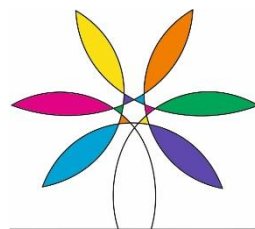




Erasmus+



AGRUPAMENTO DE ESCOLAS DE VILELA

Games Achieve My Educational Success

Project Reference Number: 2017 L701- KA219 – 035206

My travel diary



ESCOLA BÁSICA E SECUNDÁRIA DE VILELA
NUNO MIGUEL DA SILVA ALMEIDA, nº11
9ºVD 2018/2019

My dear diary,

I don't know if you know, but some time ago I was invited by my English teacher to participate in the project "Games achieve my Educational Success" by "ERASMUS+". When my mom said that my English teacher had invited me, I was so excited that you can't imagine.

I have to admit that my research about dangers in Turkey was constant, but I didn't find them, both on the internet and the time I spent there - another sign of life saying that I can't trust on the others mouths who had lied to me.

I'll write on you all about my trip – but I don't promise details, sorry... I'm kidding!

So, let's start with the departure – Saturday, 23.

Saturday, 23rd
February

2019

The farewell at the airport was not as strong as I imagined it could be. We passed, very quickly, by the check-in, I gave two kisses to my sister, my mother and my grandmother, they left and I entered the part of the shops and cafes for those who're going to travel. It was so hot and I was so anxious, but I had to wait for the hour of entry on our trip. It would be five hours' traveling and I'd have to be ready.

Oops ... it was on time - I thought as I handed the paper out for release of minors and the rest of documents to the guard.

As I was walking down the boarding aisle, I was felling happiness and anxiety, quite afraid that the plane would falter in the middle of the trip as well.

Already on the plane ... there was a film of the *Lego* toys, about the simulation of evacuation of the airplane and what we should have attention (about behaviors) in the aircraft.

While the plane was taking off, I felt so happy and fulfilled that I can't even explain...

We were in the air. The food was awful - I ate pasta with pasta and pasta, a super sour orange juice and a salad of small tomatoes and cucumbers. I just enjoyed the dessert, it was a mango mousse, I think.

We had a problem. The plane was spinning and then it went up to the sea and took another turn and that's when we arrived - by what my teacher said, it was because the plane was about to land before the scheduled one, which it could not happen. The arrival time was scheduled at 8p.m. and so it was.

At the airport, after passing through the security of the airport, in the exit part of the new arrivals, some teachers were waiting for us.

When we arrived in a café into the airport, I found a mountain of students of different nationalities. Several teachers and students, who would spend the week with us.

I know that I have not presented them yet, but the one who traveled with me, "*The Portuguese Team*", was the teacher Mrs. Leonor Marques and the teacher Mr. Fernando Pinho. My colleagues (students) were Ariana Moreira and Margarida Gouveia.



We went to our hotel - I was very tired - it was an hour's drive from the airport to the place where we would sleep for two nights.

Then we went to the restaurant next door. Was very cool. I ate a delicious plate of chicken, rice, chips and beef. We had dinner with a Turkish teacher. She was super nice and very, very, very funny.

At the restaurant, my teacher, has tasted a Turkish delicacy that is very spicy. When she ate, oh my God, her mouth was burning! Well, but me, my another teacher and Ariana didn't want to see our teacher suffer alone, so we tasted one too, though smaller. Ok, that stuff was so spicy, but so spicy that I felt my tongue burning with my throat.

Dinner finished - time to come back to the hotel, take a shower, call my mom that was super sad, she was missing me a lot because she didn't had saw me for ten hours. Omh my Godnees!

Sunday, 24th
February
2019

Sunday... I survived one day far away from my family, from my country – first time.

I woke up with my teacher's alarm clock – I don't remember the song that had always played when the alarm beeped.

This day, was a long day. After breakfast, we went to the lobby and we waited the bus. When it arrived, we travelled for the Topkapi Palace, the biggest palace that I've ever seen, showing the Ottoman power there with lust and wealth. The part that impressed me most was the garden, yes, literally the garden, and I can also point out the specific part of the palace where the sultans lived.

