



English Corner

autumn-winter, 2023

Vilnius Salomėja Nėris gymnasium

Hello, my dears,

I've missed you. Time is relentless. It flies away so quickly that one doesn't even manage to catch up with its flow.

Once we had a topic about a Teacher in our English Corner, a Teacher in its figurative and literate meanings. I just wanted to once again raise the question of a teacher's significance regardless of the events that are taking place at present.

Without expostulations remembering the most outstanding writers, a decision has been made to not extol a teacher, but just to bring to remembrance all people who were, still are and will be the cynosure of our life. Without them, believe me, we would be just losers than we are without a teacher – in the broadest sense of the word...

*Yours,
Jolanta*

P.S. I found not long ago a yellowish paper with my teacher Eugenija Pūrienė's insight into upbringing and education. These were the years of the Soviet system. Regardless of that, the ideas still remain acute today. To tell the truth – more than that. Here is an extract of the outstanding teacher E.Pūrienė delivered in a conference in Voronež so many years ago...

THE UNITY OF TEACHING AND UPBRINGING

We obviously see what great opportunities a teacher is given in creation of a universally intelligent personality.

To perfect one's work at school in order to educate the person most successfully, we must bear in mind the necessity of the psychological knowledge.

A teacher must concentrate upon the contribution he/she has put into the common cause in the education of each personality, in a word, what the quality of his/her personal work is. It depends very much upon the personality of the teacher himself/herself, his/her consciousness, his/her methods and special preparation and ability on the process of teaching in the most successful way.

We come across many difficulties in upbringing because we do not know a child's individuality, many contradictions arise between a child and a teacher. Many conflicts occur in the inner psychics of a child. A barrier that appears between a child and a teacher prevents from good relations and constructive unity.

We, teachers, must maintain a firm faith in the goodness of the child. An average child is not born a cripple, a coward, or a soulless automation, but has full potentialities to love life and to be interested in life. The aim of education in fact the aim of life - is to work joyfully and to find happiness. Happiness is to be interested in life. In education intellectual development is not enough. Education must be both intellectual and emotional. In modern society we must not feel separation between intellect and feeling. The experience of man today are to be both experience of thought and immediate grasp of what his heart feels, his eyes see, and his ears hear. Education must be geared to the psychic needs and capabilities of the child.

Psychologists state that the child is not altruist. He/she does not yet love life in the sense of the mature love of an adult. Altruism develops after childhood.

Studies of delinquents and criminals reveal that most of them have suffered more from lack of love than from lack of punishment in childhood. Children will grow happier and more stable if they acquire a conviction all through childhood that the most important thing human beings can do is serve humanity.

Freedom does not mean license. Respect for the individual must be mutual. A teacher must not use force against a child nor has a child a right to use the force against a teacher. A child must not intrude upon an adult just because he/she is a child. Closely related to this principle is the need for true sincerity on the part of the teacher. He/she must never in his life lie to a child. Healthy human development makes it necessary that a child cuts the primary ties which connect him/her with his/her mother or father and he/she becomes independent. He/she must learn to face the world as an individual. He/she must learn to grasp the world intellectually, emotionally, artistically. He/she must use all of his/hers powers to find union with the world.

A difficult child is nearly always made difficult by wrong treatment at home by parents. The difficult child is the child who is unhappy. He/she is at war with themselves and in consequence he/she is at war with the world. The difficult adult is in the same boat. No happy man ever disturbed a meeting, or robbed, or preached a war, or murdered. No happy woman ever nagged her husband or her children. We must have a full belief in the child as a good, not an evil being. A child is innately wise and realistic. The function of the child is to live his/her own life and not the life that his/her anxious parents think he/she should live. All his interference and guidance on the part of adults only produces a generation of robots. The aim of life is to find

happiness; which means to find interest.

