



Interview on

“The Millennials meet the Middle Ages”

The students explain their project in the form of an interview

Before the interview gets started, I would like to inform everybody that its contents are available both in the written and spoken version, to let everybody easily follow it.

You are going to listen to our project explained by means of an interactive interview where some students will be asked specific questions on the frame of the project itself.

Enjoy the performance!

Hi guys, we all work for the Malignani Daily News. We would like to write an article on how the students at Malignani are coping with this terrible pandemic, therefore we would like to ask you some questions about your project. Are you ready?

Hi, yes of course we are!



Ready, steady, go! The first question is:
what's the name of the project?

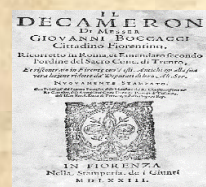


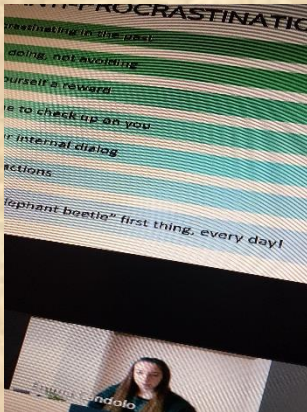
The project is called **THE MILLENNIALS MEET THE MIDDLEAGES** and it derives its name from the meeting of the students of our generation, practically ourselves, called the **Millennials**, and some characters of our age, living in the **Middle Ages**.

Can you describe the main characteristics of the project?

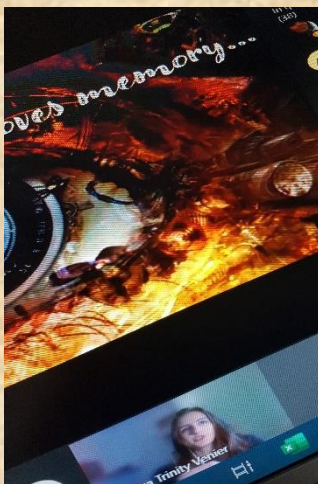


Yes of course. It is an interdisciplinary project in the form of a **journey back in time** where some students of our class, starring **the Millennials**, share their stories in the form of short talks with the rest of the class, starring both **the pilgrims of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales** and the characters of the **Decameron** written by Boccaccio.





What's more, for this purpose, we have taken part in another challenging and enthralling project called **THE MALIGNANT TALKS**. We had to write our own personal stories, talking for some minutes about what matters the most to us, such as ideas, passions, hobbies, curiosities, events, important issues or life experiences. The stories had to fit in multimedia podcasts containing texts, quotes, images, music and videos, sometimes even short videos within the video itself.



We had to tell our stories in English, of course, and we had the possibility to share them with the school community during a students' meeting. It was a really exciting experience and we felt somehow a bit like Chaucer's pilgrims or Boccaccio's characters telling their stories and sharing them with their friends!



Here, you can have an idea of the experience. This is us telling our stories and this is our teacher supporting us during the performance

That's amazing! And what's the aim of such a complex project?

Well, firstly the main aim of this project is that of proving how **working at an interdisciplinary level** including the contributions of other teachers and therefore other school subjects, can be very effective, interesting and funny at the same time.



...and there is another purpose behind this project: that of showing how some **themes and emotions are timeless and universal**. For example, the importance of **storytelling** as a healing way to overcome difficulties or the **importance of friendship and love** or **fear of disease and death**.



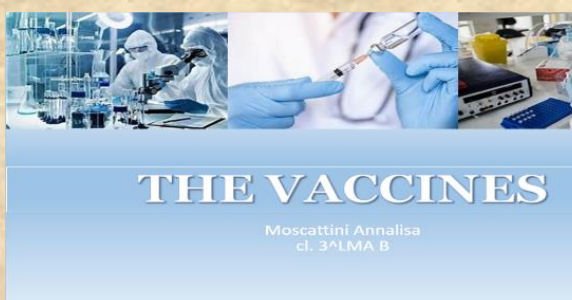
We must remember that both the Millennials and the people living in the Middle Ages are forced to face two pandemics: the **Black Plague**, which broke out in Florence in 1348 and **Covid-19**, whose details everybody unfortunately knows very well. So, we had the possibility to compare symptoms and consequences of these two plagues, with the big difference that vaccines didn't exist yet at the time of the Black Plague.



