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UNIFICATION IN DIVERSITY**

THE ROMANIAN TEAM PRESENTS:

‘STORIES FROM OUR COUNTRY’

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Teaching Techniques

HARAP ALB

Teachers: Romanian Students

School: İbrahim Süheyla İzmirli Fen Lisesi Müdürlüğü

Lesson: Stories and their heroes

Type of the lesson: teaching new information

Class: students from Poland, Portugal, North Macedonia and Italy

Date: 14th March 2023

Time: 50 minutes

Aims of the lesson:

1. to develop students’ listening, speaking, reading and writing skills;
2. to get the students focused on specific information;

STAGES OF THE LESSON

1. Warm-up

Aim:

- to create a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere

Interaction: T - pupils, pupils -T

Procedure:

Teacher greets the students and asks about their mood and feelings. They are given a picture in which their peers are presented in different situations. Students can relate to the given picture while answering the teacher’s questions.



What do the teenagers in the photos look like? What kind of emotion do they express?

2. Listening

Aims:-to listen for specific information

-to identify the main idea in a song

- to improve students' listening skills by having them listen to the music video and identify words in the lyrics.

Procedure: At the start of the class the teacher plays the chorus of two famous songs.

<https://youtu.be/bWcASV2sey0>

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=0IA3ZvCkRkQ&si=EnSIkaIECMiOmarE>

Then they are asked to guess what the songs have in common and motivate their choice. They listen again and are asked to fill in the blanks while listening.

<p>There's a hero If you look inside your heart You don't have to be afraid Of what you are There's an answer If you reach into your soul And the sorrow that you know Will melt away</p> <p>And then a hero comes along With the strength to carry on And you cast your fears aside And you know you can survive So when you feel like hope is gone Look inside you and be strong And you'll finally see the truth That a hero lies in you</p>	<p>Where have all the good men gone And where are all the gods? Where's the streetwise Hercules To fight the rising odds?</p> <p>Isn't there a white knight upon a fiery steed Late at night, I toss and I turn And I dream of what I need</p> <p>I need a hero I'm holding out for a hero 'til the end of the night He's gotta be strong, and he's gotta be fast And he's gotta be fresh from the fight</p> <p>I need a hero I'm holding out for a hero 'til the morning light He's gotta be sure, and it's gotta be soon And he's gotta be larger than life Larger than life</p>
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Teacher asks the students, as a group, “Who do you think of when you hear the word hero?” As the students express their thoughts write their answers on the board. Next ask the students, “What characteristics do you think a hero should have?” This time have them work individually.

3.Pre listening and viewing activity. Lead-in

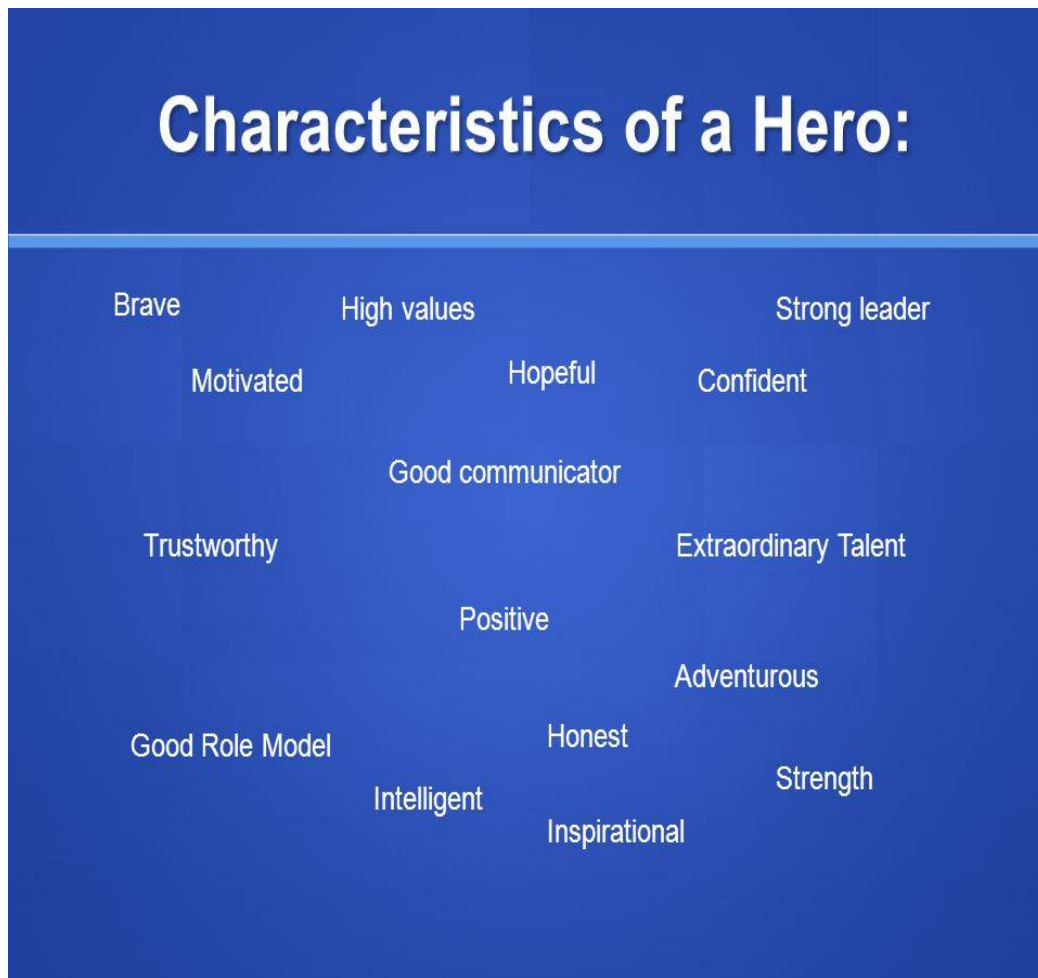
Aims:

- to introduce the topic of the lesson
- to stir interest and promote discussion

Interaction: T- students, students -T

Procedure:

The teacher writes on the whiteboard the sentences *A hero is.....because/A hero should be.....because* and asks the students to try to describe their hero. As the students describe, they get involved in the lesson and become curious. They are also provided with a set of qualities. Then they are divided into groups (made up of one student from each partner country) and asked to write within a minute as many antonyms of the given adjectives as possible.



4. While listening and viewing activity.

Aims:

- to monitor and facilitate students' listening comprehension
- to help learners focus or pay attention to the listening activity

Interactoin: T-Ss,S-S

Procedure :

The teacher will play the whole video and the students will look at it – to have a global view upon it and to prevent being distracted when they solve the task. Students are invited to watch the story of Harap Alb narrated by the members of the Romanian team.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1riwQy59_ZAWk0Bimm9ZVXNNHY-3C2JD6/view?usp=share_link

Also, the teacher provides the following handout to be filled in while watching, so that they could relate to the story more easily.

