

# MASTER'S THESIS

Increasing the motivation to work with poetry through a lyrics and poetry remix project

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## **Abstract**

This master's thesis in English explores to what extent a remix project with lyrics from a pop song and a poem can increase the motivation to work with poetry in the ESL classroom. Key concepts in the theoretical framework of this thesis are creativity, motivation, digital literacy and remix. Previous research studies on remix in school and out of school are reviewed and discussed to see if student motivation can be increased through working with remix.

The research part in this thesis describes a short three lesson remix project in a Norwegian Vg1 English class that was made in the spring of 2022. The project of making films combining the lyrics of pop songs with Shakespearean sonnets was well received by the students who participated. The study included a small presurvey and a survey where the students expressed how they appreciated working with digital literacies in connection to the remix project. The study concludes that remix can be used in school to promote creativity and increase motivation to work with poetry.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

The background for this thesis is the constant challenge of making poetry reading and working with poetry feel relevant to our students in upper secondary school. To let students bridge the gap between old literature and new technology seems like an obvious choice when we are looking for new ways of making the classic texts relevant for young people. Our Norwegian curriculum stipulates in the competence aims after Vg1 programme for general studies that “the pupil is expected to be able to read, analyse and interpret fictional texts in English(...) and use appropriate digital resources and other aids in language learning, text creation and interaction” (Udir, 2020).

Teaching poetry is an ambiguous task for many teachers of first as well as second languages. The poems that we love are received with indifference by many of our students and working with analysis is not something most students enjoy (McVee, Bailey, and Shanahan, 2008, p. 112). How can we get our students to see poetry as something that can affect them? Remix and digital literacies offer new ways of learning and using creativity in the classroom. In my thesis and in my project, remix is a way of combining the lyrics of pop music and the poetry of Shakespeare. “Digital literacies are the individual and social skills needed to effectively interpret, manage, share and create meaning in the growing range of digital communication channels” (Dudeney, 2013, p. 2). There are many ways of defining creativity depending on which part of the creative process you focus on. “Creativity can be defined as the creation of original ideas, processes, experiences, or objects; more simply, it can be described as the ability to see ordinary things differently” (Huh, & Egbert, 2010, p. 208). The ability to see ordinary things differently is a definition of creativity that makes sense for the remix project that we worked with in my class.

## 1.2. Aim and research questions

I have come across studies where the remix of poetry and pop music seems to bridge the gap between school and out of school spontaneous listening. Remixing refers to using “cultural artifacts and combining them in new and creative ways” (Curwood, 2013, p. 84). These studies have been performed in Australia and the USA and not among second language learners. Second language learners of English in Norway are among the five best rated in the world, and therefore we should set our goals high (EF English Proficiency Index, 2021). “The majority of school students in European countries such as The Netherlands and Norway,

where the media are seldom dubbed, and where there is wide access to the Web, can increasingly be considered as ongoing bilinguals” (Bland,2018, p.2). Treating Norwegian students as ongoing bilinguals gives us the opportunity for giving our students more demanding challenges. There is currently no published research on remix learning in Scandinavia, so this makes it a very interesting topic to research. This brings us to the research questions that has guided this project and will guide this thesis:

1. How do Norwegian secondary students appreciate and experience creativity and digital literacies when working with poetry and remix?
2. How can a remix poetry project increase the motivation to work with poetry?

The first question is raised to find out if there is a basis for supposing that digital literacies make working with poetry seem relevant for students today. The second research question is raised to find out if a remix project can make working with poetry more motivating.

### 1.3. Structure of the thesis

My study was structured in three parts with a presurvey to find out about the students’ attitudes towards poetry before the project started. The first question was raised to find out how they felt about working with poetry. When the project aims to find out how to improve attitudes and motivation to work with poetry, we need to ask the students directly. To ask the students if they read poetry at home is necessary to establish if they have a pre-existing interest in poetry. To ask the students if they read poetry on social media was a way of checking if they read more poetry than they were aware of.

Then I started the project which consisted of making a short video which should put together two lines from a Shakespearean sonnet with two lines from a pop song of the students’ choice. The students were not instructed in how to make a video. By not giving instructions for how to make a video the students were free to make their own interpretations of how to solve the task. Would they find motivation through ownership of the task? This can be linked with how creativity corresponds with the ability to see ordinary things differently.

The project then concluded with a survey where the students answered questions to see if their motivation to work with poetry had changed during this project. These questions had a focus on whether they enjoyed the project or not. There were some direct questions about the making of the video and how they had solved this task. There was also a question about how their understanding of the poems and songs had developed through the project.

The theory section in this thesis will introduce the necessary theoretical framework to discuss the key concepts in this thesis: digital literacy, remix, creativity and motivation.

The methods section will look at the theory behind the choices that has been made when conducting the surveys and the project. The results of the survey will be presented and discussed before the conclusion.

## 2.Theory

### 2.1. Key concepts in this thesis

Creativity, digital literacy, remix, and motivation are key concepts in this thesis. They are connected through the following hypothesis. We learn because we are motivated. We are motivated because we like to create. Creativity has brought us digital literacy. Digital literacy is something that rejuvenate poetry through remix. Remix is playing and creating with a blend of traditional and non-traditional texts. In this thesis we will investigate how our students appreciate working with a remix of pop music and poetry and if such a project in turn can increase the motivation to work with poetry.

Creativity is defined as the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others (Franken, 1998, p. 396). To be creative you need to be able to see things in a new way. One way that creativity can be expressed is through digital literacy.

Digital literacy is a new literacy and has arisen from the need to use computers and mobile devices constructively. “Digital literacy is the ability to evaluate and critique information that is created and shared in digital mediums. To be digitally literate, persons must develop mental habits to adjust to new digital tools and content” (Hays & Kammer, 2021, p. 2). This new definition of digital literacy incorporates the necessity to be constantly open to change and new development. And this openness to change is a prerequisite for remix.

The word remix was first used to describe how to make new versions of music by putting it together in new ways. In this thesis it has a wider definition. “Remix is a practice of taking cultural artifacts and combining them in new and creative ways” (Curwood, 2013, p. 84). In

this thesis we will look at a variety of remix practices to see what separates them and what unites them and how we can use them in school to increase motivation.

Motivation explains why we do something. “Academic motivation is a process that explains why students engage in specific activities throughout their education, Students’ motivation is determined by their needs their beliefs, and their goals. Moreover, student motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic” (Anderman, 2020, p.195). Motivation is a process linked to the activities and the creativity as well as the students’ goals. In this way all my key concepts are connected.

### 2.1.1. Literature in the classroom

Why should we work with literature? Literature has something beneficial to offer to language learning as it combines attention to meaning with attention to form (Paran, 2008, p. 490).

According to Paran, it is motivating and engaging to work with literature. Paran states that we are beginning to understand the importance of the learning task which the teacher gives instructions for and whether it is successful as language learning and if it brings literary understanding to the students in the second language classroom. We respond to literature in ways that go beyond the mere words we read and learn. From the perspective of my 16 year old students who work with literature at school, it should give them a need to communicate their thoughts about the text that they have read, as well as a desire to read more. This is quite a challenge, but all the more satisfying when we succeed.

### 2.1.2. Poetry in the classroom

Why should we work with poetry? According to Parini “In poetry, which employs a refined form of language governed by certain conventions or traditional assumptions, writers articulate moods, describe intense and powerful states of mind, and formulate ideas of considerable subtlety and rhetorical power” (Parini, 2008, p. 24). He goes on to describe how “A whole world becomes available to readers that was not there before” (Parini, 2008, p. 25). Encouraging our students to experience how poetry can give new insights, corresponds to the curriculum and how “the pupil is expected to be able to read, discuss and reflect on the content and the language features and literary devices in various types of texts, including self-chosen texts” (Udir, 2020). According to Lazar, making the language of a poem the basis of classroom study is a way of improving language knowledge (Lazar, 1993, p. 100). This is also a first step towards enabling students to make interpretations of a poem. The students should learn to draw on their own experiences when interpreting poems and accordingly accept that

the interpretations of a poem vary from reader to reader. Drawing on your own experiences to interpret poetry sounds easy and natural when you say it, but it takes time and experience to do it right. The students may already have a lot of practice without realising it.

### 2.1.3. Pop music in the classroom

Why should we pair poetry with the lyrics of pop music? According to a study among pre-service teacher students in Montana, popular culture can easily be introduced alongside traditional literacy curricula and can strengthen academic achievement. Popular culture is according to this study one of the most important sources of knowledge students in primary and secondary school draw upon in school. Petrone suggests that we should draw upon popular culture in our schools. Not to do so would be an active process of “turning away from how students learn and engage the world, rather than a passive process of omission” (Petrone, 2013, p. 261). In its essence, interpreting poetry and interpreting lyrics from pop music is the same. If we choose to ignore popular culture because it has a lower academic status, we will also miss a lot of interest and motivation to learn from the students.

### 2.1.4. Pop music in the classroom in Norway

According to a Norwegian article about action research carried out in a vg1 class just like mine, many students lose interest in schoolwork, due to the attraction of extracurricular interests such as popular music. In this article popular music is understood in a wide sense with genres such as pop, rock, country blues, hard rock, rap and hip-hop (Langeland, 2013, p. 2-3). This article concludes that pop music is an underexploited resource in English language teaching (ELT) classrooms in Norwegian secondary schools and even goes as far as comparing it with hitting a goldmine (Langeland, 2013, p. 6). The goldmine simile is used to explain how much this topic engages the students. This subject matter should be used to keep the students’ motivation to learn and can be used to engage the students to work with texts that they already know and compare it with for example poetry.