Many people believe: if children have nothing to fear, how can they be good? Goodness that depends on fear or on hope of reward is not goodness. The happiest homes are those in which parents are frankly honest with their children without moralizing. Fear does not enter these homes. What gives a child a sense of inferiority? He/she sees grownups do things that he/she cannot do or he/she is not permitted to do. To destroy children's fantasy is to make life a dull thing. Every act of creation must be preceded by a fantasy. To find one's own satisfaction is a vital necessity for every human being.

Hatred makes a sadist out of a child. This is a very vital question. It deals with the sickness of the world where hatred flourishes from the nursery to the grave. There is, of course, much love in the world. If there were not, we could not despair for humanity. Every parent and every educator should seriously try to discover that love in himself.

If your child or pupil lies, either he/she is afraid of you or he/she is copying you. Lying parents will have lying children. If you want the truth from your child, do not lie to him/her. Parents lie sometimes to preserve their dignity. The only good permissible lie is the kind of lie one has to tell when life is in danger, e.g. when a seriously ill child is not told of his mother's death. Speaking a lie is a minor guilt than living a lie. Many homes exist without lying, and it is from such homes that come clear-eyed, sincere children. A parent can answer any and every question with truth. Children lie mostly to protect themselves. Lying flourishes in homes where fear flourishes. Lying is always cowardice and cowardice is the result of ignorance. In many families the child's ego is suppressed because the parents treat the child as a perpetual infant: without any sense of duty or responsibility. Duty should not be confused with responsibility. A

sense of duty should be acquired later in life. A child should not be asked to face responsibilities for which he/she is not ready. Parents who choose friends for their child are trying to impose their own ideas on the child by pressure. Corporal punishment should be abolished forever. In unhappy homes discipline is used as a weapon of hatred and obedience becomes a virtue. Children are things owned and they must be a credit to their owners. Much childish misbehaviour is a proof of wrong treatment. Children are wise. They will react to love with love and will react to hate with hate. You cannot have a good humanity by treating it with hatred and punishment and suppression. The only way is the way of love. A loving environment will take care of most of the troubles of childhood. If the children are given an environment of love and approval in the home, nastiness, hate and destructiveness will never arise. It is happiness that makes our girls look attractive and our boys handsome. A child is unconscious of health. His/her single motive is his/her interest.

It is wrong to teach children to save money as they don't value it. Never treat a child with humour at the wrong time nor attack his/her dignity. If he/she has genuine grievance, it must be taken seriously. Cruelty is perverted love. The cruel person cannot give because giving is a love action. There is no instinct of cruelty. Animals are not cruel. Happy children are not likely to be cruel. Their cruelty springs from adults. We must show love and respect for the child. Parents who do not wish to spoil their children must distinguish between freedom and license. Love and hatred are not opposites. The opposite of love is indifference.

A teacher has to be so many things at the same time: actor, scholar, parent, friend, judge and jury, guide. Some teachers go crazy from too much teaching, some are stingy with the marks.

Much more attention nowadays should be paid to sexual

education; as more responsibility is laid on wedlock. A young couple at present lives more or less on their own without parent's guidance, as it used to be. Senior formers should be taught family life.

Our problem is to develop thinking powers and act in a creative way. Knowledge must not and cannot be dogmatic, therefore we must train pupils think instead of learning rules. We must not be afraid of contradictions and must not develop standardized people. Creation of a new man/woman is the most responsible creation. The teacher must gain prestige only by putting heart into his/her work, not sitting his hours for salary. He/she must get his/her pupils interested and always alert at work. They must come to feel the world which ought to be theirs. If a teacher wants to mould a universally intelligent personality, he/she must have a universal attitude towards his/her subject. He/she must be very intelligent himself/herself if he/she wants to serve humanity by his/her activity. Communism can be created only by creating a conscious man/woman. This is the main problem nowadays.

Grammar is a part of human mentality. According to some grammarians, grammar is a part of human psychology. All humans are born with an innate capacity to learn languages. This ability is universal.

A child should be trained as school to be ready to solve the problems of life that no textbook has taught him/her. There is no teacher who could doubt in the unity of teaching and upbringing. The knowledge given to the child is only one of the means for the character moulding. Teaching in a is the child's upbringing. The student should first of all like the subject, experience it himself/herself accumulating all his/her attention and mentality, otherwise, if he/she is indifferent, he/she won't know it.