Activity 1	Students' answers
What is the title of the story?	
Who are the main characters?	
Which is (are) your favourite one(s)?	

5. Post listening and viewing activity.

Aim: -to utilize the knowledge gained from listening for the development of other skills such as speaking

Interactoin: T-Ss,S-S

Procedure : . For this second activity students are paired so that they can have a dialogue which will be presented in front of their colleagues following the prompts given in this handout.

Activity 2	Students' answers
Note down sentence(s)/ moment(s) /scene that you consider very important .	Why is this sentence/moment/scene important?What made you chose it?
1.	<i>I feel....</i>
2.	<i>This reminds me of</i>
3.	<i>I like.....</i>
4.	<i>This helps me better understand.....</i>

6.Pre -teaching Vocabulary

Aims :- to provide a bridge between words that are unfamiliar to learners

- to provide a scaffold for acquiring new vocabulary.

Interaction:S-S

Procedure: Students are divided into two groups: The first group receives a set of words while the other group receives the definition of each word. One student from the first group reads one word, another student is supposed to give the correct definition. After they finish matching the words to their definitions, they are paired to repeat the new vocabulary.

1 Antagonist	a) <i>a <u>person</u> who is <u>strongly opposed</u> to something or someone</i>
2 Central conflict	b) it refers to the main event in a story where the entire narrative is "centered" around this, and it is the driving force that propels the narrative forward, ultimately to some resolution.
3 Plot	c) the main events of a play, novel, film, or similar work, <u>devised</u> and presented by the writer as an <u>interrelated</u> sequence
4 Protagonist	d) is the character who drives the action--the character whose fate matters most. In other words, they are involved in —and often central to—the plot or conflict of the story, but are also usually the emotional heart of the narrative..
5.Resolution	e) is the end of the story. It is when you learn what happens to the characters after the conflict is resolved
6 Setting	f) the time and place in which a story unfolds
7 Story	g) is a description of imaginary people and events, which is written or told in order to entertain.

7.Pre reading activity

Aims: -to establish a purpose for reading,

- to activate and build background knowledge
- to introduce the topic

Interaction : T-Ss,S-S

Procedure :Teacher shows students some pictures,then are divided into groups and asked to make up a story based on the given pictures. Teacher offers each team a set of questions which may help them make up the story.Each group has to give a title to their creation.All the students are asked to follow the sequencing ideas chart.

Beginning	Firstly	<i>Firstly, I began my education in London.</i>
	First of all	<i>First of all, I opened the cupboard.</i>
	To start off with,	<i>To start off with, we decided our destination was New York.</i>
	Initially	<i>Initially, I thought it was a bad idea, ...</i>
Continuing	Then,... but then	<i>Then, I started to get worried.</i> <i>We were sure everything was ready, but then we discovered some unexpected problems.</i>
	After that,	<i>After that, we knew that there would be no problem!</i>
	Next,	<i>Next, we decided on our strategy.</i>
	As soon as / When + full clause,	<i>As soon as we arrived, we unpacked our bags.</i>
	Immediately,	<i>Immediately, I telephoned my friend Tom.</i>
Ending	Finally	<i>Finally, I flew to London for my meeting with Jack.</i>
	In the end	<i>In the end, he decided to postpone the project.</i>
	Eventually	<i>Eventually, we became tired and returned home.</i>
	Lastly	<i>Lastly, we felt we had had enough and went home.</i>

1. Who is the protagonist?
2. Who is the antagonist?
3. What is the central conflict of the story?
4. What is the settings of the story?
5. What treatment does the antagonist deserve to receive?
6. How does the story end? Why do you think story ends this way?





8. While reading activity

Aims : -to interpret, evaluate, and reflect upon the meaning and impact of the text

-to monitor comprehension of the text

Interaction: T-Ss,S-S

Procedure :Teacher divides students into groups.Each group is given a paragraph .Each group is asked to identify the main idea of the paragraph and identify all the characters involved.When each group finishes doing this task ,they choose a leader who is supposed to present their work to the other groups till all the paragraphs are presented.

Paaragraph	Main Idea	Characters involved
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/12kGID73M2Vy9uOAmVpFGtC0H-9WbRCs4kPw7TbM6RIw/edit?usp=sharing>

9. While reading activity

Aims: -to interpret, evaluate, and reflect upon the meaning and impact of the text

Interaction :T-S .S-S

Procedure: Students are paired and given a set of statements whose answer is not necessarily given in each team's handout. Each team chooses a leader who has to co-operate with the other leaders so that each group has the right answer. The correct answer may be :TRUE, FALSE or DOESN'T SAY. When they finish filling the entire grid students are asked to motivate their answers.

Chapter 1:

Once upon a time there lived an emperor named The Old King that had three sons and a brother called The Green Emperor. When the Emperor felt death approaching, he wrote a letter to The Old King asking him to bring one of his sons to take over his empire. After hearing this, the king's eldest son set out, but wanting to test him, the king put on a bear's skin and hid under a bridge to scare him. The eldest son failed the test and came back home. The middle son did not fare much better.

His brothers' failures saddened their younger brother who ran into the palace's garden where he met an old woman. Although he did not want to help her in the beginning, he gave her a gold coin, kindness that the old lady would repay. She told the young man to search for the armor that his father used in his youth and to find his old horse and feed it embers. When he first saw the horse, he laughed thinking that it was too malnourished, but after it ate the embers it turned into a mighty steed shocking the prince. Armed with all that he needed the prince set out on his journey. When he came face to face with the bear that bested his brothers, the young prince did not run in fear passing his father's test. Before letting him go the prince's father warned him not to trust the Bald-Man.

Chapter 2

He travelled for a few days upon entering a strange deep wood. Tree branches were covered in thick moss, with sneaking eyes lurking behind them. Not too far away from the wood a strange tall character with no hair approached. He was the Bald-Man, asking him if he needed a servant considering that those woods were very dangerous. The prince replied shortly that he would take his chances alone, riding his horse forward. After a short time, the Bald-Man appeared once again this time disguised, greeting him. The man offered his help once again just to be turned down by the prince leaving him behind. He crossed the forest until a tree lying across the road stopped him. That's when he thought that he should've accepted the help, even though his father advised him not to. While thinking what to do next the Bald-Man appeared for the third time, now riding a horse and telling the prince to take him along. He begged and begged to be hired. The prince gave in and hired him. The Bald-Man pretended to be thirsty just to throw the prince's water out, after saying that they will soon reach a well. That's when the man tricked him, trapping him there. He could get out on one condition, he had to become the Bald-Man's servant and for his name to become "Harap Alb". He did just that, got on their horses and rode towards the Green Emperor.