I don't know why but I was so, but so sleepy in that morning that I couldn't absorb all that our guide told us, actually, after the visit to the library, in a free time, we went to the guide, and while he was talking about what we would see next, I specifically focused on the beauty of the tree that he supported himself – I was crazy, sorry!

After the Topkapi Palace, we visited Ayasofia Museum - before going to Turkey, my mother and I had talked about this monument, and when I received the planning of the visit, I only jumped and screamed so euphorically (maybe a madness attack, but the photos that circulate on the internet, for besides not comparing themselves to reality, made me fall through Ayasofia).

About Ayasofia - built between 532 and 537 by the Byzantine Empire to be the cathedral of Istanbul. From the date it was built up to 1453, it served in this function, except for the period between 1204 and 1261, when it was converted to a Roman Catholic cathedral during the Latin Patriarchate of Constantinople which followed the sacking of the imperial capital by the Fourth Crusade. The building was a mosque between May 29, 1453 and 1931, when it was secularized. It reopened as a museum on February 1, 1935.

The guide told us that the women pray on the top floors and the men on the ground floor. We had the opportunity to visit the entire museum.

At the decoration level, there are lamps on all sides. In addition, there were some super cute kittens there; I fell in love with them all and by the Turkish love for animals.

After the visit, I was finished, full of hunger (not really much). We went to a store that was not really a store. He traded the foreign currency for liras, so we took advantage of it, made the conversion, and ate inside the "kind of store that is not a store".

Our lunch was delicious - sandwiches, eggs, yogurts and fruit, all done by the Portuguese style: enjoy the hotel's breakfast for a day in your life.

After lunch, we (Portuguese team, I mean) had to walk through taksim square - I bought a super beautiful doll for my little sister (Beatriz). Also there, Ariana was taking some photos of a man (that asked her to take) and then, the same man said to take a photo with her. My God, I panicked ... I looked with my eyes for my teachers who were already walking and I ran to them: "Wait for Ariana!" - ups, there's the special thing, Ariana was already at their side (this marked me, so far I think of what technology the girl might have used: teleportation or embedded turbo in the shoes - I don't know).

Later we went to the hotel where we dined - I did not eat anything, I hated the food, I regret the hotel but, my host family did a lot better.

At the end of "dinner" we went to a room where we played UNO - guess what I discovered (no, it was not like playing UNO, although I also learned it): a 16 year old Italian and Ariana seemed to have known each other for years - I swear that I did everything for joining, they were like, my couple (#cupid).

The room was too tight, we were so many. So we went to the hall: we played "already /never did", we heard music from different countries, played to the "cell phone spoiled" (it was hilarious) and we also play a super addictive game that it's super funny (you have to get your hands on the surface according to order, and this being that my hands are crossed with my partner on the right and the left - I can't explain it very well). After that, already with our teachers sleeping, we went to our respective rooms.

Monday, 25th
February

2019

Monday, we visited Dolmabahçe Palace, building located on the European side of the Bosphorus in Istanbul. The palace was the main administrative center of the Ottoman Empire from 1853 to 1922. Then we went to the amazing BIG BAZZAR! – WAS AWESOME!

Me, Ariana and my teacher almost get lost inside – isn't so big actually, is big, big, big, big, big, bigger than you can imagine.

I bought silk scarves for my family (specifically - mother, auntie Ana and auntie Andreia and Grandma Fatima). I bought an imam for me and postcards.

In the Bazaar, a man called Ariana "Isabella" – I laughed so hard – that was a MEME to the entire group.

We had lunch in Grand Bazaar – the food was delicious and super tasty!

After the tour, we had a travel by the Bosphorus sea and then we left for Eşme, where we would find our host families.

That bus trip was so, but so exhausting. I hadn't taken my pills against nausea, so it looked like I was going to vomit and faint in the first part of the trip, but thanks to my wonderful teacher Leonor Marques I survived - she gave me a pill so I would not get sick, which made me get crazy. Me and Margarida, We were really going crazy. We danced, sang, had a "Barbie concert", did everything, including, break my protection glass from my mobile – I said, we did everything (thanks teacher for your pill).

