

# IO2

## VIRTUAL TRAINING SEMINARS FOR «LIT. MENTORS»

English Publication



Partners:



HELLENIC  
FOUNDATION FOR  
CULTURE



Institute of  
Entrepreneurship  
Development



IT STUDY  
Oktató- és Kutatóközpont

Sandorf



Društvo slovenskih pisateljev  
Slovene Writers Association



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This publication was created by 6 partner organizations during the Erasmus+ project

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## Table of Contents

**Overview of the project**..... 3

**Overview of the IO2**..... 5

**Methodology of the IO2** ..... 7

**Modules’ description: Read-In-Club training for Lit.Mentors**..... 10

**MODULE 1** ..... 10

**MODULE 2** ..... 23

**MODULE 3** ..... 36

**MODULE 4** ..... 45

**MODULE 5** ..... 62

**MODULE 6** ..... 72



## Overview of the project

The Creative and Cultural Sector belongs to those segments of society which are mostly effected by the 2020 novel COVID-19 crisis, causing an enormous social turbulence in European society: EU citizens experience the ‘new normality’ of staying at home and living under lockdown. While human interaction has been seriously wounded under these critical circumstances, EU values for social cohesion, inclusion, intercultural dialogue, community engagement, understanding of the “other” and tolerance, all of them conveyed by arts and culture, are into a great challenge.

The project READ-IN-CLUB (READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders) is an EU-ERASMUS+ coordinated program and includes 6 partners (A.B. Institute of entrepreneurship development ltd - CY, CulturePolis-GR, Hellenic Foundation for Culture-GR, ITStudy-HU, Slovene Writers Association-SI, Sandorf Publishing-HR) from 5 different EU member states (Cyprus, Croatia, Greece, Hungary and Slovene). Its main goal is to equip our society with those skills and competences which are essential to ensuring a smooth recovery from the resent health crisis. In READ-IN-CLUB, the art of literature and the institution of book clubs and reading communities, together with the power of digital technology, comprise powerful facilitators of informal learning and dialogue and generate a supportive cultural environment where people are encouraged to become innovators and effective lifelong learners.

In this context, READ-IN-CLUB targets professionals of the book industry who organize and coordinate the operation of reading clubs or other educational activities related to literature: writers, authors, translators, directors and representatives of private and public libraries, moderators of reading clubs/book clubs, managers of publishing houses and literary organizations, publishers, editors; its objectives are to:

- Develop a cross-sectoral approach for cooperation - established in the EU values which are generated and conveyed by the art of literature.



- Address the challenge of ingraining the educational aspect of reading clubs for social inclusion and intercultural dialogue in the “digital, post- COVID agenda” of the book industry stakeholders.
- Qualify reading clubs coordinators through enhancing their training skills and digital competences and rendering them “Lit.Mentors” of intercultural dialogue.
- Develop and deliver a digital reading club platform, innovative training materials and content methodologies for successfully meeting the needs of reading clubs coordinators and their communities and empower them at all levels.



## Overview of the IO2

The Virtual Training Seminars for «Lit.Mentors» is a core output for RIC project and is dedicated to fulfill the need of an innovative and digital educational approach, which attempts to integrate in the reading communities' context the cultural, social and education dimensions of literature for intercultural dialogue and social inclusion.

In doing so, it boosts the professional development and the creativity of the book-field professionals and especially coordinators and organizers of reading clubs and literary organizations, empowering them to become future “Lit.Mentors”, transferring in their turn relative insights, competencies, attitudes, and behaviors to adult readers.

More specifically, the IO2 offered a series of digital seminars with training material, which will be addressed to the professionals of the book sector - active in coordination of reading clubs - who are committed to the role of “Lit.Mentors” in order to develop training skills and intercultural competences and educate them on mentoring their communities in order to transform “collective reading” experiences, to lifelong learning environments which foster intercultural dialogue processes, and promote the values of literature for equity, diversity, inclusion, tolerance, open-mindedness, mutual understanding and creative development, emphasizing on the potentials of literature for creativity and innovation; stimulating interest for the universal values of EU for the understanding of the “other” through literary works and highlighting the necessity of intercultural competences and digital skills in the modern, fast changing and post-COVID cultural and creative industry of EU.

All the partners agreed on the distribution of the topics for the digital seminars: each partner was assigned with a topic closest to their field of activities. Then the process of preparing the material for virtual seminars ensued. The material prepared for the virtual seminars – ranging from experts' lectures, practical exercises, workshops, fiction and non-fiction books' overviews, or conversations with experts from book industry of literary theory.



## **READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders**

The culmination of IO2 was a physical meeting in Split, Croatia, where all the partners gathered to review the results of the IO2 and prepare for the IO3, which made possible for exploring the new approaches and exchanging experiences on individual partners' engagement in the project.



## Methodology of the IO2

Constructing the IO2 was a considerable challenge for all the partners involved in the Read-In-Club project. It demanded creating a positive and a socially inclusive environment which would serve as a wider frame for the practical knowledges and skills needed to be transferred to the future online book club mentors.

The IO2 was constructed by use of creative networked learning methods based on the learning theory of the 21st century of “Connectivism” as most relevant for delivering online courses for adults. Complying with this theory’s main principles that:

- There is no strict divide between trainers and trainees, as all participants can be an expert on his/her special area
- The main role of the trainers is acting as facilitators whose task is to generate intensive collaboration and knowledge sharing among the participants
- While a high quality learning material will be provided, the learning process won’t be driven by the learning content, learning from each-other will be highly focused
- The learning environment serves a space for creativity and interactivity, the Virtual Training Seminars recognizes that not all of the target groups members possess the same role, knowledge or experience in READ-IN-CLUB topics; and therefore it aims to address the enrichment of their skills & competences in the most efficient, interdisciplinary way, tailored to participants’ needs and attributes, including:
  - a) Real-time seminar sessions through videoconference applications (e.g. Zoom, Skype) aiming to give a motivating introduction to the topic in order to generate personal contact between the trainer and the trainees, and carry on to interactive workshops, along with the inclusion of digital team building activities and group work tasks for trainees

These seminars were conducted using different approaches and methodologies: interactive workshops, lectures, conversations, interviews.





Each partner decided for the approach and methodology which suited their topic of the online seminar.

- b) The online learning and collaboration in Learning Management System based on Open Source Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) Framework which supports cooperation and collaborative content creation and it integrates tools for constructive pedagogy. Moodle Learning Management System (web2.0 aware platform) lets the trainers to create, upload, share digital learning content, grade assignments, quizzes, discussion forums, etc. with an easy-to-learn user-interface.

All parts of the Virtual Training Seminars were designed as online modules (each partner extracted, edited and formatted data and methodology from their own conducted online seminars) and are accompanied by written educational material in the present e-book. E-book is a practical manual about the results of the IO2 composed to explain and guide the user of online Moodle LMS constructed through the Read-In-Club project.

All modules of the scheme are provided in English language and also are translated in all partner countries' languages, in order to deliver a comprehensive output that fosters creativity, culture and multiculturalism.

The methodology adopted is addressing the following tasks:

**TASK 1: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT.**

Sandorf as the leader of IO2 developed the curriculum and coordinated the conduct of the virtual seminars.

**TASK 2: LEARNING CONTENT-MODULES DEVELOPMENT**

All partners participated in the development of the modules equally and solidary, bringing the key decisions together on monthly online meetings, as well as on the physical meeting in Split.

**TASK 3: TRAINING METHODOLOGY DEVELOPMENT**



The training methodology was aligned between all the partners allowing each one of them to adjust their own practices to the topic assigned to them.

**TASK 4: GRAPHICAL DESIGN AND MULTILINGUAL VLE PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT**

The IO3 leader ITStudy introduced a simple and innovative methodology of the VLE platform development.

**TASK 5: EVALUATION**

The evaluation method for the modules was mutually agreed between the partners on the suggestion given by the representatives of HFC.



**Modules' description: Read-In-Club training for Lit.Mentors**

MODULE 1

Conducted by CulturePolis – Greece

<b>Module title:</b>
<p><b>Literature, Reading Clubs and Intercultural Dialogue</b></p> <p><i>The inclusive character of literature and how to enter the world of reading</i></p>
<b>Learning objectives:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To explore why literature underlies processes of intercultural dialogue.</li> <li>2. To investigate the power of reading clubs as mediums for the development of intercultural competencies.</li> <li>3. To present some technics and case studies on how literature and reading clubs promote intercultural dialogue</li> </ol>
<b>Introduction:</b>
<p>This module investigates the interconnection between literature, reading clubs, and intercultural dialogue. How does literature can benefit and advance intercultural understanding and how does the reception of literary creations across cultures can be consolidated through reading clubs? These are some of the questions a reading club coordinator may bring to the spotlight when designing and planning the reading circles of his/her club.</p>

**Module content:**

**UNIT 1:**

**What is intercultural dialogue?**

The term intercultural dialogue, which until the end of the 1990s was not very widespread or known to most people in Europe, today is a term so familiar and well established in our consciousness. Thus, many academic studies worldwide have been conducted to analyse its aspects and parameters, and their impact on the study of humanities and other social and anthropological sciences.

✦ It was first defined in 2008 on the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (p.8) as “an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals, groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect.”

Yet, intercultural dialogue is not a 'new' phenomenon. The need for dialogue and communication with other cultures, and for an "opening" towards a socially, politically, culturally, and religiously different culture/people, has always been a matter of major importance that concerned human history.



### **Why intercultural dialogue is so important?**

It is true that every culture has its own specific characteristics, which encompass the way of life, the traditions, the aesthetic experiences, the religious beliefs, the personal and collective values of a place, in other words, culture is connected to the core of the society in which it is developed. Nevertheless, no culture can evolve without communication with others. The culture of a nation expands our horizons to new ideas and perceptions. At the same time, through the discovery of the cultural identity of others, we obtain more awareness about our own cultural identity. Once culture is not restricted to the narrow borders of its birthplace, it loses its introversion and takes on a universal character. Thus, the specific characteristics of a place automatically become **universal**, as well as the values and ideals represented by each culture.





## UNIT 2:

### The value of literature in intercultural dialogue

One of the most important "tools" or bridges of communication for intercultural dialogue is literature, which is one of the most accessible forms of art. Even when it expresses or deals with certain elements of a specific community of people, the values it promotes are and must be universal and humanitarian, since the main purpose of literature is Man himself, along with the fundamental existential issues that concern him/her, and determine or govern his or her existence, behavior, beliefs etc.

Quoting Aristotle here: "Literature does not only imitate life and society of a certain place, it does not only reflect its past or its present, rather, its most important function is to unite and unify people ..."

More recently Umberto Eco in his theory of "Semiotics"<sup>1</sup> suggested that the whole culture should be studied as a phenomenon of communication. So did support the French philosopher / author Jean-Paul Sartre. In addition, the writer George Eliot pointed out that: "If literature does not broaden our perspective for the other, then it has no moral influence."

Hence, literature is a universal language that transcends all borders: even though writers portray the core of their society, or the issues they raise come from the immediate cultural context that surrounds them, **the aspect of universality is always present.**

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<sup>1</sup> Theory of "Semiotics, Umberto Eco: Indiana University Press, series: Advances of Semioritics



### UNIT 3:

#### Reading clubs as a tool for the development of intercultural competencies

The 2013 UNESCO publication [\*Intercultural Competencies\*](#) noted the importance and power of storytelling in many cultures around the world throughout human time. Further, the 2013 publication noted, “Only through joint construction of a relationship in which people listen to one another can individuals demonstrate their intercultural competencies” (p. 38), meaning that relationships (and listening) are very important in intercultural competencies development.

Creating conditions of listening and sharing, reading clubs have the potential to serve as sites where intercultural awareness and competencies are developed. In reading critically, individuals taking part in book clubs engage with the shared experiences of their peers, as well as of the characters in the books they discuss. This can lead to a greater understanding and empathy for those who have identities different from one’s own.

While reading certainly provides an opportunity of exploring and understand the “other”, it is the discussion element of book clubs that states “at the heart of the intercultural awareness-raising.”

Here is where the role of the reading club coordinator comes.



