

## 4. Appendix A: Researcher's log

12.11.2019:

I was excited to start my project. The first student who entered the classroom told me they had read lots of manga and graphic novels before. I handed out a questionnaire that all the students had to answer and submit to their teacher.

I started by asking the students if anybody was familiar with comic books or graphic novels. Most of them raised their hand and mentioned Donald Duck. I asked them if they prefer comics to regular text. They said yes, as predicted, because there were lots of images and less text. I handed out *The Hobbit*.

The students were excited when I handed out the book. It was nice to see that some were leafing through, some were reading intensively. One group was speaking in Norwegian, but I noticed that at least they were discussing the book. They talked about Gollum and Orks.

I let them read for a while and then I talked about the characters they have met so far.

I showed them a short video about graphic novels and their history.

Their teacher was surprised at how much we actually accomplished in one story.

13.11.2019

Today I changed my plan almost right before the lesson because I realised we had covered most of what I had planned for today. I decided to read out loud while they read along. I started from page 1. The students were generally quiet and followed along. I know this because I could hear the pages turning at the right time.

After reading I assigned a task where they were to look at the different elements of a graphic novel and find examples in the book. For this task I told them they could cooperate, but there was an immediate lack of focus in almost all the students except 3 or 4. I talked about the task and some of the students gave me examples. We discussed whether or not there were really any thought bubbles at all in the book. I had also given them a task to create a comic strip, but I immediately could tell that it was too soon and that they were not motivated so I cancelled the task. Then it was time for them to choose their independent reading. I was curious and almost nervous about this. I spread the books over a desk and asked a few students at a time to come up and chose a book. Their teacher wanted to hand out the books, but I told her that free choice was important to me. I observed how the students chose their book. New moon, a pink manga book and a graphic novel about Helen Keller were of no interest. I saw that some students looked at the cover before choosing, some chose at random and some leafed through the book. I wished I had set more time to do this. I want to ask them in the interview how they decided which book to choose. I explained the homework to them. I lent one student my personal copy of Deathnote 1, because they had told me they had watched the series. They were excited when I kept my promise to bring it.

18.11.2019

I can see that only two of my 7 participants have answered the weekly mini survey. They have answered 1 and 2 on the Likert scale of how enjoyable and useful this week's lessons have been. In planning my lessons for next week, I would like to do the activity in which they draw their own sketches. I need to specify that these will be hung up in the classroom.

19.11.2019

The teacher told me she had received a message from a mother who was concerned with the difficulty of the reading. She had been trying to translate the book with her child and found it difficult. This is expected, and I told the teacher that the students have to ignore difficult words and rather keep reading and try to understand what is happening by looking at pictures. The teacher told this to the students. The class started with some independent

reading while the project participants answered the weekly mini survey. I gave them the choice between *The Hobbit* and their independently chosen book. All but one chose to read their independent reading book. One student had finished their book and chose a new one. A few had read around 50 pages since last week. Nobody had found or done the homework, so I gave them the rest of class to do that. I had intended to do the drawing task today but actually only a few of the students seemed interested. The quiet reading today was quite good to begin with, but I can tell that they get distracted by each other and that they can't really settle enough to focus, especially the ones sitting in a large group. Tomorrow we will rearrange the classroom so that they are sitting in pairs. The teacher talked to the students while I was out of the classroom and she discovered that the students enjoy reading graphic novels. From casual discussions with the teacher it seems like this is a group in which it is "uncool" to be into schoolwork. So, if it is the case that some students are really enjoying this project, they will most likely not admit it in front of their peers. Therefore, I am thinking that an individual interview will be better than a group interview at the end of the project. I also have learned that these kids need very clear, step-by-step instructions for any task or homework. I say practical things in Norwegian to ensure that everybody does their work. It does not seem like the students are very interested in the drawing task I have planned, but I will still try it anyway because it seems like other researchers have been successful with this task.

#### 20.11.2019

Today I did the drawing task. I read pages 11-13 out loud, the part where they are planning the adventure. Then I asked them to draw a comic strip about what they thought could happen next. Their teacher told me that I should read slower and more clearly and that these students love being read to. I noticed during the drawing that actually most of the students were concentrated. Timmy, Benicio and Finn were drawing with great concentration and was quick to begin the drawing task. George was not very pleased with the task and told me he is not a good drawer. I told him it does not matter; the point is just to visualise some ideas. Frank was drawing in detail and the teacher told me that drawing is his strong point. Robert was concentrated and decided to draw his own panels instead of using the template. At the end of the lesson the teacher suggested a Kahoot about chapter 1 in *The Hobbit*.

#### 26.11.2019

I have checked and again, the students have mostly forgotten the survey and homework. I will need to focus on giving them time to finish this in class so I can make sure it is done and answer any questions.

We rearranged the classroom, so the students were in pairs. Some were annoyed, some indifferent and some puzzled. The students got some time to finish their surveys. So far only 6/19 had finished their homework. I gave them the task for this class. At first it was chaos, then I tried modelling the task for them on the big screen. During this modelling there was silence, focus and good oral response. It showed that Robert had read a lot in the book, because he had got to the part where The Iron Hill is introduced. Robert had also finished his independent reading book and asked for a sequel. He thought there would be a sequel based on the ending of the book, which shows good comprehension.

During the written task the students were fully focused for about ten minutes. I sat at the back of the classroom and could see that almost all of the students were doing their task or reading efferently in the book. When there was small talk it was about the book. Unfortunately, the teacher interrupted the focus with questions about other tasks in the subject. I asked her to bring it up later and she agreed. There was focus again for about four more minutes until she left the classroom. It seems that some of the students might be focusing out of fear and not interest.

I showed an example clip on YouTube of Readers Theatre. The students did not seem interested, but the teacher encouraged me to try it with them as they need a ground for oral assessment. We gave the students a little pep-talk about homework. Then I tried to model one of the homework tasks.

27.11.2019

I was absent today due to a foot injury.

03.12.201

Today I introduced reader's theatre to the students. I gave instructions on a PowerPoint that I shared in Google Classroom after the presentation. I divided the students into groups of 3-4. Two students were absent and will join the groups of 3 tomorrow. George and Timothy's group were working and asking questions, while Frank's group was apprehensive to the project and fooling around a lot. These two groups were distracting and disturbing each other occasionally. Benicio's group found it hard to agree on a section of the group to use for the reader's theatre. By the end of the lesson, Frank's group claimed to be halfway done with the script, Timothy and George's group had decided on a part, Benicio's group had also eventually decided on a part and were brainstorming the script. Tomorrow they may finish the script and Tuesday they will practice. They will perform on Wednesday. I hope that with a more long-term task like this, the students will engage more in the task than previously.

Somebody had taken the library books from the teacher's office and left them laying around the classroom. The teacher and I were very confused about this.