## 2.2. Digital literacies

To accommodate evolving technologies, we need to implement digital literacies in the second language classroom. This is described in the curriculum that “the pupil is expected to be able to use appropriate digital resources and other aids in language learning, text creation and interaction” (Udir, 2020). Hockly suggests that language, information, connections and (re)design are overlapping skill-sets to structure the literacies. These digital literacies systemize the different tools from everything from language-based literacy, information-based literacy, connection-based literacy to redesign- based literacy, such as recreating and

repurposing already-made digital content in innovative ways (Hockley, 2012, p. 109). As language teachers, we can help our students learn the language skills needed to succeed in a technological world. By using these digital literacies, we fulfil the criteria that our new steering documents demand: “The pupil should be able to discuss and reflect on form content and language features and literary devices in different cultural forms of expression from different media in the English-language world, including film, music and gaming” (Udir, 2020).

By providing our students with analytical skills connected to different cultural expressions, we will provide them with necessary tools for both social and practical life. “The aim of teaching multiple literacies is reading at a deeper level, and it is undoubtedly the English language teaching (ELT) classroom that offers most opportunities for this training due to the enormous diversity of English-language texts”(Bland,2018, p. 5). Bland places the teaching of multiple literacies well within the English Language Teaching classroom because of the diversity of English Language texts and goes on to advocate the use of literature to become more skilled in interpreting new literacies. Literary texts prompt the reader to consider interpretation as well as connotation and cultural meanings.

### 2.2.1. Poetry and filmmaking

Curwood and Cowell found that students could apply literary practices such as audience awareness and construction of meaning by combining poetry and film making. Students have felt disconnected from the subject in traditional reading and writing based teaching of poetry. This is something that has been found in earlier studies, too (Curwood and Cowell, 2011 p. 118). Curwood and Cowell found in their study that the transfer of knowledge was practised in very meaningful ways through the use of film making. Making film offered a new and interesting way of interpreting literature. In this project the educators gave the students clear instructions of how to make a storyboard and how visualise their poetry through these storyboards (Curwood and Cowell, 2011, p. 113). This gave the students a clear understanding of what they were trying to express. Making storyboards gave the students an opportunity to explain their interpretations and to show each other how they visualized the poetry.

### 2.2.2. The interview or video log

In a research article about using multimodal literacies to work with poetry, McVee, Bailey and Shanahan observe that it was important to access and assess the student's design processes. They discovered that "Teachers and students often express an aversion to poetry based on their experiences with based poetry texts that typically dominate school curricula" (McVee, Bailey, and Shanahan, 2008, p. 139.) In interviews, the students would comment on how they had not been able to convey the deeper understandings they were trying to express. Often their intended meaning was not realized through their final products because of time constraints or technical difficulties. The flash and gloss of a visual product may not correspond to the depth of understanding by the student (McVee, Bailey, and Shanahan, 2008, p. 139). Most teachers know this, but it is an important reminder that much reflection on the student's part can be accessed through a discussion of the choices the students have made and why they made them. This means that taking the time to interview or have the students make a video log is worth the effort and can show learning goals that would otherwise remain unclear to the teacher.

### 2.2.3. Can digital literacy be taught?

In the article "Can we teach digital natives digital literacy?", Ng discusses the question of whether digital literacy can be taught or not. The article investigates how a group of undergraduate students at an Australian university are able to learn digital technology. Digital natives are referred to as people being born after 1980. The short answer to the question raised by the title is yes. The students can learn digital literacy, but they need to be made aware of what constitutes educational technologies and be provided with the opportunity to use them. Through this work their belief in their own digital literacy increases. (Ng, 2012, p. 1078) The article concludes with how many of the students' technical capabilities have been gained informally through the use mobile phones. And the article asks educators to expand the role of digital technologies in formal settings. The article is ten years old and that is a long time in digital development. The tendencies that were stipulated of informal learning from digital technologies on mobile phones seem to increase and become more prominent. The intersecting literacies that digital literacy consist of can be interpreted from the model by Ng that is printed below.

## Can we teach digital natives digital literacy?

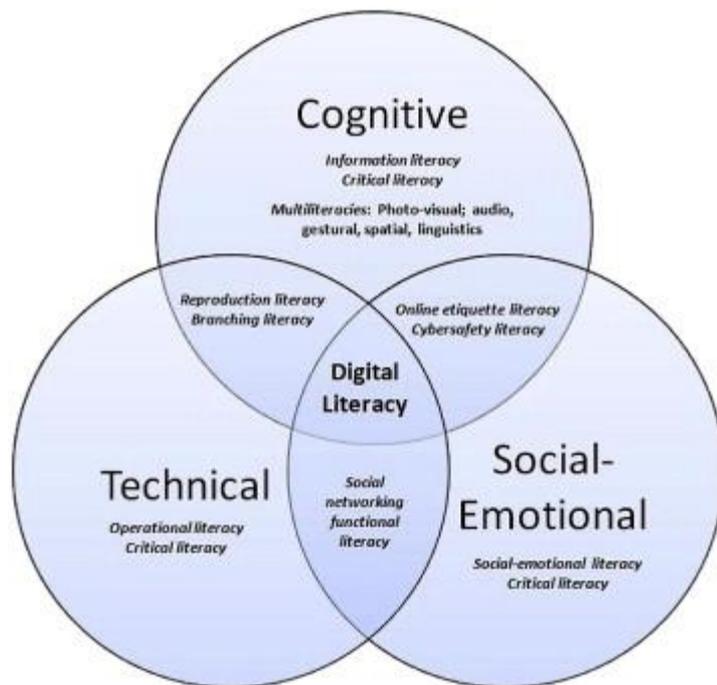


Fig. 1. Digital literacy model (Ng, 2012).

The digital literacy model by Ng explains how technical, social-emotional and cognitive literacy interact and how digital literacy exist where these literacies intersect. It is very interesting how these different literacies are necessary to develop this skill-set. You need the cognitive critical literacy to understand how the digital medium works. You need the technical critical literacy to make it work and the social-emotional literacy to have the drive to want to make it work. These literacies also sum up why young people are good at this. They are not set in their ways of previous technical and cognitive thinking and never is social networking more important than to young people. “Digital literacy is also important for them to know about how the world operates where so many processes are being governed by technology” (Ng, 2012, p. 1077).

In a Norwegian article from 2019, Arne Olav Nygård argues that the terms digital native and digital immigrant were useful in the early years of digital literacy discourse, but that they now are counterproductive. One of the main reasons are that there are greater differences within the group of so-called digital natives than between the different generations. The division into digital native and immigrant does not cover the dynamic nature of digital literacy and the different ways digital literacy tools are interwoven with other types of literacy (Nygård, 2019, p. 252). As this article is more recent than the article by Ng and based on Norwegian conditions it is worth noticing there may be a change in the group or that the digital literacy of

the group has evolved because the students have had more access to digital technology over the last decade. Today's students may take a lot of the technology connected to social media for granted, but there is no guarantee that the digital proficiency applies to all the students and we often see that there are huge gaps in some of the students' knowledge of digital literacy. We sometimes see that students have a passive relationship to social media and digital technology where they are passive consumers who do not know how to produce or create material digitally.

### 2.3. Remix

We can find early examples of remixing dating as far back as the 1400s, but then in the form of fan fiction. The internet, digital tools and online spaces have made remix very popular in recent years. Digital literacy is a new literacy, we find that the articles about digital literacy and remix are not older than twenty years, even though the contents and discussion of using filmmaking in school can be much older than this. Lankshear and Knobel used the term remix in 2006, but then described it as a new literacy. They had the clarity of mind to add that what was a new literacy then would be an old literacy by 2008. (Knobel and Lankshear, 2006, p. 63) In their book called *New Literacies: Everyday Practices and Classroom Learning*, they defined "Diverse practices of 'remixing' – where a range of original materials are copied, cut, spliced, edited, reworked, and mixed into a new creation" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006, p. 82). They explained the popularity of remixing with the personal computers and the internet which could give anyone the opportunity to make music by editing and mixing in a way that had not been possible before.

The initial inspiration for my study came through Bowmer and Curwood's article about remixing and digital literacies and how these can improve motivation to learn about poetry. Our pupils are much more exposed to popular music and its lyrics than to traditional poetry (Bowmer and Curwood, 2016. P. 141). Bowmer and Curwood explore how popular culture lends relevance to traditional poetry and how remixing them inspires students. By comparing the lyrics of popular music to romantic poetry and remixing the two, Australian students were much more motivated. The research goal of this study was to find out how studying popular music and romantic poetry alongside each other makes secondary English more relevant for students. The second goal in Bowmer and Curwood's study was to find out how remixing Romantic poetry with popular culture texts promotes student agency and engagement. An important prerequisite to such a study is for the teacher to acknowledge the students' expertise

when it comes to popular music. Bowmer and Curwood's study was quite extensive. It included 13 lessons and five 30-minute interviews in the focal group, as well as studying all the student artifacts and products from this period. An important student voice in the study explained her dislike of high school English: "It doesn't relate to anything." (Bowmer and Curwood, 2016. P. 145). This study concluded that students found remixing a rare opportunity to exercise agency in what they otherwise found to be a teacher-controlled curriculum. Pop culture is a complement to and not a substitute for traditional literature. Working with popular music can make the use of literary devices more clear to them as they engage with these texts more frequently. They would then know some of these lyrics by heart and would have a better chance of finding rhythm and meter.

### 2.3.1. Remix and Creativity

In "An Overview of research literature relating to remix, literacy, and creativity", Michele Knobel points out guidelines for educators regarding remix and new literacies. She makes interesting observations about creativity in the classroom through working with remix and literacy (Knobel, 2017, p. 46). The most important element in this review is creativity. Working with creativity in a context of literacy and remix is important and a good way of keeping a healthy focus on collaborative activities and will increase motivation to learn. "Creative accomplishment is social before it is private, and largely externalized rather than "interior " or "private""(Knobel 2017, p. 36). Creativity does not appear in a vacuum. It will always draw upon context and resources that already exist. In doing so it will transcend what already exist. We can see this kind of creativity in digital literacy and this can be acknowledged and encouraged in the classroom.

