

*What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet;'*

William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Sc. II

The rose: inspirational, evocative, emblem, symbol and much more

Learners

High school students, adult education programmes

Subjects

English and Botany as main subjects + ICT, Italian, Art, History, Music, Sciences, Maths.

Objectives

The students will be engaged in a large range of cross-curricular studies and researches aiming at deepening their knowledge in many disciplines and improving their ability to use the English language in different contexts and situations. Methodological interaction

Competences

To research and analyse documents and texts related to different subjects and disciplines. To improve the ability to select, organize and communicate/write about a subject. To become aware of the interconnection among cultures, disciplines, people. To reflect and improve critical thinking skills. To develop sharing and exchanging among peers

Tools and materials

Online and printed texts; digital devices and programmes

Duration

It is envisaged as an extensive project lasting all through the school year based on an accurate planning and scheduling including all or part of the subject matters suggested

Development

Implementation of all (or a selection) of the activities suggested

Accurate methodological preparation of the teachers of the subjects involved to establish actions, times, activities and subdivision of the tasks by contemplating the steps below after a warm-up introduction to elicit general information from the students about the botanical rose, Shakespeare and his work *Romeo and Juliet*

1. in-depth study of Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* to find details about structure, plot, characters, language. Particular attention will be dedicated to the passage known as 'What's in a name?'
2. investigation on how remarkable and significant the symbol of the rose and the rose itself are in the English history and culture
3. by applying the web-quest methodology, careful research on English and American literature to meet and study authors and works where the *rose* represents an important, if not the only element, of their creative process. Some examples: Oscar Wilde (*The Nightingale and the Rose*), Burns (*A red, red rose*), Emily Dickinson (*If I should cease to bring a Rose, Nobody knows this little Rose*) and countless others including Gertrud Stein's famous quotation 'A rose is a rose is a rose..', worth being analysed and explained, as well as Jim Morrison's quote 'I will stop loving you only when a deaf painter will succeed in painting the noise of a petal of rose falling on a floor of a crystal castle ever existed'
4. research on other subjects and disciplines like classic and modern art where the theme of the rose has been developed. Some examples: the paintings by Renoir (*Roses dans un Vase décoré*, and many others), Monet (*The House among the Roses*, and others), Van Gogh (*Roses*, and others) and by an additional number of outstanding artists worth being explored. In music (*La Vie en Rose*, jazz music, etc.) and ballet (*The Spectre de la Rose*), cinema (*The Purple Rose of Cairo*, *The Rosemaker*), politics and ideals (*Die weisse Rose / The white Rose*), popular traditions (*The yellow Rose of Texas*, *Bread and Roses*), tales (*Beauty and the Beast*), films and videos, and in an astounding number of meaningful cases deploying a variety of narrations, suggestions and interpretations

5. overcome the borders of the Anglo-American literature and find some important examples illustrating the same theme such as in *The little Prince* by Saint-Exupéry, or the 'Candida Rosa / Divine Rose' in Dante's *Divine Comedy, Paradise Canto XXXI*, 1-3. Analysis and reflection on the meaning and symbolism of the rose in these and other texts and contexts that will be considered

6. research on the botanical aspects of the rose-plant: origin, characteristics, variety, diffusion and cultivation. It will be interesting to deepen the learning of the characteristics, properties and history of the famous English roses. In addition, an exploration of the Shakespeare New Place's garden can be carried out online and through direct contacts with the British National Trust or other local British institutions. The whole study also implies specific visits to the Botanical Garden, the Rose Garden in San Giovanni park in May, the gardens of Miramare to provide field experience through direct observation

In the attempt to widen the scientific side, it could be interesting to approach the history and development of such an instrument as the *Wind Rose/Compass* and its function, or consider the *rose curve equation* in Maths, and so on

7. finally, absolutely important, undertake an accurate investigation into the extremely rare **White Rose of Trieste**, its botanical characteristics, and the long, amazing story around its origins, disappearance, recovery and present location

Implementation

-Each group of students will tackle a specific field of action to research, select, analyse, reflect on, etc.

-They will write accounts, essays, produce tables and graphs with information and figures about the topic developed

-They will communicate to the class and report details and impressions of their researches

-They will read and perform some significant passages from *Romeo and Juliet*. It can be foreseen a live performance at the Botanical Garden and/or in one of the places mentioned above. As well, a series of readings and lectures about the other texts and authors selected may be accompanied by music and properly arranged to give more impulse and visibility to the project

-Creation of paintings, drawings, sketches related to the rose with explanatory captions

-Creation of an e-book to be uploaded on the school website and diffused through social media made up of the different sections explored. Accurate bibliography and presentation with an account of the motivations and of the methodological pathways exploited



Products

Creation of an e-book *A Rose is a Rose*

Evaluation and validation

See introduction