### **How can a reading club coordinator facilitate intercultural awareness-raising?**

✦ As already discussed in the previous unit, literary authors are more than mere narrators of a local myth, but their writing should reflect universal truths. The coordinator needs to encourage the members of the reading club to have a more careful and complex observation of a literary character. They need to reflect on the human condition, of the man himself, along with what governs the existence of Man, his behavior, and his actions in a given - usually catalytic - tragic or at least decisive time. Even when the narratives concern historical events that marked the authors’ birthplace, their stories reflect aspects of the universal history of mankind.

✦ Coordinators of reading clubs may introduce and propose to their members, writers whose work promotes intercultural dialogue and the universality of literature. Writers who have played a very significant role in acquainting us with others, who spoke of the universal man, without 'removing the local colors and odors of their birthplace, in other words without "abandoning" the context in which they live and the particular characteristics of their place, are so many, one could not count or list



them. Indicatively, only a few of the most emblematic authors in the history of literature are referred: Hugo, Flaubert, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Melville, Steinbeck but also Naguib Mahfouz, Taha Hussein, Nikos Kazantzakis, and many others.



✦ Coordinators of reading clubs may add specific intercultural training tools and activities, such as story circles, line differences or human libraries:

**A Story Circle** is a small group of individuals sitting in a circle, sharing stories—usually from their own experience or imagination—focusing on a common theme. As each person, in turn, shares a story, a richer and more complex story emerges. By the end, people see both real differences and things their stories have in common. A Story Circle is a journey into its theme, with multiple dimensions, twists, and turns.

**Line differences** is a game of three steps: At the beginning, reading club members are given small pieces of paper and they are asked to write on one what they think they have in common with one of more characters (decision made by the coordinator) of the book they discuss about. They don't need to write their names on the paper. After they finish, the coordinator collect their notes and invite the members of the reading club to make a line in front of him. The coordinator read out loud the sentences one by one. For each sentence, the members are asked to make a step forward if they find themselves in the mentioned sentence or stay in the same position, if not. After all the sentences are finished the members of the reading club are gathered for final discussion.



## READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders

**Human libraries:** The coordinator asks reading club members to be part of a living library. They are asked to decide if they want to be readers or books: the group should divide by choice into 2. Those you selected to be the book need to think of a very suggestive and direct title for the book. They are encouraged to think about aspects that will be related to cultural sharing and dialogue, to their personal experience or the books they have read. The readers ask for the catalog of the titles and then start loaning the book. Human stories are shared inspired by the real experiences and the literature exploration that the reading club members have already done in the past.

The concept of “Human library” was first established as a movement in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2000. It aims to address people's prejudices by helping them to talk about taboo topics openly and without condemnation. Now the movement has turned into an international organization and uses a library analogy of lending people rather than books: the Human Library does not consist of actual books but of people who are willing to share their stories and experiences with others, in order to fight prejudice and promote diversity.



## CASE STUDY:

### **The reading Club in Thrace:**

The reading club of Komotini in Thrace, Greece, has been operating since 2016 and was created out of the pure love of its members for books and their need to share ideas and opinions about what they read. The club has 60 registered members of which 40 are active. Meetings are held twice a month and the choice of books is based on a democratic decision of the members. The main focus of the selection is the different writing periods of both Greek and foreign literature.

This club is a good case study because of the multicultural character of the region where it operates, Thrace: In the area of Thrace, Greek-born Christians, Pontians, Armenians, and Muslims, including Muslims of Turkish origin, Pomaks, and Gypsies, coexist. Moreover, Thrace is a peripheral region of Greece bordering Bulgaria, having thus, among others, strong Balkan cultural characteristics. The coordinator of the reading club of Komotini, together with the members, recognizes the special features of their place and they identify that intercultural dialogue should play a significant role in the operation of their club. That is why they regularly select books that support the understanding of the “other”.

Their reading practice is based on identifying what unites people, i.e. common characteristics they share with the characters in a book and then identifying what seems to make them different.

After completing the book, they discover that what unites people is much more than what divides them, and indeed, those obstacles that make intercultural dialogue difficult can be resolved thanks to the universal values that govern harmonious coexistence.

The reading club of Komotini seeks to further integrate the importance of cultural diversity in its readings, through the selection of books and authors from the cultures with which Thrace borders, namely Bulgarian, Turkish, Arabic and Balkan literature.



**CONCLUSION:**

- Every culture has its own specific characteristics
- No culture can evolve without communication with others (intercultural dialogue)
- Literature is one of the most important "tools" or bridges of communication for intercultural dialogue.
- Literature is a universal language that transcends all borders.
- Storytelling is fundamental for the development of intercultural competencies and awareness.
- Storytelling is in the core of reading clubs operation
- Reading club coordinators have the potential to become facilitators for the intercultural awareness of the club's members



**QUIZ/ SELF-ASSESSMENT TASK:**

1. Every culture has its own specific characteristics, and thus evolves within the narrow borders of its birthplace.
  - A. True
  - B. False

Correct Answer: False.

*It is true that every culture has its own specific characteristics, which encompass the way of life, the traditions, the aesthetic experiences, the religious beliefs, the personal and collective values of a place, in other words, culture is connected to the core of the society in which it is developed. Nevertheless, no culture can evolve without communication with others.*

2. Given the fact that literature is the art of storytelling, it expresses or deals with certain elements of a specific community of people. The universal aspect of literature lies on the potential to express values which are universal and humanitarian.
  - A. True
  - B. False.

Correct Answer: True.

*Even when it [literature] expresses or deals with certain elements of a specific community of people, the values it promotes are and must be universal and humanitarian, since the main purpose of literature is Man himself, along with the fundamental existential issues that concern him/her, and determine or govern his or her existence, behavior, beliefs etc.*

3. In Human libraries:
  - A. books, from all over the world are collected and preserved
  - B. individuals take the role of a “book” - metaphorically, and share a story with others.
  - C. the database of all libraries operating in the globe.



Correct Answer: B

*The Human Library does not consist of actual books but of people who are willing to share their stories and experiences with others, in order to fight prejudice and promote diversity.*



**LIST OF REFERENCES:**

- A. [https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/documentViewer.xhtml?v=2.1.196&id=p::usm\\_arcdef\\_0000370336&file=/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach\\_import\\_7c9c55b8-0c83-4f0a-aa8a-b725b4a016ed%3F\\_%3D370336eng.pdf&locale=en&multi=true&ark=/ark:/48223/pf0000370336/PDF/370336eng.pdf#15044-3018-Fullbook.indd%3A7\\_bck%3A1503](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/documentViewer.xhtml?v=2.1.196&id=p::usm_arcdef_0000370336&file=/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach_import_7c9c55b8-0c83-4f0a-aa8a-b725b4a016ed%3F_%3D370336eng.pdf&locale=en&multi=true&ark=/ark:/48223/pf0000370336/PDF/370336eng.pdf#15044-3018-Fullbook.indd%3A7_bck%3A1503)
- B. [https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox\\_tool\\_download-file-1947/Final Toolkit compressed.pdf](https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-1947/Final_Toolkit_compressed.pdf)
- C. <https://humanlibrary.org/about/>
- D. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000219768.locale=en>



MODULE 2

Conducted by Sandorf – Croatia

<b>Module title:</b>
Developing Intercultural Intelligence in a reading community - Understanding literature as an upgrade of the common knowledge
<b>Learning objectives:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing understanding between the participants in the process of group reading: acquiring the basic elements of reading and understanding skills.</li> <li>2. Recognizing the positive outcomes of the reading process and how literature can help enhance communication.</li> <li>3. Recognizing common subjects and motives in an intercultural online environment</li> <li>4. Comparative analysis of cultural contexts through literature and bridging the language/translation barriers.</li> <li>5. Expanding horizons of knowledge: enabling participants to contextualize their knowledge and experience of literature and take an active role in defining and practicing intercultural intelligence.</li> </ol>
<b>Introduction:</b>
The module’s goal and purpose is to enable the future user to achieve intercultural intelligence through reading and shared reading experience. Through practical examples it shows literature’s important role in a society’s development and building understanding and dialogue.





**Module content:**

**Keywords of the module:** cross-cultural approach, world literature, reading culture, understanding through literature, experiencing different cultural contexts, educational aspect of literature

**Unit 1:**

**Understanding Literature**

Example of different practice, research, approaches discussed with the participants; example of a bilingual author writing about his experiences in different contexts.

ZORAN ŽMIRIĆ'S PRESENTATION

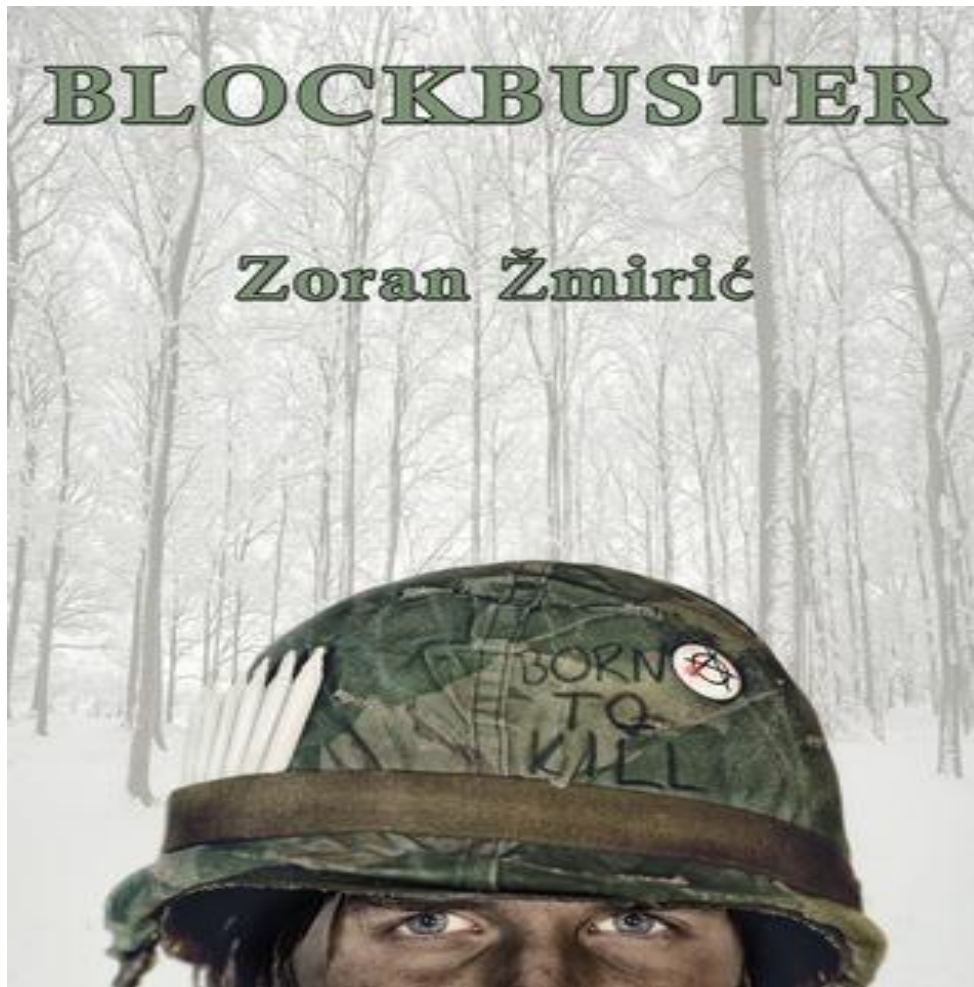
- Going to a different milieu and context (Ireland) because of the need for distance and for experience that will give him a new image of himself; the experience of Ireland itself was intense, fascinating, and beautiful for him, although at first, during the adjustment period, it was not easy;
- Although he went to Ireland in his adulthood, at the age of 48, he was able to fit in perfectly; despite his knowledge of the language not being impeccable, he experienced complete acceptance and understanding from his new colleagues and surroundings; Irish society is extremely sensitive to gender-based, racial, age-based and other types of discrimination
- experiencing the Anglophone context in terms of literary creation: Ireland was very stimulating for his writing because he felt an additional need to express himself due to the language barrier; in everyday life, he functioned in another, foreign language in which he couldn't fully express himself, so at one point he felt constrained, and the result of that was much greater productivity when it came to writing compared to when he lived in his native country, surrounded by his mother tongue; the result is 4 books in 3 years;
- within a close, artistic milieu, he didn't feel any cultural barrier (confirming what the Croatian literary theorist Aleksandar Flaker called horizontal continuity, referring to global generational identity support); here he also referred to a thought from his novel "Blockbuster" – that he had more in



## **READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders**

common with a peer from the enemy ranks than with his comrade-in-arms of an older generation;

- Through literature and music, he gained the prerequisites to travel and be open to new experiences without fear of misunderstanding; “I’ve never had that fear, and that kind of understanding is crucial to me, both as an author and as a person, because I’ve never built my views solely on one experience and my own personal views. I left the ecstasy of belonging in puberty. I haven’t seen myself in these limiting formations for a long time, whether social, religious, cultural, or subcultural. Even as a teenager, I was a darker, but I never had a problem hanging out with people who belonged to other subcultures. Dialogue has always been extremely important to me, especially dialogue from which I can learn something new. I’m truly grateful for every such opportunity, to come out of every conversation an experience richer.