Chapter 3

Bald-man travels a long and difficult journey with his new servant to reach the Green Emperor's palace. He is welcomed and accepted as a prince and a king's successor. However, he treats his servant, Harap Alb, cruelly, and the princesses notice his disrespectful behaviour. One day, the king serves a special type of lettuce at dinner, which is only found in the Bear's garden. Bald-man orders Harap Alb to bring him these lettuces. Harap Alb, with the help of

his magic horse, succeeds in finding the garden. There, the prince seeks help from Holy Sunday Lady, who saves him by making the bear fall asleep. The prince takes the lettuces from the Bear's garden, which he presents to the Green Emperor, earning Bald-Man's wrath. Later, Bald-Man sends Harap Alb to bring him the skull of a stag full of precious gems. The prince finds the stag, kills it, takes its skull and treasures and returns to the palace. On his journey back, the prince is admired by the people for the sparkling gems on the stag's skull. Bald-Man comments on Harap Alb's adventurous nature in a rude manner, and the princesses sense his bad intentions. At a feast, a strange bird speaks of the Red Emperor's daughter, which leads Bald-Man to order his servant to find and capture her. The prince's horse reassures him of their success and takes him to the Red Emperor's location.

Chapter 4

The prince and his horse were about to cross a bridge over a lake when they noticed an Ant wedding happening. The prince didn't want to harm them so he and his horse jumped into the water to avoid killing the ants. Then, he found a swarm of bees who couldn't find a place to settle, so he hollowed out a log for them. The prince was given an ant wing and a bee wing because he had shown them kindness, and if he was ever in any danger, lighting those wings on fire would let the insects know he needed help.

After wandering around for some time, the prince and his horse came across several strange but friendly creatures. The first among them is Gerilă (from ger, "frost", and the diminutive suffix -ilă), a man who shivers in summer, and whose cold breath can turn things into ice. Confronted with astonishment and some irony by the prince, Gerilă answers: "Laugh if you will, Harap Alb, but you'll not be able to accomplish anything without me where you're going." They are joined by Flămânzilă (from flămând, "hungry"; translated as "Eat-All"), who can consume huge amounts without satisfying his appetite. Next comes Setilă (from sete, "thirst"; also "Drink-All"), These in turn are followed by Ochilă (from ochi, "eye"), whose sight covers immense distances, and Păsări-Lăți-Lungilă (from pasăre, "bird", a se lăți, "to widen oneself" and a se lungi, "to lengthen oneself"), who can make himself grow in any direction and reach heights only accessible to birds. Together they finally arrive at the Red Emperor's palace where Harap Alb makes known his intention of marrying his girl.

Chapter 5

The father is displeased by the news, but undecided about how he should treat the visitors. In the end, he opts in favor of tricking them, offering them residence in a copper house, which he has ordered heated to an oven-like temperature. Gerilă, who has the foresight of entering ahead of his companions, proceeds to cool down the entire structure. The Red Emperor then invites the group to a magnificent feast, and witnesses with alarm how his food and drink are rapidly consumed by Flămânzilă and Setilă. The emperor then decides to impose a test on Harap Alb and the others: that of sorting out a huge amount of poppy seeds from an enormous barn, which Harap Alb manages with assistance from the ants.

Chapter 6

The King then tells the heroes that, if they want his daughter, they are to guard her and bring her to him in the morning. At midnight, the princess turns into a bird and escapes the palace, but, even though she takes refuge in the most inaccessible places, she is tracked down by Ochilă and eventually grabbed by Păsări-Lăți-Lungilă. As a final attempt at putting his guests on the spot, the princess' father then makes Harap Alb tell her apart from his adoptive daughter, who is her exact double. This the protagonist accomplishes with assistance from the queen bee, who sets down on the princess' cheek. A final challenge is presented by the girl herself, as a fantastical race between her turtle dove and his horse, to obtain three scions of apple tree and measures of living and dead water. After taking the girl and parting with his five assistants, Harap Alb falls in love with his hostage on the way back to the Green Emperor's court. They are greeted by the Green Emperor and his entire entourage, at which stage the Red Emperor's daughter reveals the Bald Man's true identity and states her own affection for the destitute prince. As revenge, the Bald Man attacks the hero and chops off his head with the backsword of his sermon. The stallion resolves this situation by grabbing the enemy with his teeth and dropping him from "the height of skies". It then joins back the prince's head and body, reviving them with living water. The story ends with a magnificent wedding between Harap Alb, recognized as successor to the Green Emperor, and the Red Emperor's daughter—a feast which, according to the narrator's account, lasts "to this day".

Chapter	Statements	True	False	Doesn't say
1	1. The Old King has three sons.			
	2. The king let his sons leave without testing them.			
	3. The young prince helped the old woman when she first asked for help.			
	4. The old woman told the prince to go and search for the armor that his father used when he has younger.			
	5. The horse had wings.			

2	1. The prince met the Bald-Man five times in the forest.			
	2. The prince accepted the Bald-Man's help the first time.			
	3. The Bald-Man approached the prince on a horse.			
	4. The Bald-Man gave the prince a flower in order to trick him.			
	5. The prince became "Harap Alb".			
3	1) When he first arrived, Harap Alb is welcomed and accepted as the Green Emperor's successor.			
	2) The lettuce served by the Green Emperor can only be found in the Stag's Forest			
	3) Bald-Man keeps sending Harap Alb on dangerous and life-threatening missions			
	4) Holy Sunday Lady is dressed in a beautiful white gown			
	5) Harap Alb can't bring himself to kill the Stag			
4	1. The prince is only given an ant wing.			

	2. The prince came across several strange but friendly creatures who would help him during his journey.			
	3. The prince and his crew arrive at the Red Emperor's palace.			
	4. Harap Alb does not intend to marrying the girl.			
	5. The Red Emperor's daughter reveals Bald Man's identity and her affection towards the prince.			
5	1.The father knows how to treat the visitors.			
	2.The father opts to trick them.			
	3.The red emperor invites the group to a magnificent feast.			
	4.Only Flămânzilă eats and drinks all the food and drink.			
	5.Harap Alb passes the test with the help of butterflies.			
6	1) The final challenge is presented by Harap Alb			
	2)The protagonist accomplishes his task with the help of the			

	queen bee.			
	3)Harap Alb passes the test and says to the emperor that he wants money as a reward			
	4)The princess is tracked down by Ochilă and grabbed by Gerilă.			
	5)The story ends with a magnificent wedding between Harap Alb and Red Emperor's daughter.			

