

# Implementation of Creative literacy in Education– the Story of Good Practices

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# Research aims and context

- This presentation explores how creative literacy practices are implemented in classrooms.
- Using a qualitative research approach, in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers across Finland, Latvia, and Estonia to gain deeper insights into their experiences and strategies for integrating creative literacy into their teaching.

# Theoretical background

- According to previous studies (Smith, 1965; Lähdesmäki et al., 2022), the pedagogy of creative literacy consists of activities and methods that enhance active engagement, curiosity and interpretation of texts allowing personal reflection and imaginative expansion.
- These approaches are child-centered, often communal and take advantage of different forms of communication, such as creative writing, drama, visual arts, or digital media (Davies et al., 2013).
- Combining multimodality and creativity in reading might offer a tool to reach diverse readers and re-write the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

# Interview questions, data collection and analysis

- The research data were collected by FinRA, EstRA, and LatRA during August and September 2025 through individual and focus group interviews.
- The dataset comprises 45 responses (17 from Finland, 15 from Estonia, and 12 from Latvia).
- During the interviews, teachers were asked about their perceptions and practices of creative literacy.
- This presentation shares preliminary qualitative findings, presented as country-specific analyses.

# Interview questions

- If you think of the concept of creative literacy, which associations come to your mind first?
- How would you define creative literacy?
- Could you give some examples of implementing creative literacy in your teaching practise?
- Which creative literacy strategies/methods do you use?
- What are the benefits of using creative literacy methods?
- What are the challenges of using creative literacy methods?
- How important is creative literacy in developing students' literacy skills?
- Which skills do you think can be developed through creative literacy?
- What has been the most successful creative literacy method you have used in your classroom?
- What additional resources or support would help you implement creative literacy strategies more effectively?

# 1 Country-specific results – Estonia

- SLIDE 1: The background information of the data (age, affiliation, education and experience in creative methods)
- SLIDE 2 and 3: Good practices -Creative methods and skills development: Choose any 3-4 questions – and give a summary
- SLIDE 4: Challenges of the use

# **The background information of the data**

The data consists of 6 small group interviews with altogether 15 interviewees.

The interviews were implemented face to face or online via Zoom connection.