## Unit 2:

### Upgrade of the Common Knowledge

General guidelines for achieving the objectives: enhancing the communication through recognizing social patterns in literature, defining common subjects in the intercultural online environment, encouraging active participation.

Comparative analysis of the reading club mentors' experiences with literature from all over the world – how do members of the reading clubs react to common subjects in different contexts; how does this affect the group dynamic:

How do club members react to topics they have in common in different contexts and how does this affect group dynamics?



Different experiences of reading clubs in collaboration with libraries, bookstores, and other institutions and public spaces.

Even before the reading club begins operating, there can exist a certain base of people who participate in book recommendations, event programs, and membership gatherings. The ideal number of participants for each club meeting is 10-20.

**Disadvantages** of online meetings: some, mostly older, members give up on this style of meeting, but have a desire to return when live meetings start up again.

**Advantages** of online meetings: many people who couldn't attend meetings due to physical distance before have now joined (and many are younger members). The members who joined when the online meeting began during the pandemic do not want live meetings. Some members stated that these zoom meetings also had a healing function for them – in a closed environment, when there aren't many other cultural events and opportunities for social contact. Some have noted that the meetings have a positive effect on the anxiety they developed during the pandemic.

Some have very positive experiences, members really like to meet in person or online, they like to chat. The good thing is that after each meeting, the moderator sends an exhaustive e-mail about the meeting, about what was talked about, and even sends critiques of the title that was discussed.

The moderator always reads the books before recommending them for a discussion.



**Fun fact:** many members stated that they really like that they have conflicting opinions, which greatly contributes to the development of dialogue.

Most club members prefer in-person meetings. But it would be good to keep online gatherings going even after the pandemic, precisely because it allows people from more distant areas who are interested in this type of gathering to also join. It would be good if both ways of meeting could be combined. The need for such a form of reading clubs exists regardless of the pandemic.

How the book club mentors choose a book for discussion, preparations, and meeting structure?

- Some make an annual themes plan so that they can adjust the purchase of books accordingly. Once a year, they have a "one title" discussion about a latest release.
- Some moderators take turns to chair the meetings. The first two moderators usually pick books they have not read in order to share their first impressions of the book with the members. It's also not mandatory to read the book before the meeting. Members can also send their thoughts and reviews via email.



## **READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders**

- There are cases when two moderators put together some general questions that encourage discussion; these questions aren't only closely related to the book, but prompt a broader discussion.



**CASE STUDY:**

The importance of libraries and the culture of reading – example of Susan Orlean’s ‘The Library Book’

The importance of collective knowledge shared through books – discussion about the role of culture of reading in a society

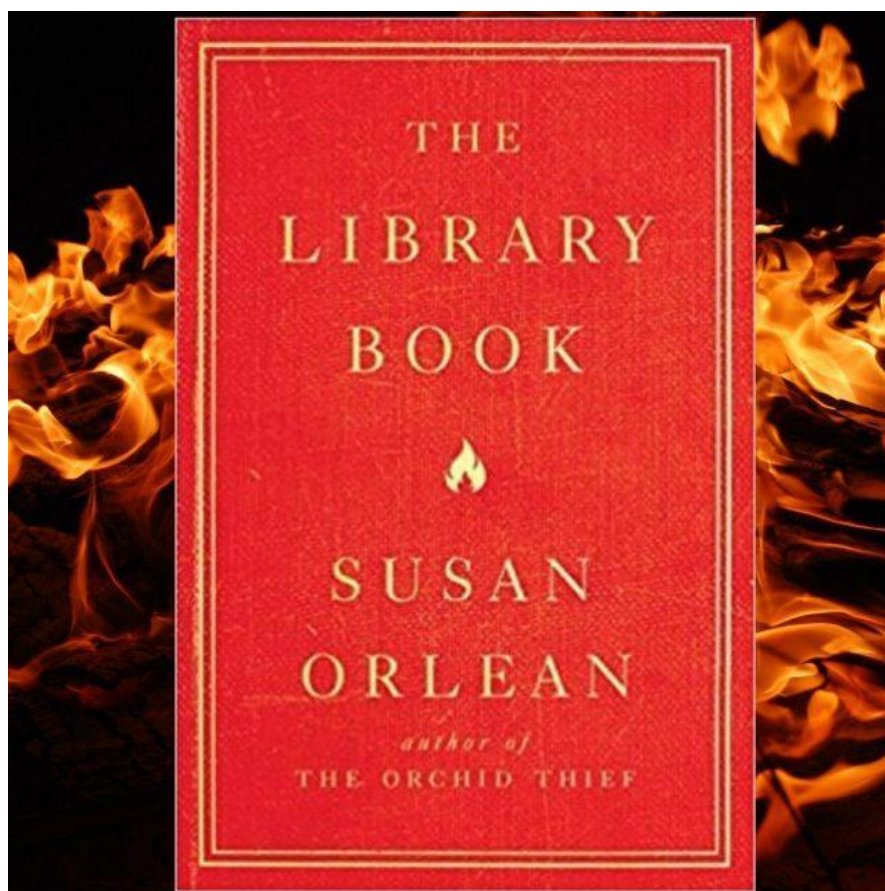
On April 26, 1986, the Los Angeles Public Library, a magnificent building of American modernism from the golden age of Hollywood and a cultural monument, was ravaged by a devastating fire that destroyed over a million volumes of books. The event remained mostly unknown to the world at large, but also to the American public, because only three days before, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster happened, which the whole world feared for months to come. Susan Orlean, a writer and journalist, decided to dedicate several years of her life to researching this real urban catastrophe that irretrievably wiped away the knowledge and memories of entire generations who built the Californian metropolis and dreamed of a better life on the Pacific coast. In this amazing book, , Orlean reveals the importance and role of every library in the world and in an accessible and almost touching way raises a monument to all librarians.



Susan Orlean has been a reporter for *The New Yorker* since 1992. She is the author of several books, including *Rin Tin Tin*, *Saturday Night*, and *The Orchid Thief*, which the Oscar-winning film adaptation was based on. She was a Harvard scholar and a Guggenheim Fellow.

The book is organized as two parallel stories, i.e. investigations: one about the alleged arson, and the other about the history of the Los Angeles Public Library. In both investigations, the author seeks to pay equal attention to "ordinary" people whose destinies she encounters, as well as to historical greats inscribed in Californian and American cultural and political history.





**CONCLUSION:**

This module shows how intercultural intelligence is building bridges in understanding contemporary society and its basis found in culture, language, and dialogue. We have shown the importance of intercultural intelligence through examples of nourishing the culture of reading in different contexts.





**QUIZ/ SELF-ASSESSMENT TASK:**

**Interactive question:** to list which three most important things the participants learned in their first library.

Through this task, the participants will connect with the subjects important to them and understand the connection between intercultural intelligence and personal growth.

Here you should explain and describe the quiz or the self-assessment task you chose.

Examples:

**What has your first library taught you?**

- respect
- the library space as a home, a cabinet of wonders where anything is possible
- a sense of mystery as the librarian goes to some special place in search of a book
- very important contact with the library from an early age because that's how you get into the habit of reading
- entering and exploring a different world



**LIST OF REFERENCES:**

1. Susan Orlean: 'The Library Book', Simon&Schuster, 2018
2. Zoran Žmirić, Pacijent iz sobe 19, Hena com, Zagreb, 2018



MODULE 3

Conducted by Slovene Writers' Association – Slovenia

<b>Module title:</b>
<b>Reading Clubs in a digital world: Reading as means of communication and the effect of digital reading</b>
<b>Learning objectives:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acquiring the basic elements of communication skills</li> <li>2. Enhancing social interaction in the book club context</li> <li>3. Recognizing the benefits of reading books in digital times</li> <li>4. Comparative analysis of digital vs. analogue reading process.</li> <li>5. Raising the intercultural competences</li> </ol>
<b>Introduction:</b>
<p>The module's goal and purpose is to enable the future user to achieve communication and media intelligence through reading and shared reading experience. The module emphasises differences between digital and analogue reading, as well as the differences between digital and analogue communication.</p>

**Module content:**

**Introduction:**

Presentation of the needs and benefits of reading books in digital times:

1. Capability of close reading enhances perception of the world and better understanding of reading contents, as well as of the world that surrounds us.
2. Reading expands our vocabulary as well as cognitive capabilities, so it is easier for the people who read on a regular basis to contemplate the everyday events.
3. Reading books brings better understanding of the book contents than reading of the same contents in the e-form when the same amount of time/attention is used by the reader. For more on that, see Nicholas Carr, *The Shallows* (2010) and [E-READ COST \(ereadcost.eu\)](http://ereadcost.eu).
4. Reading supports empathy and reading books coming from other cultural contexts expands our horizons and broadens our minds.



**Unit1:**

**Communication skills**

Communication skills are essential for moderating a successful book club, as well as essential for successful everyday processes.

(Examples of different circumstances, practices, approaches discussed with the participants.)

The need for equality in the book club corresponds with the importance – and possible absence of equality in the everyday situations.

(Examples of extreme situations, such as a participant that has very strong wish to express his or her opinion on every topic opened in the discussion. Suggested approaches to pacifying such participants. Need to divide time between all the participants. How to overcome possible 'stagefright' effects. How to establish the 'I belong here and I am safe' feeling for all the participants?)

Verbal communication is important, but it is not the only form of communication. The importance of eye contact, gesticulation, voice level etc. should be on our mind when entering communication on all occasions.

Importance of guidelines for discussion vs. free flow of thought. Spontaneous reactions to the read book can be the entering point for discussion – however, deeper reading is connected to the ability to detect deeper narrative structures and the narrative tools that made the book function as it does.

(Should one dominant motive in the book prevail in discussion or should be at least part of the attention also dedicated to the undercurrents in the narrative? Last but not the least important question for an ambitious book club debate – is it only the story of the book what is important for discussion or should we also reflect how the story was told?)





## Unit2:

### Digital vs. analogue reading

The age of digital revolution has immensely effected our reading. The cognitive processes of our mind have begun shaping in another way which influences our reception. Since we approach digital reading sources as well as traditional printed sources (we use the word analogue for those) on a daily basis, we are in constant process of combining different cognitive approaches. Reading brains need 200 miliseconds to recognize a printed word and in this process, they use schemes created by previous cognitive processes.

Many experts have analysed (probably most notably Nicholas Carr in *The Shallows*) that the digital reading is shallower compared to analogue reading when same amount of time and/or effort is dedicated to the same reading content. The 'reading mind' reacts differently to digital than to analogue media. On the other hand, digital media is much more practical to use on many occasions, the pandemic with closed libraries being only one of them, so it is fruitless to require a historical step back to 'print only' culture. By reflecting the differences between digital and analogue reading, we gather capabilities to react accordingly to any of these reading processes and therefore gain benefits from using both of them.

