

Note from *people and places*: this volunteer's placement was designed specifically for them – they went through our full matching process, as we've been doing with you. The placement report indicates their particular skills and experience – yours may be similar or completely different – your own placement will make best use of **your** experience and skills. Every volunteer is different – in what they give and what they gain. Reports from previous volunteers serve to give you as good a picture as possible about the project. If you have any questions about any of the detail in this report please do not hesitate to contact me at [dianne@travel-peopleandplaces.co.uk](mailto:dianne@travel-peopleandplaces.co.uk)

## Report for People and Places

### Jane Booty e-volunteer Education for All March - June 2021

- What was your motivation for e-volunteering?

I saw it as an opportunity to use my skills with a group that I had had contact with previously (Note from *people and places* – Jane had previously visited Education for All in Morocco – but not as a volunteer)

- Was e-volunteering as you imagined it would be – if not how did it differ?

It was pretty much as I imagined it would be, but I am used to meeting groups online, and had been doing some teaching online.

- Preplacement preparation - were you happy with the information we shared with you during your preparation for this placement? what information did you consider most useful?

The information was very comprehensive and prepared me for the placement. The information from other volunteers was the most useful. I had visited the project so was aware of where the girls lived etc.

- Your experience and work – including what resources you may have sent to the project and to whom – please attach copies of any written resources you may have given to them and let us know of any others.

I was helping 14 Moroccan girls aged 15 – 18 with their English conversational skills. Each week I worked with 4 or 5 girls.

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- We started with information about themselves – family, likes and dislikes, what they do at home, at school etc.
- I asked them to talk about where they would like to visit and a place they liked to spend time in and why.
- They told me about their walk to school using directional words and phrases.
- They described each other and used comparisons. E.g. taller than, both have...
- We looked at pictures and talked about them, paying attention to tenses.
- They described the floors of the house they lived in and asked about my home.
- I gave them questioning words to use with each other – who, what, where, when, how

I had planned a couple of further sessions and had sent lists of vocabulary associated with a topic plus a few questions to consider based on the topic.

I had also asked the girls to bring an object to talk about for the next session.

Unfortunately time ran out and we needed to concentrate on another group.

Towards the end of the placement I was coaching 8 girls for an oral interview for a university course delivered through the medium of English. The questions were given to me and the girls so we practised them together, and I corrected and made suggestions as to their responses.

• What advice would you give to future e-volunteers, including any technical difficulties you encountered?

- I would recommend spending time getting to know the participants to ensure that activities are focussed on their interests etc.
- Write down participants names and ask for help with pronunciation – its good to be able to remember names and say them correctly. I would draw a seating plan to help each session.
- If participants are screen sharing I suggest 3 maximum per screen.
- Speak slowly – I found this difficult at times!
- Use the chat box for explanations if participants seem to be having difficulties in understanding you. Also, use the chat box if the sound distorts or there are sound problems

• Successes, disappointments and challenges of your placement

I hope that there was an improvement in the girl's English – I think there was, if only in that their confidence in speaking increased.

The fact that the girls diligently completed the homework I gave them was impressive and I suppose could be seen as a success.

I was disappointed to finish as I really enjoyed meeting the girls and hearing about their lives.

There were not really any particular challenges as most eventualities had been foreseen by P and P, and I knew who to contact if difficulties arose. I had been given both email and Whatsapp contacts.

• What was the highlight of your volunteer experience?

There isn't one highlight – the girls were very gracious and polite always which I

found a delight each week.

- Would you recommend e-volunteering to other people or not? please tell us why.

Yes, certainly. If you enjoy meeting with people from other countries, if you would like to use existing language skills or simply try to help with English. An hour a week plus a bit of preparation in return for smiles and commitment and a feeling of contributing just a little is definitely worth it.

- Anything else you would like to share with future volunteers about your placement.

People and Places have been incredibly supportive throughout and EFA too. We have had regular meetings to check that everyone was happy with all involved invited, and I knew I could contact them at any time should the need have arisen.

### **Second e-volunteer placement February - May 2022**



As soon as I had finished my first placement I knew I wanted to do it again, and so I was excited to be able to commence another 12 sessions in February this year.

This time I worked with the same 4 girls for the entire placement which I feel was very beneficial for them, as they had a consistency, we were able to build up relationships and I was able to better assess their progress and what I needed to cover week to week.

**(Note from people and places – during Jane’s first placement Covid restrictions were in place meaning the girls were only at school and in the boarding houses every other week – this made consistent groups impossible. Also we were all learning the best way for e-volunteers to work – more consistent groups was a recommendation from our first e-volunteers and as far as possible their advice has been implemented)**

Whereas before I had worked with 10 or so girls on a rota system and used a similar lesson plan over 3 sessions, this time I had to plan a separate lesson each time, which was more of a challenge but I enjoyed coming up with new ideas. I used the BBC for video and audio clips, the British Council for suggested lesson plans and a variety of other sources.

I also focussed on events to discuss such as International Women’s Day, Ramadan and Easter, using articles and video to stimulate discussion and provide variety in the sessions.

We played games, shared recipes and photographs and had a scavenger hunt on the final session which was great fun.

We worked on vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation in class with mainly written work for homework.

I really enjoyed these sessions and had fun with the girls which I think they appreciated. They engaged fully and enthusiastically and always completed their homework, and their confidence in speaking has definitely improved. Aicha, their housemother was nearly always on hand if needed, and being able to chat to her as well added to the friendly feel of the sessions.

The 4 girls shared one computer screen however and this meant that I could only see 3 of them at once which wasn't ideal, so I would suggest if possible, in future sessions for there to be two screens available.

(Note from people and places – sensible advice which we will share with the our partners in Morocco)

It was lucky that Dianne (people and places placement director) was visiting the house when I was teaching as she could have first hand experience of a session, but we didn't have any other contact during this placement, whereas on the first placement we met 3 times. I think to have met just the once during a second placement would be a good idea however as there may be issues to be discussed, although I always knew that I could contact People & Places if necessary. Maybe just to pencil in a midway date that can be taken up if required.

(Note from people and places – as this was Jane's second placement and she knew what she was doing we felt regular meetings might be an unnecessary imposition on a volunteer's time – however we welcome Jane's suggestion of a meeting half way through the placement and will put this in place for future e-volunteers)

As before I really appreciate the support which helps to make everything run smoothly, and thoroughly look forward to the third placement next year!

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