

**An inter-cultural exchange: Venice-Cracow 2007 by 3A & 3G**  
**Liceo Giordano Bruno and VI Liceum Ogólnokształcalce**  
**Roberta Croce 3A**

An inter-cultural exchange needs **devotion**, time and good will. The main point is developing the exchange from the beginning: it is fundamental to work hard and carefully.

Our inter-cultural exchange started last year, in March 2007, when the project was presented by our teachers to our parents during a meeting. From that moment until the following September, we had to solve a lot of **problems**: students who didn't know whether to take part in the exchange or not, whether they were allowed to **accommodate** a foreign partner or not, teachers who didn't know who would be accommodated by whom...etc. However that was only the beginning: after that, it was important to organize the exchange through **e-mails contacts**, working together with another class – last year's 2G - of the same age as us. In fact, after the project had been approved, we began to write e-mails to our future Polish partners, exchanging the students' profiles and to plan their stay in Venice. The Poles set up a **website** to arrange **partner matching** It was hard work and we finished only on the eve of their arrival!!!

Let's interview somebody about the exchange experience...

**The first meeting and the week in Venice...**

**I: «Silvia, tell us something about the organization of the exchange. What was it like?»**

S: «Well...it required a lot of energy!!!!... it was sometimes so hard that, during those months, in the evening I was so tired that I didn't go out as usual... anyway, it's also true that I had fun **planning excursions and presentations** about us, Venice and our local history...» **Silvia Bisello, 3A**

**I: «Silvia, how was meeting Kasia at Treviso airport?»**

S: «Well, nobody can imagine how I felt... I was absolutely excited about that meeting, but I was also worried about my **English**... It was my first cultural exchange: I had never had experiences like that or something similar before. I'm not very fluent and my parents have never studied English, they only know a few English words... So, imagine how I was feeling waiting for my partner!»

**I: «Was it a problem?»**

S: The opposite! Everything was alright from the very first moment Kasia smiled to me...» **Silvia Trentinaglia, 3G**

**I: «What about you Francesca?»**

F:« ...when they began coming out of the airport everyone started asking them “Who are you?” to find the legitimate partners. I asked for Paulina, but three girls came to me saying “I'm Paulina!!!” When I found the right Paulina, she welcomed me with a strong embrace and I immediately understood that she was a very effusive girl...» **Francesca Doglioni, 3A...**

**I: «...and for you Chiara? Was it hard to break the ice when your guest arrived? »**

C: « Even if we had exchanged a lot of e-mails before our first meeting it was really hard **to break the ice** when I met my Paulina for the first time... I didn't know what I could say, how I could possibly speak ...I felt as if I had never spoken a word of English before... It was absolute panic!!!!...»

**I: «... then, what happened? Didn't you say a word until the following day?!?»**

C: «No, fortunately not!!!... It needed only a few minutes to relax and it seemed that Paulina and I had been friends for years!!!... I have to admit that it was thanks to my parents, who invited me to translate for them, so I asked her about her family, her way of life, about Cracow.... When it was time to go to bed, I was really tired, but also proud!!!» **Chiara Voltan, 3G**

**I: «I can imagine how Chiara felt...however she accommodated one guest only!»**

**I: «Hello, Beatrice! What was your week in Venice with your partner like? »**

B: «Don't say anything about it! I accommodated two girls, my partner and Filippo's. You can't imagine what it was like...AWFUL! I'm very shy and speaking to people who I have never met is very hard for me!!! However, my father speaks English very well and so he helped me a lot with the conversation.

**I: «Any other problems?»**

Our partners were older than us and so it was normal to go out every evening for them, but not for me, which caused a little bit of trouble at home!!! Anyway it was a fantastic experience to meet my partners.»

**I: « Filippo, what were your duties during your partner's stay in Venice if you didn't accommodate her?»**

F: «Well, first of all I contributed to the family budget since it was a private exchange. Of course I did my best to spend some time with her and be friendly. I often went to Beatrice's for dinner or during the afternoon. And, if they went out in the evening, I joined in.» **Beatrice Zennaro and Filippo Pasqualetto 3A**

**I:« Can I ask you about the school activities, Silvia? I heard that Carlotta and you were great as West and East Germany in a performance about the history of the European Union...»**

S: «We had great fun making the posters and all... but, unfortunately, the **performance flopped**, I think... there were too many people who weren't interested in our mini play and were not paying attention. So, while we were acting, there was a lot of noise and the performance didn't have success...»