10.Post reading activity

Aims: -to process information and develop creativity

-to act out in front of their peers

Interaction : T-S .S-S

Procedure: Students prepare questions they would like to make to one or two main characters from the story. When all classmates have prepared their questions, set pairs and assign a role to each student. Students answer from the characters perspective and discuss how the character may have evolved from the beginning to the end of the story.

11.Post reading activity

Aim :: -to communicate freely and imaginatively either in written or spoken form

Interaction : T-Ss ,S-S

Procedure : Teacher asks students to speak about themselves ,to describe themselves according to their zodiac signs. Then students assign a zodiac sign to their favourite character and create a weekly prediction for the character. Then, they are divided into groups and asked to compare themselves to the chosen character ,they are supposed to use the vocabulary provided inthe three handouts.

OPENNESS	EXTRAVERSION	EMOTIONAL STABILITY	AGREEABLENESS	CONSCIOUSNESS
Creative	Extroverted	Temperamental	Warm	Efficient
Artistic	Talkative	Unenvious	Sympathetic	Organized
Intellectual	Energetic	Relaxed	Cooperative	Systematic
Imaginative	Bold	Moody	Kind	Practical
Unintellectual	Withdrawn	Touchy	Cold	Disorganized
Philosophical	Quiet	Fretful	Rude	Inefficient
Uncreative	Shy	Jealous	Unsympathetic	Sloppy
Deep	Bashful	Envious	Harsh	Careless

Zodiac Signs Elements & Qualities

Fire signs 	Air signs 	Earth signs 	Water signs 
Aries Cardinal 	Libra Cardinal 	Taurus Fixed 	Cancer Cardinal 
Leo Fixed 	Gemini Mutable 	Virgo Mutable 	Scorpio Fixed 
Sagittarius Mutable 	Aquarius Fixed 	Capricorn Cardinal 	Pisces Mutable 

The Qualities

Cardinal Signs: Enterprising, ambitious, and full of initiative. They are also natural leaders and are always ready to take on new challenges

Fixed Signs: Reliable, stable, and tenacious. They are often traditionalists who like to stick to tried-and-true methods

Mutable Signs: Adaptable and flexible. They are often good at multitasking and thrive in changeable environments.

The Elements

Fire Signs: Passionate, Driven, Enthusiastic, Confident, Bold

Water Signs: Emotional, Intuitive, Sensitive, Compassionate, Nurturing

Air Signs: Intellectual, Social, Communicative, Bright, Stimulating

Earth Signs: Reliable, Practical, Patient, Hardworking, Down to Earth

Words and Phrases Used in Comparison and Contrast

Words that signal a comparison

- > As
- > Also
- > Like
- > Alike
- > Likewise
- > Resembles
- > Similar
- > Just as
- > Just like
- > Equally
- > Same both

Words that signal a contrast

- > however
- > Although
- > Whereas
- > In contrast
- > Yet
- > Differs from
- > Instead
- > Unlike
- > On the contrary
- > Different from
- > On the other hand

12. Post reading/listening activity

Aim :-to learn new idioms related to the topic

- to get the pupils involved in acting out the dialogues

Inteaction :T-Ss.S-S

Procedure :T explains what an idiom is. (An idiom is a common word or phrase which means something different from its literal meaning but can be understood because of their popular use.)Then presents some examples of idioms. Students are asked to make up groups of four to choose at least three idioms and act out a dialogue in front of their colleagues. They have to write it first, then to perform it.

Drama queen



- an overly dramatic person
- someone who becomes easily upset or angry over small things

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— IDIOM OF THE DAY —

Castles In The Air

Meaning: plans that have very little chance of happening

"Sometimes you feel that your hopes and ambitions are just castle in the air. But hold on to your dreams; one of them will soon come true."

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the card features two glasses of wine, one with a yellow liquid and one with a red liquid, flanked by several yellow stars and circles.

Prince Charming – the name of a fairy tale hero that used to describe an ideal man who is both handsome and of good character



Dark Horse



A dark horse is a person whose experience and abilities are unknown but who could unexpectedly win or achieve success over others.

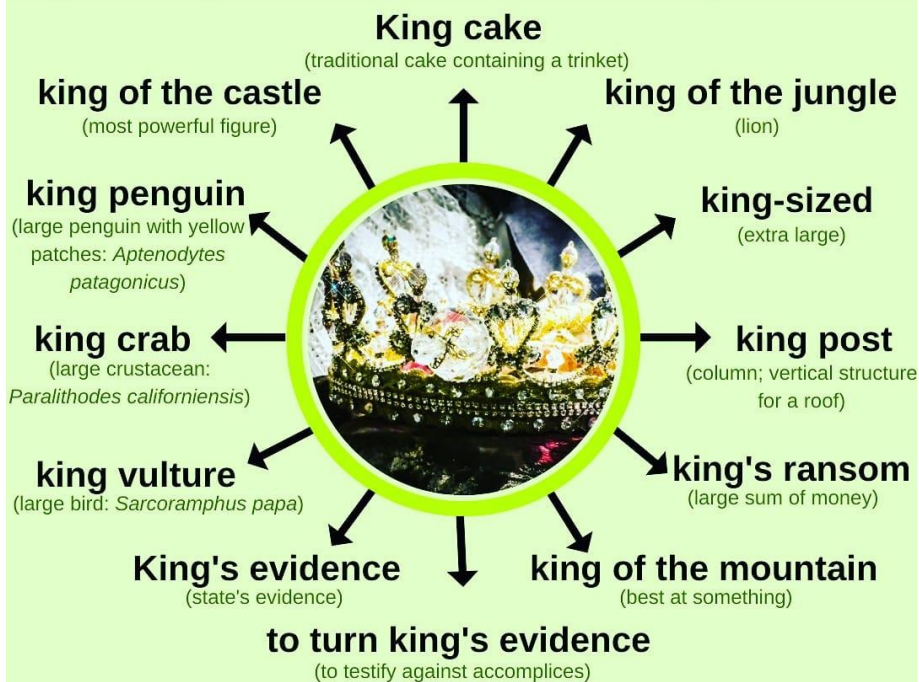
“This year’s dark horse in the state Senate race is Roger Elliot, a former school teacher who has never held public office.”