What about the teacher's criterion? What makes the children like and respect the subject and the teacher is his/her intellect, a deep understanding of his/her learners, his/her inventiveness. The teacher with his/her cheerful countenance encourages his/her learners. The teacher should read much, experience and know as much as possible. An unintelligent person can't inspire his/her learners for a creative work. In short, the teacher's responsibility now is greater than that of any other specialist.

Eugenija Pūrienė,
Vilnius Salomėja Nėris Gymnasium

Literature:

1. Dr. Benjamin Spock "Babyhood and Childcare"
2. G. S. Neil "A Radical Approach to Child Rearing"

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People are born to be alive, though, for a while. They are born to make deeds or wrongs, unfortunately... But most of them devote their lives to others – because of vocation, humaneness, generosity or just – for love for people...

Where does it come from? Sure, a family. But not always. A Teacher inconspicuously leads to the values that are innate in us, human beings. But... why... do they decide that those inborn values are worth nothing? Fatigue? Disillusionment? Depression? Negation? Who knows...

Dear Teachers, please, do not take blame on only your shoulders. Though – you have done an enormous, formidable job...

My dear Teacher, forgive for my weakness to pass away... Regardless of your inspiration to combat and overcome all the obstacles... I got tired. Forgive me, my dear beloved Teacher...

In memory of former pupils,
Jolanta



Photo by Laura Dilytė, 3C.

Life – our best teacher...

Life, akin to our most profound teacher, demonstrates the enduring virtue of patience. It stands as a constant lighthouse, illuminating our path through the darkest nights, offering guidance when we stumble and falter. Life strikes a delicate balance between trials that test our resolution and moments of resplendent growth. It teaches us that with patience we can withstand any storm, and in finding this equilibrium, we discover the wisdom hidden within the journey.

Vitalija Kartamyševaitė, 3B

An oak

Looking through the window I see an oak. It's a very sturdy and wise tree. Not even the passage of time can make it give up its solid stance in the ground. The opposite happens – every moment of life is condensed into leaves of lessons which cast shadows of wisdom upon the land. But it isn't all that monotonous. As the years pass, new knowledge is gained, thus changing the color of leaves themselves and once in a while it throws them all away replacing with the new enhanced ones.

Ignas Dalinkevičius, 1D

A Teacher

A teacher, much like a lighthouse, stands tall in the midst of darkness, guiding eager minds towards the shores of knowledge. With their wisdom and nurturing spirit they beam hope and inspiration ensuring that students navigate the seas of life with confidence and purpose, even during the stormiest days. What should be added? Nothing... except – a drop of gratitude...

Laurynas Matuliauskas, 3B

Poor man

As my hand is stretched out for light
Head hungry for satisfaction
To be blessed by the divine
A poor man will give me fortune
Not in money or material, but in knowledge

Sunflower

Standing there turned to sun
Asking it questions one by one
Never a rest with this flower
It will let its seeds seek desire

Wind

You as a bird flocking out east
Now you have nothing left to feast
Though a wind has been flowing
First time you decide to follow it
It brings you now to supper
One thing you wanted to suffer for no longer
The wind blew you on the right track
To thank it you will
It is a job you have always honored

Gerda Domanskytė, 3A

A Lighthouse

In gloomy, cold days there is always light. Especially when we are going to a place to learn. For some of us it's very hard to learn something. But there is one thing that can help. In a dark cave there is always light. The dark days or caves symbolize the hard times of studies. Times when you want to just disappear. And there comes the lighthouse, light. These beautiful people help us guide us to the light, the right path. They are like the beacons of light after a storm. We can always talk with them, work with them and get advice. Very important studies are also introduced by them. They are like windows to the studies of the world. Thanks... for everything – the light and the dark...