The time was coming ... we left our teachers in a hotel after dinner, which was super distant from where we were staying with our host families, and when that moment came, my heart almost exploded, in fact they were super nice to me, they took my suitcase to the car (which made me very embarrassed) and then we headed home.

I'll be honest, when I saw the house from the outside, I thought it would not be that house that has super comfort, but after I took off in a kind of foyer and after opening the door of the house, I was greeted with comfort, hygiene and home care - I won't describe it exactly, I think they have right to their privacy, and I won't break it.

I went to talk to my family in a sort of super comfortable layover with a hyper fluffy rug, then I went to bed and talked a bit with my host friend - he's super cute and friendly. I met his family, they were super friendly, they offered me lots

of food that I accepted, and I admit that I was a little hungry. I took a shower and then, it was past bedtime. I plugged in a presence lamp beside my bed, Mustafa (the name of my friend) told me to turn it on and leave it at night. I had trouble sleeping and I felt tightness in the chest for my family – I missed them. I took advantage of it and read a little of "Call me by your name", simply the best book of all (had little clarity, but enough to be able to read without disturbing the sleep of my partner).

Tuesday, 26th
February
2019

Today I had breakfast with my host family, it was delicious. I talked a bit with my host friend and host father and I could understand that they were very embarrassed.

We went to school on foot – there we were received with a traditional folk dance performed by the students there and I met Mustafa's friends – they were super funny. I rediscovered the ERASMUS group and we talked a while.

Then we got in the school – we went to an art workshop where we, literally, painted water – was amazing. I have to admit that I can be the future of art (certainly not, but, no one knows).

After that workshop we had a break where we ate some snacks. They have a student room better than me, but better one thousand times (maybe not, actually, they have a little better). There were a giant computer where they can play a kind of puzzle game.

Then, we went outside to play volleyball, I loved playing with them (is better than playing in my school, I don't know how to say it). We visited the rest of the school and we talked, meeting each other.

After school, I went home with my host friend, we were going to eat – when we arrived, he asked me if I was hungry, I said "not really" and he said "me too". His parents were out, he said that they were at school.

Time to meet with our friends – but, wait, I thought that we were going to eat, but whatever...

At the café, I met just Mustafa's friends and the Spanish team, a little weird, but, I don't care, actually, where is the rest of the group?

Then some long conversations at the café, we went to a dance pavilion. There were all the students of ERASMUS and two Turkish teachers (they were so nice!).

We went there to a Turkish Folklore workshop. I loved the songs and the steps, was an amazing time.

When the workshop was finishing, the teachers said that, at night, we had to present what we have learned for our teachers – ok, panic (just kidding). Mustafa and I went home again, but this time, his parents were waiting me in the kitchen with a BIG LUNCH!

WHAT THE HELL! SO LATE!? – I can't eat so much!

Was pasta, but too much pasta in my plate. I ate it all and I ate a Turkish dessert that I don't remember the name, but that's super tasty.

It was delicious. Was missing a lot to the presentation, so I and Mustafa played FIFA, and I had never played that game before, so was a mess (why? Because I hate football, but with my Mustafa I turned off some of my hate for football, although the clumsiness was 100% present). Then I went to the bedroom to read my beautiful book and surf on the internet, a little.

beep... beep... beeeeeep...

Time to the dance presentation – I wasn't nervous or something. We went there and we sat in some chairs around some circle tables with all the groups. The parents of the host friends and the teachers were in another side of the pavilion.

It's time. A man put some Turkish music and we started dancing, and when our music arrived, we went to our places and started the most brilliant dance ever (that dance is super funny).

In the end of the presentation we said goodbye to our teachers and with the group, we went to a café next there. We ate some chips and drank cola. We were there until midnight, I think so.

Wednesday, 27
February

2019

Today I took breakfast at home: milk with cereals and some bread with butter, and I discovered that Mustafa put the cereals first and then put the milk – WHAT THE HELL – that is unacceptable, but whatever, that breakfast was delicious.

After that, we went to school again, we played “Turkish games” – the most of them exist in Portugal, but I really don’t care – Was super funny. Ariana was always winning me in the most part of the games, but I remember that I won Margarida (sad, was an easy game, Ariana is the expert of the hardcore).