The literature review by Knobel represents how everyday people have practiced creativity by surveying 36 existing research articles on digital remix and literacy published from 2006 to 2016. Creativity is drawing on existing resources and ideas. It can be a sociocultural conception and could be examined through work with new literacies and remixes in the classroom. An important aim of this article is to inform how teachers can think usefully about creativity and literacy in their classrooms. A second aim of this article is to tell us of how research of literacy and remix can inform us of how creativity and literacy has been practiced outside schools. Knobel found many ways in which students can be creative in the 36 articles on remix and new literacies that she studied.

### 2.3.2. Fan fiction

Fan fiction is one of the early the remix practices in articles that have been reviewed by Knobel. Fan fiction refers to practices where fans remix the original stories to make new narratives. This started as an out of school creativity, but according to Black, an important challenge for teachers is thinking of ways to make our classrooms more open to creativity. We should strive for “inquiry-based, participatory forms of learning in which students are encouraged to explore alternative interpretations of literature and classroom materials, much as they explore alternative interpretations of media through their fan fiction text” (Black, 2009, p. 696). My remix project is this kind of low-key project where the students are encouraged to find alternative interpretations of literature and hopefully experience a sense of accomplishment in the process. The early fan fiction affinity sites can be an inspiration to school remix projects, because they sprang out as spontaneous writing sites where fans wanted to continue the lives of literary idols. A similar remix practice is explored in *Teaching with Harry Potter : Essays on classroom wizardry from elementary school to college*. (Frankel, 2013). These articles underline how important motivation is for literacy. Young writers can immerse themselves in fantasy and science fiction through fan fiction. This gives them an opportunity to critically engage the writings of their literary idols and can respond to literature through “remixing characters, setting and events” (Curwood, 2013, p. 90). Sauro and Sundmark investigated the bridging of digital and linguistic practices of the second language classroom and how fanfiction could be used. They investigated how technological knowhow affected their students learning experience when working with fanfiction. “Future fanfiction projects should be designed to allow students greater freedom in their selection of online publishing tools and formats that reflect both their communication goals and their prior experiences.” (Sauro & Sundmark, 2019, p. 54). To develop the fanfiction tasks in this way could lead to the students creating more engaging stories and it could increase motivation to work with fanfiction. If teachers have the courage to introduce remixing of fanfiction into school it can prove motivating and a powerful way of using literature in the classroom. These are examples of creativity that will out. They start with an out of school activity and school can only try to channel this creativity in school activities.

### 2.3.3. Poetry affinity website

Exploring how young people read, write and critique poetry on websites is the focus of the article by Padgett and Curwood (2016). An important factor in this article is that these are out-of-school activities and that they are done voluntarily in the students’ spare time.

Nevertheless, teaching poetic literacy can and should find inspiration in the website such as Figment.com and find new ways of using peer reviewing, teaching constructive criticism and fostering creative passions. There is no reason why we should not develop learning communities and make use of online affinity platforms. I had one of my student participants express a love of poetry so I recommended the website figment.com only to discover that it had been shut down due to lack of sponsorship and any searches now would be redirected to a page owned by Penguin Random House. The website is still about the love of literature, but less a collaborative community. The work on this website exemplified the combination of creativity and intrinsic motivation that is a goal for school work as well.

#### 2.3.4. Intercultural musical remix videos

Migrating literacies is how Myrrh Domingo describes how the artist Aziatic makes multimodal renditions of music and text in a music video (Domingo, 2014. P. 277). She coins this term to express how Filipino British youth engages reading writing and speaking across social contexts. The creative use of hip hop lyrics in the music video combines two different languages to signal cultural group membership, Tagalog and English. The creativity in this example can be defined as a way of making meaning that is shared with others. This cultural remix described in this article is a colour coding of the different languages represented in the lyrics. This language remix constitutes something new as well. The listeners of this music identifies with the music because of the use of the two different languages. Knowing that others will not understand the lyrics on the same level as they do gives them a linguistic identity. The creativity of music is can also be seen and heard in the next remix project.

An African remix project describes how the artists Naija Boys re-appropriates black American hip hop in a very popular Nigerian interpretation. This Afro-exploitation of black American music is at the same time original and put into a Nigerian context. The videos are comedic and satirical as they comment on the difference between afro American and Nigerian culture as well as playing with well-known stereotypes(Strong & Ossei-Owusu 2014, p.201). The Youtube videos received 20 million views. It could be argued that making music inspired by other artists from other countries does not constitute a remix in this new sense of the word, but the musicians are using cultural artifacts and combining them in new and creative ways. And even though satire has a long tradition, this does not mean it is not relevant in a remix context. The creativity of music is something that ties us together as the music travels across continents.

### 2.3.5. Visual poetry remix

Creating poetry through visual art is a new concept where the traditional writing classroom meets the concept of remix in a visual poetry project. In their article about classroom remix, Callahan and King (2011) explore student social hierarchies and how new challenges bring students forward who did not play an active role before in collaborative learning. This article raises the question of how the new techno-literacies function within the school context. The new literacies open up for valuing more visual aptitudes and not just the linguistic. Most importantly the article asks for an open mind in both teacher and student. Preconceived notions of what poetry is and how it should be presented could reduce the possible learning outcome. They refer to it as mindset remix as something that asks both teacher and students to work together to transcend barriers of age. The teacher should be open to student expertise in digital media and let them show us what is possible and help explore what should count as literature in traditional categories. (Callahan and King, 2011, p.143) This is a recurring theme in the articles of remix literacies. The students' expertise in digital media is called upon to help solve a challenge of analysing or interpreting a text. This expertise should lend relevancy to the challenge at hand. By using technical know-how the students are able to bridge the gap of interpretation where the traditional school essay feels more alien to many students.

### 2.3.6. Multimodal literacies

According to their article about teaching multimodal and digital literacies in second language settings, Lotherington and Jenson (2011) conclude that wherever teachers place themselves in the world of multimodality, it does not define the worlds of their students. The article gives an overview of theoretical perspectives on multimodality as well as describing pedagogical projects that make use of different kinds of multimodal teaching practices in second language contexts. The article underlines the need for an appropriate teacher education, suitable assessment methods, the freedom to experiment with multimodality in the classroom, as well as the respect for varying language competencies in the student group. (Lotherington and Jenson 2011, p. 241.)

Sound elements became of special interest to Heidi Höglund in a research article where she reviews digital multimodal composition in response to poetry. She concludes that students use multimodal composing strategies such as sound effects to engage with pressing matters. Sound elements represent a key resource in student response to the poems they are set to

interpret. This study points out the continuing need to research students' use of sound in digital composition processes (Höglund, 2022, p. 297). The students activate their social agency by commenting on a social issue through the use of sound elements in their multimodal compositions. The use of these sound elements was perceived as something playful and interesting to the students where they had little previous experience.

### 2.3.7. Remix practices in critical literacy

In a corpora-based article about the remix practices in non-fiction books for children, Graff and Shimek, explore the way young readers respond to literature. The students consume, produce, share and negotiate with non-fiction children's literature as a starting point. (Graff and Shimek, 2020, p. 232) This is a new way of working with non-fiction and the goal is to cultivate informed, engaged, and discerning citizens. Working in a process-oriented manner the students work with critical literacy and learn as they continue to read, write and discuss. Working with non-fiction in this way is perhaps a way of keeping the playfulness alive. We will look at how we motivate our students.

### 2.3.7. Remix practices summary

Remix and remix practices span from fan fiction and poetry affinity, through music and video production to new ways of working with non-fiction for children. These remix practices have a few things in common. They all take cultural artifacts and combine them in new and creative ways. They do not all appear in a school situation, but they do all serve to inspire how school and learning situations could be if the goal is to inspire creativity and develop motivation.

## 2.4. Motivation

How do we motivate our students? Motivation is at the centre of learning. What motivates us to learn and why do we learn? Most children begin school with a joy of learning and a strong motivation to learn. However, the motivation declines over the years, and students lose interest and confidence about their ability to succeed. The curiosity and excitement in learning is often replaced with the attitude that school is a workplace where the students are required to do tasks that do not have any particular meaning connected to them. (Wigfield & Wentzel, 2007, p. 193). How can we make the students motivated to work with poetry in upper secondary school and what mechanisms govern motivation? We will look at what extrinsic

and intrinsic motivation does for learning and see how they interact through the self-determination theory. There are various ways to stimulate intrinsic motivation.

#### 2.4.1. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

We should consider the possibility that students work with poetry because it gives them pleasure to do so. This is intrinsic motivation. At the same time, we should open up for the possibility that they work with poetry in order to please the teacher or their parents or because they will be tested and graded about it afterwards. This is extrinsic motivation. The two concepts are not mutually exclusive, we can imagine that the two concepts ought to be coexisting in the classroom. Extrinsic motivation in the classroom is very often connected to the students being particularly good at an activity and is often rewarded with verbal acknowledgement or a good grade. Intrinsic motivation can be enhanced by the acknowledgement by others (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000, p. 273). We get inspired by working with others and sharing the joy of working with something we like.

#### 2.4.2. Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is centrally concerned with the social conditions that facilitate or hinder motivation. The theory by Ryan and Deci examines how biological, social and cultural conditions either enhance or undermine our capacities for motivation. “SDT research thus critically inquires into factors, both intrinsic to individual development and within social contexts, that facilitate vitality, motivation, social integration and well-being, and, alternatively, those that contribute to depletion, fragmentation, antisocial behaviors and unhappiness” (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 3).

Three basic psychological needs have been identified in the SDT. These are autonomy, relatedness and competence. (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 8). To apply SDT in the classroom involves supporting autonomy in the learning situation. The students perform better when they believe that they are self-governed. The students need to relate to the tasks and to their group. The students need to feel connected to the group to increase intrinsic motivation. The classroom and every aspect of the learning situation should cultivate competence.

SDT differentiates between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and the latter ranging from highly controlled to autonomous. This theory places its primary emphasis on the sources and types of motivation behind people's actions. Intrinsic motivation thrives when the conditions support autonomy and competence is reduced when these needs are not fulfilled. People are

naturally motivated to learn, but social contexts can reduce the natural basis for learning. (Wentzel & Miele, 2009, p.99).

