

My experiences as a Comenius Assistant

To whom it may concern,

This letter aims to demonstrate my works about the LLP- Comenius Program so far.

Having completed my Bachelor of Elementary Mathematics Education degree from Middle East Technical University, I had the chance to gain experience as a Comenius Assistant in a European school since November 8th, 2009. I am currently teaching English, Mathematics and Turkish in a secondary school, Gymnázium Uničov, Czech Republic, with great interest. I have a busy schedule consisting of five hour Mathematics, thirteen hour English and one hour Turkish lessons per week. The thing which is very important for me is that I am having experience of teaching in variety of grade levels such as Sexta, Tercie and 3.B. We have a peaceful environment at school that helps me contribute my knowledge to the courses -both English and Mathematics. The English and Mathematics teachers at school help me a lot in this case. I am free to ask them any question and we discuss lesson plans and activities. I do not hesitate to mention my ideas and feelings. We work together and share ideas to construct effective classroom environment. They also share their materials such as textbook, cd player, worksheets and manipulative to develop students' understanding. After each session which they observe, I pay attention to their comments and try my best for the next one. Recently, I am improving my teaching skills by the help of their comments. I strongly believe at the end of the year I will be a qualified Mathematics teacher. Thanks to my contact person, I have an opportunity to teach my mother language, Turkish. I have 7 students attending Turkish courses regularly. I am happy that they are interested in speaking Turkish. In the course, we focus on reading and speaking rather than grammar. I teach them the common phrases and basic vocabulary. Since I give the course in English, they improve their English at the same time they are learning Turkish.

Moreover, I do extra-curricular activities with students and teachers. Students ask me many questions about my country and my culture. We sometimes meet in a café after school and talk about the similarities and differences between Czech and Turkish culture. We also have fun together. They invite me to their village or town for activities such as fireman show in Medlov and cycling from Uničov to waterfalls. I meet with their parents sometimes and talk about their daughter or son. It was pleasure for me to be with them during the trip to Prague, three weeks ago. They gave me information about historical places and monuments we visited. We sometimes do after school activities such as playing table tennis and swimming. Besides, I have good relationship with my colleagues. They show Czech hospitality always. They invite me to their houses. I have never felt homesick because of delicious Czech food I tasted in their houses. In my view, an educator's mission is to make schooling exciting and enjoyable. In this case, extra- curricular activities play a vital role and should be considered during the year.

To sum up, I am actively taking a place in teaching program in Gymnázium Uničov, Czech Republic. I am very glad to be here and hope to utilize my knowledge and abilities for my school efficiently until the end of my assistantship.

Sincerely,
Ayşe Meltem YILMAZ