Later we went to the Laboratory, where was the “Science Workshop” – I loved it!. They surprised me at all, they did. One time, one experience, and when it was finished, we went to another experience. At the end, we saw (with all teams together) the “SUPER SCIENCE EXPERIENCE” – I knew and I did what they did there, but not so good – they simulated a volcano's brilliance, they used various colors and they made so much foam that they occupied the whole floor in front of the board – yes! That was amazing!

When we finished it, we went to the bus, we were going to visit another school. It was a primary school, super well equipped and super well decorated. At the entrance hall, the light came from a giant panel in the ceiling, and on the floor was a panel of light with painted dolphins – THIS IS A SCHOOL? PRIMARY?

Ariana sang “Rosa Sanguie” in the Music Class. It was amazing, she was so nervous. I filmed it, she was super brilliant (ps.: Marco was charmed, just saying).

I think that primary school, the way that they decorated it, encourage students to get better grades –It is a comfortable place to stay, students don’t have to say “PLEASE, TAKE ME AWAY! PLEASE, SAVE ME!”. I admit: this was the best primary school that I have ever seen in my life!

After that, we went to **Uşak** – we visited “Ulubey Canyon”, the second longest canyon in the world. It was scary and funny. I took a lot (I mean, a looooooot) of pictures with Bogna (Polish team), Margarida and Ariana, with Pablo and André (Spanish Team) and with the entire Lithuania team.

One thing, I thought that Austeja (Lithuania) was in love with me because, one time (or a lot of times) she winked her eyes in an intimate way. Until now, I hope that this was all created by my mind. I remember that in the dance

presentation to our teacher, she winked again and Ariana saw it – what happened – Ariana just said: “OMG”.

We had lunch at Şefin Melodi Restaurant. In the last time I ate iced pizza with iced nuggets, but this time I ate a big plate with all types of meat (except pork) and you know why I ate this, because Marco said to Ariana to taste it and I didn't know what to eat, so I ate the same, and it was super delicious.

I love Turkish food – maybe, more or less...

In the restaurant, an employee (called Tutku Peker) came to us (me, Margarida and Ariana) to talk with us. She was asking us about Portugal, what we think about Turkey, why we were there, that kind of questions. She said to us that she wanted to have a magic power to visit Portugal. Tutku said that she would love to visit and that she was sad that she couldn't.



She was very nice with us, we share our social media, and we took a picture with her.

After that, while we were going out, there was a waiter who drop on my hand a kind of perfume. I have never seen that in another place, country, whatever, and so... Turkey is the country that wins the “Nuno's Hygienic Prize”!

Then, we went home and I went to the small room to talk with my family – I loved those moments, I don't know why, but that room is MY ROOM TO CALL AND TO WALK IN THAT FLOFY CARPET! Later I took a shower and I went to sleep.

Thursday, 28
February
2019

Aff... today I was so tired, I actually don't know why, but I was super tired, this just in the first part of the morning ... I think I'm a little crazy.

Mustafa and I went to school and we played Math's Games, was a kind of workshop, I think. Again... ARIANA WAS ALWAYS WINNING ME AND MARGARIDA! I don't know I, but... afff... I QUITE (*lie*). Then we went to the "code hour" – we had to do games in the scratch platform, I couldn't finish mine, but, was a fun time.

Later, w'all travelled to Denizli, where we visited the Hierapolis ancient city, I loved that, and you know why? – you need to wait to know it. There we visited a big theatre and we walked so, but so much, you can't imagine. We visited natural petrified pools of the so-called "Cotton Castle" and another set of thermal water pools that descend in cascades in Hierapolis. There, the visitor has the privilege of bathing in the waters of the pool of Cleopatra, which also carries a legend. According to the story told there, the place was built under the command of the Queen of Egypt, who frequented it believing in the healing and rejuvenating power of its waters.

I LOVED THIS TIME!

Well, my couple (you know who) were getting closer and closer and on this trip ... uh ... I do not even tell you! (I'm just kidding, was a funny time trying to marry them, but...it is their lives and not mine... so... they know what they want, not me).