Urtē Mereškevičiūtē, 1D

The Guide

I am walking. Looking around. I see black letters, notes, paintings, spilled ink, numbers, tears, and cannot understand. I am listening, I hear, and only You, my dear Guide, make sense of all that I have not understood so far. Even though You are not always sweet and beautiful to me in your thoughts or words, I knew that if I asked you for the way where to go, what to do – You would show it to me, even if You were not always ready.

You will show not the easiest one, but the one that will open our eyes to life.

You may be a common, simple little human, but I will remember You as the best Guide.

Ieva Kaunaitė, 3B

A Teacher

One moment she'd shine like the beaming sun, so happy and unbothered, while the next – a storming cloud would come in and wreak a havoc upon others. The mood changes in a blink of an eye. It's so unpredictable, exactly like the weather. Sometimes it can be so extreme like the biggest thunderstorm or an ocean wave, ruining everything left behind, but even then the good side can randomly come in, you just never know when, you just have to patiently wait for the forecast of the next day.

Adelė Motiejūnaitė, 1D

Lightness

It's in us all. It's anywhere, anywhere and exists in all. It's very bright that you can even lose your light, if you look alike. What is this brightness? Where can one find it and saddle it like a horse? It's easy to find, you just have to use your mind and be enlightened to the universe of time. You'll have to fix it or you'll remain a speck that is unseen... lost in the infinite universe that is time. Have you harnessed it?

Jonas Sabutis, 3B



Photo by Laura Dilytė, 3C.

A Teacher

A teacher can be compared to many things: a lighthouse or a cynosure, but I believe that the most accurate comparison is a compass. During the most important years of our lives we are surrounded by many teachers and while some come and go, most people have one teacher, who acts as their compass. They help you by guiding you through difficult situations, encourage you to choose the right path, and make you want to believe in yourself. This teacher is an important part of everyone's lives, and I can't imagine what my life would have been like, if I hadn't had a teacher, who has always been my compass...

Rusvilė Grigaitė, 3A

* * *

Everyone had their own
Star in the sky.
A teacher – who would light up
A dark day and black night.

A teacher – the window to
Freedom and light,
A person who helped you
Confront all your fights.

Some say you cannot go through
The life road all alone,
But I like to think
That they're wrong.

What if I never had someone
To call only my own?
What if I swam the whole sea
All alone?

As I looked in my soul
And got surprised with what I see,
I realised what I already knew –
My teacher was me.

Augustė Dambrauskaitė, 1D

* * *

Teaching is like a door – a door to hopes and possibilities. Over the time we will keep opening new doors to varied outcomes, but it is always better to have someone help you open those same doors. A voice to point out the elegance of them and what they hide behind them. A calm touch to showcase the intricacies of its craft. But just as easily a sloppy touch or uncouth voice can ruin the doors beauty and discourage opening it. A sea of wonder can be left untouched due to an untrained face. In the end, though, we will be judged and remembered for all our seen doors, not just the opened ones.

Liutauras Bučinskas, 3B

A Good Teacher

A good teacher respects. We are humans. We know nothing. That's why respect is a necessity.

A good teacher stays calm. My voice is calm; my thoughts are sharp and meaningful.

A good teacher understands. I can help you learn a new language. The language of Gods. The language of literature, mathematics, philosophy, law, art, history, geography, astronomy, etc. Nevertheless, I cannot help you learn the language of soul. Because you already know it. You use it every day. You are speaking to me right now. The language of soul. We both understand it. We are both listening carefully.

A good teacher believes. I am strength and power from your memories, showing you the right path. I won't let you lose your way.

A good teacher helps. Walk along the seashore and collect those pieces of amber. Little by little, pieces are becoming something big and shiny. It's your knowledge.

A good teacher is an authority in a student's life.

A good teacher is trust.

Laura Dilyté, 3C

Life's way

A force that gets you through life.
Something that shows you the way
How to look through your eyes,
To see everything that surrounds you,
Everything that's new,
Everything that may awaken you...
To see the world as it is or as it could be,
To show you that dreaming is good
Or that reality isn't always as bad as it seems.
To teach you to see and to feel,
To teach you to love and to be –
To teach you to live.