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King idioms

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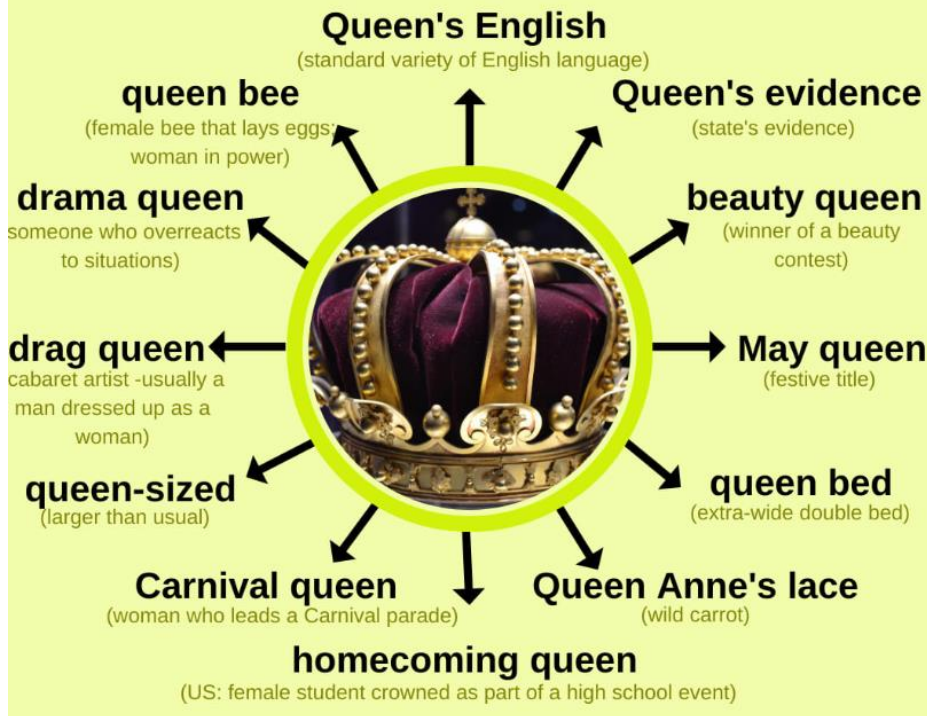
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Queen expressions

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TEACHING TECHNIQUES

THE SALT IN YOUR FOOD

Teaching techniques

Activity 1. Warm-up

1.1 **Brainstorming.** The teacher asks the students to get into groups and name five aspects from their lives that are of utmost importance to them, for example: friends, family, exams, education, future careers, entertainment, etc. They will justify why they have chosen them. The teacher gets feedback.

1.2 **Meanings and Comparisons.** The teacher writes the word 'Family' on the whiteboard and asks the students to answer the following questions:

1. What does your family mean to you?

2. What would you compare your family with?
3. If you were to compare your love for your family with a gem or precious metal, what would you choose? Why?
4. If you were to compare your love for your family with an item of food, what would you choose? Why?

Activity 2. Pre- reading/watching Activity: Prediction

Taking into account the title of the fairy tale ‘The Salt in Your Food’, what do you think that it is about? The teacher gets feedback.

Activity 3. While- reading/watching Activity

The teacher plays the video with the fairy tale which is narrated by the Romanian team.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yjA9WDcc70K8yDfUIiwH6fV23o9HUTTW/view>

3.1 The students are asked to identify the character/characters who

- a) asked how much he/she was loved
- b) answered he/she loved his/her father like honey
- c) answered he/she loved his/ her father like sugar
- d) answered he/ she loved his/her father like salt
- e) had to leave his/her house
- f) had to work as a servant
- g) had to leave to wage a war
- h) was injured
- i) took care of the injured person
- j) first refused to let their son get married to a commoner
- k) prepared a special kind of food
- l) admitted to being wrong and apologized

The teacher gets feedback.

3.2 The teacher asks the students how the characters might have felt when they were in the situations mentioned at exercise 3.1. They students have to sustain their opinions with arguments and examples from the fairytale. The teacher gets feedback.

Activity 4. Post- reading/watching Activity

4.1 Unjumbling.

Put the main ideas into the correct order according to the plot.

- A. The emperor had to go to war and took his son with him to learn how to wage a war.
- B. All the guests were eating and were merry, but the girl’s father got very angry.
- C. The emperor’s youngest daughter ordered her father to be served the food she had personally cooked.
- D. Unfortunately, the emperor's son was injured, and his mother desperately tried to heal him.
- E. As she was very smart, hardworking and kind, everyone adored her and the empress called her to talk to her.
- F. In the end, the prince persuaded his parents to let him marry the girl who had taken such good care of him.
- G. The two elder sisters replied that they loved him like honey, respectively like sugar, but the youngest one said that she loved him like salt in his food.
- H. The two fell in love, and the emperor's son wanted to marry her, but his parents opposed.
- I. The bride-to- be asked her future in-laws to invite a certain emperor to the wedding.
- J. The emperor was very angry with his youngest daughter and as a result, she was sent away from the palace.
- K. The emperor's daughter watched over him day and night and her love and kindness contributed to his healing.
- L. She left her father’s palace with sadness in her heart and tears in her eyes and after a long journey, she reached the palace of another emperor and found work as a servant, being the housekeeper’s helper.
- M. The emperor's daughter revealed the truth, explained why she had cooked the food in that way, forgave her father who had apologised, and they all made up.
- N. They had a fairytale wedding and lived happily ever after.
- O. One day, the emperor, wanted to find out how much his daughters loved him.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

4.2 Alternative titles.

Group work. The teacher asks the students to give an alternative title for the fairy tale and to explain why it is appropriate. They should give arguments to support their ideas.

4.3 Quiz Time

Pair Work. The students do the quiz and then they compare the answers with the partner.

Whom would you choose to....	The emperor	The emperor's elder daughters	The emperor's youngest daughter	The prince
be your best friend?				
spend an entire day with?				
keep a secret?				
help you with your chores?				
be a member of your family?				
cheer you up when you're down?				
Take care of you when you are ill?				

Activity 5. Pre- reading Activity

5.1 Salt. The teacher tells the students what salt has meant throughout history.

Explanation: The motif of salt is an extremely common one in all mythologies, beginning from the Egyptian one, and its symbolism, is a very rich one. Salt corrodes but also preserves. On the one hand, it dries, and on the other hand it is collected from the water. It has been fascinating people for millennia, not only as a valuable substance, that is worth being obtained, but also as a generator of poetic and mythical meanings. Historians have shown that salt was not always the readily available resource that it is today. In the old times, people struggled to get it, and it required effort and cleverness. Salt triggered trade and conflict. It was used as payment and taxes. Back then, it didn't have the connotations of excess that it has today.

On the contrary, it was considered a sign of wealth and prestige. With such a wide palette from semantical point of view, salt also emphasised the social differences, between the food of the rich and that of the poor. Such considerations help to contextualize many references to the value of salt, some of them being extremely widespread culturally. For example, in the New Testament, to share salt with others at mealtime, often together bread, represented the creation of a strong bond of trust and solidarity, whereas spilling salt was considered a blunder of proportions and potential disunity.

Many social connotations of salt reflect its important value, the ability to preserve. Just as salt preserves the integrity of plants and meat, so it was assumed that it could maintain the unity of a group. For the Romanians, salt really became a currency, hence the Latin 'salarium',

meaning money of salt, with which the soldiers were paid, and it represented pieces of compact salt. Salt therefore, has an integrative character and the ability to unite the opposites.