#### 2.4.3. Autonomous learners remember better

Students who learn through interest will remember more. Modern schooling is not structured to achieve intrinsic motivation. According to Deci and Ryan the curricula is often decided by policy-makers and the students or teachers for that matter have little influence over what is to be taught or learnt. The learning will often be measured and graded. The intrinsic learning in school is declining from the early years where most of what the students learn is intrinsically motivated whereas in upper secondary school, very much of the motivation is extrinsic.

Students who see themselves as autonomous and who learn through interest remember better and score higher in surprise tests (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 353).

#### 2.4.4. Intrinsic motivation can be generalised

In a study of garden-based education Skinner and Chi discovered that to students who had low motivation and were likely to drop out of school, introducing work in the school garden was beneficial for the students' motivation. Succeeding with this work increased motivation in other areas as well. The intrinsic motivation could be generalised to include other subjects in the students' school day (Skinner and Chi, 2012, p 3) If success in one area can increase your motivation in another, it does not seem far-fetched that motivation to work with lyrics of pop music could increase the motivation to work with classical poetry.

#### 2.4.5. Authentic materials increase motivation

According to an article by Crookes and Schmidt, approaches studying motivation have shared two limiting features. The approaches have been social-psychological. Motivation has been consistently linked with attitudes the community of speakers of the target language, with an interest in interacting with such speakers, and with some degree of self-identification with the target language community (Crookes & Schmidt, R. 1991, p. 471). In an article about the effect of authentic materials on the motivation English as a foreign language (EFL) learner, Peacock found out that using authentic materials that was not made for this purpose and was previously published as literature had a positive impact on student learner motivation. A surprising find in this article was that authentic materials was reported considerably less interesting than artificial materials by the students. At the same time the results from the article clearly stated that working with authentic materials was more motivating for learning as indicated (Peacock, 1997, p 153) This suggest that self-reported interest in the materials in use is separate as a component of motivation from levels of attention or action and persistence

with the learning task. In the selection of authentic materials were among other texts, two poems.

#### 2.4.6. The importance of an empathic teacher

In an article describing objectives and methodologies used to explore student motivation in working with poetry, Henry and Thorsen explored interactions between teacher and students. “Small and sometimes almost imperceptible interactions between teachers and students can be of significance for motivation and engagement” (Henry & Thorsen, 2019, p. 49). The teacher’s empathic skills are a very important factor when it comes to motivating and engaging students. The teacher’s important role has been assumed, but there has not been much research on the subject before. How is it that the teacher engages the students to work? This article stipulates the teacher does so through short interactions and dialogues with the students and a keen interest in them.

#### 2.4.7. Achievement goals

In an article about university students’ achievement goals and academic dishonesty, we get a unique insight in how students perspectives shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the achievement goal theory, four achievement goals are identified. These are mastery-approach, mastery-avoidance, performance-approach and performance-avoidance. Mastery approach is associated positive learning outcomes such as interest, and persistence. However, mastery-avoidance is connected to behaviour that is directed away from a negative outcome like failing a test. Avoidance is associated with negative emotions and poor learning strategies. Performance approach and performance avoidance are achievement goals connected to competence relative to others (Daniels et. al ,2021, p. 300). Motivated students achieve good results and students with low motivation are more prone to academic dishonesty (Daniels et. al ,2021, p. 315). It should come as no surprise that students who are highly motivated, can work from home without difficulties. There are opportunities to work without disturbance for a longer period of time when you work from home, but at the same time, there are no one to get you back on track if you have a low motivation.

#### 2.4.8. Implementing a formative assessment practice

Implementing a formative assessment practice can increase the students’ motivation. Even though further studies are needed with larger groups of participants, it seems likely that teacher intervention can improve students’ behavioural engagement and autonomous motivation to learn. The formative assessment practice was based on a professional development program. The student centered approach to a formative assessment practice was

centered on peer assessment and peer feedback in order to take a more proactive role in the core formative assessment processes of identifying their learning needs and how to act on this information. The teacher-centered approach in this program was to focus on teacher's actions and how they gather evidence of students learning, for example through classroom dialogue or short written tests (Näsström et. al, 2021, p 11). The formative assessment practice had a clear focus what the students' knowledge and skills were relating to the learning goals before the teaching and learning unit. Then the formative assessment practice focused on what the students' knowledge and skills were during the learning unit and based on the findings of these two questions, what would be the best method to meet these learning needs? This caused the teacher among other changes, to stop just answering questions from the students who asked, but also asking those who did not, because they were often much more insecure in their knowledge (Näsström et. al, 2021, p 8). This teaching practice constituted a shift from a summative to a formative assessment practice. Previously most of the focus had been on a product in the form of a test, now the process of learning and the motivation to learn was more in focus.

#### 2.4.9. Literature increases motivation in L2 classroom

According to a critical review of the use of literature in second language classroom: "The use of literature enables students to develop L2 linguistic knowledge and language awareness, communicative competence, cultural knowledge of the target language, critical thinking skills, helps their level motivation, and provides them with emotional engagement" (Iida, 2013, p. 9). Through the use of literature motivation for learning a second language can be increased, because we need emotional engagement to increase the motivation to learn a second language.

#### 2.4.10. Language-speaking ideals

In a study of language speaking ideals or envisioning future second language speaking selves, it was found that females are more likely to see themselves communicating and interacting with target language speakers in a foreign language than males in the future. Believing in these future selves means that they are more robust and likely to be realised. (Henry & Cliffordson, 2013, p. 289). To be able to envision a future self, speaking a second language increases the motivation to learn.

#### 2.4.11. Out of school learning

In a study measuring out of school learning and motivation, Schürmann & Quaiser-Pohl compared an out of school learning setting and motivational regulations at school in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects. The study also looked at gender and achievement as important factors of motivation. The study found that out of school activities levelled the differences in perceived competence between high and low achieving students and differences in intrinsic motivation in this group. These findings emphasise the importance of out of school learning in low achieving students. (Schürmann & Quaiser-Pohl, 2022, p 9). Intrinsic motivation is found in out of school activities. The students work with this voluntarily. And in this way, it could be compared to fanfiction and other out of school remix practices. When making my remix project I tried to achieve intrinsic motivation. The out of school learning situation is the ideal, where students work with subjects out of interest. Of course, there may be extrinsic motivation here too. The students might be doing the activities because they feel that these activities are beneficial for them and this can improve their grades or similar exterior motives.

#### 2.4.12. Motivation summary

In these chapters we have looked at theories governing motivation. The difference between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is central to this thesis. This is the difference between working with poetry because you *have to* rather than because you *want to* do it is essential here. The research question of how a remix project can increase the motivation to work with poetry should be answered with a shift from *have to* to *want to*. The self-determination theory looks at factors that facilitates or hinders motivation. Autonomy, relatedness and competence are psychological needs that must be fulfilled to increase intrinsic motivation. We will look at how these psychological needs are experienced in the remix project. The ideal is what happens in out of school learning and how intrinsic motivation is at the centre of this activity.

### 3. Methods:

In this project, I invited my vg1 class to participate. The students in my class were 16 years old and attended vg1 general studies. I had made a pre-study questionnaire, a remix task, and a final survey to investigate if the student's motivation to learn about poetry increased after the project. I chose to conduct a presurvey and a questionnaire. The questionnaire was chosen instead of interviews. The presurvey was chosen to show if my students had any prejudice

towards the subject or if they on the other hand had a pre-existing interest in poetry. The survey that was conducted after the completion of the project, assessed whether there had been development in attitudes towards working with poetry. I wanted to find out if the students' intrinsic motivation to work with poetry could be increased through this project. By removing obvious extrinsic motivation factors such as grading, I hoped that the students would appreciate working with poetry and experience creativity while working with remix.

### 3.1. The questionnaires

I chose to make a questionnaire because I wanted to understand if the students changed their attitudes towards working with poetry, when the project was finished and they had worked with poetry through digital literacies. The survey had open-ended questions. In professional questionnaires the questions are primarily closed-ended. Close-ended questions do not require the respondents produce any free writing. The respondents in close-ended most often get to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with a statement. I chose open-ended questions because I wanted the respondents to feel free to say what they wanted. The survey will also provide attitudinal information about learning poetry and new media (McKay, 2006, p. 35). Survey research can use both statistical and qualitative analysis. However, there is no opportunity to go back or follow up interesting answers like interviews would have given. The sample size in this survey is limited to the students in my class. The positive aspect of this is that I know exactly what information they have been given and I know the situation the pre-survey and the survey have been conducted in (McKay, 2006, p. 17). A more general survey with more participant in different classes and even in different schools could have given a more certain result regarding general attitudes towards poetry and working with poetry.

In hindsight I quickly found out that I should have piloted the questionnaire. Even though the intended sample of the questionnaire was not so large, a pilot would have given me the chance to fine-tune some of the questions and add some questions. Some of my questions did not give so much information and some were perhaps too leading. A pilot could have showed missing responses or signs that the instructions were not understood correctly. The pilot could measure if the range of responses to the items made them include almost everyone or no one, because this makes it difficult to process statistically. Could the internal consistency of the

items be improved so that they measure the same target area? (Dörnyei and Csizer in Mackey & Gass, 2012, p. 80).

### 3.2. The timing of the project

I chose to wait until after the mock exams in May to perform the project so that my students would not feel that they wasted their time when they should have prepared for the mock exam. All exams were cancelled this year because of the pandemic, so there would not be any protests that this project did not prepare them for the exam either. When introducing this project, I was quite clear that the students would not be graded for their work, so that their motivation towards working with poetry would not be confused with the desire for a good grade. To remove grading as a factor is to go from a summative to a formative assessment approach. (Näsström et. al, 2021, p 2). However, this could also have been a contributing factor to why some of the students declined to participate in the project as well as the surveys. This could tell us that by removing all extrinsic motivation the students chose not to participate.