After that, we had lunch at the shopping and then we went to *a kind of square" where Mustafa Atatürk was everywhere, just... everywhere.

Turks are very nationalistic and have Turkish flags everywhere: I even saw a car with a painted one on the hood.

Then we went to a shopping center again where we had dinner – I ate in McDonalds and the weirdest thing happened – the Polish team asked to Margarida if I was gay – WHAT THE HELL!!! (why they didn't ask me in my face – I would have said it if they did that)

We all went home again. I talked with my family (Portuguese one) again in my room.

Friday, 1st March

2019

and

Saturday, 2nd

March

2019

Yesterday I took a shower, I packed my suitcase, I organized my documents, my pills and a snack in my school bag and I took out the clothes which I would use the next day.

Mustafa was sleeping – IM KIDDING! He wasn't.

When I finished it all, my host mom said to me to drink a coffee with them, in the living room. When I arrived, I saw chocolates, desserts, Turkish delights, gifts, coffee and my entire host family. I was gaping.

I ate with them. My host father said: "Portugal, Vasco da Gama, maritime discoveries, Camões..." – he made, literally, a mental map about my country. He said that he was history teacher. My h.mom (i) and my h.dad (ii) said that they would like to visit Portugal. Actually I'd like to visit Turkey again, with my family – my dear h.mom said that I could sleep in their house – they made my day happier than before.

They gave me a scarf to my mom, Turkish delights, a book and a shirt for me, they also gave me a kind of Turkish shoes to my sister and my mom. I was so, but so grateful. I gave to them a traditional Porto's Plate, painted, I gave to Mustafa a shirt and a book – nothing comparing to them.

I spent two hours with them, after I went to sleep (iii).

Today I left home at 6 a.m. I guess. My all family cried so, but so much, that I was too embarrassed and sad.

We went to Izmir, I took my anti-moodiness pills and I went to the bus. It was a big trip.

We made some stops by the way – the first stop was in "Ephesus Ancient City" which is a Greek city later a Roman city. It was built in the 10th century BC on the site of the former Arzawan capital by Attic and Ionian Greek colonists. During the Classical Greek era it was one of the twelve cities of the Ionian League.

There, in that city, at the entrance, it was so many cats, like, beautiful cats! I loved them and the Ancient City.

Later, we stopped in "Holy Mary Church" – a house where Virgin Mary lived a refugee after the death of Christ. Outside the shrine is a particular "*wishing wall*" which pilgrims have used by tying their personal intentions on paper or fabric. Various types of flowers and fruits are grown nearby, and additional lighting has been installed within the vicinity of the shrine for further monitoring of the site. A water fountain or well is also located nearby, believed

by some pilgrims to have miraculous powers of healing or fertility – I washed my face and my hands in that water... I think the best wish and the best “luck” that you can have is to be healthy.

I took, maybe, fifty photos there, no one can see how beautiful that place is with pictures, you need to visit and you need to feel it.

After that, we continued our trip to Izmir. When we came, all the palm trees, houses, hotels, impressed the entire group.

But... ups... This is the last time that we're going to be with our hosts friends... probably (***sad feelings***).

And yes... that time came... to fast...

When we arrived to the hotel, our host friends and even us started to cry, like, everybody was crying: the teachers, the Turkish teacher (I love her, she's super kind), the project director... everybody.

I remember that I said to my host friend that he's super kind and beautiful and cute and smart and that kind of things. His family said that they say “Hi” to my Portuguese family.

I cried... not a lot. I don't know. I'm the kind of person that suffer inside. I just cry in cases of pressure.

They left us... and we went to our hotel room.

(...)

NEW CLOTHES, NEW PERFUM, NEW NUNO, NEW SMILE

In a few hours we are going to the airplane, so... I need to be shinning to the entire group. When I went to the lobby, Ariana, Margarida and Bogna had been outside to meet with a boy, so... I was alone. I saw the Italian team outside and my teacher said to meet them. I ran and I walked with them – we went to the beach. They were with an Italian girl that lived in Turkey and I was trying to understand Italian... I kind of understood something, but... almost nothing.