5.2 Interviews, interviewers and interviewees. The class will be divided into four groups. Each group will write a set of 5 questions to interview either the emperor or his daughter. Two confident students from each group will impersonate the two characters and the interview will be conducted so that the interviewee's feelings, thoughts and reasons should be evident.

Activity 6. While- reading Activity

6.1 Personality Traits. Write the personality features of the characters from the fairy tale. Justify your answer.

-The emperor- the girls' father:

-The youngest girl:

-The two elder sisters:

-The prince:

- The empress:

6.2. Multiple- choice exercise. Choose the correct answer, A, B, C or D.

1. What did the king ask the girls?

- A) If they get on well.
- B) If they wanted to leave home.
- C) How much they loved him.
- E) Who is the most hard-working

2. What did the older sisters do when they heard their sister's answer?

- A) They burst out laughing.
- B) They told her to leave the palace.
- C) They remained indifferent.
- E) They got sad.

3. What did the emperor do when he heard his youngest daughter's answer?

- A) Asked for his daughter's forgiveness.
- B) He was very happy because he was loved.
- C) He got angry because the food was not tasty.

D) Told his daughter to leave his house.

4. What did the emperor feel when he heard his youngest daughter's answer?

A) anger

B) mercy

C) pity

D) joy

5. What was the item of news that all the inhabitants of the palace where the girl worked as a servant found out?

A) That she was decent and hardworking.

B) That she was lazy but smart.

C) That her father was an emperor.

D) That she was bad hardworking.

6. Why did the empress started to hold the girl dear?

A) Because she was the daughter of an emperor.

B) Because she knew how to make tasty food and clean things.

C) Because she was clever, hardworking and decent.

D) Because she seemed to be an orphan.

7. Why did the emperor take his son to war?

A) Because he didn't love him.

B) Because the empress asked him to do so.

C) Because he wanted his son to learn how to wage a war.

D) Because that's what the noblemen decided.

8. What was the prince like?

A) coward.

B) disobedient

C) fearful

D) brave

9. What did the emperor's son decide when he got healthy?

A) To ask the girl who took care of him to become his wife.

B) To go hunting.

C) To wage another war

D) To build another palace.

10. Why did the girl ask her future in-laws to invite the emperor from the neighbouring country to the wedding?

A) Because he was her father.

B) Because he lived nearby.

C) Because that was the custom.

D) Because she wanted to meet him.

11. What did the girl put in her father's food?

A) only salt.

B) only honey.

C) sugar and honey, without salt.

D) sugar, honey and salt.

12. Why did the girl's father get angry at the wedding?

A) Because all the guests were merry.

B) Because he was called to the wedding.

C) Because he didn't like the other guests.

D) Because his food could not be eaten.

13. What did the emperor, the prince's father, do when he heard the neighbouring emperor's complaint?

A) He tasted the dishes.

B) He apologised.

C) He called the cooks.

D) He punished the cooks.

14. What did the girl do when her father-in-law sent for the cooks?

A) She admitted to cooking the food.

B) She let the cooks be punished.

C) She didn't do anything.

D) She admitted to asking the cooks to make the food in that way.

15. What did the girl want to prove through what she did?

A) That she was unjustly banished from home.

B) That the emperor prefers sugar and honey.

C) That she didn't love her father.

D) That the emperor is wise.

16. Did the girl finally reconcile with her father?

A) Yes, but she did not forgive him.

B) Yes, they apologised to each other.

C) Yes, but he didn't invite him to the wedding.

D) No, because she was right.

Activity 7. Post-reading Activity

7.1 Answering Questions. The teacher asks the students the following questions.

1. What were your feelings while you were reading the fairy tale?

2. How would your father feel if you expressed your love for him in a similar way?

7.2 Debate. Defend and/or criticize the actions of the emperor's youngest daughter. What were her motivations? Give your opinion on her actions.

7.3 Let's be creative! In groups, the students are asked to write a scene that would have changed the plot of the fairy tale. They will read the scene to their classmates and they will explain how everything could have changed. The class will vote for the best scene.

Harap- Alb (the story)

Chapter 1

Once upon a time there lived a king that had three sons. The Old King had a brother that was called The Green Emperor. They lived really far apart so, sensing himself at death's door, The

Green Emperor wrote a letter to The Old King asking his brother to bring the best of his three sons to take over his empire. After hearing this news, the king sent his eldest son on his way, but wanting to test him, he secretly put on a bear's skin and hid under a bridge to scare him. The eldest son failed the test and came back home. The middle son did not fare much better.

His brothers' failures saddened their younger brother who ran into the palace's garden where he met an old woman. Although he did not want to help her right from the beginning, the prince ended up giving her a gold coin, a gesture of kindness that the old lady would repay. She told the young prince to go and search for his father's armor and weapons that he used to win his battles in his youth. She also told him to find his dad's old horse and to feed it embers. When he first saw the horse he laughed thinking that it was too malnourished to help him. After the horse ate the embers the prince was shocked to see a mighty steed before him. Armed with all that he needed, the prince set out on his journey. When he came face to face with the bear that bested his brothers, the young prince did not run away in fear of passing his father's test. Before letting him go on his way the young man's father warned him not to trust the Bald-Man.

Chapter 2

He travelled for a few days upon entering a strange deep wood. Tree branches were covered in thick moss, with sneaking eyes of unknown creatures lurking behind him. Not too far away from the wood a strange tall character with no hair approached. He was the Bald-Man, asking him if he needed a servant or a shield bearer considering that those woods were very dangerous. The prince replied shortly that he would take his chances alone, riding his horse forward. After a short time, the Bald-Man appeared once again this time disguised, greeting him. The prince was baffled from how many bald men were in the forest. The man offered his help once again just to be turned down by the prince leaving him behind. He crossed the forest until a tree lying across the road stopped him. That's when he thought to himself that he should've accepted the help, even though his father advised him not to. While thinking what to do next the Bald-Man appeared for the third time, now riding a horse and wearing other clothes, telling the prince the right path and to take him along. He begged and begged to be hired. The prince gave in and hired him. They went on to travel together until the Bald-Man pretended to be thirsty just to throw the prince's water out, after saying that they will soon reach a well. That's when the man tricked the prince to go into it, trapping him there. He could get out on one condition, he had to become the Bald-Man's servant, to give him his riches and for his name to become "Harap Alb". He did just that, afterwards they got on their horses and rode towards the Green Emperor.