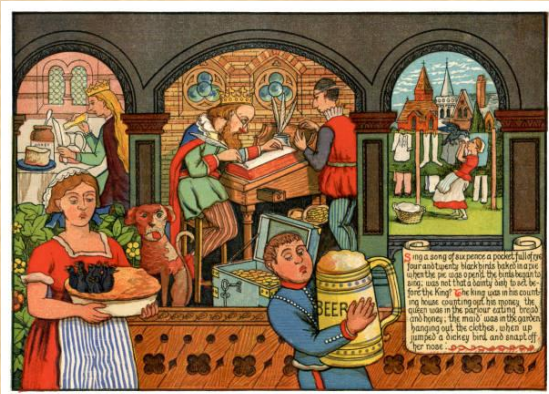
Vaccines are a very current and relevant topic nowadays....

Yes, they are. In fact, Annalisa, who is an expert in this field, will give her peers from the Middle Ages some information on vaccines.

Unfortunately, it will take still a long time before they are invented...



It sounds very interesting!



Yes, it's extremely interesting and educational as well! In fact, to carry out this project we had to study many documents and texts and then we had to compare them **to find out similarities and differences** to have a general overview of the period we were studying, namely the Middle Ages.

Now we know everything on the **Black plague**, on the **condition of women in the Middle Ages**, on the **murder of Thomas Becket** and on **pilgrimages**. And we can even make comparisons between texts, not to speak about all the details of the Canterbury Tales themselves, which we had to study in details and report during the speaking tests.

By the way, do you know why Thomas Becket was considered a saint?

Because he was a good-hearted man, wasn't he?



HAIR SHIRT to mortify the flesh

No, not only because of this. To be honest, historians report that he was a real "**pain in the neck**" because he was very strict with rules on Christianity. He became a Saint mainly because there were rumours going by that when he was assassinated by the 4 knights of king Henry II, he was wearing such a hairy hair shirt that a lot of **fleas and lice came out of his body**, so people thought they were running out his flesh, and so they thought he was a saint!

This sounds very interesting and funny as well...
Did the English teacher carry out the project all alone by herself?

Which teachers have been involved?



What has Dudeney to do with the whole frame of the story?



No, of course not! She wasn't alone, even though she had the main idea of the whole frame of the project! **Other teachers have taken part in this project.** They have always supported and helped our English teacher to let her project come into force, thus really becoming an interdisciplinary project.

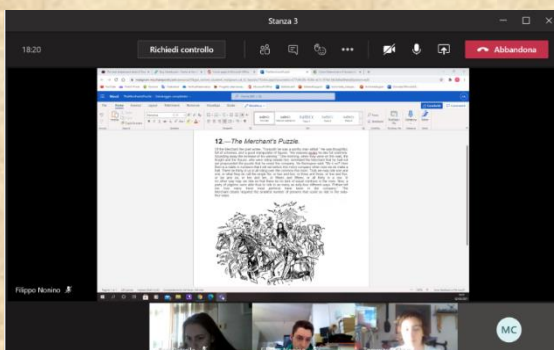
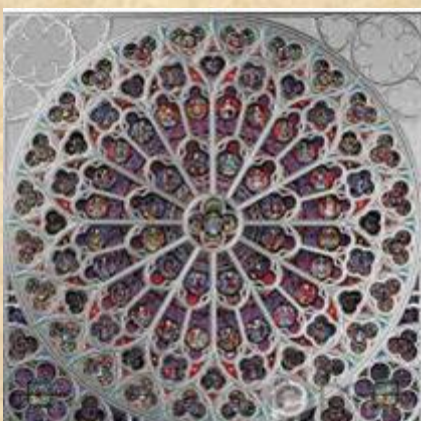
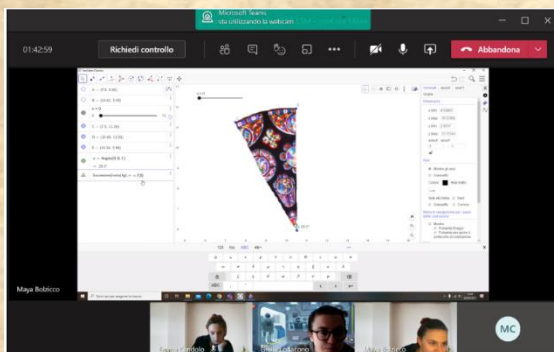
Every teacher has dealt with a specific aspect of the story. The Maths teacher, **prof.ssa Chiara Milan**, for example gave us the idea of including in the story the famous British mathematician **Henry Dudeney** with his riddles. In particular, Riddle number 12 told by the Merchant, who is one of the Canterbury Tales' characters.