Otilija Ražinskaitė, 3B

A Teacher

Who's the best teacher? Life. Every second we learn something new. Every second new thoughts and ideas enter our body. Every second we learn from our mistakes and get wiser. Life, like a puppeteer, silently leads us to one path or another, sometimes a good one, sometimes a bad one. Sometimes life leads us to different paths and we separate, sometimes our paths connect. And join. Every step of our path makes us understand the world better. Eventually, our paths will end and we will finish the longest lesson of our lives. Life is a lesson, a teacher, life is everything.

Kajus Liutkus, 1A

A Door to a Better Tomorrow!

Everyone does have the one or two in a lifetime. A person who leads us through the thick and thin while the hot and cold. So good a feeling to have a cynosure. A cynosure which makes your daily life hard because wants you to have a really bright future. Can it be said that a cynosure is a door to a better tomorrow? Because it gives you its heart while trying to explain the laws of life. Because it has a calling... a vocation to lead, a calling to teach, a calling to be passionate about his or her job. Isn't it crazy that someone was born to teach us how to live our own life? A teacher – a door to a better tomorrow!

Miglė Smagurauskaitė, 3D

Teachers

When an infant is born, it immediately receives a goal that it will keep trying to achieve throughout life – learning. This, obviously, doesn't only apply to people. Wild animals have to learn how to survive in the wild, we, humans, have to learn how to survive in our own society. We have to go through years of learning in school, then go to learn even more in university, college, etc. And even after that, learning isn't over. It never is. Our learning only ends when we die. Humans made these rules for themselves, but, maybe, they're expecting too much? Maybe, our rules are too strict? Someone, hundreds of years ago, created the school system with good intentions – to help people achieve the goal of learning. But maybe it wasn't a good idea after all? Therefore, school puts a lot of stress on students, some can't take it and abandon their natural life goal – learning. By what I mean, they end their lives. Our life goal can be our own end. So, have we created a hand-made heaven or a hand-made hell for ourselves as a human race? All I can say is, every living being teaches himself/herself and others. We are all teachers, because we make rules for ourselves.

Joris Malinauskas, 3C



Photo by Laura Dilytė, 3C.

A Teacher

I came face to face with my math's teacher. Suddenly, my body went back in time. I could feel that my palms were starting to sweat. I used to get this feeling when I was in her lesson. My body was in a prison I could not escape. My mind would run in circles when she tried asking me anything. I did not like her, and I sensed that she did not like me either. I was just a rock to her – plain and impractical. Even though I did not like her, others did. She was a lighthouse for many and when you could not see a path, she would guide you safely into the right tracks. Yet, feelings sort of disappear. What remains? It's just a feeling of respect and the memories of the teacher's devotion. Though... yet...

Amelija Norvaišaitė, 1D

The Lighthouse

It was a stormy night. The rain was like a cold shower. The lighthouse stood on the edge where the land met the sea. This beacon cast a ray of hope to the hopeless sailor, who was struggling to command his ship through the wrathful sea. It illuminated the dangers that sought ahead and allowed him to dock his small beat up ship. And, yet... Alas... To a fortunate end was he led by the Teacher of the universe...

Joris Stonys, 1C

Memories

All I saw was just an abstract substance. But when he came, I understood what the eyes see, the secrets, the unknown in the dust of the void. This great man just opened... What? And now I am already a person who understands the world around me. Sadly, a person who accompanied me through the struggles of hard life is already waving his hand with tears in his eyes and wishing the best in life from above...

Dominykas Žukauskas, 3D

Life

Life is like a teacher. Through joy and sorrow
It instructs us. Life shows us there's more,
Than just darkness in this world.

Every setback, every fall we endure,
It teaches us resilience,
Makes us more sure.

Each morning brings a lesson anew
It teaches us – there's a hope
To keep going on, not to stop

Gabija Lonskytė, 1C

Aitvaras

Oh, to fathom the whispers of hope, the very breath of the atmosphere, the exchanged sighs and wise words... What profound bliss it would be, if only we could discern the true nature of our hearts...