Chapter 3

Bald-man travels a long and difficult journey with his new servant to reach the Green Emperor's palace. He is welcomed and accepted as a prince and a king's successor. However, he treats his servant, Harap Alb, cruelly, and the princesses notice his disrespectful behaviour towards Harap Alb. One day, the king serves a special type of lettuce at dinner, which is only found in the Bear's garden. Bald-man orders Harap Alb to bring him these lettuce. Harap Alb, with the help of his magic horse, which transforms into a sea-horse to cross the boundless sea, succeeds in finding the garden, but he must also face the killer bear.

There, the prince seeks help from Holy Sunday Lady, who saves him by making the bear fall asleep. The prince takes lettuce from the Bear's garden, which he presents to the Green Emperor, earning the Bald-Man's wrath. Later, the Bald-Man wants to acquire the precious gems from the stag's skull in the wild woods. He sends Harap Alb to bring the stag's skin, with its skull full of precious stones. The prince mounts his horse and starts flying high in the sky towards the stag's forest.

When they arrive, the prince seeks help from the Holy Sunday Lady again. She gives him the tools of a former dwarf master and they go to the stag's forest to catch it. Holy Sunday

instructs the prince to wait in a pit with a helmet and a sword until the stag comes to drink water. He kills the stag, takes its head and treasures, and returns to Holy Sunday. She tells him to leave Bald-Man to his fate and to go home.

On his journey back, the prince is admired by the people for the sparkling gems from the stag's skull. Bald-Man comments on Harap Alb's adventurous nature in a rude manner, and the princesses sense his bad intentions. At a feast, a strange bird speaks of the Red Emperor's daughter, which leads Bald-Man to order the prince to find and capture her. The prince's horse reassures him of their success and takes him on a magical flight towards the Red Emperor's location.

Chapter 4

The prince and his horse were about to cross a bridge over a lake when they noticed an ant wedding happening.

The prince didn't want to harm them so he and his horse jumped into the water to avoid killing the ants. A flying-ant appeared and thanked them for being merciful, then gave them a flying ant wing to repay them. The ant told them to set it on fire if they ever got into trouble and the ants would come and help them.

When they set off, the prince heard a strange buzzing noise and noticed a swarm of bees looking for a place to settle and so he helped them by hollowing out a log and putting sweet smelling weeds in it, the perfect place for the bees to settle.

The bees were extremely thankful for the kindness the prince had shown them and the queen bee offered the prince a bee wing which if set on fire would let the bees know that they were in danger and would rush to help them.

Chapter 5

After wandering around for some time, the prince and his horse came across several strange but friendly creatures. The first among them is Gerilă (from ger, "frost", and the diminutive suffix -ilă), a man who shivers in summer, and whose cold breath, reaching the fury of a strong wind, can turn things into ice. Confronted with astonishment and some irony by the prince, Gerilă answers: "Laugh if you will, Harap Alb, but you'll not be able to accomplish anything without me where you're going." (The reply prompts its recipient to change his mind, and creates a bond between the two characters.) They are joined by Flămânzilă (from flămând, "hungry"; translated as "Eat-All"), who can consume huge amounts without satisfying his appetite. Next comes Setilă (from sete, "thirst"; also "Drink-All"), (Flămânzilă's counterpart among drinkers). These in turn are followed by Ochilă (from ochi, "eye"), whose sight covers immense distances, and Păsări-Lăți-Lungilă (from pasăre, "bird", a se lăți, "to widen oneself" and a se lungi, "to lengthen oneself"), who can make himself grow in any direction and reach heights only accessible to birds. Together they finally arrive at the Red Emperor's palace where Harap Alb makes known his intention of marrying his girl.

Chapter 6

The father is displeased by the news, but undecided about how he should treat the visitors. In the end, he opts in favor of tricking them, offering them residence in a copper house, which he has ordered heated to an oven-like temperature. Gerilă, who has the foresight of entering ahead of his companions, proceeds to cool down the entire structure. The Red Emperor then invites the group to a magnificent feast, and witnesses with alarm how his food and drink are rapidly consumed by Flămânzilă and Setilă. The emperor then decides to impose a test on Harap Alb and the others: that of sorting out a huge amount of poppy seeds from a enormous barn, which Harap Alb manages with assistance from the ants. The King then tells the heroes that, if they want his daughter, they are to guard her and bring her to him in the morning. At midnight, the princess turns into a bird and escapes the palace, but, even though she takes

refuge in the most inaccessible places, she is tracked down by Ochilă and eventually grabbed by Păsări-Lăți-Lungilă. As a final attempt at putting his guests on the spot, the princess' father then makes Harap Alb tell her apart from his adoptive daughter, who is her exact double. This the protagonist accomplishes with assistance from the queen bee, who sets down on the princess' cheek. A final challenge is presented by the girl herself, as a fantastical race between her turtle dove and his horse, to obtain three scions of apple tree and measures of living and dead water. After taking the girl and parting with his five assistants, Harap Alb falls in love with his hostage on the way back to the Green Emperor's court. They are greeted by the Green Emperor and his entire entourage, at which stage the Red Emperor's daughter reveals the Bald Man's true identity and states her own affection for the destitute prince. As revenge, the Bald Man attacks the hero and chops off his head with the backsword of his sermon. The stallion resolves this situation by grabbing the enemy with his teeth and dropping him from "the height of skies". It then joins back the prince's head and body, reviving them with living water. The story ends with a magnificent wedding between Harap Alb, recognized as successor to the Green Emperor, and the Red Emperor's daughter—a feast which, according to the narrator's account, lasts "to this day". :)

The Salt in Your Food (the story)

This is a Romanian fairytale called 'The Salt in Your Food' ('Sarea in Bucate') collected by Petre Ispirescu.

Once upon a time there was an emperor who had three daughters, whom he loved dearly. After his wife had died, he took a great interest in his daughters' education and granted their every wish. He bought his daughters the most beautiful dresses, the most expensive jewels and the most wonderful books. His daughters loved their father more than anything else.

One day the emperor asked his eldest daughter how much she loved him.

"I love you like honey," replied his eldest daughter.

Her father was pleased with her reply and asked his middle daughter the same question.

"I love you like sugar," she replied.

The emperor was touched by so much love. He then asked his youngest daughter how much she loved him.

"I love you like the salt in your food, father," replied his youngest daughter.

Her sisters started to laugh at her. The emperor was furious.

"What kind of answer is that? Leave my house at once!"

The youngest daughter was not allowed to give any explanation and was exiled. Her sisters laughed at her stupidity and were pleased that she was leaving because they did not really love her dearly. The youngest daughter dressed herself in some simple clothes. She left with sadness in her heart and tears in her eyes.

After a long journey, she reached the palace of another emperor and found work as a servant, being the housekeeper's helper. She was so hard-working and skilful that before long, everyone adored her. She could cook the finest dishes and could make any object shine. The empress heard of this clever servant girl and called her to talk to her. The girl spoke from a pure heart, without pretense and much audacity. The empress liked her a lot and she suspected that the maid could not be a commoner. They became inseparable and the girl no longer had to work in the kitchen. Instead, she stayed alongside the empress, sewing or painting, and everything she made was incomparably beautiful. The empress loved her as if she were her daughter.