### 3.3. The Project

The project itself was started by listening to and reading two sonnets by William Shakespeare. According to the competence aims for VG1 general studies, “the pupil is expected to be able read, analyse and interpret fictional texts in English” (Udir, 2020). I chose the two sonnets by William Shakespeare because “the pupils should be able to read, discuss and reflect on the content and language features and literary devices in various types of texts, including self-chosen texts (Udir, 2020). “Our curriculum does not go into detail as to which texts we should use, but there is a clear precedent that Shakespeare should be included because of his standing in western literature and culture. I chose sonnet 18 ”Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day” and sonnet 130” My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun”, because they are a good way to introduce Shakespeare to students( Johnson, 2002, p. 18). Sonnet 130 has as intriguing opening that can inspire the students to think of the poetry of love from a new perspective. Sonnet 18 was chosen because it starts out as a traditional love poem where the lyrical subject shows how his lover is better by comparison than a summer’s day, by the end he is praising his own poetic skills instead.

The students were instructed to choose two lines from Sonnet 18 or Sonnet 130 and couple them with two lines from a pop song of their choice. The short length of the product was

chosen because the project was voluntary and not much time was available to complete the task. In addition, Bowmer and Curwood did a similar project that had a similar scope: to remix a popular song with a poem. The length of the products in Bowmer and Curwood's project is not expressly stated, but they show an example where there are two lines from each text (Bowmer and Curwood, 2016, p. 147) They would then present this in a video presentation. The lines should be visible, and their voices should be heard, but it was up to them if they would appear in the video. They were asked to work in pairs. This corresponds to the competence aims in the curriculum "The pupil is expected to be able to discuss and reflect on form, content and language features and literary devices in different cultural forms of expression from different media in the English-language world, including music, film and gaming" (Udir, 2020).

By pairing the poems to pop songs, the students make an interpretation. Their choice of songs can limit, expand or contrast the interpretations of the sonnets. This is remixing as it refers to using cultural artifacts in this case lyrics from a song and a sonnet and combining them in new and creative ways (Curwood, 2013 in Bowmer and Curwood, 2016). After they have recorded their videos they will answer the final survey.

Survey research is a method of quantitative research aiming to collect self-report data from individuals. Originating in social sciences, survey research operates from the idea that the characteristics and opinions of a large population can be described from the answers of a fraction of this group. Surveys can make inferences about people's opinions and attitudes towards specific second language issues. (Dörnyei and Csizer in Mackey & Gass, 2012, p. 74-75). Attitudes towards working with poetry should be well within the parameter of survey research.

The survey aimed to find out if the students were more motivated to work with poetry than before the project started. A survey is a written questionnaire that can provide valid and reliable data. Survey research was chosen because it can give us factual information, behavioural information and attitudinal information. Most of the questions in this survey have provided attitudinal information, because the most important information told us of how motivation to work with poetry had changed during the project. The questions were open-ended. Open-ended questions can provide richer data than close-ended questions, but they can be more difficult to analyse (McKay, 2006, p. 39).

The remix project that was conducted in my class was intended to be motivating using lyrics of their own choice. In this way the gap between the exciting out of school media practices and the more traditional in school activities could be bridged. Remix of pop music and Shakespeare poetry should also give the students an opportunity to critically engage the writings of their literary or musical idols. Many of my students say that they never read any books, but they do listen to pop music. In hindsight, this is a question which should have been included in the questionnaire. To what extent do they listen to pop music and what do their lyrics mean to the students? I can find statistics which shows that 9 out of 10 Norwegians stream music, and 50% of Norwegians have pop music as their favourite music genre (Kleveland, 2019). It would have been much more precise and relevant simply to ask the students what their relationship to pop music is and how much they listen to it.

Additional interviews were considered, but this idea was discarded. Such interviews could have given me more balanced and nuanced attitudes towards poetry in general and this project in particular. When these students are my students and I have the responsibility to grade them at the end of the course, I am in a position of power. The asymmetrical relationship I have to my students, makes it difficult for them to express criticism or express negative feelings towards the subject we are discussing (McKay, 2006, p. 54). I have applied and received permission from the Norwegian centre for research data- NSD, to conduct this project. As the students were 16 years old they were allowed to consent to participate in the project themselves as the survey did not divulge any personal information(Appendix D). A letter of information was sent to their parents (Appendix E).

### 3.2. The videos

The videos were assessed by looking for creativity and digital literacy. How was the task solved? Did the students use any sound effects or did they add music? Did they film their computer screen or did they insert the text they were asked to include in the video presentation? It is reasonable to assume that digital literacy and creativity in the making of the video also show a higher degree of intrinsic motivation in the students? A display of creativity would show a commitment to the task. If the videos had been linked to the survey, we would know if the most creative videos were made by the students who enjoyed the project the most. As it is, we can make it an assumption that the most creative videos were made by the most intrinsically motivated students. However, in a study about remixing and creativity, the students said the process of creating a remix enhanced their creativity. This could not be

detected in the objective assessments of the project. The process of taking part in the project may have contributed to the self-perception of improved creativity (Order et al. 2017, p.305). This corresponds with the findings from a study about the quality of mobile-assisted, video-making task outcomes and the role of proficiency, narrative ability, digital literacy, and motivation. This study by Kang and Kim concluded that the most important factors to the quality of the video task outcomes were the English writing proficiency and the first language narrative ability. In this study, motivation and digital literacy was found to make less of an impact on the video quality regarding the linguistic quality and the quality of the content (Kang and Kim, 2021 p 23-24). Creativity did not increase objectively from participating in the project about creativity and remix even though the self-perception of improved creativity and English proficiency had a much larger impact than motivation in the project about videomaking tasks. It would then be quite exciting to observe if the results of the project would show an increased motivation to work with poetry.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. The project

How did my students appreciate and experience creativity and digital literacies when working with poetry and remix? The results of the presurvey, the survey and the videos from the project will help answering this question.

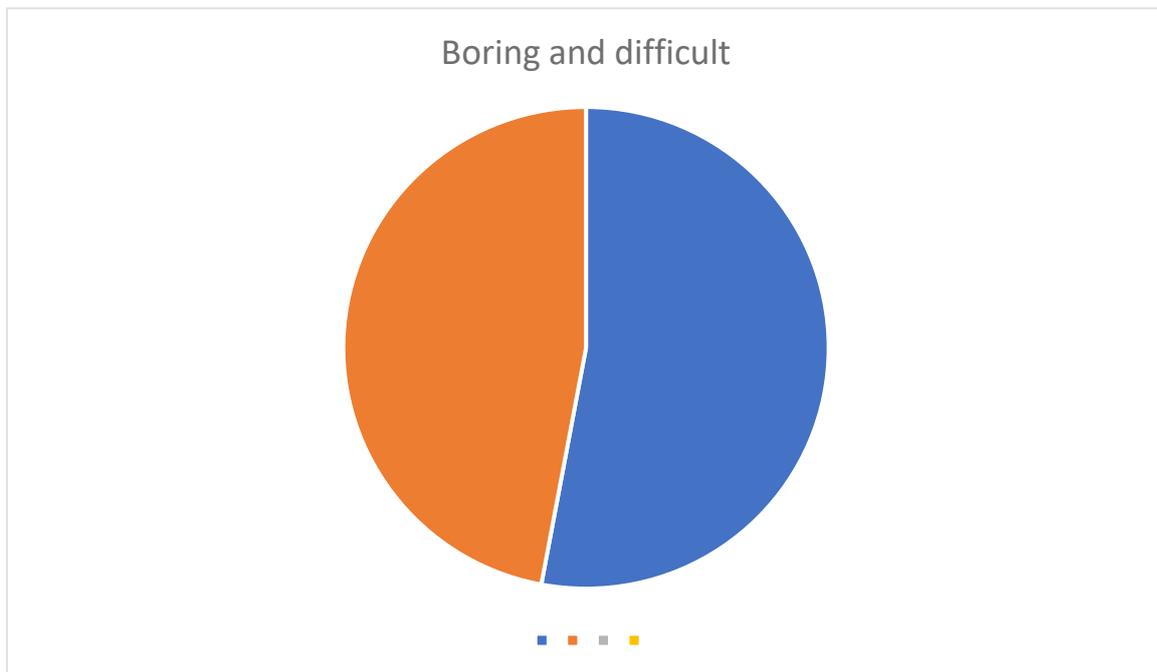
#### 4.1.1 Student participation

When the research project was presented to the students, it was pointed out that according to the rules of the NSD, it was voluntary to participate and that this consent could be withdrawn at any time. Only 15 out of 29 chose to participate. (51.7%) Many of those who did not participate was sceptical to making a film showing their face on a video presentation, despite assurances that this would not be published on youtube. None of the participants chose to show their faces in the video presentations, even though nothing was shown in class at the end of the project. Perhaps the videos would have been more worked through and that the students would have found more motivation to make an effort if the videos were to be shown in class. This reluctance to expose themselves is something new in social media. Nonetheless it is an important factor to take into consideration when planning a project such as this. Where the opportunity to make a film would be alluring just a few years ago, it is now met with much more reluctance. There is too little data to say something definite about this development. It

could be that the group dynamics in this class make them more self-conscious and unwilling to share their videos with the rest of the class. Another poor decision on my behalf, was giving the students who did not participate in the project interesting articles to read and answer questions to. In the future, if I will conduct this project, the activity will be compulsory even though the participation in the study is not.

#### 4.1.2. The presurvey.

In the presurvey, half the students 9/17(53%) answered that working with poetry is fun or interesting(Appendix B). The other half found it difficult and boring. They could answer in their own words, so three also said it was hard and fun.