Oh, to comprehend the soul, that enigmatic presence and the treasure that it brings! What great sorrow would befall a man who remained a stranger to himself.

I offer this dedication to you, o valiant Aitvaras, the embodiment of the meaning you unearth from within. My deepest gratitude to you for bestowing your treasure. For without it I, for without it we would be no men, instead, meager echoes lost in the endless corridors of aimless souls.

Kristupas Pikutis, 3D

A Teacher

Life is like a game – the more you play, the more experience you get. But what if you don't know how to play the game? You can always try to learn how to do it yourself, but that's too long and hard. That's why every game has a tutorial. It helps you understand what to do and it guides you. But do you really need it? Will you use it in the game? In games the more skilled you are, the better rewards you get. It's the same in real life. To get a highly paid job you need knowledge and experience. And what is the best way to get it than a tutorial? It helps us learn new things. It also helps when you are choosing what you will do in the future. But in the end, it's entirely up to you, if you want to or not. I want to and you can, too. I will help you, my dear. To not only possess material things, but moral, as well... I'll always be with you...

Antanas Merčaitis, 1A

A Teacher of Life

When the questions in silence appear and the brain has its thoughts restrained, a wise voice in the depths of the body emerges, the age in its knowledge is heard. The sound makes your worries depart and the feeling of the unknown disappear. It knows all the answers you need just focus and let it be free.

The Main Teacher

It's unique and dull at the same time. It hides all the answers, although shows you all. Containing many different journeys some meant to learn, some not. People choose quicker or slower? But everyone has to take a path. That's the main teacher – it's life. And when it's time to fly, we are meant to own the sky. Will the life lead us all?

Milda Jusytė, 1C

A Guide

A teacher is like a lighthouse. It guides you where you need to go, it helps you to stay on your path. It turns the light on when you're in the dark. If you do not follow it, you get lost or might sail to paradise. The lighthouse guides you, but you're the captain, so you can go wherever you want, but eventually you'll arrive at the shore – destroyed by garbage or a shore you only imagined in your dreams.

But it all depends, if you followed the lighthouse.

Justas Dukanauskis, 1A



Photo by Laura Dilytė, 3C.

A Teacher

"I can see it in your eyes, it was rough."

He was right. That small observation made my heart feel at peace. Made me stop running away from problems, but let my soul cry and long for understanding.

You made sure I wouldn't go back to bloody blades and used bandages.

Even if you can't see my heart, it was bleeding. You carefully took care of it.

Slowly, but surely put bandages on by checking up every day.

The way your eyes met mine in a crowded school hallway, and shot a genuine smile, made me feel visible.

Not even my father is able to show this much care towards me, it's sad.

But it's okay, I'm used to ignorance.

It's okay, if you don't want to see me, but you do.

I found that strange that you calmed the storm inside me.

That's not quite what teachers do, but deep inside I appreciate it.

Maja Timonova, 1D

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"Are you okay?" I hear this phrase in disbelief. Before answering "I am", it's no use lying. His eyes are filled with hope, almost as if... He's being sincere? A simple question that warms up a lonely heart and keeps a negative thought away. Not even noticing as my eyes start to water. His calm voice doesn't even begin to compare with my father's harsh tone and disgusting breath from morning cigarettes. "I want to go home", I say while the soft wind blows from the open window. I repeat the same phrase over and over again. Crying in his arms, meaning I just want to feel safe and loved. We sit there in silence, admiring the quiet autumn afternoon, his firm but soft hands comfortingly stroking my back. It felt stronger than the bond I've had with my biological father for years. He looks like he wouldn't come home drunk, he'd know how to give his daughter support after she tried taking her own life. He would make her feel at home. That's everything I've wished for.

Thank you, teacher.