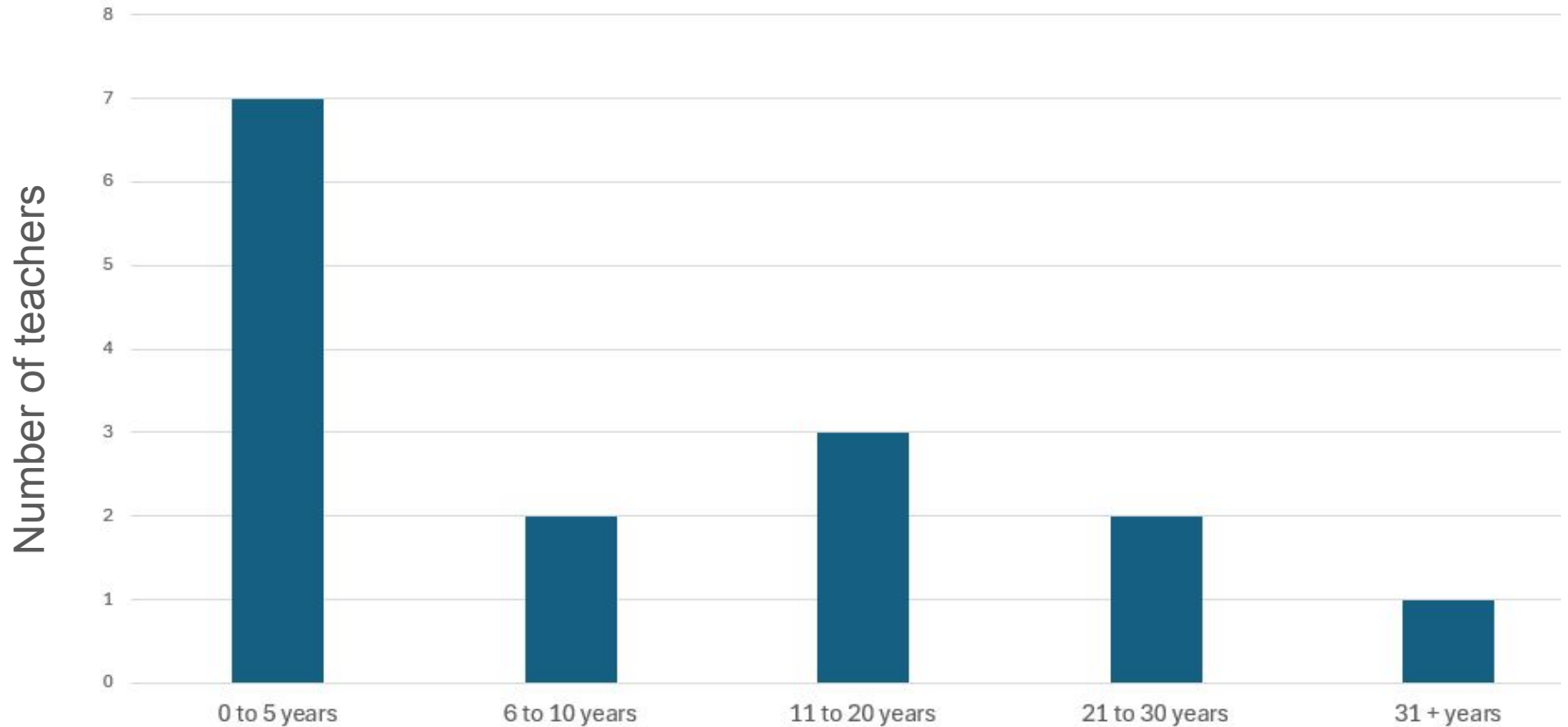
The interviews lasted for 35 to 117 minutes and they were transcribed for the analyses.

The teachers participating to interviews were from all levels of education (from ECEC to secondary level) and they had varied amount of experience in teaching.

The participation to interviews was voluntary and the interviewees were allowed to interrupt at any point.

No personal information except of the teaching experience were collected.

# Teaching Experience of Interviewed Teachers (N=15)



# Creative literacy

The teachers, even the experienced one, were not sure how to defined creative literacy. They are aware of creative writing practices, and also creative methods used in promoting reading, but the term creative literacy (*loovkirjaoskus*) is not commonly used in Estonia

In discussion they still brought out following ideas

1. Creative methods used to promote writing different types of texts
2. Creative methods used to promote reading (and writing) - different methods of drama, illustration, movie-making, story-telling, writing connected with books and text in wider sense
3. Creative methods to promote skills connected with literacy and pre-literacy skills (using visuals/ prompts for story telling, poetry etc).
4. Methods that connect literacy with different creative areas (arts, music, dance, drama etc).
5. Methods that connect literacy with critical thinking and discussion

# Good practises

An interesting list of good practices was introduced. The data have been not analyzed yet, but some interesting ideas mentioned were:

Creating a historical newspaper with different topics about theme. For example about the Vikings - the latest war news, the latest royal love affairs, beard fashion, food recipes etc.

Using mystery boxes for introducing the hobbies of children or the books read

Chain writing in a certain genre (a fairy tale, a horror story, a modern symbolistic poem, etc).

Offering inspirational beginnings for a story, for example:

“It was 2 a glock in the night. Teacher opened her window and silently climbed out, dressed black form head to toe”. . .

Telling stories (individually or in groups), recording the, transcribing them (by teacher, when the children are small), illustrating them, publishing self-made books.