**I: «Oh...what a pity!! Maybe you should have involved the Polish partners in the performance...»**

C: «If you are talking about our E.U. performance, there are only a three words to describe it: A TOTAL FAILURE!!!»

**I: « Carlotta, what an optimist you are... as usual! »**

C: «I only said that it was AWFUL... but this is just in my opinion... Anyway, I enjoyed the exchange because I could make new friends, compare our ways and traditions with another different way of life, visit new places and improve my English... Well, I can only say that it was fantastic!!» **Silvia Bisello and Carlotta Giordano. 3A**

**I: «I suppose a strong point was the outings... Where have you been during the exchange week in Venice?»**

M: « We had a boat trip down the River Sile, we visited Torcello, Murano and Burano...»

**I: «Perhaps it was boring to visit places where you might have already been, wasn't it? »**

S: «A boat trip in our lagoon is always nice but of course it wasn't as great as the Sunday we went to the beach altogether...»

L: «You're right... that Sunday was a wonderful day: maybe, our Polish partners were a little bit tired, due to the fact they had arrived just the day before, anyway it was fantastic!! We had a good time on the Lido and it was rewarding for us realizing how excited and happy our partners were on the beach because they live far from the sea and it's cold most of the time...»

M: «However, also the trip on the boat was great. Even when it was raining on the way back we had a great time: there were people talking, singing, playing...the atmosphere was great!!!»

S: «And we might have had more fun if we had been to Padua with our Polish partners ... in fact, they told us that they got bored without us!!»

**I: «I see and it's wonderful to think how much you were friendly to each other if they missed you ...»**

L: «It's strange, I know. But, believe me, it was really like that: it needed only a little time and then we were already all friends and everybody liked to spend the time together!!» **Linda Gatto, 3A Michele Maniero and Sebastiano Peschiutta, 3G**

**I: «I've asked more than one student about the exchange and it seems as if everything went right during the week the Polish students were here, in Venice...»**

M: «... it isn't true that everyone made friends at once and liked to spend the time together... for example, during the week I accommodated my partner here, there were some problems because I didn't agree with her about going out every evening and every afternoon with or without me...»

**I: «How bad!!! What happened when you were accommodated by her family?»**

M: « That week was fantastic because I eventually made friends with her: we always agreed and there weren't any problems any more!!! Maybe during the week in Venice, we had our little disagreements due to the fact that we didn't know each other and everything was new to both of us... However, the most important thing is that I've met a new friend with whom I'm still exchanging e-mails every week!!!»

**Monica Zanin 3G**

### **In Cracow...**

**I: « Tell us about your week in Cracow , Gianmarco»**

G: «Well, I think that there aren't any words to describe it... It was wonderful, magic, fantastic, great, fantastic...and every other adjective you know!!! I'll not explain you what we have visited because it might need hours and hours: from Wavel Castle to Wieliczka saltmine, from the hot springs of Orowice to Zakopane... however, in my opinion, the week in Cracow was better than the one in Venice because everything went perfectly smooth – not like our E.U. performance!!! – Everything in Poland was organized in the best way. However, it's also true that it had been our first cultural exchange, but a week in Cracow, a new, exciting city with our partners cannot compare with being at home!» **Gianmarco Caruso 3A**

**I: «Wonderful!!!...So, everything was perfect in Cracow for all of you!!!!...»**

F: «Well, it isn't really true because, when we were in Cracow, I know that somebody ate almost nothing for the whole week, because they couldn't take the new food or different meal times...»

**I: «Well, a good way to slim down... however, thanks to the exchange, you have met new friends...haven't you, Francesca?»**

F: «This is absolutely true!!!...at first I was afraid of spending a week with a girl who I didn't know so well, in a city so far from home where everything is totally different from here...but, in the end, when it was time to come back home, I was very sad because I had grown fond of Kasia and of the place and now, if I think about that week, I would like to go back in the time to those unforgettable days!» **Francesca Berganasco 3A**

### **An inter-cultural exchange is something that you can remember forever and a good way to grow up.**

In conclusion, if you ask somebody about the exchange now, you will find everyone enthusiastic because they have met new people, visited new places through their monuments, history, traditions, arts and craft, they have improved their English, but – and this is the most important thing – they have also become more mature than before the exchange. I agree with what my mates from 3A and 3G have said. It was hard for me to break the ice with Monika, my partner, as it was for Chiara, it was not so easy to fit in Monika's way of life and I wonder why she isn't replying to my mails now... but I had also two weeks full of fun and surprises, both at home and in Cracow. I can say that I loved every seconds and everything about our intercultural exchange!!!