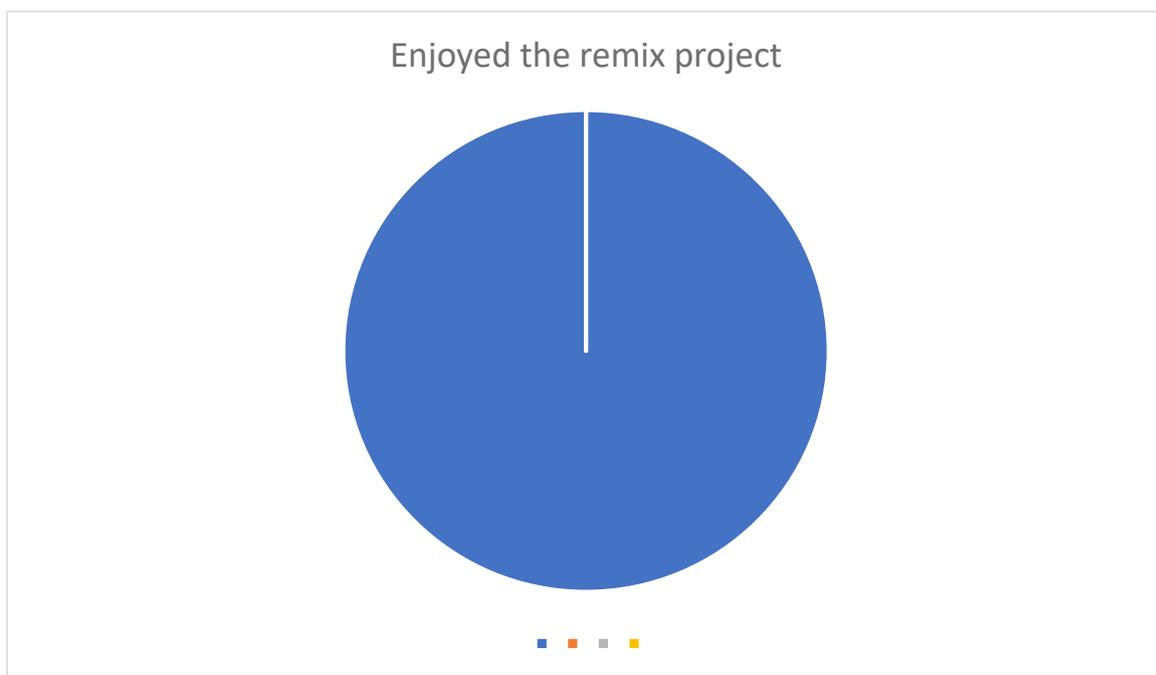
It is unexpected to see such a clear split of motivation among the responders. It was also unexpected that half of the students found working with poetry interesting. 12 out of 29 (41.3%) declined to participate in the study and this may account for the positive answers. If they declined to participate it is reasonable to assume that they were more negative to the topic of the survey. It is reasonable to assume that the students who declined to participate had a low intrinsic motivation when it comes to working with poetry. If it had been compulsory to participate in the project, we would not be able to differentiate between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

Ten of the students (58%) did not read poetry at home and this corresponded to a high degree with the students who found working with poetry boring. When asked if they read poetry on social media, a bit more answered affirmatively. 12 out of 17 (70,5%)said “yes” or

“sometimes” even though many of these stressed that they preferred it if the poetry was performed or read out loud and they did not have to actively seek it out. The fact that this would be an out of school activity, makes it likely to more of an intrinsic motivation. We can assume that digital literacy and social media make listening to or reading poetry more motivating. This makes us optimistic to the project that the students will appreciate creativity and digital literacy when working with poetry (Appendix B).

#### 4.1.3. The Survey

In the survey that was introduced after the project all the students answered that they had enjoyed working with the remix project. However, the number of responders was now down to 11. If they had not enjoyed the remix project this could be a reason to avoid answering the survey.



What the students enjoyed the most in the remix project was the act of combining the song with the sonnet and the search for a song that would suit the sonnet. 6/11.( 55%) Other responses were that it was something different and creative 5/11(45%). 7/11 (64%) became more interested in working with poetry after the project, even though they may have been little interested in working with the project before the project. Creativity is motivating. Creativity is often associated with having fun. As Knobel stated, creative accomplishment is a social activity, and something we enjoy sharing.

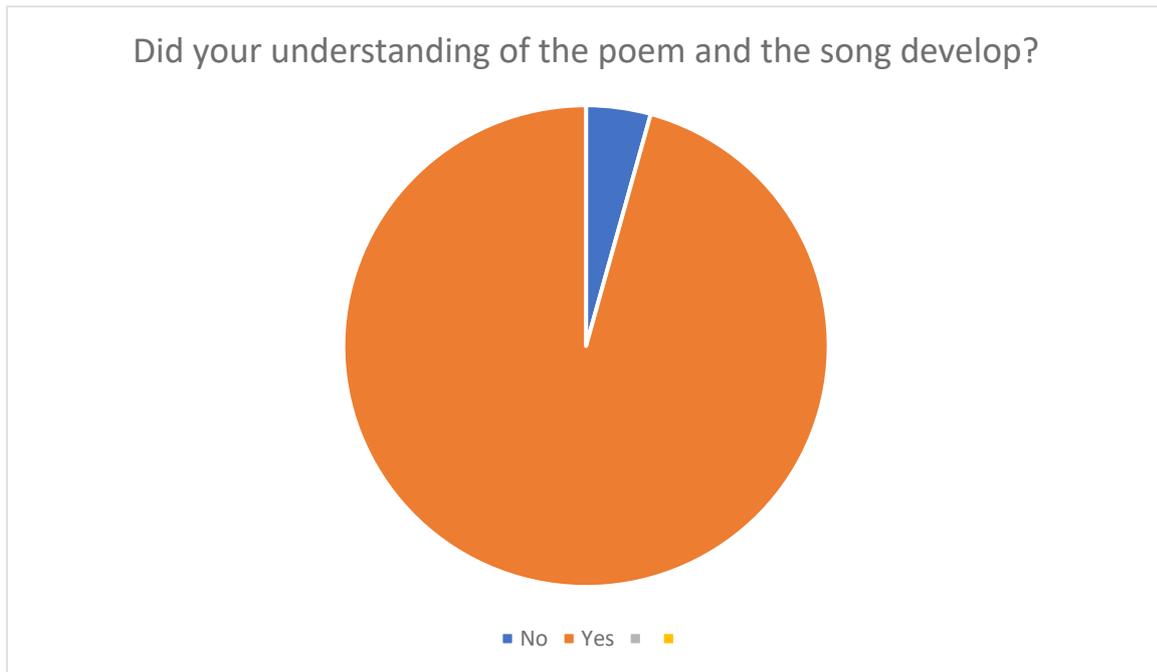
One student answered that: “I think that this remix was an interesting way to work with poetry. I found poetry less intimidating to work with because I didn’t have to come up with my

own lyrics, but rather look into the work other people has done. I think this project might have caused a new interest within me, for working with poetry. (I don't believe I will find myself becoming a poet, but I did find this task ok to do.)” This reflects the sentiment of the class in a precise way. It is my impression that working with poetry in the remix project will make poetry less mysterious and easier to relate to. This corresponds to what Bowmer and Curwood discovered about how popular culture lends relevance to traditional poetry and how remixing them inspired students. By comparing the lyrics of popular music to romantic poetry and remixing the two, Australian students were much more motivated. (Bowmer and Curwood, 2016) In the same way my Norwegian students were less intimidated by working with poetry when they could mix pre-existing lyrics and poetry. They appreciated and experienced creativity and digital literacies in this project

8/11 (72.7%) of the students spent less than one hour to record and edit the film. This may show that the technical part of the process is less demanding than it used to be for students. They are more accustomed to filming and editing than they used to be. Filming with their cell phones is something they often do. All the students confirmed that they had enough time to complete the project. A more detailed demand of the process where digital literacy would be more time consuming, but it is difficult to say whether this would make the task more motivating. If the students were required to learn more digital literacy, this could prove more motivating.

9/11 (81.8%) felt the understanding of the poem and song developed well during the project. Only two did not feel their understanding developed, even though this can be a difficult

question to assess by yourself.



One student said:

“I don’t really know how my understanding for the poem and my song developed throughout this project. I do believe that to connect a poem and a song, I have to be able to understand the meaning and the message in both of them. Before I chose a song, I had to understand what Shakespeare was really writing (this, I needed some help to really understand). Then, when I got the theme of the poem, I had to understand the meaning of the song I wanted to use, to find a song with a matching theme and message.” This emphasises the process of understanding and how understanding will develop through working with poems. “In this text, we approach poems not as static texts that must be mined for correct meaning, but as texts with rich potential for multiple interpretations” (McVee, Bailey and Shanahan, 2008, p.113). In a curriculum where we are pressed for time, it is often easy to offer well-meant advice to students when it comes to interpretation. If we instead focus on giving them the tools to interpret the texts themselves, we have done them a great favour.

Most of the students did not find any unexpected difficulties in making this project. To one the language of Shakespeare was difficult to mix with the song and to another the greatest difficulty lay in interpreting the sonnet, but as the student added: this should have been expected.

“My main challenge when working with this project, I believe was the understanding of the poem and the song. I found it pretty hard to understand the deeper meaning of the sonnets, and to understand what I was really looking for in my song (it helped when I was asked the

question “what songs bring out the same theme” (or something like that), after we’d agreed on the theme in sonnets). But, I mean, this wasn’t really an unexpected challenge - rather more an expected challenge (at least for my part, cause I’m not very good at understanding the theme and the deeper meaning of texts like these)(Appendix C).

## 4.2. The videos and The Six C’s of motivation

The criteria I will use to assess the video presentations were defined by Turner and Paris in 1995. The criteria were designed to find out how literacy tasks influence children’s motivation for literacy, but in my opinion they qualify to assess motivation in digital literacy presentations as well. The Six C’s of motivation were termed from their key terms in fostering motivation at school: *Choice, Challenge, Control, Collaboration, Constructing meaning and Consequences*. (Turner & Paris, 1995, p. 672). The Six C’s of motivation has the potential to increase motivation when applied to open-ended tasks. (Appendix A)

### 4.2.1 Choice

When given the explicit *choice* to shape their assignment, they will choose subject matter that is close to their personal interests. This should increase the students’ intrinsic motivation. The students in the remix project had the choice if they wanted to participate. This should increase the motivation to do the task well. At the same time, their motivation to make a great video may have been reduced by the classmates who chose not to take part. The students in the remix project had the choice of which pop song and lyrics they wanted to pair with a sonnet. They had a high degree of autonomy in how to shape their video presentation, and yet the video presentations are surprisingly similar to each other. They have filmed their written lyrics and read out the text loud. Half the groups (3/6) have added background sounds or music.