## **BENEFITS**

These methods support motivation and interests

Every student can use their strengths as a reader/ writer/ creator

Promotes integration of subjects and mastering general competencies like communicative and social skills

Improves thinking skills and language awareness

Promotes empathy and care

Promotes self awareness and positive self concept

Promotes collaboration of teachers

## **CHALLENGES**

It might be not so easy to find time for longer and deeper methods and projects

Requires creative teachers or teachers who have good resources

Organize safe spaces for creative action

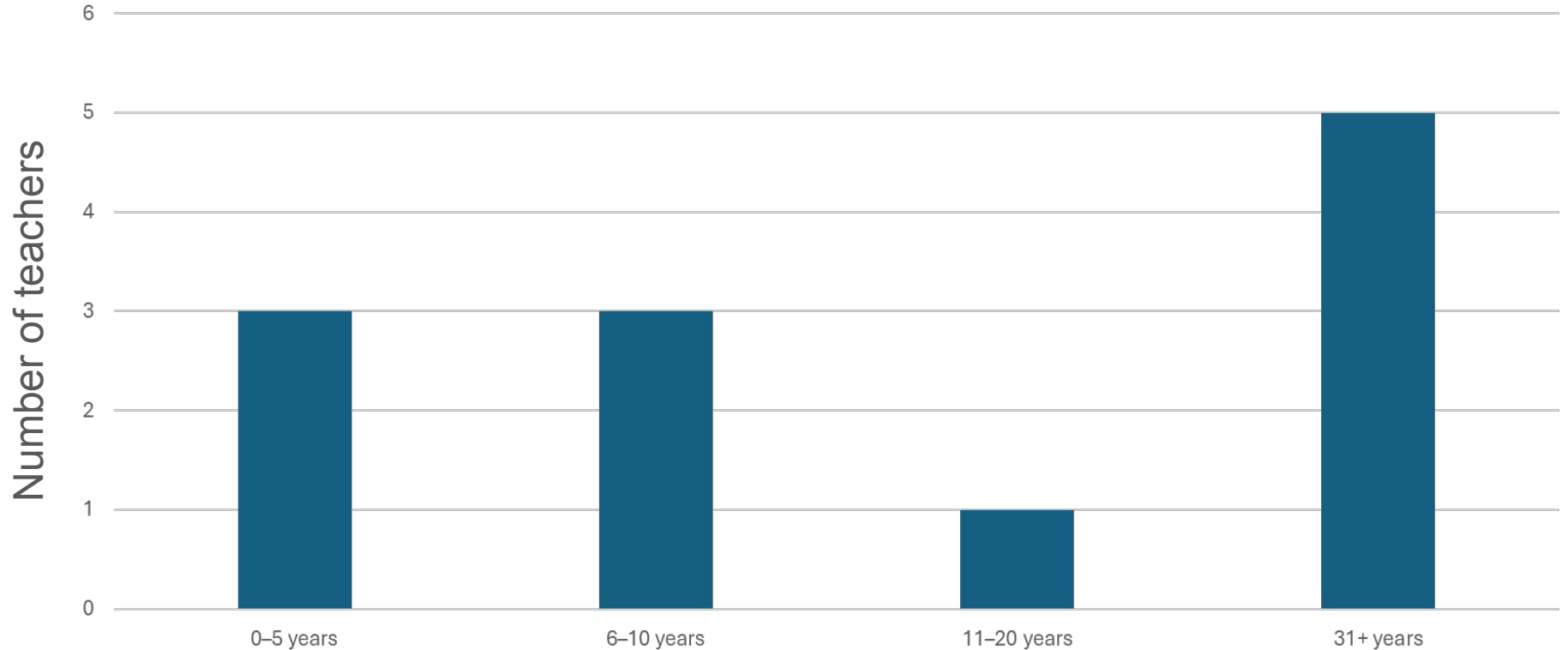
Group's atmosphere and group dynamic affect the process, especially with teenagers