Maryanne Wolf (*Reader, Come Home*) emphasises that the act of reading is a complex cognitive process and that the e-reading process activates the so-called 'grasshopper mind' with divided attention. Immersion into text becomes a much more complicated task – on the other hand, for shorter messages, e-reading seems more adequate. [Singer and Alexander](#) conclude that a text longer than 500 words is better understood when read from paper versus digital carrier. However, in many cases, digital reading is the only option. Maryane Wolf suggests that we need to develop a biliterate reading brain that shifts the approach to the text depending on the media of reading (analogue vs. digital).

The same changes in reception of digital vs. analogue contents affect our communication when it shifts from live surroundings to digital connections. Body



language as one of the crucial ways of communication between humans is limited and spontaneous reactions are less visible, the communication needs more structuring.

(A topic for general debate: Does the transfer into „network society” bring better networking between individuals as is commonly believed by social media users – or does it also have certain downsides?)



**CASE STUDY:**

When a book club discusses a book with specific ethical and ethnical background, appropriate communication skills are very valuable. The case study example is a novel [Catch the Rabbit](#) by Lana Bastašić which is set in Bosnia just after the cruel war has come to a standstill. The members in the book club might have very varied knowledge about the circumstances from which the story arises – younger members might have no knowledge about the happenings in former Yugoslavia in the eighties and especially nineties while some of the older members might have personal or family experiences from this era, in many cases very painful ones. So it is of extreme importance how to handle the subject of the novel which can be viewed from various angles, including the angle of the clash between generations which is of course not limited to any specific time or national background. Intercultural and intergenerational awareness take a great part in successful mediation of a book club on such topics.





**CONCLUSION:**

This module shows how important it is to know the difference between digital and analogue reading experience and showcases some methods to enlighten the passage from one experience to the other, when needed. It also emphasises the need to be aware of various communication approaches in digital as well as analogue communication, also with the purpose of overcoming the intercultural and intergenerational barriers.



**QUIZ/ SELF-ASSESSMENT TASK:**

**Interactive questions:**

- 1.** To list the differences, the participants experienced between their digital and analogue reading and to compare them with the differences in online and live communication.
- 2.** To list the experience in encountering intercultural differences in everyday life and overcoming them.
- 3.** To name (and shortly reflect) a book or two that thematises the experience above.



**LIST OF REFERENCES:**

1. Nicholas Carr: *Plitvine. Kako internet spreminja naš način razmišljanja, branja in pomnjenja*. Cankarjeva založba, Ljubljana 2011.
2. Nicholas Carr: *The Shallows. What the internet is doing to our brain*. W. W. Norton, 2010 and later editions.
3. Alenka Kepic Mohar: *Nevidna moč knjig. Branje in učenje v digitalni dobi*. Cankarjeva založba, Ljubljana 2021.
4. Miha Kovač: *Berem, da se poberem. 10 razlogov za branje knjig v digitalnih časih*. Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana 2022.
5. Lana Bastašić: *Catch the Rabbit*. Restless Books, New York 2021.



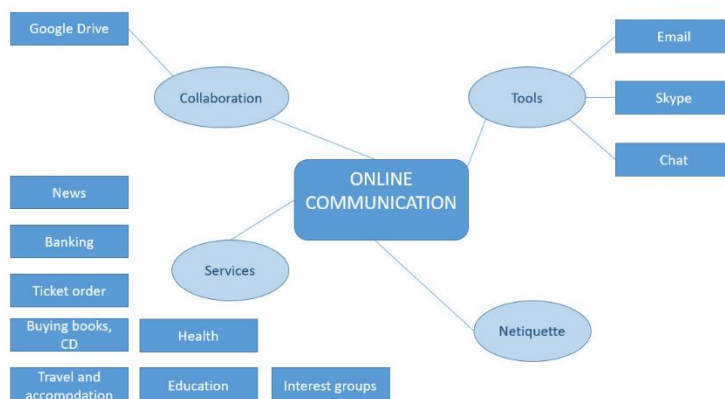
MODULE 4

Conducted by ITStudy – Hungary

<b>Module title:</b>
<b>Digital Tools for Adult Learning</b>
<b>Learning objectives:</b>
<b>By going through this Module, participants will be able to identify tools and methods to be used in adult education, suitable for communication, collaboration, presentation, sharing and content creation in order to organize and conduct online reading club sessions and use them effectively.</b>
<b>Introduction:</b>
<b>Here we present you different digital tools which can serve you well in the planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of a reading circle/club session or event, ranging from voting on time or topic, creating and sharing invitations through conducting the online session properly to asking prompt feedback of the members.</b>

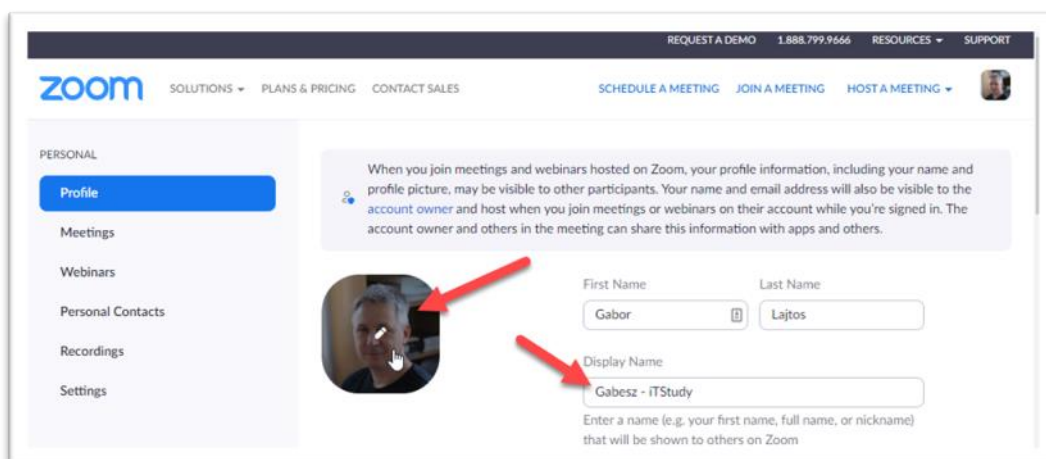
**Module content:**

**Unit 1 Communication platforms**



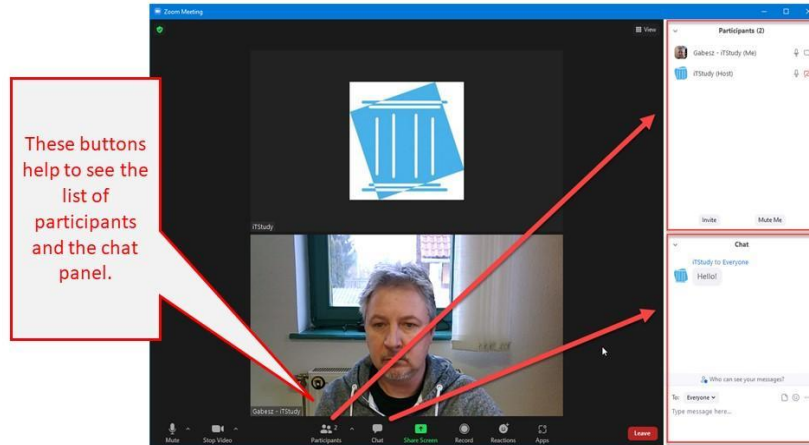
**Why to choose Zoom for communication?**

Registration for Zoom is free and it is applicable for up to 100 participants, but also for a maximum duration of 40 minutes. For the registration we can use any existing email address and enter a new password or we can use an existing Google or Facebook account either.

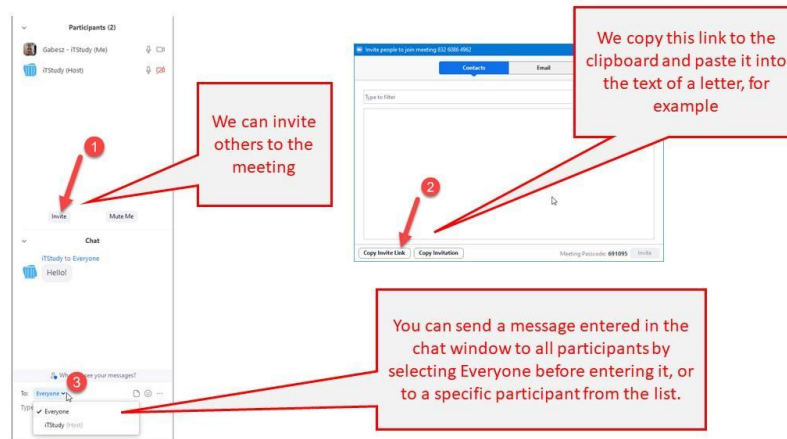


We will need to download the meeting client not only to host a meeting but also to attend one.

## Functions



READ-ING for CuLTUres across Borders



READ-ING for CuLTUres across Borders

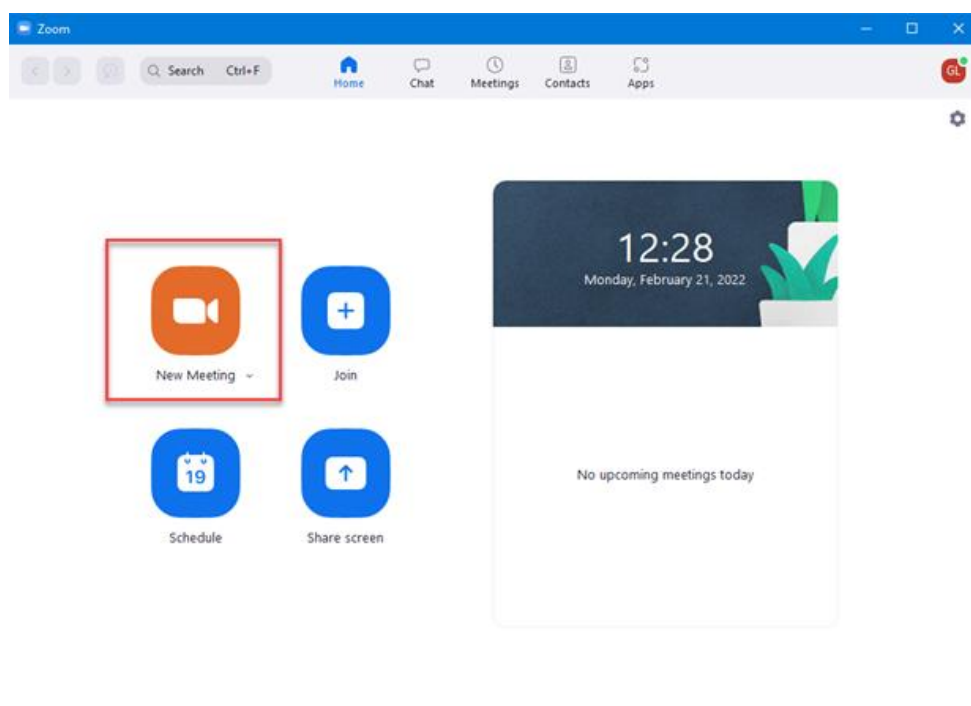
Down you can find buttons to mute / unmute your microphone and turn your camera on. There is also the Share screen function that you can use if enabled by the host.

We can place icons in the upper left corner of your camera image, for example, to indicate if we want to speak. The audio, video, and chat text of the entire meeting can be saved.

### How to launch a meeting as a host?

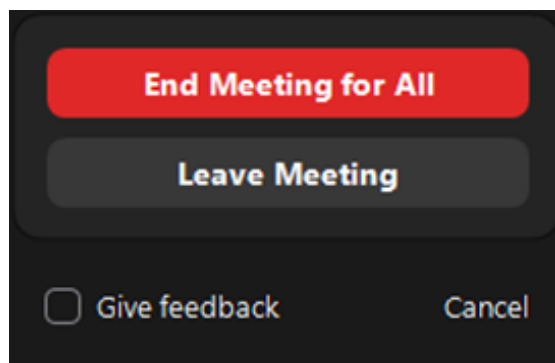
Launch the installed Zoom desktop program and start a new meeting (New Meeting). Copy the invitation link and distribute it to the participants via email.





Participants may be placed in a waiting room in which case they must be admitted in the Participants window (ADMIT). Host has a specific role, e.g. enabling participants to share their screens.

