



## ASSIGNMENT 2, WINTER:

Winter activities and Nordic skiing

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## Winter excursion: Nordic skiing in Telemark

### 1. My winter experiences

This winter excursion I went with my Erasmus class to Jønnbu Fjellkyrkje og Ungdomssenter, in Lifjellveien (Bø i Telemark) from Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> of February until 1<sup>st</sup> of March. I was a bit nervous because I only practice ski once and I fell so many times kicking in one of those falls my back bone and it was a horrible pain, so I was frightened to fall and hurt myself again. The temperature was supposed to be -15 or -20, but it was windy, so it seemed to be -30. The teacher advised us to wear warm, but even I wore all my warm clothes, I was cold.

**First day**, we left our bag package in our rooms, and went to the canteen to eat and meet the other teacher, Andrea, who stayed with us all three days. After lunch, we went to put more clothes on and came back because Andrea explained us how to orient ourselves using a map and a compass. It was a bit mess at first time, but it was very interesting and important to know. Then, we went to catch our skis and went to a hill to practice slide. For me, it was not so much fun because I was terrified and all the time I was afraid of falling because I couldn't stand up on my skis without losing my balance. When we finish there, we come back home and some of us prepare dinner while the rest were waiting. Then we have dinner together and spend a great time talking and playing together.



The **second day**, we woke up early to have breakfast and continue with the activities. But, first, when we finished our breakfast we played some team building games to have a great time all together and knew a bit more. Then we continued with the ski activities but, this time, we were separated in two groups: Andrea's one with people that had more ease to ski and another, Kari Anne's one, of people that needed to practice more and improve their technique to use the ski. This day was better than the other because, at least the group of people that never tried ski, could practice and get more confidence. It was great because we

were practicing how to slide, how to slide on a hill, how to stop, etc. At night, other group prepare the dinner and another prepare ice cream for dessert. That part was fun because I never tried it before and we learn how to use the snow to make it.



The **last day** we went on the same 2 groups as in the day before, one group stayed first with Andrea while the other was with Kari Anne, then we changed. With Kari Anne, we practiced ski activities according to our ski level while with Andrea we talk about where to camp if we were in a snowy place and how to prevent avalanches. Once we finished the activities, we have lunch, took our bag packages, and came back home.





## 2. Spanish children in Telemark

Good evening Claudia, I have already seen your email asking me some information about the place I visited last week with my Erasmus class, to go up with your kindergarten class.

The place, Jønnbu Fjellkyrkje og Ungdomssenter, is in Lifjellveien (Bø i Telemark). It is a small place located at the top of a mountain, and there are not much houses around, but you do not have to worry about that because the place offers enough facilities to spend there some days. To security I recommend you to be, at least 4 teachers, to control all children and do some little targets for kids with a phone number in case they get lost. Any way, it is very important to be enough teachers because in the forest children tend to go by themselves and explore so, it is important to be very careful.

The landscape is amazing because all around you is covered by forest and nature so, it is a very good place to relax from the continuous stress from the city. In summer all of it is completely green according to some photos I saw on their web page, but in the winter season, all of it is covered with snow. We were guests in a house which was divided in two floors with many bedrooms of 4 or 6 beds each one. There are 4 common bathrooms (2 in the first floor and 2 in the second one) equipped with 2 sinks, 1 toilet and 1 shower. Next to this house, there is another big building with an equipped kitchen, a spacious dining room and a big place allocated for religious ceremonies, but there is lot of space that can be used as a place to realize some activities, games, etc.



The advises I am going to tell you are based on my experience there and the activities I realize so I hope that all the information could be useful to you to organize the activities here. I have to recognize that the activities I made are, at least by my opinion, a bit excessive in to do for children, mostly if they never have done ski before, so I will try to give you some alternatives you can do outside activities and inside if the weather is not so good to go out.

