



Erasmus+

This work was done as a part of Erasmus+ project

‘A MYSTERIOUS DEVICE’

Mr. Antony Fisherman had a special hobby. He was fond of fishing very much. He was sitting for hours on the river near his home, but he never caught anything. His family and friends advised him to change his interest. After having heard these words, Anthony always smiled. He didn't care of catching fish. He loved sitting in silence and observing nature for hours.

Once after lunch he went on the river as usual.

The day was nice and very hot. Lilacs were out of bloom. But jasmines and acacias started to grow. A young, fresh green of the trees and lawns was to smile to the spring sun. Some boy was sitting on a shady desk at the seaside. There was a book near him. The boy was not only making calculations, writing them in a note-book, but drawing pictures as well. He looked tired. His eyes couldn't stare at the columns of numbers for a long time. In a moment he raised his head, putting the notes away. He looked ahead at the huge tract of the sea, reaching somewhere far up the horizon. The boy was resting.

However he wasn't the only person on the desk. An old man with grey hair was sitting next to him. There was a set of lectures on the man's knees. He was busy with reading. He was making marks. The man squinted at the boy from time to time. He was interested in the boy's copybook, full of numbers and rules.

Suddenly the man decided to begin a conversation.

- What are you doing, a young friend?
- I'm solving a mathematical problem.
- Are you fond of maths?
- Oh, yes. It's my favourite school subject.

The old man smiled for a while. He hesitated and reached to the pocket of his jacket.

The man took out a little object. The boy moved closer to the man with curiosity. The man, seeing his interest, showed this secret 'thing'. He said:

– Look at it carefully. This is a magic ring. One turn of this ring on the left can carry us one hundred years in the past. One turn on the right – one hundred years in the future. Let's turn the ring 24 times on the left. We will travel through the ages and countries.

– Where are we heading, because travel broadens the mind?

– Ancient Greece – the land of famous mathematicians and philosophers.

We are walking along beautiful streets of the big city – Croton. There are lots of expensive shops on the both sides of the streets. Salesmen sell china, perfumes and clothes. They present carpets, amulets, silver and golden jewellery.

In the middle of the main street a special march is crossing the roadway. Pythagoras from the Samos island is coming with his students. They are chatting.

They go over the Kefissos river near Athens. Platon is sitting in front of his Academy building and discussing with the smartest student - Aristotle.

Euclid rushes to the Musaion, where in one of the rooms with a terrace overlooking the olive garden. He has lectures in mathematics. Passers-by know his famous name. They know that he is a friend of King Ptolemy.

Euclid, drawing on the sand geometrical figures, explains something to his impatient students.

But a lesson was interrupted by Archimedes' exclamations. He detected dishonesty of a goldsmith, whom the King of Syracuse gave gold for the Crown. Reportedly Archimedes came up with it during sitting in the hot tub. Thought that flashed, surprised him a lot. Archimedes jumped out of the tub and ran through the streets shouting: Eureka, Eureka ('I have discovered, I have discovered!'). Pedestrians were really amused...

What happened next, Mr. Fisherman didn't find out anymore. In fact, someone woke him up with a slight touch in the arm. His grandson John came to remind him about the afternoon tea. Mr. Anthony immediately got up and went to his house. He was never late for the tea and cookies, freshly baked by his wife. This, except fishing was his second habbit!

Now my dear friends, we must finish our story. We should add that mathematics has come into existence with an effort of many nations and brings them together. Maths is a base for astronomy, chemistry and physics. I'm sure you are delighted by a beauty of many different nature masterpieces – flowers, butterflies, crystals.... Mathematics not only discovers harmony and symmetry but cooperates in their creation. Let me mention that one of the greatest painters in the world, Leonardo da Vinci, was also a mathematician.

Mathematics is a base of science, the whole knowledge. It serves them very well. You have to know a history of mathematics to understand it and its meaning. We have tried both to interest and make maths closer to you.

‘A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new’. (Albert Einstein)

We encourage you to study ‘something new’: a history of a difficult subject - mathematics.

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