### 4.2.2. Challenge

The *challenge* should be just within reach for the students, just at or just beyond the students’ capabilities. The video presentation should give ownership and motivation as it is challenging. Understanding the Shakespearean sonnet was perhaps a little difficult for some of the students. Only two of the groups of the students asked for help to interpret the sonnet, so this part could have been more suited for some of the students. None of the groups expressed that making the video had been difficult, even though the videos differed in complexity. The challenge should perhaps have been increased with suggestions to how they could have been

more creative, for instance that their video could illustrate the story their interpretation of the song and sonnet conveyed.

#### 4.2.3. Control

If students are involved in classroom *control*, they will be more responsible and independent and self-regulating. The students should be involved in decision making and choosing partners or groups. This gives them ownership and motivation. The work with the videos gave the students the opportunity to choose who to work with and share ideas and learning strategies and this increases motivation. The project in itself could have been improved if the students would be allowed to participate in deciding what the task should be. This control would perhaps give a greater sense of ownership.

#### 4.2.4. Collaboration

*Collaboration* and communication gave the students the opportunity to share ideas and enhance thinking and learning. The videos all show students enjoying the collaboration. Two of the groups chose to work alone. One of the students who chose to work alone had the need to come and talk to me about the choices he had made in making the video. This reflects the need we have to communicate with each other when creating something.

#### 4.2.5. Constructing meaning

The Students' need to find importance and value in their task in order to *construct meaning*. Setting meaningful goals for the students enhances motivation. The videos could be improved by setting up more definite goals before the project. These meaningful goals should demand a greater understanding of the sonnet and the lyrics of the pop song of their choice. All the videos complied with the sparse instructions the students had been given but walking around speaking with the groups as they worked, they were eager to ask if they were doing it right and if they had understood the task correctly.

#### 4.2.6. Consequences

There must be *consequences* to what you do. Students need to have their work appreciated and valued. This will increase motivation. (Turner & Paris, 1995, p. 673). The videos were not shown in class or given feedback other than gratitude for their help with the project. This could be improved. The videos could have been shown in class, if this had been decided

together before the project started. On the other hand, this could have backfired, as many of the students in this class are afraid of presenting in front of the others.

The *choice* and *challenge* are perhaps the two areas within the criteria that show how the students appreciate creativity and digital literacies when working with the remix video. Some of the students also mentioned how much they had particularly liked the *collaboration* and this is evident in the videos. They laugh and have fun while solving new tasks(Appendix A).

#### 4.2.7. Summary of the results

It seems safe to say that my students appreciated working with the remix project. The initial attitude towards working with poetry was quite neutral with only half of the group enjoying it. All the students enjoyed working with the remix project, and four out of five of the students said that their understanding of the poem and the lyrics have developed through the project. The videos did not show as clear results as the survey, possibly because there would not be any consequences to how they made the videos. All in all, based on the results of the presurvey, the survey and the videos from the remix project, we can say that the students' motivation to work with poetry was increased. The students appreciated being creative and working with digital literacies, and this improved their intrinsic motivation.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Creativity in the process of learning

One of the goals of the remix project was to introduce more creativity in working with poetry. Creativity in the process of learning is the common denominator of most new remix and literacy articles (Knobel, 2017, p. 46). This is a goal for much of our language teaching, as well. How do we keep it interesting to the students? If working with poetry is associated with something instrumental and difficult, a lot will be gained if we can associate it with something spontaneous and enjoyable instead. Motivation to work and learn will increase. If we look at the videos, we can see creativity. Not as much as we would have liked, but the groups answer the task given in an interesting manner. There is little tradition of creativity at upper secondary school in Norway. The only creativity that is mentioned in the curriculum for vg1 general studies is mentioned under formative assessment. "They also demonstrate and develop competence when they create different types of texts" (Udir, 2020b). Creating different types of text does not always give the students a sense of being creative. Bringing creativity into tasks such as the remix project is something that needs to be learned. To have

fun in making videos should give intrinsic motivation. In the presurvey, 53 % of the students said that working with poetry is fun or interesting, but in the survey, all the participants said that they had enjoyed working with the remix project.

## 5.2. Motivation

How can a remix poetry project increase the motivation to work with poetry?

The three psychological needs that was identified in the Self-determination theory: autonomy, relatedness and competence is represented in the remix project. 81,8% of my students said that their understanding of the poem and the song developed during the work with the project. This corresponds with the idea that autonomy makes the students perform better and that relatedness make the students feel connected with the task. An increased understanding also corresponds with cultivating competence that the Self-determination theory set up as a need.

The remix project was set up to test if a task similar to that of Bowmer and Curwood also could inspire students in a Scandinavian context. Bowmer and Curwood studied how popular music could lend relevancy and advocate agency to romantic poetry (Bowmer and Curwood, 2016, p. 141). In my study, I exchanged romantic poets for Shakespeare, because the romantic poetry does not fit in with our national curriculum before the final year and that English course is not compulsory for all students. Shakespeare on the other hand is used in our textbook because of his important role in the development of the English language. His sonnets are difficult to comprehend for some of the students, as one of the students said in the survey, but they should be possible to grasp with a little help and guidance. My project is also less extensive in scope and time frame. Three lessons were all I had time for in my vg1 general studies class. The scope of the study and the length of the products may seem short. However, I felt that given the short window of opportunity that opened to conduct this project it was enough time to get a good impression of how creative the students could be with the allotted timeframe.

As we have found out from the self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation increases when the conditions support autonomy. According to the garden-based project of Skinner and Chi, The intrinsic motivation that was nurtured in the garden, could be generalised to include other subjects in the students' school day (Skinner and Chi, 2012, p 3). As all the students had enjoyed working with the remix project, whereas only half of the students said that they enjoyed reading poetry in the pre-survey, the same mechanism as the one found by Skinner

and Chi in the garden-based project could be working here. The introduction of pop song lyrics could lend relevancy to the sonnets by Shakespeare.

### 5.3. Digital literacy.

Keeping an open mind towards multimodal projects seem to be a good start. The time it takes for a new multimodal technology to reach teacher' education, it is likely to be quite old news before it can be used. The suitable assessment methods will be a constant challenge. In my remix project, I chose not to assess the work with a summative assessment, but it is part of the formative assessment. The steering document from the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training states that: "The teacher shall facilitate for pupil participation and encourage the desire to learn by using a variety of strategies and learning resources to develop the pupils' reading skills and oral and writing skills" (Udir, 2020). Through the work with the remix project, the students increased their desire to learn through working in a manner that they had never worked before, with filmmaking of a chosen song lyric and a poem. This is further emphasised in the steering documents about formative assessment in that: "The pupils shall have the opportunity to experience that experimenting on their own and with others is part of learning a new language" (Udir, 2020). I chose to work towards a higher motivation to work with poetry in the future. An interesting question is whether it would have been possible to assess the remix project through summative assessment by itself. In order to assess the project, there would have to be an oral or written task which includes reflection on the choices made and what the students have learnt. The video itself would mostly function as an illustration of the group's work. The freedom to experiment with multimodality in the classroom that Lotherington and Jenson advocate is very important indeed. As multimodality evolves, and there is no reason to believe it will not, we will need to embrace it to inspire and engage students.

However, in my project most of the students did not display any vast technical proficiency. They use certain videorecording programs such as Tiktok or snapchat, but do not seem to have any overview or perspective on their own practices. This seem to correspond to the Norwegian study by Nygård in 2019 where he concludes that the students have very different skill sets and that it is counterproductive to speak of digital natives or immigrants based on the year the students were born (Nygård, 2019, p. 252).

The video presentations of the remix presentations are all quite literal recordings of their two lines of a Shakespeare sonnet coupled with two lines from a chosen pop song, their voices can be heard. (Appendix A) In her recent research article Heidi Høglund studies how students use multimodal composing strategies to engage with video presentations. Her findings can suggest that it is beneficial to use multimodal composition in poetry education. With a special interest in the students' use of sound elements, this study highlights an aspect of multimodal composition in response to poetry (Høglund, 2022, p. 296). Even though her students are eighth graders from Finland, it is interesting to compare with our Norwegian 16 year old students. Only two of the groups took advantage of sound effects in the recordings. One group had added the sound of falling rain and one group had romantic piano music in the background. They recorded their voices live with little extra embellishments. They did present their remixes with feeling. They all wrote their texts on a computer screen which they then filmed, except for one group that wrote their lyrics on a whiteboard. How sound and image work together is worth further studies, as multimodal presentations find their way into schools and education in general. As this part is not taught in school to any special degree, the students are much expected to improvise and play it by ear. They do watch a lot of media and are bound to draw upon their experience from this. "Regardless of the limitations of this single-case study, there appears to be grounds for claiming that filmmaking should come to play a more important role in the language classrooms of the future" (Stige, 2015, p.2015). The fact that the students in the remix project spent less than one hour to record and edit their films should indicate that they have the proficiency to work with multimodal literacies and that this is an avenue it would be interesting to follow up.

If we look at the conclusions of Sauro and Sundmark in their remix project, developing their project to include a greater freedom in format and tools could increase the students' motivation and create more engaging products. (Sauro & Sundmark, 2019, p. 54). It is reasonable to assume that my remix project could have been more successful if the students had been given a greater freedom to choose length and medium for their products. All the students answered in the survey that they had enough time to complete the project, and 72,1% of the students spent one hour or less to record and edit the film. Some groups could possibly have found it exciting to remix the entire sonnet and lyrics of their chosen song. And when it comes to format, some groups could have found it interesting to present their product in TikTok. Good skills in digital literacy could be one explanation why the groups finished so

quickly. However, to make the videos more interesting, the students could have been taught better editing programs and been made to plan their presentations to a greater degree.

