



Learning History and Civics through Live Action Role- Playing (LARP)



My information

- **Viljami Nykänen**
- Teacher at Finnish Russian School (Helsinki, Finland)
- Subjects: English, Japanese, ICT
- Students: age 11-18 (elementary, lower and upper secondary)
- viljami.nykanen@svk-edu.fi



Live Action Role-Playing (LARP)

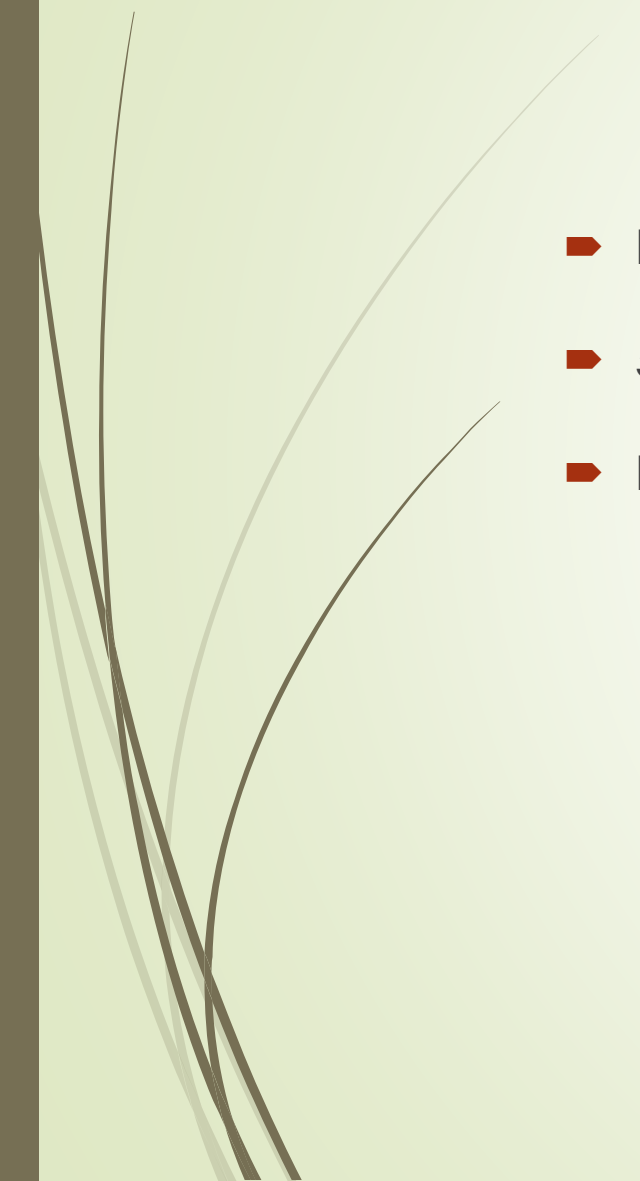
"A form of role-playing game where participants physically portray their characters." ([Wikipedia](#))

- ▀ Participants = players = characters
- ▀ Goals
- ▀ (Fictional) setting
- ▀ Gamemasters

- ▀ Open-ended interaction



Baltic Sea -themed Viking LARP

- February 2019
 - 5-day interdisciplinary learning module
 - Participants: lower secondary students (grades 6-9)
- 



Planning



- Teachers (some student input)
- Setting: ca. 1000 AD, Coastal village in Southern Finland
- Background: Trading between three tribes (Vikings, Karelians, Tavastians)
- Narrative (story) hooks: conflicting goals for each group



4-Day Learning Module

- Students and teachers together
- Programme
 - Day 1: introduction / improv training / museum visit / questionnaire
 - Day 2: brainstorming and writing characters / tribe meeting / improv
 - Day 3: creating clothes, equipment, weapons / improv / LARP rules
 - Day 4: preparing for the game / LARP game / reflection and discussion circle
 - Student work: LARP trailer / LARP story / in-depth character interview



At the National Museum of Finland

Making foam weapons



LARPing – The Tavastian Guard



LARPing – The Vikings approaching



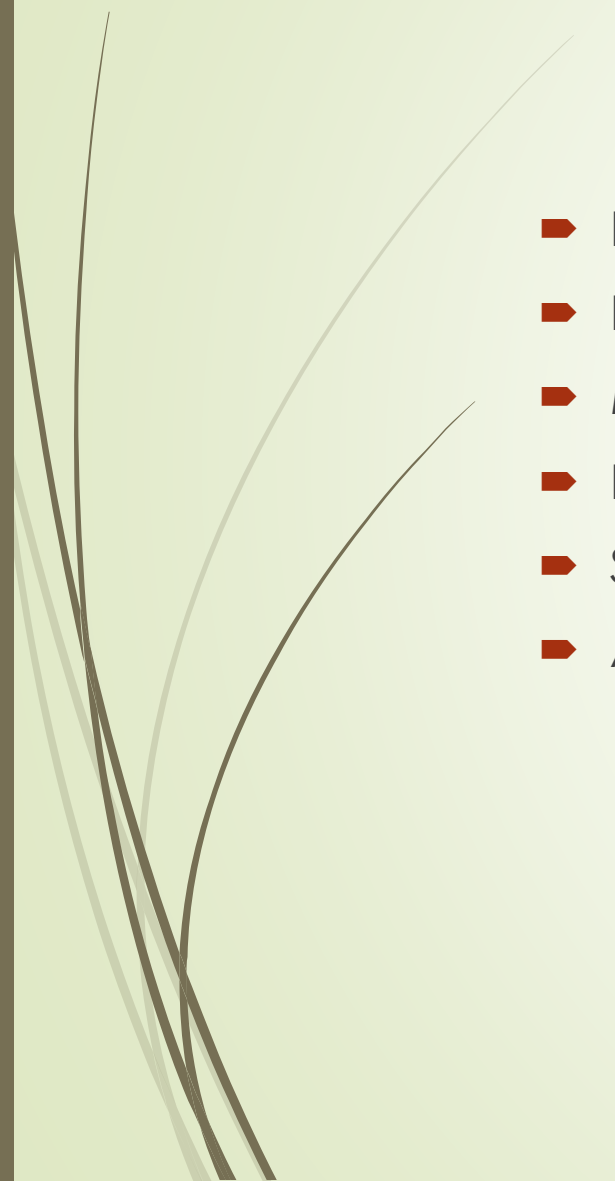


Pointers for a successful LARP

- Make student input a central part of the process
(increases student ownership)
- Practise improv together throughout the project
(Helps everyone immerse and be in-character in the game)
- Go through the game rules very carefully
(For everyone's safety)
- Create plenty of narrative hooks that alter the course of the game
(It's not about winning!)
- Focus on the reflection and discussion session
(Learning empathy, skills, and focusing on real-life issues through LARP)



Expected learning outcomes

- Empathy through drama
 - Expressing emotions
 - Manual skills (handicrafts etc.)
 - Problem-solving
 - Subject knowledge
 - And much more..!
- 



Thank you!