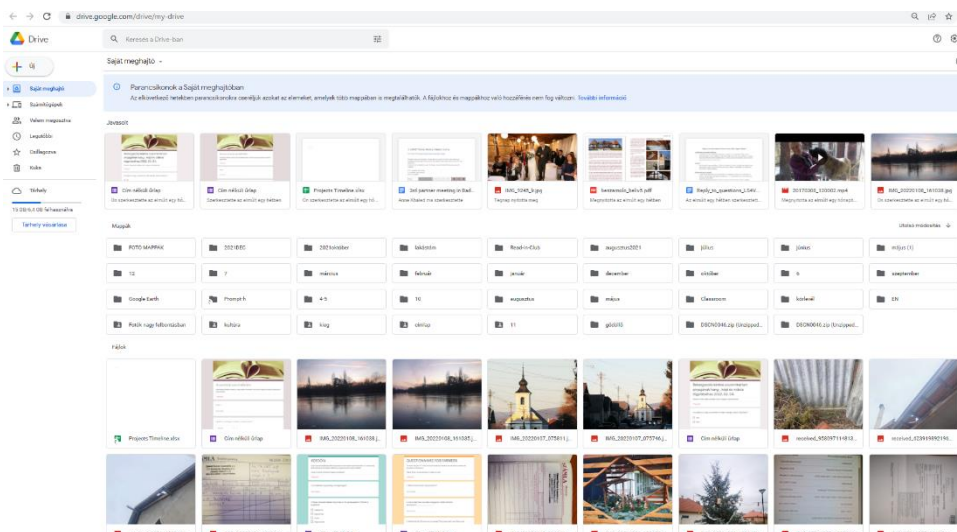
At the end we can put an end to the meeting:



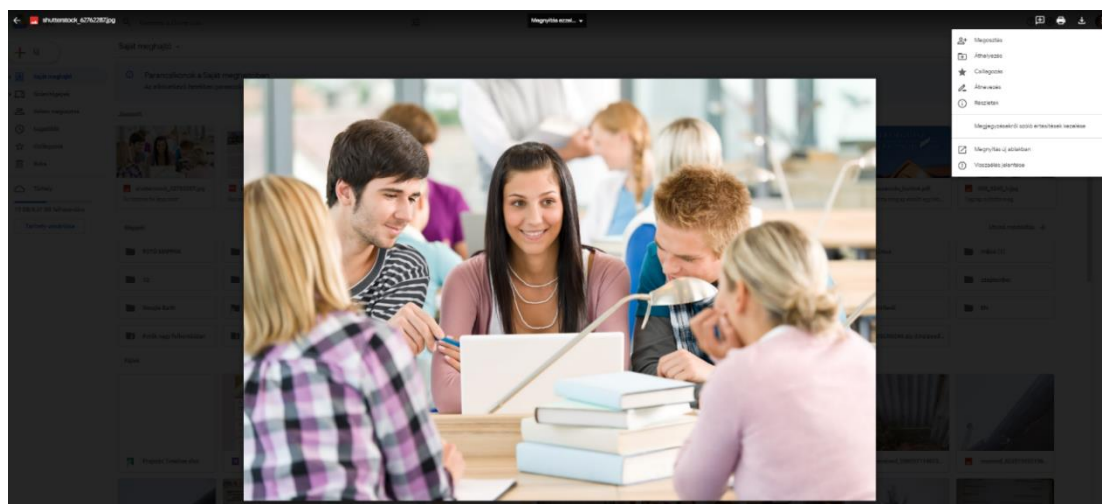
### **Unit 2. Collaboration tool: Google Drive**

Once you have a Google Account, you can start using this function for storing and sharing your photos, videos, documents. This tool makes it easy for people at different locations to share files and work together.

Uploading a file (document or photo/video): after clicking on the cross symbol on the left corner on the top, you can choose the files to be uploaded. First, you need to mark what type of content you are going to upload: a file, a folder, Google Docs or other...



Your contents can be shared with others by clicking on the 3 dots in the upright corner: you can share them with definite people by writing in their names or email address, or you can choose the option to create a link with no restrictions in order to be admitted. This way everyone who is sent the link, can open it.

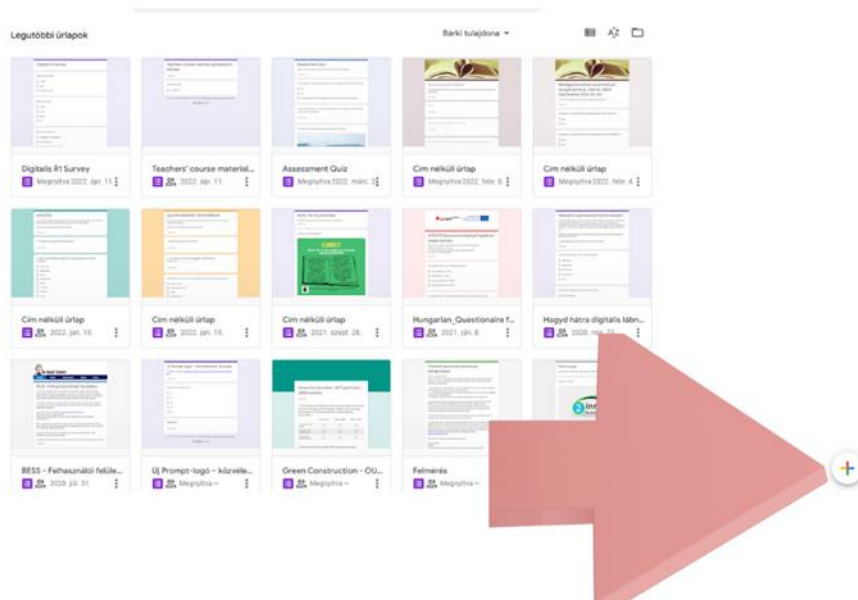


In possession of a Google Account, you can carry out online surveys easily by applying [Google Forms](#).



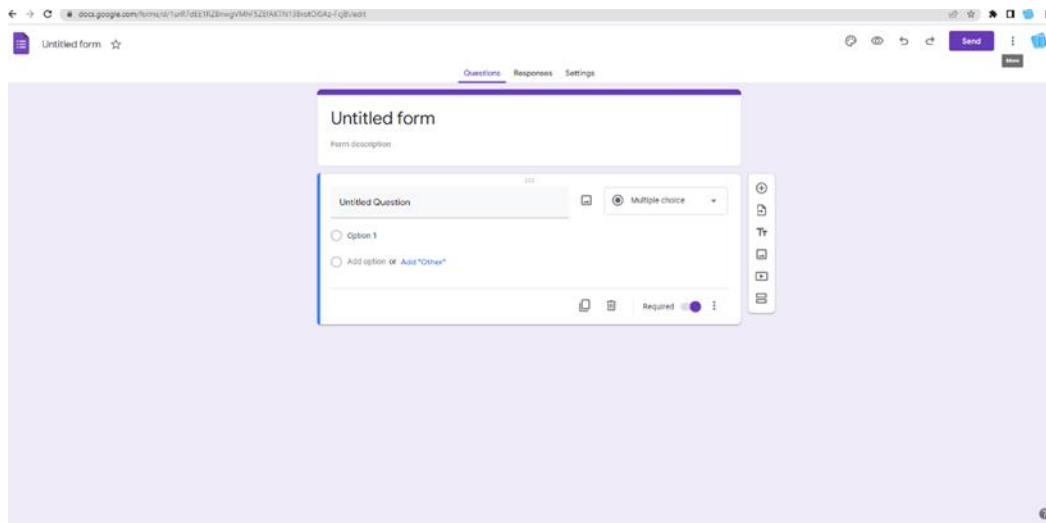
Choosing this icon in the Google menu you will be able to create and customize questionnaires and you can share them in the same way like your files on Drive. One important benefit of using Google Forms is that you can have your analysis of the survey ready immediately provided by Google. By applying Google Forms, you can ask for your club members' opinion e.g. on the time or topic of a reading circle/club session or another event, or you can get their feedback following it.

Log in your Google account first and choose the icon of Google Forms you can see above. Here you can see all the previous forms you created or are shared with you. Click on the + mark on the right for a new, empty form.

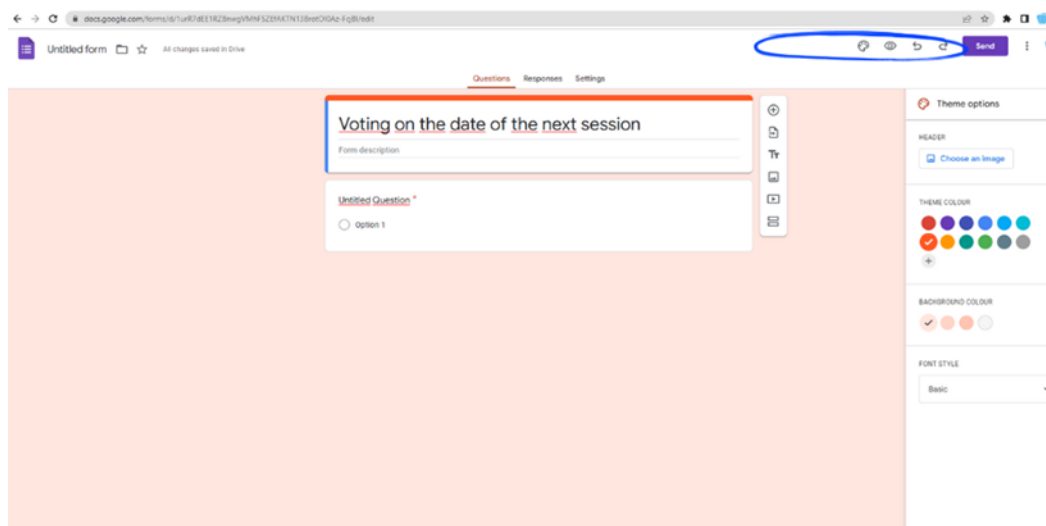


A new form construction is under way now...

## READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders

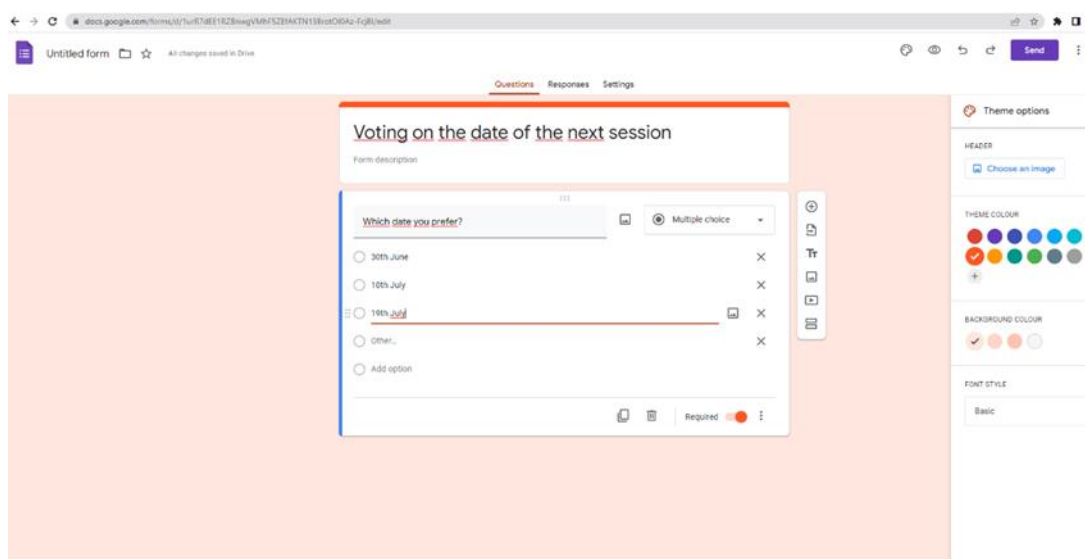
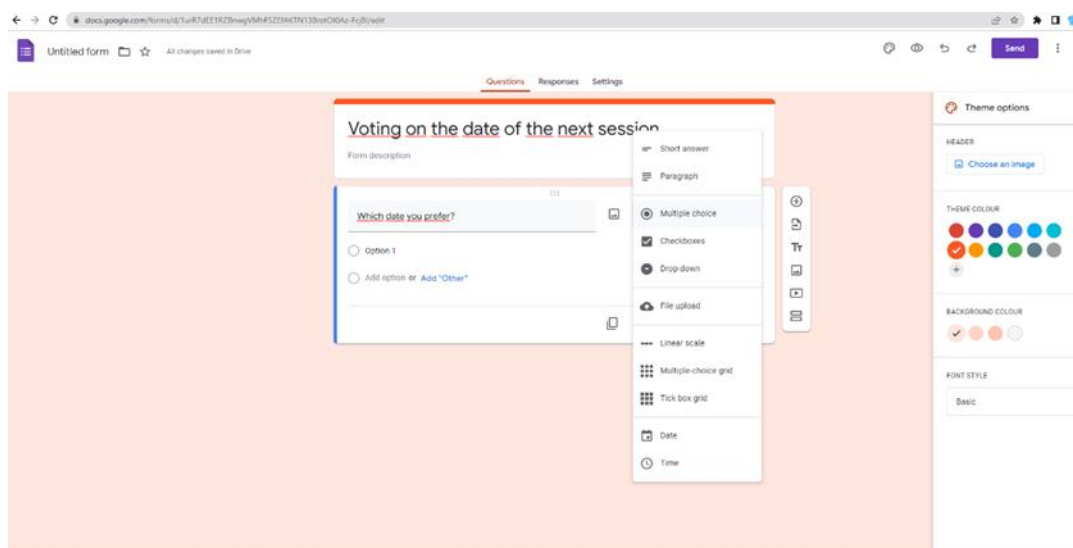


You can write the title in the textbox and also a short description of why you are asking for an opinion. This time the aim is to negotiate about the date of the next book club session, so you should ask this question. In the upright corner you'll find the icon clicking on which you can customize your form and add a colour to make it more appealing.