First of all, I want to talk about the clothes. It is very important that you bring the correct clothes because the temperature here is very different of what we use to have in Valencia. It is important to look up information about the weather before you come here, but you should know that weather here is unsettles and probably it will change. For example, when I came here was supposed to be -15 or -20 and, when we get off the bus it was really windy, so it seemed to be cooler than what it was expected like -30. I recommend you bring wool clothes because are the best to keep you warm. Bring some thin warm layers because, if you feel hot or when you come inside the houses where the heating is so high, it is better to remove some of these layers instead of a big warm one because you can still have enough clothes to not be cold. For children, I am not pretty sure, but I think that the best option would be if they wear a snow waterproof overall because they could be warm while they are playing outside or doing ski activities. I know it is not very easy to put and take off, but if they wear this garment it will not be necessary for them to wear lots of clothes. Boots are also very important because if your feet are cold you will not be able to carry out the activities and you will have a bad time, any way, if you wear woolen socks it will be fine. For the ski activities you do not have to worry about the shoes because here, the teacher will provide you some special shoes necessary to put on the skis later. I recommend you bring a neck gaiter instead of a scarf, also for children, because scarfs are a bit uncomfortable and sometimes they fall or do not keep you warm if you do not keep them properly. Also, with the neck gaiter you can cover your ears and protect them from the wind and cold. For hands, I prefer waterproof gloves because you have more finger mobility to make activities, but people here use to wear waterproof mittens because they say that they are better to keep warm hands.

About the protection and safety, it is important to bring sunscreen, if it could be possible to be without water, because with the low temperature and the wind it could be worse. It is very important to have sun glasses because the sun reflection in the snow is very bad, more like in the beach, for skin and eyes, also it would be great if you could bring after sun cream to put before the activities. For being outdoors doing activities, it is important, and also

recommended, to bring some warm drinks, like hot milk, and food that gives you quick energy, like chocolates. Is better to bring food that do not require much time to prepare or to have it because if there is cold, you have to keep yourself moving or eat quick to continue moving or doing activities. I recommend bringing a bag pack to put all these things and take them in the rest of the activities during the day. It is very important you bring a first-aid kit with some indispensable stuff like muslin, bandage, little scissors, etc.

In relation with the activities you could do here, there are different options. First of all, I think that the best option is to make 2 groups of 13 children each one because is better to control them. Then, if the weather conditions are good, you can go out with skis and play games or go for an excursion. I recommend you that for the first time you do some easy activities like slide on an even path, slide and stop on small hills ... and little by little you can go to bigger ones. I directly go to the big ones and I was so frightened that I could not have a good time or do any activity, so is better if you go step by step. Also, there are some games or songs that you can do with children on their skis like make “snow flowers”, play tag, create some circuits that children have to make, etc. There are also lot of space where children can play and have a nice time so, if there is a day that you do not want to go with the skis, you can also let them play with the snow and explore developing their creativity around the lodging or the main building where there is also near a rock wall to climb on it. There is also a refuge where you can make fire and prepare some food or telling Norwegian folk stories around the fire that I am sure children will love.



Otherwise, if the weather is not good enough to go out, you can stay inside making some activities in the spacious place I mentioned before. There you can prepare some activities about what things can children be able to find around (animals, vegetation, etc.), also it would be great to make some team building games, so they can have a great time. I do some

of them and was really fun like the one you have to untangle a circle mess a group of people has done. Also, there is one activity that I am absolutely sure they will love: make their own ice cream. I made it and it is a very funny and interesting activity. There are some tutorials about how to do it on Internet, and you do not need so much ingredients (milk, vanilla, sugar, salt, some bags and snow) and 2 bags. On the first one you add, the milk, the vanilla and sugar and close the bag, while on the other you put snow with salt and the closed bag mentioned before. You have to keep moving the bags for at least 10 minutes and then you have it. You can also add some toppings like chocolate, cacao, broken cookies, fruit, etc. It is an activity that I really recommend you to do because children will always remember it, and it is not a very typical activity, at least not in Spain.

There are other activities that could be also interesting like, for example, orientation games. When I was there I learn how to use properly the compass and the map, and I made an activity where I have to look for some targets in the forest guiding myself with the map and compass, so it was very useful. I also learn about avalanches and how to prevent them on a very snowy hill. These activities maybe are too complicated for children to do but maybe you can adapt them. I have to admit that, at the beginning, it could be a bit mess, because there are lots of children to do the activities but you can divide them in little groups and play some orientation games simulating there were explorers and they have to find a place in the map or maybe all of you can go for a walk following the route “they have planned” but always guided by the monitors.

I hope all this information can be helpful to you and if you want to know anything more, feel free to ask me whatever you need or want to know. Finally, if you decide to come here, I wish you to have a very good time and enjoy the experience. Best regards, Alicia.

### **3. References**

1. STIFTELSEN JØNNBU FJELLKYRKJE OG UNGDOMSSENTER. Retrieved from <http://www.jonnbu.no/>