

FLOW – For the Love of Water

Final meeting in Budapest.

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The last of all four FLOW meetings took place in the beautiful city of Budapest, Hungary at the Baar-Madasz-Gimnaszium from April 16 through April 20. This time the group that represented our school consisted of Gina Semrau, Annika Schultz, Konstantin Schulz, Christoph Cornelius, Aaron Paris, Canel Frenschock and us, Marcia Cole and Lisa-Marie V ath.

Travelling by train we had the chance to catch a glimpse of wonderful sights and landscapes, however we were quite happy to finally meet our hosts and their families after a journey of 12 hours. Driving through Budapest at night we soon fell in love with the city, which is amazingly beautiful by night, being lit up by hundreds of lights.

We all enjoyed a nice evening with our host families and even though they were all different, they had one thing in common: they made us feel extremely welcome. They would embrace us in their daily routine the following days.

The next day, it was a sunny Wednesday, the program started at the Hungarian school. The group from the Slagelse Gymnasium in Denmark presented some facts about the danish agriculture and water distribution and divided us into different groups to discuss on the question „How does financial growth in farming and reduction of pesticides unite best, when having to secure a sustainable future?“. Following the discussion we came to an agreement that was accepted by everyone.

After a long break we drove to a wastewater treatment plant, where we got to know about the chemical procedures in order to cleanse the waste water for reuse, which was quite interesting but also extremely bad smelling. We were first introduced to the plant with a short presentation and were then able to look at the different buildings. I must say, we were really impressed (and disturbed) by the smell! Luckily we had the chance to recover by making a sight seeing tour through Budapest and taking a huge amount of pictures of Budapest’s unique and unforgettable architecture.

The next day started out with another excursion, this time to a river. We collected water and mud samples from a river to analyse it. We looked for little animals in the mud, so-called „bio-indicators“. They were sensitive to even the least amount of pollution so that one can assume the condition the water is in. With this method, we found out that the river we looked at was in quite a good shape. On the water out of the river, as well as other water samples and tap water we used different chemicals to find out the amount of certain substances in the water.

During the lunch break following the analysis a big buffet was waiting for us with lots of tasty hungarian specialities and sweets, such as „Turorudi“, a cooled chocolate bar filled with sour cream. After lunch we were to attend a literature block, consisting of a Hungarian poem, a little lesson in Hungarian and a presentation by the Italians about the symposium which then resulted in an interactive workshop with creative writing, pantomiming italian sayings etc. This little group activity was a lot of fun and we think it really contributed to our international communication, since we finally found the courage to communicate with others. The free evening was spent in the city with our Hungarian hosts, we got to go shopping, so we could buy some keepsakes and gifts.

After all the last day of the project, which was also the day we were going to hold our presentatin drew near and finally arrived.

Our presentation consisted of a silent clip art movie produced by our 10th graders, that showed various forms of water, and we had the task to add the missing sound effects with the help of few requisites. Eagerly waiting for it to be our turn we actively participated in painting and acting activities concerning the use of water in everyday life, industry and nature. We also listened to the Estonian talking about the difference between tap and mineral water. The program continued with a very inspiring instrumental interpretation of songs that dealt with water. Then it was finally our turn to perform and it went well, better than expected anyways.

The last thing on our program, despite the closing ceremony was the Italian play, that appeared to

be very humorous at first, but the real message was that the war about water should end and that it should be fairly distributed to every nation of the world because of its essential meaning. With this thought in our mind it was time to say goodbye, after listening to a very touching speech by Ms. Landauer, in which she summarized the amazing experiences of the four meetings of the FLOW-project. The short three days of program were over, but far more than that, the whole Comenius Project with the topic of FLOW that had been going on for 1 ½ years came to an end.

However, we still had some time left in Budapest on Friday evening and Saturday morning. Again, we went sightseeing, this time we stopped at the opera as well as the Hősök tere (Heroes' square) and then took a little walk on the Margaret Island, a green space in the middle of the Danube and in the centre of Budapest, where we took a wonderful strolch with our Hungarian hosts.

The next morning, we sadly parted with our hosts, who had hospitably taken good care of us throughout our stay, and met up with our teachers to explore the Central Market in Budapest, an interesting experience that enabled us to buy some last minute souvenirs to eternize our remembrance of that city.

We furthermore found time to talk about the project in Budapest and make suggestions for maybe another upcoming Comenius Project. In the afternoon we flew back to Berlin and arrived in the early evening of Saturday with experiences one cannot forget that easily and a ton of pictures on our memory cards.