Issues of feedback and evaluation of creative processes

Creative (text) can hint deep problems (like problems with bullying, depression, abuse, drugs), and the teacher may not have the skills and resources to deal with them

## **2 Country-specific results – Latvia**

# Teaching Experience of Interviewed Teachers (N=12)



# Institutional Affiliation and Teaching Context (N=12)

<b>Level / Context</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>	<b>Examples from Interviews</b>	<b>Features of Teaching Context</b>
Pre-school (5–6 years)	1	Pre-school teacher preparing children for school	Focus on early language development, playful reading, sensory engagement.
Primary (Grades 1–6)	5	Teachers with 3–38 years of experience in mainstream or alternative (Waldorf) schools	Emphasis on foundational literacy, reading motivation, drama and visualisation.
Lower-secondary (Grades 7–9)	4	Teachers of Latvian language/literature and theatre arts	Work with adolescents; use of literary courts, photo-illustrations, and performance tasks to sustain interest.
Upper-secondary (Grades 10–12)	2	Latvian language teachers with 32–40 years of experience	Advanced text analysis, reader diaries, alternative endings, and critical discussions to deepen comprehension.

# Experience in Using Creative Literacy Methods (N=12)

<b>Experience Level</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>	<b>Illustrative Practices</b>
Extensive and long-term practice	5	Regular integration of reader diaries, alternative endings, role play/dramatization, creative writing, and symbol analysis; interdisciplinary projects (literature + theatre/art).
Established, regular use	3	Combine visualisation, open-ended questioning, literary courts, comics, and photo-illustrations to motivate adolescents and deepen comprehension.
Emerging or occasional use	3	Experimenting with drama games, shadow/puppet theatre, interactive storytelling, and personal-response tasks but still building confidence and repertoire.
Minimal or exploratory use	1	Uses playful, informal creative tasks (songs, movement) but reports limited structured training or materials.

# Perceived Benefits of Creative Literacy Methods (n=12)

Benefit Area	Description and Evidence from Interviews	Representative Examples
Increased Motivation and Reading Pleasure	Creative tasks make reading enjoyable and engaging, helping students, especially reluctant readers, develop a positive attitude toward books	<i>“Grāmatu tārpīņi” (book-worm competition) motivated children to read more; dramatic role play captured adolescents’ interest.</i>
Deeper Text Comprehension	Methods such as dramatization, visualisation, and interpretive questioning encourage students to move beyond surface-level decoding to analyze meaning, symbols, and subtext	<i>Literary courts and open-ended debates improved understanding of character motives and themes</i>
Critical and Analytical Thinking	Literacy strengthens critical reasoning, argumentation, and the ability to consider multiple perspectives	<i>Alternative endings and reader diaries required comparing different solutions and justifying choices</i>
Language and Communication Development	Activities such as letter-writing, storytelling, and group discussions expand vocabulary, improve oral fluency, and enhance written expression	<i>Writing letters to characters or creating comics improved expressive skills</i>
Emotional and Social Growth	Engaging with characters’ experiences fosters empathy, emotional intelligence, and social cooperation	<i>Writing personal reflections in reader diaries helped students connect emotionally with texts</i>
Personalised Learning and Self-Expression	Creative literacy invites students to link literature with their own lives, supporting <i>identity formation</i> and <i>self-directed learning</i>	<i>Students produced video clips of poems to convey their own interpretation of mood and meaning</i>

