

When they were little



As a young journalist I had an interview with our teacher of English, Miodrag Dimić. Everything was fine and I got some very interesting answers... I am pretty sure there will be more interesting articles, because our magazine is going to have the column with the same title every month. I had a wonderful time and I hope you will enjoy as well. So, let's start.

1. Which primary school did you attend and when ?

Teacher: "I attended primary school in Stalać from 1982 to 1990. Back then it was not called "Vojvoda Prijezda", but "Mirko Tomić"."

2. What is the first thing you remember when you think about your primary school?

Teacher: "The school building was only a couple of years old, so I still remember the hygiene and tidiness. All the students had to wear indoor shoes and dark blue school uniforms. Another intensive memory is the smell of the school meals coming from the kitchen, especially



fried sausages on Thursdays and buns on Fridays. I can still smell that whenever I think about them.”

3. What was your favourite subject at school?

Teacher: “I didn’t really have a favourite subject, but I used to like Serbian (it was called Serb-Croatian), English, History, Geography and Biology. I could learn them easily and with interest and I always had excellent school marks in them.”

4. Who was your favourite teacher and why?

Teacher : „My favourite teachers were my English teacher, Dušan Petrović, who was teaching us in many different and interesting ways, Desimir Ilić, teacher of History and Geography, who taught us how to study and think critically, and Biology teacher, Mića Filipović, who knew how to teach us lots of things in a very relaxed and interactive manner.”

5. What was your least favourite subject and why?

Teacher: "I didn't like Maths, Physics and Chemistry, because I found them all abstract. I definitely "broke up" with Maths the moment we started using letters instead of numbers."

6. What did you use to do in your free time?

Teacher: "In my free time I liked playing with my friends, riding my bike far from home, reading comics and listening to music. I was also obsessed with the idea of learning to play the guitar. I was spending a lot of time by the river Morava."

7. Did you do or train any sports?

Teacher: "Not many children trained sports. I think that none of the kids I knew trained any sports. We were simply playing outside all day. We used to play football, basketball, hide-and-seek, Partisans and Germans, ride our bikes, go to the nearby woods or by the river Morava. We adored marbles, and every boy used to have at least ten of them in his pockets and they were clanking while we were walking or running."

8. Did you ever escape from a lesson?

Teacher: "As far as I can remember, I didn't. We were simply not allowed to, neither by teachers nor parents. And there was no need to. We were having fun at school. Once I tried to avoid a Maths test. I think I was in Year three or four. I lied to my teacher and told her I was having a stomachache and she let me go home. My father was a policeman and he immediately realised I was bluffing. He took me to the doctor's and they told me I had to have my appendix taken out at

once. Of course, I confessed everything. He took me back to school and I had to apologise to my teacher. Of course, I had to take my Maths test and, as you can imagine, I did it badly.”

9. Did you ever cheat in tests?

Teacher : „No, never, for two reasons: I was too lazy to cut and prepare all those tiny papers, which I would probably not be able to use due to my terrible handwriting and it took me much less time to learn the lessons for a decent school mark than to get ready for a decent cheating.”

10. What did you want to become when you grow up?

Teacher: “I was not quite sure. Like most boys I dreamed about becoming a police or army officer or a rock star. There was even a period during my childhood when I wanted to become a lumberjack or a truck driver. When I finished primary school I decided to enter veterinary school, because I liked animals and I didn’t have to take Maths test, but Biology.”

11. What is your best primary school memory?

Teacher: “I have no bad memories from those days. Everything was nice and interesting, even the event when I got a bad mark in P.E. because I didn’t want to wave my arms in the air while dancing “čoček“(a vivid traditional dance from the south of Serbia). Everything was full with games, joy and laughter. It was really a wonderful period of my life.”

12. Do you still keep in touch with your schoolmates?

Teacher: “Of course I do. There are lots of people who have moved away, but lots of us still live in Stalać and its surroundings. We meet from time to time, sometimes we have a drink or two, or pay a visit to each other. Even today, almost thirty years after finishing primary school, we still remember lots of things, and we still call each other “schoolmate”.

13. Do some of your student experiences influence you as a teacher?

Teacher: “Quite a lot, I have to admit. Just like the early childhood influences the whole life of a person, my school days largely influenced my professional life. I have been studying, attending lots of seminars and trainings, but every now and then I can recognise some of my teachers appearing out of me, either verbally or behaviourally. I am glad for that. Many times I have realized how those people were well-intentioned, no matter if they were laughing with us, making us study, yelling at us, or even pulling our ears and hair sometimes.”

14. How would you compare your primary school to our modern one?

Teacher: “I think that you are much more burdened with lessons, number of school subjects and different obligations and that you have much less free time than we used to. As I have already said before, there were no private lessons when I was a kid (we didn’t even know what they were), sports trainings and so many lessons and subjects. We used to have much more school picnics, volunteering, forestations, picking fruit and corn, school performances, and our teachers used to

have much more time for remedial work, extra lessons and different sections. In my opinion, it was much easier, relaxed and fun for us than it is to you.”

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