The use of film making can facilitate the transfer of knowledge in meaningful ways. Through clear instructions of how to make a storyboard and how to visualise their poetry through these storyboards, the students in Curwood and Cowell's study worked diligently (Curwood and Cowell, 2011, p. 113). Storyboards are a concrete process of ensuring reflection of how a product is to be presented and didactic aid to planning how to be creative in the process. Working with storyboards gave the students a clear understanding of what they were trying to express. In my project the students were given no instructions as to how to make the videos. This could have opened for a more creative solution or at least a video that was original, but instead it seems like the students gave less reflection to how the remix poem was to be presented. Could the students have reflected more if they had been given more prompting and cues as to what was expected of them? Most likely this would have been the case. Discussions in the groups about what choices they were supposed to make could have given good reflection about creativity in the filming process.

## 5.4 Remix

My remix project is a small-scale project where the students are encouraged to find alternative interpretations of literature and hopefully experience a sense of accomplishment in the process. The early fan fiction affinity sites can be an inspiration to school remix projects because they sprang out as spontaneous writing sites where fans wanted to continue the lives of literary idols. A similar remix practice is explored in *Teaching with Harry Potter* (Frankel, 2013, p.81). These articles underline how important motivation is for literacy. Young writers can immerse themselves in fantasy and science fiction through fan fiction. This gives them an opportunity to critically engage the writings of their literary idols and can respond to literature through "remixing characters, setting and events" (Curwood, 2013, p. 90). If teachers have the courage to introduce remixing of fan fiction into school it can prove motivating and a powerful way of using literature in the classroom. This article shows beyond all doubt that even though remix practices may originate as out of school practices, educators nevertheless see the value of the digital literacies and use them gradually more and more. These remix practices may have been started as out of school practices, but because of the digital innovations people will communicate and play where they can. Does this mean that school

should open its doors and embrace anything digital and new? Definitely not, we should not be afraid of new technologies and new media, but we should always strive for finding tools that help us reach our goals of learning. There should always be a clear learning objective in a task performed at school. However, if an exercise is perceived as fun by the students, that is a bonus. Similar activities may be received with more enthusiasm and a higher degree of intrinsic motivation in the future. The inspiration of fan fiction is how it leads young writers to let creativity out. To make something new is a fulfilling experience and definitely something that leads to a keener interest in what you tried. The students who made remix videos were all happy with the results and were more motivated to learn about poetry.

## 6. Summary and conclusion

My first research question asked: How do Norwegian secondary students appreciate and experience creativity and digital literacies when working with poetry and remix? I found that the students really did appreciate and experience creativity in this project.

The present study has shown that the students have found that it is motivating to work with remix of poetry and pop lyrics. The students have all said that they have enjoyed working with the remix project. Remix is a new way of working with poetry and the goal is to cultivate informed, engaged, and discerning citizens. There is a distinctive shift in the attitudes of the students towards enjoying working with poetry through using digital media after working with the remix project. Digital literacy is an increasingly important skill. Creativity and digital literacy can increase motivation to learn.

The answer to my second research question: “How can a remix poetry project increase the motivation to work with poetry?” was overwhelmingly positive. The students also enjoyed working with in collaboration with this project and found this motivating. The remix project increased the students’ motivation to work with poetry. Due to my small sample size, however, more research is needed to confirm these results.

If I were to conduct this project again, I would drop the presurvey and have all the students make video presentations of their projects. I would then inform them that it was voluntary to participate in the final survey. If they had already invested time and effort in the making of the video presentation, it is likely that they would have wanted to participate in the final survey as well. The group that I initially wanted to reach out to with this project, may have declined to participate. I would increase the group of participants to a higher statistical

significance, to get a more trustworthy result, with larger sample sizes and more extended projects. There is a clear need for more research into remix and how it can be motivating to students. There is also a need for more studies to find out how remix and the extra motivation derived from working with remix can be integrated into the ESL classroom to include assessment.

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This thesis draws on a project outline and literature review submitted as part of an obligatory master course in “Methods and project” at the university of Gothenburg, (Hegland, 2021)

## Appendix A The video presentations

- A. The first video presentation is made by two students. The head line is “The Remix project” and it is presented in black and white. We can hear the sound of falling rain and the text appears at the moment it is spoken. “I’ve never seen you looking so lovely as you did tonight/ I’ve never seen you shine so bright” “Shall I compare thee to a summers day?/Thou art more lovely and and more temperate. “ The texts are spoken in soft voices, where the two first lines are spoke by the first girl and the two second lines are spoken by the second girl. The video ends with the sources listed as “The Lady in red” by Chris de Burgh, and “Shall I compare thee to a summers day?(Sonnet 18) by William Shakespeare.
- B. The second video is made by two students. It is a filmed whiteboard with the lyrics and poetry written in crude blue writing. “Shall I compare thee to a summers day?/Thou art more lovely and more temperate.” “I like big butts and I cannot lie/ You older brother can’t deny/ That when a girl walks in with an itty bitty waist/ And a round thing in your face, you get sprung” The text is presented in a soft voice. The first boy read the lines by Shakespeare and the second boy read the lines by Sir Mix-a-lot. The sources are not listed, but otherwise nothing shows that the task is completed in complete seriousness.
- C. The third video is made by two students. A computer is filmed with the lyrics on the screen. There is soft guitar music in the background and the girls take turn reading the lines with emotion. ”And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare/ As any she belied with false compare.” “ I’ll think of you each step of the way/ And I will always love you.” The sources are written at the bottom of the screen as William Shakespeare sonnet 130 and I will always love you” by Whitney Houston. As the girls have searched for the lyrics, they have not become aware that they are written by Dolly Parton.
- D. The fourth video is made by one student. He presents his text as a poem and reads them with feeling: “When the jester sang for the king and queen/ in a coat he borrowed from James Dean” “So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,/ So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.” He does not list his sources, but the background image is made as a collage with the thumb of Don Mclean from the record cover and a

caricature of William Shakespeare as well as the Norwegian and the British flag. At the end of the presentation he humbly thanks for the attention.

- E. The fifth video is made by a student. She presents her film as a matter of fact and explains what she has chosen to do. She says that she has chosen two lines from “sonnet 130” by Shakespeare and coupled them with two lines from the song “Perfect” by Ed Sheeran. “And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare/ As any she belied with false compare.” ” But darling just kiss me slow, your heart is all I own”.
  
- F. The sixth video is made by three students. They have recorded sound in a powerpoint image. There is speech and background music, but the sounds are distorted and cannot be easily understood. There is a short presentation of Shakespeare and the artist Drake and the printed lyrics from the song “Marvin’s room” and poem on the powerpoint. The lines by Drake are half-sung: “I need you right now, are you down to listen to me? Too many drinks have been given to me.” “And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare/ As any she belied with false compare.” The presentation is ended with laughter from the boys.

## Appendix B The Presurvey

Before the project:

Questionnaire

How do you feel about working with poetry?

Have you ever read poetry at home?

Do you read poetry on social media?

## Appendix C The Survey

After the Project:

Questionnaire

Question 1: Did you enjoy the remix project?

Question 2: What did you enjoy most about this project and why?

Question 3: Did you become more interested in working with poetry through working with remix?

Question 4: How much time did you spend on making and editing the film?

Question 5: Did you feel you had enough time to meet the deadlines (planning, working with the texts and making the film itself)?

Question 6 How did your understanding of the poem and your song develop?

Question 7 Were there any unexpected challenges in making this project?

## Appendix D Samtykkeerklæring

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

«Remix of poetry in a video presentation»?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke hvordan nye medier påvirker læringsmotivasjon. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

I prosjektet skal du svare på spørsmål knyttet til læringsmotivasjon og nye medier. Etter å ha laget en videopresentasjon hvor du skal krysse eller remixe to tekster skal du svare på en ny spørreundersøkelse.

Dette er et prosjekt som inngår i min masteroppgave på Høgskolen i Østfold.

Informasjonen din vil bli slettet når oppgaven er avsluttet.

Det vil være to spørreundersøkelser som tar 15 minutter å fylle ut på surveymonkey og en videopresentasjon mellom dem. Videoen vil kun lagres på minnepinne og slettes når prosjektet er avsluttet 31.12.22.

Dine svar fra spørreskjemaet blir registrert elektronisk

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg. Det vil ikke påvirke ditt forhold til skolen eller vurdering i faget engelsk.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger vi behandler om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om deg som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

kontaktinformasjon til personvernombudet ved Høgskolen i Østfold Personvernombud: [Line Mostad Samuelsen +47 696 08 234](mailto:Line.Mostad.Samuelsen@høgskolen.no)

[line.m.samuelson@hiof.no](mailto:line.m.samuelson@hiof.no)

**Dersom du har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med Halvor Hegland, telefon 97177605 eller [halvor.hegland@hiof.no](mailto:halvor.hegland@hiof.no). Veileder Melanie Duckworth kan også kontaktes på telefon +47 69608410 eller epost [melanie.duckworth@hiof.no](mailto:melanie.duckworth@hiof.no).**

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

## Samtykkeerklæring

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

Navn på elev:

---

(Signeres av elev, dato)

Vennligst marker i rutene i hvilke punkter du gir din tillatelse til:

- Jeg samtykker til at de skriftlige innleveringer brukes (anonymisert).
- Jeg samtykker i at spørreundersøkelsen brukes (anonymisert)
  
- Jeg samtykker til at filmene kan vises til veileder og sensor på Høgskole i Østfold

## Appendix E Infoskriv

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

«Remix of poetry in a video presentation»?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke hvordan nye medier påvirker læringsmotivasjon. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

### Formål

I prosjektet skal du svare på spørsmål knyttet til læringsmotivasjon og nye medier. Etter å ha laget en videopresentasjon hvor du skal krysse eller remixe to tekster skal du svare på en ny spørreundersøkelse.

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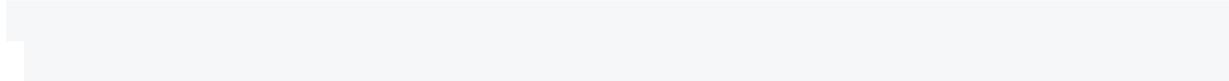
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