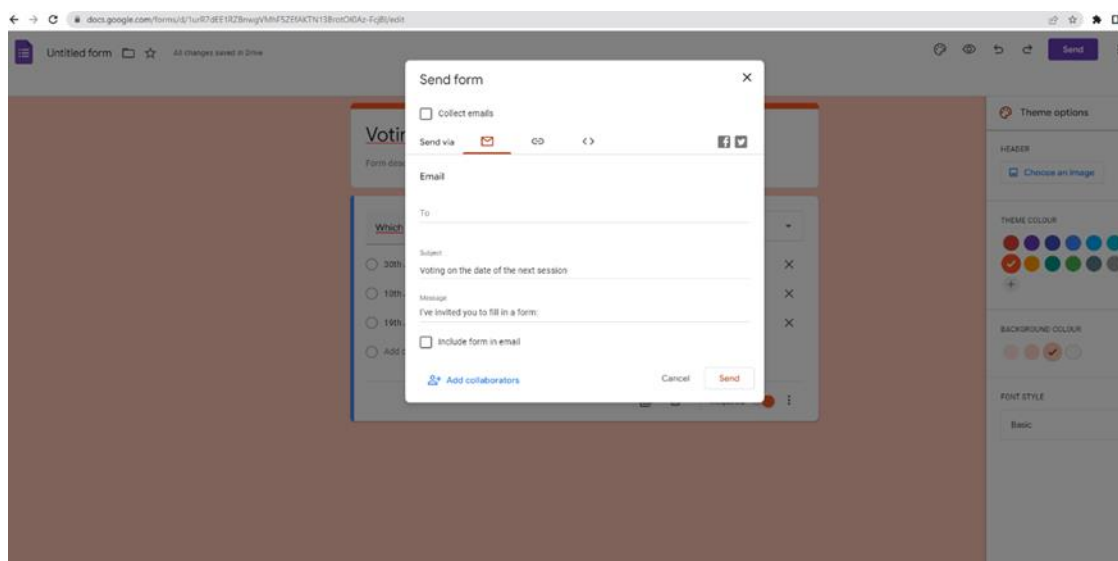


## READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders

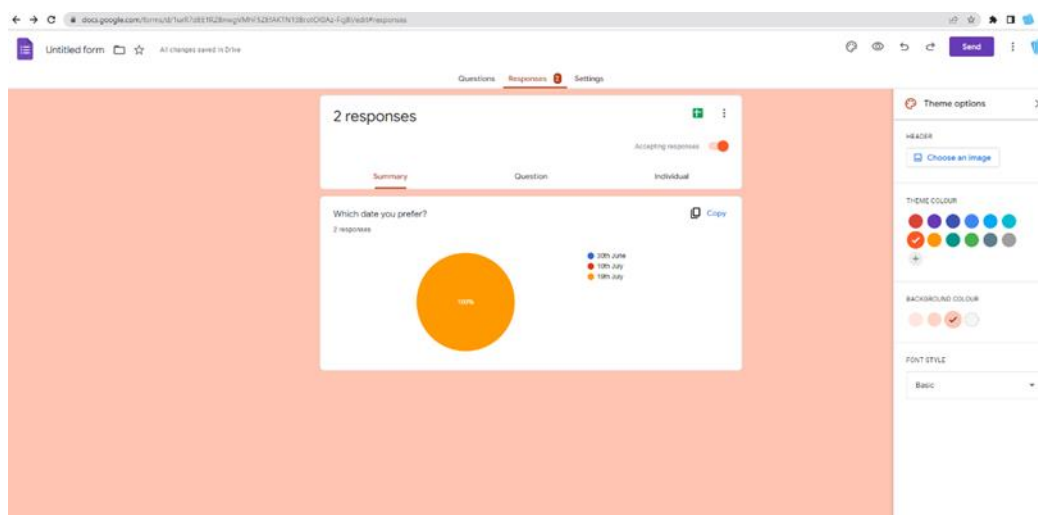
Then determine the type of the response from the dropdown bar on the right side of the text box. and choose the options for the respondents.



There are different options to share or send the completed form: sending it to the emails of the respondents, copying the link and sharing with them online, etc.



Google forms make it very easy to check the responses even through an analysis of the values received so you can make your decision.



### Unit 3. Reconciliation for consultation

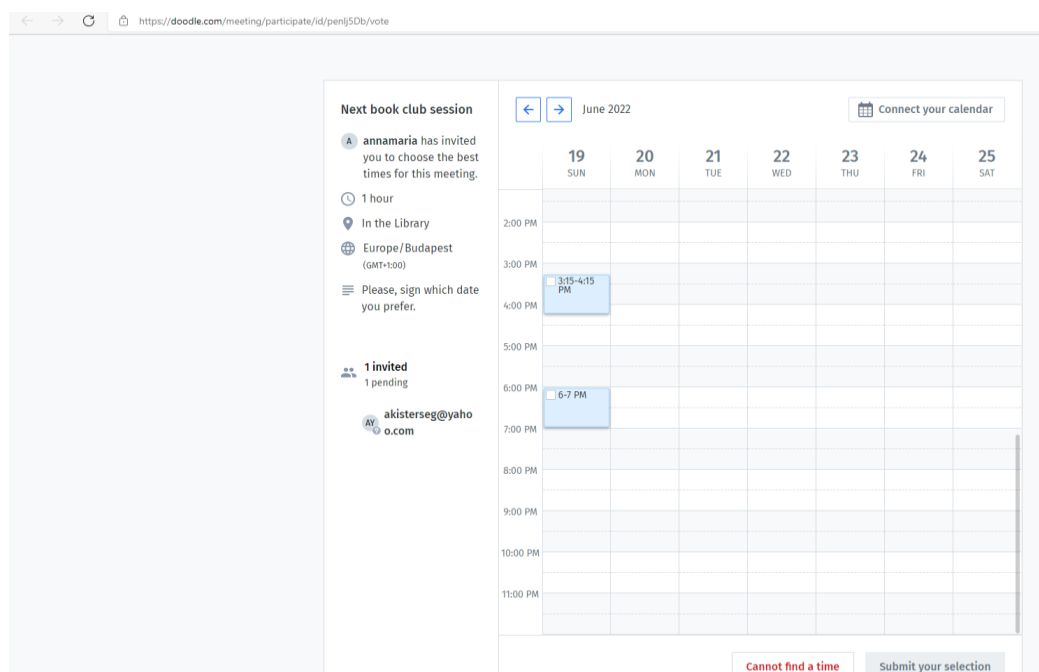
# Doodle

Doodle as a Reconciliation tool works for example to clarify:

- the date

- the topic/book
- location, etc....

*An example of negotiating about time with the group members:*



Options to be reconciled:	
19 <sup>th</sup> June 3.15-4. 15 pm	19 <sup>th</sup> June 6-7 pm

**It is easy to use without registration, anyone who gets the link can participate, and the result is visible immediately.**

You can gain more information on the multifold use of Doodle [here](#).

**Mentimeter for mindmapping**



**Mentimeter**

If we ask for an opinion, feedback, or suggestion, a word-cloud app that shows the thoughts of all stakeholders can be interesting. Such as e.g. the Mentimeter Wordcloud creation tool.



The principle of operation is simple: the answers to our questions are collected online, the program shapes and displays the word cloud at the same time they are received.

[Mentimeter](#) is a really convenient interactive presentation tool that can be used to collect feedback instantly, helping to provide immediate feedback before, during or after an (online) presentation or an event.

Users may quickly determine the mood of the group/audience, the level of understanding, moreover, it can even be used as a digital exit card.

Creating a word cloud is within reach, which is an excellent way of organizing and highlighting information. To create a word cloud, simply enter the list of words you want to use, then choose a format from a list of predefined options - or upload your own images.

See for more of Mentimeter: [here](#).

#### Unit 4. Design, Creation

*In case you are up to making your posters, invitations, blog posts or community sites more appealing, you'll need to edit and decorate them. Canva is a significant content creation and design tool that will help you a lot, even not being a registered user. Registration is free and opens up a vast number of reusable and modifiable templates of many kinds.*



*A Facebook post created with Canva*





You can add your own images, captions, icons, shapes, etc. to your work and then download/share/email the finished artwork.

All the details for beginners are [here](#).

### What can we produce with Canva?

- Logo for the reading circle
- Invitation to an event
- Business card
- Flyer
- Admission ticket to an event
- Poster
- Facebook post
- You can subtitle and edit videos
- ... and a lot more that requires creativity.

### Advantages:

- multilingual interface



- simple, user-friendly program
- works on any device (tablet, phone, laptop, desktop)
- allows for individual, pair and group work
- a wide range of well-categorized templates to choose from
- constantly evolving and expanding functionality
- all created materials are stored in the user's own account, so they can be easily modified
- there is the possibility to upload and use your own photos and videos
- it allows beginners to create sophisticated, printable graphics and documents (e.g. invitations, flyers, certificates, CVs, etc.)
- design without registration: in this case, only the basic functions are available
- Canva Pro (an advanced version of the application) is free of charge for educational and non-profit organizations.

**By watching this short video [here](#) you'll prepare yourself to design your own invitation card to an event or a book club session.**



## CASE STUDY:

### How to invite the members?

During the seminar held on 2nd February it turned out that reading club leaders usually invited the members of the club or notified them about the upcoming events exclusively by emails. We cannot call it proper communication because – except for your smartphone being paired with your Google account – there is always a bit of delay between receiving the information and responding to it. Not mentioning the possibility for the emails to be missed or overlooked when the sender needs to repeat emailing.

Invitations for the reading club sessions are mostly prepared as plain Word documents and are attached to an email sent. One reading club leader said that she had inherited a Publisher template from the previous leader created specifically for invitations and still she was using that with always changing the text in it according to the time and data of the planned event. Invitation process proved to be simpler when a reading circle had its own social media site with active followers. The leader of such a reading circle said she preferred creating events on Facebook with inviting people directly to it. Besides, she also created and printed some posters about the event and put them out in public places. Those were designed in Canva, but by the young daughter of the club leader, as she herself had thought it very difficult. Eventually, by the end of the seminar she was really amazed at seeing how easy to use and manageable tool it was.



**CONCLUSION:**

“The pandemic is leading many to identify and adopt novel digital communication methods. The pandemic also opens up possibilities for—and affects how—we use digital media in all other aspects of our lives.”- as an international research article appeared in Sage Journals (September 9, 2020) on post-Covid communication set out. It is also valid for reading clubs and social groups alike, that all had better extend their work online.



