

Adapting for different contexts

Some tasks may be relevant to students with certain socio-cultural knowledge in a certain geographical or situational context, but not to others. In this case, the task may need to be adapted to another context with which students are familiar. The following METLA task (No 8) is an example of a lesson which can be adapted by the teacher in order to be relevant to the needs of his/her students. Below are some suggestions. In this activity, students read a (Language A) text regarding airport transportation, and they then write informal short messages as part of written text communication with an exchange student. Then, the same information has to be used by students in order to write an email to the student's parent.

- Differentiating the language of the input:** The activity uses as a source a leaflet taken from the official website of the Helsinki airport. A similar leaflet can be found or created in different languages if the teacher visits the official website of the main airport of the different countries.

 Handout A 1/2 Kulkuyhteydet Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalle	 Airport Access: English version
<p>Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalle on helppo saapua. Bussilla ja junalla pääset lähelle terminaaleja, muun muassa Tikkurilasta ja Helsingin keskustasta on suora ja nopea yhteys lentoasemalle. Helsinki-Vantaalta on kattavat juna- ja bussiyhteydet, joilla pääset nopeasti myös esimerkiksi Turkuun, Tampereelle tai muualle Suomeen.</p> <p>Lentokenttäbussi: Bussilla pääset helposti lähelle Helsinki-Vantaan terminaaleja. Lentoasemalle on kattavat bussiyhteydet Helsingin keskustasta, Turusta, Tampereelta ja muualta Suomesta. Lentokenttäbussit, mukaan lukien Finnair City Bus, kulkevat lentoasemalle useasti tunnissa.</p> <p>Lentokenttäjuna: Saavut helposti Helsinki-Vantaan omalle juna-asemalle mistä tahansa päin Suomea. Lähiliikenteen P- ja I-junat kulkevat Helsingin keskustasta ja Tikkurilasta lentoasemalle tihein vuorovälein.</p> <p>Kaukoliikenteessä voit valita määrääsemäksi "Helsinki lentoasema" ja matkustaa samalla lipulla lähiliikenteen junalla Tikkurilasta Helsinki-Vantaalle.</p> <p>Taksi: Helsingin keskustasta tai muista lähikaupungeista pääset lentoasemalle usean eri taksiyhtiön kuljetuksella.</p> <p>Auton vuokraus: Helsinki-Vantaalla palvelee kuusi eri autovuokraamoja, joiden toimipisteet löydät terminaalien 1 ja 2 väliseltä yhdyskäytävältä. Voit vuokrata auton myös ennakoon autovuokraamon nettisivuilta tai soittamalla.</p>	<p>You can arrive at Helsinki Airport easily by car, taxi or using public transportation. The buses and trains take you close to the terminals, and there is a fast and easy connection to the airport from e.g. Tikkurila station and Helsinki city centre. There are also comfortable bus and train connections taking you easily to Turku, Tampere or elsewhere in Finland. There are flexible connections to the airport from Finland's near regions, including St. Petersburg, Tallinn and Stockholm.</p> <p>Parking: It is easy to arrive to Helsinki Airport by car and find a suitable parking option from Finavia's parking halls or outdoor parking. Have a stress-free start for your travels by reserving your parking spot in advance. Have a look at our additional services.</p> <p>Airport buses: Buses take you close to the terminals smoothly. There are various bus connections to the airport from Helsinki city centre, Turku, Tampere and elsewhere in Finland. Airport buses, including Finnair City Bus have frequent daily connections to the airport.</p> <p>Airport train: Reaching Helsinki Airport by train is easy from all over Finland and St. Petersburg. Trains P and I operate daily from Helsinki city centre to the airport. You can also purchase a ticket directly to the airport in long-distance trains.</p> <p>Taxi: Various taxi agencies operate between the airport and Helsinki city centre, and other nearby towns. Please find out beforehand from which terminal your flight departs, and the taxi will drop you off right in front of the right terminal.</p> <p>Car rental: There are five car rental branches at Helsinki Airport. Their service desks are located in the corridor between Terminals 1 and 2. You can also hire a car beforehand on the rental company's website or by calling them.</p>