I WAS SO RARE OF ARIANA! (iv)

We sat in a garden, was super funny... we heard some music and I talked to the Italian girl (in English XD).

When we arrived to the hotel, I sat in a table with Margarida and the Lithuania team – Austeja cried so, but so much... you cannot imagine; but it's normal, isn't it?

After dinner, we went to our rooms. One more time: I organized all my stuff and I took the documents to my shoulder bag because in a few minutes, we had to go to the airport.

We went, the entire group, to the lobby. We went to the beach (in my case... twice!). The Italian team didn't come, just Marco.

I have never laughed so much – I was playing with Marco and Ariana, imagining their relationship... maybe tonight (**don't imagine, please**).

We went to a shopping and I made a video where I played with the Lithuania Team – Gabija... that video is hilarious! But, our time came. When we went to the hotel again, we talked by WhatsApp, where we could get together – it was our last time together. We got together in the Lithuania room, but before, no one was their, just me. They filmed me twerking, dancing, just... you know... teen stuff (of course adults can do everything I listed 😊). Was super funny, we talked, we made a prank to the room of the Spanish team.

Later, the Polish team said to me to come with them to the hall, away from anybody – IT'S OBVIOUS THAT I WAS SMART (and I am) – I said "enough" when I was leaning against the door of my English teacher. They just said "Ok". Both cornered me, putting their arms from one wall to the other, on either side – I WAS SCARED, but also, curious.

They said that, more or less: "Hey, in that way you can't run away..." – they were laughing – "We've some questions... Do you like us... like... friends?" WHAT AM I GOING TO SAY? I lied – "Yes... kind of... Why?" "You know... everybody hate us, or... seems like that." "Ok... What the hell... - I was ready to knock in my teacher's door – "We've one more question... Are you gay?" – Ok... WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME THIS? – Amh... Am I supposed to give satisfactions of my life?" Both said "no", so... they just left me.

(...) SATURDAY DAWN (...)

We decided that we could get together in the room of Lithuania Team... and we got together there.

We talked and we made silence to suffer a little more, and we cried more, and Marco said to Ariana: "Let's go talk outside" – OMG! JUST WAIT NUNO!

The entire group played a game that was telling a shameful story about yourself... In this moment, Ariana and Marco arrived (she said that they hadn't kissed 😞).

I, Ariana and Margarida had to go to the airport at 3 a.m., so it was our time to say goodbye, and once again we all cried, including the Poles!

When I arrived at the bedroom, I just slept a little, more or less half an'hour. We were getting to the airport with the Lithuania team.

(...)

The second time that we were passing by the metal detector, the machine beeped. In the first time, they just touched me, but in the second one, THEY PUT ME IN A GIANT X-RAY MACHINE!

I was too nervous – I know... I didn't have some drug, weapons, but... I was scared. The security saw that I wasn't a terrorist and they just left me.

REFERENCES

i – H.MOM: Host Mom

ii – H.DAD: Host Dad

iii – I WENT TO SLEEP: Always, before sleeping, I took advantage of the presence light beside my bed, and while Mustafa slept, I would always read a little of "Call me by your name" until I was completely tired and put the book down.

iv – I WAS SO RARE WITH ARIANA: More or less... ok... I was... a bit.

Airplane, 2nd March

2019

All this I have lived is unforgettable. Everything I've been through and everyone I've met ... everything has struck me. I thank the "Games Achieve My Educational Success" project and my English teacher who gave me this unique opportunity. I thank teacher Fernando, Margarida and Ariana for being the best companions ever ... Thank you.

By the way ... in the room ... even before we left our colleagues, Ariana said, **"Never ignore a rainbow!"** I understood the reference and I also know that they noticed - Thanks Ariana for taking care of me and for control my levels of madness.

A kiss to everyone I met and to all who accompanied me on the trip,
Nuno Almeida.

Ps.: When I arrived in Portugal, I remember the "Hil" from my host family to my Portuguese one. My family said also "Hil" to them. I wrote to Mustafa about it. One more thing: **Thank you diary for taking me through this week.**

GAMES ACHIEVE MY EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS
NUNO ALMEIDA

23rd , February– 2nd MARCH

2019