**QUIZ/ SELF-ASSESSMENT TASK:**

1. Fill in the quiz

<https://forms.gle/Bmrb154ptvsoiaDh9>

2. Design an online invitation card to be sent to the club members for the upcoming club session with using Canva. Include the date, time, place and topic and relevant images. Download it as a png or a jpg and subscribe here.



**LIST OF REFERENCES:**

**INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY TOOLS AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS**

Interreg-central.eu

[The whole article](#)

Last visited 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**Changes in Digital Communication During the COVID-19 Global Pandemic:  
Implications for Digital Inequality and Future Research**

Research Article

Sage Journals

First Published September 9, 2020

Authors: Minh Hao Nguyen, Jonathan Gruber, Jaelle Fuchs, Will Marier, Amanda Hunsaker, Eszter Hargitay

[The whole study](#)

**The Benefits of Online Collaboration**

Author: Stuart Dillon Roberts

April 2, 2020

Published on Digital Journay

[The whole article](#)



MODULE 5

Conducted by Institute for Entrepreneurship Development – Cyprus

<b>Module title</b>
<b>Reading Clubs and lifelong learning</b>
<b>Learning objectives:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To highlight the important role that reading clubs play in lifelong learning</li> <li>2. To enhance the knowledge and creativity of book-field professionals</li> <li>3. To help professionals understand and embrace the correlation between books and lifelong learning</li> <li>4. To present case-studies and highlight the contribution of books in self-growth and skill enhancement.</li> </ol>
<b>Introduction:</b>
<p>This module focuses on the importance of lifelong learning in the world of books and reading. Through this module we will try to highlight the reasons why reading clubs should adopt a lifelong learning approach as well as the ways that book club coordinators can use to make the process of reading a journey of continuous self-development and self-improvement. Lifelong learning is one of the most important benefits that can be gained from reading a book and it is particularly interesting that this approach is grounded in the process of group reading and discussion that takes place within a reading club.</p>

**Module content:****Introduction:****What is lifelong learning?**

When we refer to lifelong learning we mean that education begins at birth and continues throughout the life of a person. Learning extends to many areas and continues on a daily basis and is not limited to studies and basic education of man. The acquisition of a global education and the cultivation of the spirit are benefits of lifelong learning and enrich human life.

To be in the spirit of lifelong learning one needs to have an open mind, to pursue opportunities for knowledge, to respect different opinions. Through lifelong learning we avoid the consequences caused by inactivity. Acquiring new knowledge and skills can make our work easier, open our horizons and give us the basis to try to improve our lives. Investing in lifelong learning is an opportunity for constructive use of our leisure time, as well as an opportunity for social interaction with other people who share common interests.

**Unit 1. The concept of lifelong learning and its application in the reading practice**

Lifelong Learning, first mentioned as a terminology in the early 1900s. But in the late 70s and early 80s it started to make its appearance more strongly mainly because in most jobs up until the 50s and 60s we had a learn 10 things and do it character and that was the working life of most workers. But from the 80s onwards due to the development of technology and the emergence of computers in so many companies the demands of knowledge increased not only in terms of recruitment but also the employees themselves were asked to adapt to the new situation. Thus many forms of lifelong learning emerged and with increasing speed new seminars and new training books of not only academic character began to come to the fore.

In his book "Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion", ROBERT CIALDINI describes 6 factors by which we can make an idea highly irresistible and attractive. This book was written in 1984 and the 6 things described can of course be understood as marketing





## **READ-ING for CuLtUres across Borders**

strategies - how to make a product or service irresistible, but they can also be understood as self-improvement strategies - how to do the idea of taking care of ourselves - how to do the idea of proper nutrition, physical exercise, life balance - how to support ourselves and with our thoughts and actions raise small and large goals, achieve them and build self-confidence, which is a huge part of lifelong learning - personal skills.

Although lifelong learning was promoted by employers and institutions, it was initiated by the individual. And the book itself is all about the individual. In the book the individual is asked to read and analyze the concepts. The individual is responsible for the pace of progress and also for monitoring that pace. This process contributes to the development of personal skills such as patience, concentration, the discipline learning ability but also skills that cannot be easily defined in a single word such as staying true to a goal for a long time. Many people today do not or cannot read books, even if they want to, because they cannot make the time investment or because they are not used to doing something for such a long period of time. A book can take 20, 50, 100, maybe more hours. When a person reads a book, in order to really absorb it, they need to have white paper next to the book while they are reading it to note down the basic concepts.

When the person notes other interesting concepts or things that they want to explore further, then they can both understand the book substantially and really learn from it. A lot of research has been done over the years on how much a stimulus affects us but in the short term. It is estimated that the basic concepts will stay in our memory for about one to two weeks, but by the third we will start to forget. This is why it is important that we learn to read properly and take notes, to re-read when we want to revive the concepts the book has given us.



## Unit 2. Reading clubs and their role in life-long learning

Reading clubs further complete the process by making learning more enjoyable and easier because as humans we are social beings and we need socialization. The social nature of reading clubs has this positive aspect: instead of thinking about something when we read a book and the only dialogue we would have would be internally with ourselves, in reading clubs we talk about it, externalize it, it becomes more vivid and we own it better. Great proof that we have a good grasp of something is when we can explain it to someone else. Another positive of the social element of reading clubs is that we learn other approaches besides our own, which is very important. This process can make us understand concepts that we did not previously understand or that went unnoticed, or it can make us absorb knowledge that we had some difficulty understanding or that even seemed inaccessible to us.



An interesting example is the story of Roger Bannister who was the first man to run 1.6 km in less than 4 minutes. The record was close to 4 minutes and it was informally agreed by most sports scientists and coaches that it was not possible for a human being to run that distance in less than 4 minutes. The record had been there for 20 to 25 years and when 25 year old doctor Roger Bannister first ran it in under 4 minutes, two months later another man was found to run it in under 4 minutes and to date 1,400 people have run it. Thus, something that seemed impossible, once one person tried to do it, most people saw that it is finally possible and they too are trying and succeeding.

Let us now look at the role that reading clubs play in lifelong learning. First of all, we must observe the functions that reading clubs in general are called upon to fulfil. They have to give access to knowledge and culture, to strengthen reading skills and the use of all media, to provide orientation in the 'information storm' that overwhelms us and, lastly, to support our participation in education, research, culture and leisure. These functions of the reading club become more important when it comes to supporting autonomous learning processes, i.e. when we talk about non-institutional learning.

The reading club provides materials for independent learning that suit each individual's personal style. It is a pleasant place for learning, in which knowledge is thus placed in such a way that the learner can be oriented on the one hand and on the other hand is given a stimulus for learning. The coordinators are responsible and competent facilitators for the transmission of knowledge, they are people who know and share their knowledge with the members of the club.

Thus, reading clubs need to concretize their function and their role in the field of lifelong learning and expand it in practice. The role of reading clubs as cultural institutions must be consolidated by establishing them as a place of (lifelong) learning.

Lifelong learning is directly linked to lifelong reading and therefore a lifelong learner is also a lifelong reader. This means that any practice applied in the clubs should go beyond the narrow confines of a classroom and mediate the creation of a lifelong two-way relationship between book and reader. Reading books is knowledge and a wealth of experience, which are key components of lifelong learning.



**CASE STUDY:**

An interesting way to promote lifelong learning in reading clubs is the internal and personal search for knowledge, both conscious and unconscious, provided by reading books, which takes place in a group and social environment where it is communicated and reinforced. A good practice, which can be carried out both online and face-to-face, is to ask participants to write down their favorite book and 2 things they learned from it. The resulting discussion will be very interesting as they deepen their search and discover more and more things they learned from that book, even skills they didn't realize they had acquired. A second activity is to present book excerpts and engage in a group reading. As each passage is read, participants will note key terms, look for them, and discuss what they learn from them and what skills and knowledge they reinforce. Continually seeking knowledge through books, both individually and in groups, will help participants understand the real cognitive benefits they receive from reading and the importance of implementing similar activities in their own reading clubs.





**CONCLUSION:**

Lifelong learning is a process that takes place throughout life and it is important to be able to recognize and adapt it in its various aspects. Applying it to the practice of reading a book, and particularly in social settings such as reading clubs, can be extremely enlightening and empowering for the individual, transforming them from a simple reader into a reader-thinker and lifelong learner. Consciously recording, seeking and thinking about the knowledge offered by a book is a proven and effective practice that is recommended to be adopted by all social and non-social book reading environments.

**QUIZ/ SELF-ASSESSMENT TASK**

Think carefully and answer the following questions:

- What is lifelong learning?
- How can the sense of learning be enhanced through reading? What approaches should reading clubs take to enhance lifelong learning among their members?
- Can you think of other approaches that could promote lifelong learning in your reading club?





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MODULE 6

Conducted by Hellenic Foundation for Culture– Greece

<p><b>Module Title:</b></p>
<p>The prosperity of Philanagnosia through book fairs in the post covid-19 era.</p>
<p><b>Learning Objectives:</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To illustrate the Literature Mentor’s characteristics and traits</li> <li>2. To outline the impact of the pandemic on the book fairs and publications.</li> <li>3. To define the context of a productive Philanagnosia scheme.</li> <li>4. To analyze the concept of the effective framework for the reading clubs.                      To Identify the features of an efficient book translating mechanism in the global book industry.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Introduction:</b></p>
<p>In the first unit of this module, you can get more information on the impact of covid-19 on the book industry. After that, the characteristics of a successful reading club and thus a successful reading club coordinator are given. And in the third unit, you will learn what is "Philanagnosia", and which is a productive model.</p>

**MODULE CONTENT:**

**Unit 1:**

**The impact of the pandemic on the book industry and the publishing sector**

Analyzing the impact of COVID-19:

The current situation (General information on the EU books industry):

- Publishing sector: one of the largest cultural sectors in Europe, with a total value of EUR 36-38 billion
- The production chain of the book (including authors, booksellers, printers, designers, etc.) is estimated to employ more than half a million people (European Publishers Federation report in 2018).
- With more than 500,000 titles published per year, the European book sector is particularly rich and diverse.
- The large increase in the cost of paper is highlighted as a major problem today

Characteristics demonstrated by the book market at an international - European - national level: **Flexibility - Adaptability – Endurance**

What are the causes?

- reading "explosion" in 2020
- remote work
- prohibition of leisure activities
- more time available



Stephen Loting, CEO of the UK Publishers Association, said: *"The publishing sector has proved incredible resilience to all the major challenges of 2020."*

### **A. IMPACT ON THE PUBLISHING SECTOR – YEAR 2020**

*"One of the first impacts was the cancellation of many planned new titles— which in turn, they further affected the revenues,"*

Enrico Turrin, Ann. Director of the Federation of European Publishers.

- All countries have faced problems and cancellations in their planned publishing activity.
- A significant increase in online sales of audio and electronic books in many countries
- Sales of electronic and audiobooks also increased significantly in many countries, and in some places, publishers chose to publish specific titles only in digital form.



### **B. IMPACT ON BOOKSTORES**

According to published data from the Federation of Booksellers of Europe for 2020 and for countries:

- In 2020, 88 percent of EU booksellers said they had to close at least once during lockdown



- In one third of the countries, governments provided special subsidies for assistance to booksellers
- In all countries surveyed, governments provided grants/stimulus packages to try to boost the economic outlook overall
- In more than half of the countries included in the study, total book sales for 2020 decreased significantly compared to 2019

### **C. IMPACT ON BOOK FAIRS:**

- For the year 2020, the International Book Fairs of the first semester, namely the International Book Fair of Paris (20/-23/3/3020) and Bologna (30/3-2/4/2020) were permanently cancelled and transferred for the year 2021.
- In the second half of the year, the scheduled book fairs were held mostly digitally.
- With physical presence, despite the restrictions, the International Book Fair of Moscow and exhibitions of Arab countries and Latin America were held.
- In 2021, the model of hybrid book fairs was mainly utilized, a new genre in which we were all trained by necessity.

### **Conclusion:**

The book fairs survived mostly with strong state subsidies as they are costly and lost a lot of profits from the loss of exhibitors.