The character of Dudeney perfectly fits in the story since the first part of his mathematical puzzle book ***The Canterbury Puzzles and Other Curious Problems*** he wrote in 1907, features a series of puzzles based on the characters from The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer, so easy peasy!

Amazing. And did you also have to solve the puzzle?

12.—The Merchant's Puzzle.

Of the Merchant the poet writes, "Forsooth he was a worthy man withal." He was thoughtful, full of schemes, and a good manipulator of figures. "His reasons spake he eke full solemnly. Sounding away the increase of his winning." One morning, when they were on the road, the Knight and the Squire, who were riding beside him, reminded the Merchant that he had not yet propounded the puzzle that he owed the company. He thereupon said, "Be it so? Here then is a riddle in numbers that I will set before this merry company when next we do make a halt. There be thirty of us in all riding over the common this morn. Truly we may ride one and one, in what they do call the single file, or two and two, or three and three, or five and five, or six and six, or ten and ten, or fifteen and fifteen, or all thirty in a row. In no other way may we ride so that there be no lack of equal numbers in the rows. Now, a party of pilgrims were able thus to ride in as many as sixty-four different ways. Prithie tell me how many there must perforce have been in the company." The Merchant clearly required the smallest number of persons that could so ride in the sixty-four ways.



Yes, of course we did.

Some classmates, Tommaso, Sara and Filippo, who are very good at Maths, made an algorithm and were able to solve the riddle!

And we have also made a connection between the conics and the spiers of the gothic cathedrals, as well as an analysis of the typical rose windows of the facades of Gothic cathedrals from a mathematical point of view:

these are geometric figures that can be characterized on the basis of isometries that do not modify the figure itself (in mathematical language "they keep the figure fixed").

There is a famous theorem, attributed to Leonardo da Vinci, which deals with this issue.

We have also learnt how to use the GeoGebra dynamic geometry software for the construction of a rose window starting from its fundamental elements, which has improved our technical and specific glossary.

And we have also analysed the arches of the facades and colonnades, typical of the Gothic cathedrals by applying the knowledge acquired on the circumference and modelling of the construction of an arch using GeoGebra.



rest of the class on him/her actions, as well as the reasons behind them.

In the end, we wrote a series of questions to be asked to Boccaccio on the reason why he had chosen that specific storyline for each character. These questions were first asked as if the characters themselves, who are people from the Middle Age, were interrogating their author and later on as if we, Millennials living in our own time, were confronting Boccaccio about his storyline choices. The main point of this activity was to understand that classical authors have still a lot to teach to the contemporary human beings and can be looked upon as friends by the present-day students.

Also **prof.ssa Alcea De Agostini**, the **Phylosophy teacher**, was involved and she helped us deepen the meaning of friendship all over the centuries.

And **prof.ssa Maria Concetta Brocato**, the digital animator of our school, has helped us with all the technical aspects of the project, together with **Mr. Lorenzo Bianchini**, who has shot all the scenes of the story, he is also recording this interview right now!

Which techniques, tools, devices did you use to carry out the project and which new skills have you learned?

We have experimented with the use of new teaching tools that have expanded both our knowledge and our digital skills, like knowledge and Networking and virtual communication. Specifically, we have learned how to use Teams





collaborative communication platform with all its features becoming more and more autonomous, including the ability to upload multimedia materials, share them and display them, simulating real classroom



interactions. We have also explored the different features of presentation programs such as PowerPoint, Prezi, Sway and the use of GeoGebra dynamic geometry software. The in-depth study of Power Point features has been very useful especially in the recording phase of our works, since it has created a very realistic simulation of a live performance.

Were you evaluated for this project?



Yes, of course. We got marks in English on the materials we produced (video summaries, written processing of texts, creation of PPTs, videos and personalized glossaries) and on our ability to report what we had studied establishing interdisciplinary connections.

Another test was made to check out our stories or talks and it was based on the originality of the topic and the presence in each slide of the PPT of the right balance between text and images, audio and video.

In addition, there has been a multidisciplinary test, where all the subjects we mentioned before were involved.

It has been a kind of interdisciplinary anticipation of the final examination at the end of the school term when we

will be tested both on several subjects and on our ability to use our skills in making connections within the various topics.

Did you like doing the project?



Yes, we did, even though at the very beginning we were quite scared at the idea, but with the help of the teachers we have successfully completed the task, having a lot of fun as well. What's more we have learnt new digital skills!

Thank you very much for your time.