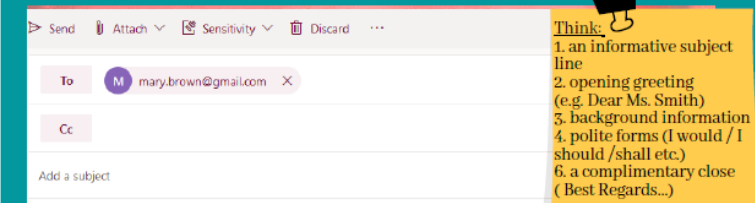
The "Airport Access" leaflet is presented in Language A (in this example it is Finnish). An English version of the text is added in case teachers, who are not familiar with the Finnish language, would like to create a similar activity or their own version of this activity in their preferred language.



- **Differentiating according to learners' needs:** As a follow-up to the above task, students are given the task of writing an email using the information from the texts and activities of the lesson. If students find the email part of this activity challenging or they are not familiar with writing formal emails, the teachers may adapt the task requirements by differentiating the text-type (email) required. The teacher could ask students to write a short text message (which is different from an email) to the parent in the second part of the lesson. However, this activity is a good opportunity for students to learn more about writing emails. It includes a template (see below) which contains certain tips for learners. These tips intend to raise their awareness regarding the main features of an email. Specifically,
 - the teacher could provide further explanations about the different parts of an e-mail, such as the subject line, sender, recipient, salutation, closing, signature, attachments, etc.
 - s/he could compare the structure and length of text messages with the format, structure and organisation of an e-mail (introduction, main body, and conclusion).
 - due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many classes are taught online. In an online lesson, students could create their own e-mail accounts and practice how to write emails in an authentic environment. Finally, they could send the activity to their teacher and get feedback.
 - As a follow-up online activity, the teacher could post learners' answers to a forum or Padlet or Flinga anonymously and ask them to post their replies under sample emails.

Handout C

Based on the messages you have exchanged with Eve and the information you have from the "Kulkuyhteydet Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalle" leaflet, write an e-mail to Eve's mother, *Mary Brown*. Introduce yourself, inform her about the situation and what you have agreed with Eve, and give your parents' details (names and phone numbers).



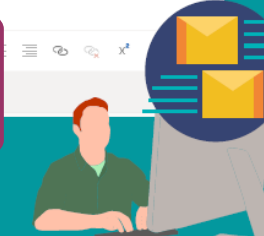
Think:

1. an informative subject line
2. opening greeting (e.g. Dear Ms. Smith)
3. background information
4. polite forms (I would / I should / shall etc.)
5. a complimentary close (Best Regards...)
6. a complimentary close (Best Regards...)

Students are instructed to write a formal e-mail in Language B (English).

This template is included in order to promote authenticity and familiarise students with the layout of an email.

If the teacher alters the language of the instructions, the template can be used for different language combinations.



- **Adapting the reflection grids:** A great number of the METLA activities incorporate a reflection component at the end. The reflection activity for this task focuses on the different characteristics of the text-types on which the students have worked (informal text messages and formal emails). Students are asked to reflect on them and compare their characteristics. In addition, a list is provided to prompt them to reflect on some of the variables they should be aware of when writing a message. This template can be adapted for use with different text-types.

Handout D



Student.....

Class:.....

REFLECTION

WRITE DOWN THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF TEXT MESSAGES

WRITE DOWN THREE PHRASES YOU FOUND EASY TO TRANSFER FROM _____ (LA) TO _____ (LB) AND THREE DIFFICULT ONES. WHY?

WRITE DOWN THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF E-MAILS

WHEN YOU WROTE YOUR TEXT MESSAGES, DID YOU CONSIDER ANY OF THE FOLLOWING (AND WHY/HOW?):

- the recipient's culture
- the recipient's age
- the form of the text (e.g. online)
- the purpose of your text (e.g. to explain/inform/complain)
- the level of politeness
- the languages involved
- the way we text in _____ (LA)
- the way we text in _____ (LB)