### **D. THE IMPACT ON READING CLUBS**

- Increase of members in the already existing Reading Clubs
- Formation of new Reading Clubs



## UNIT 2:

### Analysis of the content of an effective framework for the activities of reading clubs

**Definition:** A reading group is a (generally informally) organized group of about 5-15 people who meet systematically, with a pre-agreed program, to discuss books read by the members, after a common agreement.

**How it works:** At a pre-agreed time, the members meet and choose books after suggestions and discussions.

- Regular meetings are arranged, usually monthly.
- For each book (optionally) a rapporteur is appointed, depending on the topic.
- Sometimes (but not necessarily) an expert, writer, etc. is invited.
- Every month members read the book agreed, one book a month.
- In the monthly meeting there is (perhaps) a presentation and a book is discussed.
- Coffee or tea (drink, tavern, etc.) often follow

#### **Reading Clubs are usually organized into:**

- Common residence areas (village, neighborhood, etc.).
- Workplaces (office, factory, etc.).
- Association or body (excursion club, professional club, club, etc.).
- Natural book spaces (bookstore, library, etc.).
- Organized educational institutions (university, faculty, foreign language institution, etc.).
- But also in houses, from groups of friends.
- Or more rarely in open spaces (e.g., park)

#### **Themes:**

A Reading Club can be, depending on the composition and interests of the participants:

- General (we read what we want)
- Literature
- Special (police book, historical, culinary, children's, modern Greek poetry, etc.)

#### **Rules:**



(Some rules are needed; but each Club makes its own rules).

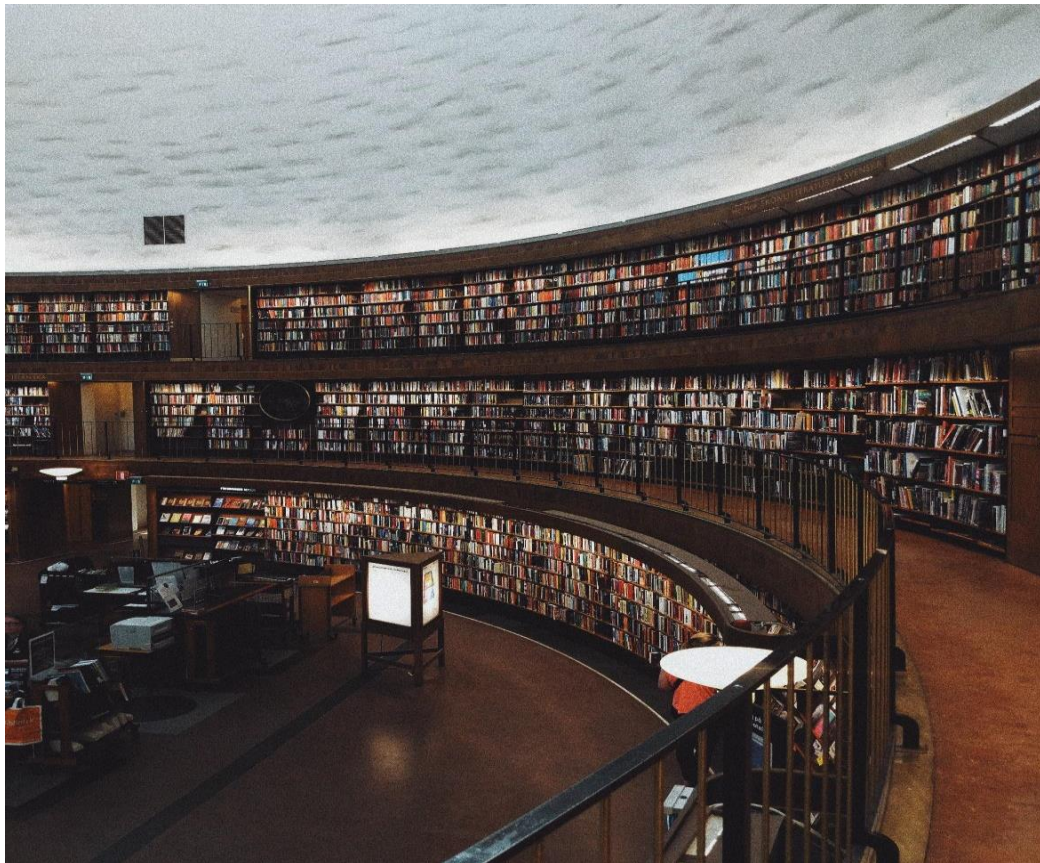
- The Reading Club is a free and open institution, the adaptability is in nature. Therefore, there are no general rules, for:
  - How many and who participate
  - How, where, how often, etc. meets
  - How and if suggestions are made, research, etc.
  - How many books are read in a year
  - How they are selected

**Examples of clubs:**

- The club of friends
- The neighborhood clubs
- The club of a club (e.g., police officers)
- The club of the library, the bookstore, a cultural institution
- Thematic Clubs: detective novel, modern literature, ancient Greek literature, philosophy and contemplation, romantic novel, etc.

**Hierarchy:**

- 1 + others / The monologue dominates / "Enlightened dictatorship" / Knowledge pre-exists / The book plays a role of authority.
- All equal (or about!) / Dialogue dominates / Well-governed democracy /
- Knowledge equally: Pre-existing, Sought, Created



### **The characteristics of the coordinator of a Reading Club as a literary mentor**

#### Main characteristics:

- Organization
- Collaborativeness
- Interaction
- Determination
- Team Spirit
- Leadership Skills

#### Additional characteristics:

- love for books and reading
- knowledge of literature and the written word in general
- continuous information on book production at national or international level
- understanding the interests of the group to give the right directions

- flexibility in options to meet the "reading" requirements of the members
- ability to analyze texts, position on topics, manage discussion
- the team's creative spirit of inspiration for continuous search for new reading discoveries

The coordinator of a Reading Club must:

- Be characterized by a noble passion for books
- Be inspired and able to inspire
- To keep alive the interest of the team by deepening and renewing the topics
- To attract new members to enrich the composition of the group.







### UNIT 3:

#### The framework of a productive model of Philanagnosia

##### Definition:

The term “Philanagnosia”, contains all these qualities that define the process of reading, not as an obligation but as a pleasure and love for the knowledge, communication, and joy that the book offers.

##### How is the framework of a productive model of Philanagnosia determined?

The main emphasis is given to childhood and adolescence but, the promotion of reading is extended to all ages through lifelong learning models

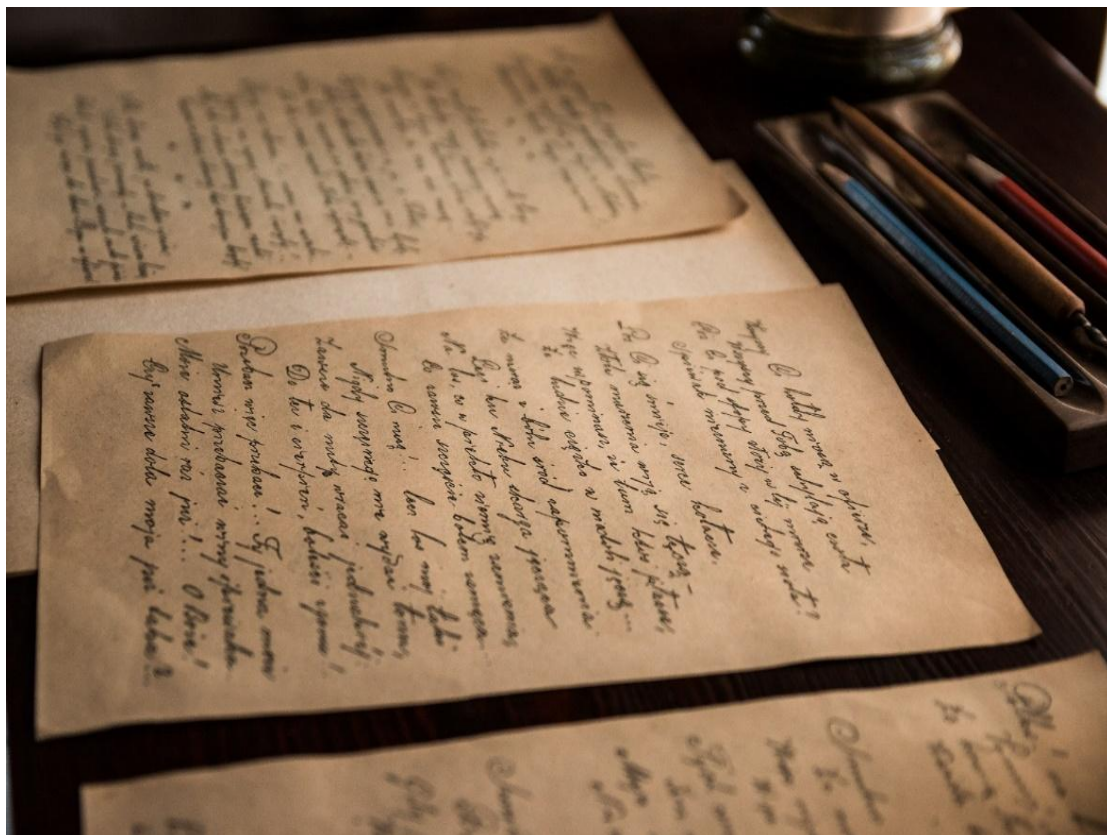
##### The timeless benefits of Philanagnosia:

- Reduces stress
- Improves memory and memory-remembering ability
- It is the best teacher
- Expands the imagination
- Awakens a potential literary talent

##### Basic strategies for the cultivation of Philanagnosia:

1. Priority to the child, key to the future
2. Giving second chances – lifelong learning
3. Creative use of new technologies, digitization of literary archives
4. Utilization of popular media transmission media, social media, etc.
5. Utilization of the creators of the book, authors, illustrators, etc.
6. Collaborations with cultural institutions e.g. libraries, foundations, associations, groups for more direct access to the general public
7. Creation of cultural venues, literary festivals, book fairs, etc.
8. Support of new creators, creative writing seminars, literary competitions, scholarships, etc.

9. Reading Clubs, an eminent field for cultivating Philanagnosia





**CASE STUDY:**

**How the exploitation of new technologies can contribute to the Development of Reading Clubs?**

- The combination of physical presence with the use of technology will follow.
- This time they can turn reading clubs to young people since young people, mainly use the internet.
- It is obvious that reading clubs will have a hybrid evolution.
- Members research, write and participate with creativity.
- For the clubs that will return to their physical encounters, they face the problem of small and unsuitable space.
- Concerned about the availability of quality technology, because they faced many problems all this time.
- They need platforms that also support multimedia for presentations, documentaries, etc.
- Municipalities can also be part of the Reading Clubs as supporters.
- The hybrid model is here although we live in a transitional stage. The sooner the transition is made, the better the Reading Clubs will be able to improve and evolve hybridly.
- Often online participate people who would never go to a physical meeting, e.g., men who may be ashamed, people with mobility difficulties, in their club there are two blind members.
- For guests it is much easier the online meeting either because of distance or for other reasons.
- An interesting story is the blogs, where members upload critically or rapporteur texts and other texts that arise in or because of the Reading Club. So, an important job that is being done is not lost but shared through a file that is created and made available to all stakeholders.



**CONCLUSION:**

What they need to discover is what are the boundaries of the new era, what does it mean for online and natural RIC, and how they can combine them as the new technologies give them the chance, to invite, for example, a speaker or a writer from a faraway country, something that they could never conceive of during the past, but now it can easily happen.

New technologies provide enormous possibilities. What needs to be examined is how, with the right portion of technology and in relation to the real objectives of the RIC that comes from their main goal, they should make the right use of the new technology necessary for fulfilling that goal.



**QUIZ/ SELF-ASSESSMENT TASK:**

**Through the main question of the case study, some questions arise.**

**Interactive questions:**

- Will remote members participate as listeners-spectators or as active members discussing and submitting opinions?
- Will the team be able to operate hybridly?
- Is there not a danger that members will feel that they are doing a TV show and not a Reading Club?
- Will they lose their sense of intimacy, of company, of each other?



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