Maja Timonova, 1D

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To teach is to live – was the way of the olden days. No longer we yearn for the power of knowledge, no longer we are able to earn it. The fountain has run dry and, yet in these desperate times, a cynosure has arisen. You are a shining star, a beam of light to end all night. And as the mom laid down its gentle carpet, surrounding the land with ease and slumber, with pounding drums you arose and cleared the sky. Destined with great things you flew away like a migrating birds leaving only an empty nest. For the young have to feed themselves, to find the fruit of their own labour. It's a cruel word, after all?

Patricija Rinkevičiūtė, 3A

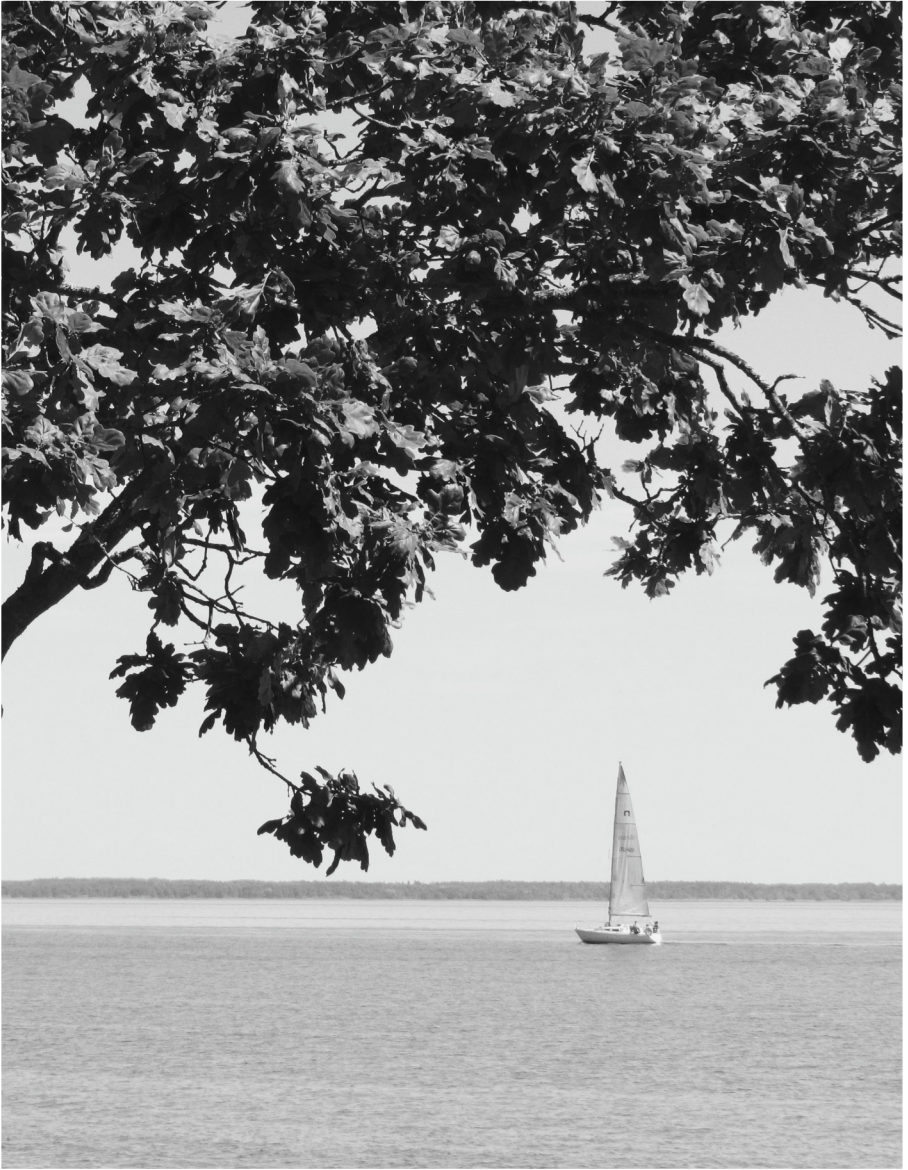


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English Corner

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Vilnius Salomėja Nėris gymnasium

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