# Challenges in Implementing Creative Literacy Methods (n=12)

Challenge	Description and Teacher Insights	Representative Examples
Time Constraints	The most frequently mentioned obstacle. Creative tasks (role play, literary courts, projects) require longer preparation and classroom time than standard lessons	“Grāmatu tārpiņš” reading project and literary courts demanded extra lesson periods and planning
Resource Limitations	Lack of appropriate books, props, multimedia tools, or physical space hinders dramatization, illustration, or digital storytelling	Teachers noted the need for methodological guides, sample tasks, and digital platforms to support creative reading activities
Assessment	Because creative outputs are subjective and varied, teachers struggle to establish clear, objective criteria for grading	Evaluating open-ended reader diaries or alternative endings can be inconsistent across classes.
Student Engagement Gaps	Not all students are equally comfortable with imaginative tasks; some prefer structured, fact-based learning	Adolescents with weak basic reading skills may feel intimidated by interpretive or performative tasks
Teacher Preparedness	Implementing creative literacy demands flexibility, methodological knowledge, and confidence in managing open-ended discussions	Younger teachers mentioned uncertainty in designing complex activities or facilitating deep textual analysis
Institutional and Parental Support	While generally supportive, schools sometimes provide limited resources or training opportunities	Some teachers rely entirely on personal initiative to introduce creative reading tasks.

# 3 Country-specific results – Finland (N=17)

# The background information of the data

The data consists of 7 small group interviews with altogether 17 interviewees.

The interviews were implemented online via Zoom or Teams connection.

The interviews lasted for 20 - 45 minutes and they were transcribed for the analyses.

The teachers participating to interviews were from all levels of education (from ECEC to secondary level) and they had varied amount of experience in teaching.

The participation to interviews was voluntary and the interviewees were allowed to interrupt at any point.

No personal information was collected.

# Creative literacy

The teachers defined creative literacy education with the following features:

1. Versatility in book choices (multimodal books, silent book, multilingual books, factual texts).
2. Activities and environment that support students immersion to stories (drama and other creative activities).
3. Integrative learning entities and the deep presence and enthusiasm of the teacher.
4. The active agency of the student and focusing on the personal reading experiences.
5. Involving the families in considered important.

# Good practises

Teacher in a role

Fairy tale chests and suitcases

Creating modern poets with versatile techniques

Object theater and telling stories with props

Audiotaped reading logs

The story of the week

Focusing on safe spaces

Making the reading a long lasting experience: storied play

Reading aloud

Literary art

Daily five

Arts-based learning

Outdoor learning

SEL learning

Active learning methods

## **BENEFITS**

All the students have strengths as readers.

The stories start to live and be a part of the everyday life.

Creates a communities of readers.

Improves thinking skills and language awareness.

Students learn group working and social skills.

Open students' own creative channels to interpret and produce

Courage to throw oneself to experience, act, see things in a new way

Places to find and develop things

## **CHALLENGES**

Find current and emotionally connecting texts.

Requires time to plan and implement.

In-service training is not possible to everyone.

There is no funding for books, props or in-service training.

Organize safe spaces for creative action

Issues of feedback and evaluation of creative processes

Group's atmosphere and group dynamic affect

Teacher's too narrow mind can restrict creativity

## 4 Discussion: Some notions of the similarities and differences between countries

# Conclusion

- Something about
- teachers' perceptions of creativity in literacy education
- how creative literacy stimulates students' interest in literacy, enhances meaningful engagement and increases the pleasure of reading.

# Conclusion I (Latvia)

- Teachers from pre-school to upper secondary consistently observed that creative literacy methods make reading enjoyable and help students develop a positive emotional connection to texts.
- The interviewed teachers represent pre-school, primary, secondary, language-specialised, and alternative (Waldorf) settings, demonstrating that creative literacy can be adapted to different ages, curricula, and linguistic needs.
- Experienced teachers (31+ years) integrate multiple strategies seamlessly and link them to curriculum goals, whereas early-career teachers tend to experiment with a narrower range of techniques and seek more training and methodological support.

# Conclusion II (Latvia)

- Lack of time, resources, and clear assessment criteria emerged as the most common obstacles. Teachers also noted varying levels of student readiness and the need for stronger institutional support and professional development.
- Professional learning opportunities are therefore crucial for sustainability. Many teachers expressed interest in methodological guides, digital tools, and peer exchange to strengthen their confidence and to scale creative literacy practices more consistently across grades and schools.