The emperor had to leave for war, taking his son with him. The prince was wounded, and the emperor and the empress were distraught. The empress did not leave his side day or night. And the empress's servant girl stayed with them. She took such good care of the prince and

the very touch of her delicate hands could soothe any pain. When he had recovered, the prince went to the empress and told her that he wanted to marry. The empress was delighted and asked him if he wanted to marry someone in particular. The prince told her that he wanted to marry the servant girl who had tended him while he was ill because he did not know a more beautiful, honest, hard-working or a more modest girl than her. At first, the empress was against the marriage because she wanted her son to have a bride of noble blood. But in the end, the prince persuaded her. Together it was not difficult for them to convince the emperor, and a date for the wedding was set.

The young bride-to-be asked her future in-laws to invite a certain emperor, but she did not tell them that that emperor was her father. The long-awaited wedding day arrived. The bride-to-be cooked for her father separately and told a servant to bring his food to him personally and to make sure that those dishes were not given to another guest by mistake.

From the moment the emperor arrived, he could not stop looking at the beautiful bride. He felt a pang in his heart as he thought how much she looked like his daughter whom he had not seen for a long time.

When the enticing dishes appeared on the table, everyone tucked in – only the bride’s father could barely swallow his food because it was not tasty. He asked those on his right and those on his left if their food was good, and everyone replied that it was the most delicious meal they had ever tasted. He took a little from his neighbours’ food, and indeed, it was very good.

Finally, he couldn’t take it anymore and stood up. He accused his hosts of making a fool of him. His host was just about to call the cooks to punish the person who had played the trick on his guest when the bride admitted that she herself had cooked for the emperor who had got angry. She had only used honey and sugar and she had even put sugar in his salt-cellar because the emperor preferred honey and sugar to salt.

She told everyone that the emperor was her father and explained the reason why he had got those dishes as she wanted to show her father that people could live without sugar or honey, but they could not live without salt.

Her father admitted to making this mistake and tenderly embraced the daughter whom he thought he had lost. The other emperor was pleased to have such a clever daughter-in-law, such a suitable bride for his son – and the daughter of an emperor on top of it all.

The moral of this story:

Each person expresses love in his or her own way. Try to understand this before judging them

National Identity Revealed in Romanian Culture Through Stories

Romania is a beautiful European country and it is a member of the European Union. Like any other country, it has its own history and its own culture. For example, did you know that Romanians have their own traditional Valentine’s Day? It’s called “Dragobete” in Romanian and is celebrated on February 24th. Girls usually receive snowdrops from boys. Another holiday loved by girls is celebrated on the 1st of March. It’s called “Mărțișor”, which actually means “little March”. On this day, girls receive little talismans that have a red and white string. They can wear it as a brooch for several days.

Romanian culture has plenty of fairytales that you’d love to hear. One of the greatest fairytales collectors was Petre Ispirescu. He gathered stories from elder people and rewrote

them. That's how these stories survived and children can still enjoy them to this day. Dragons, princes and princesses, places where people stay young forever, golden apples that need to be protected – all these are part of Romanian fairytales. The fight between good and evil is always present. But, don't worry! Good always wins. But first things, first. The creation of Romania is beautifully presented in myths and legends.

IN THE BEGINNING

In the beginning of beginnings, before time and matter, there was a boundless ocean called Apa Sâmbetei. (Saturday's Water) Since time out of mind the ocean was as still as a mirror, until a ripple appeared, as if something was blowing on the surface of the primordial waters. The ocean churned and bubbled with the waves, creating foam. From the froth suddenly sprouted a tree of massive proportions. Crawling on the tree's branches was a single butterfly and a lone worm. The butterfly shed its wings and transformed into a beautiful, shining boy, lighting up the blackness around him. As if to mimic the other, the worm also wriggled and writhed until it had shed its body, revealing yet another boy, clouded with darkness. "Brother!" the second boy exclaimed with joy and moved to embrace him, but the first boy grimly shook his head. "You are not my brother, for I can have no equal. I shall call you Nonbrother."

SEA

Together, the Brother and Nonbrother, or Fîrtat and Nefîrtat, took it upon themselves to create the world. Fîrtat asked Nefîrtat to dive down into Apa Sâmbetei and retrieve sand from the bottom of the sea, for he could not swim. Three times Nonbrother descended only to have the earth slip from his fingers. The third time that Nonbrother failed, Brother told him to clean the mud from under his fingernails and from that he would create land.

LAND

Fîrtat moulded an island under the branches of the cosmic tree and laid down to rest. While Fîrtat slept, Non-brother saw his chance to get rid of his brother and create his own world. Knowing that Fîrtat could not swim, Nefîrtat tried to roll him into the sea to drown. Nefîrtat pushed his brother in every direction but wherever Fîrtat was rolled, land would appear beneath him. For a long time Nefîrtat tried to drown his friend until land had spread to each corner of the world. When the Brother awoke he marvelled at what the Nonbrother had done, but saw that the earth was much too big. Combining each other's strength, the two beings squeezed the earth, creasing the land— forming mountains and hills, lakes and swamps— until finally it was compressed into the perfect size.

SKY

The two divinities thought they should build the sky, a firmament to separate the waters above from the waters below. Setting it upon the highest branches of the cosmic tree, Fîrtat embedded the stars, the moon and the sun like jewels in the sky. Due to a slight miscalculation, however, the sky was too heavy for the earth and the land began to sink into the waters. Nonbrother quickly dove into the ocean and constructed four pillars, supported by four cosmic fish, to hold up the earth.

LIFE

Now that there was light shining down upon the world, the cosmic tree bloomed and bore fruit which Brother and Nonbrother used to shape all manner of men and creatures that walk this Earth. While Fîrtat created animals of beauty and practicality, Nefîrtat, with his wild imagination, experimented creating giants, shape-shifters and other strange beasts. In the beginning, everyone got along together in peace, but over time, evil seeped into the world from below and the troubles arose.

The epitome of dark myths and legends began deep within the wide forests of Romania, a country that was once harsh and full of mystery. Natural disasters, disease, wild animals, and war always felt too close to home and threatened to decimate the lives of the Romanian folk. Seemingly powerless against these terrible forces, the Romanian people created tales of monsters and heroes to give them hope and understanding. Earthquakes occurred only because your lack of faith erodes the Pillars that hold up the world. It was a vicious *Pricolici* that killed your cattle and a blood-sucking *Strigoi* that caused your mother to grow ill. Long ago, these superstitions were what helped the Romanian people deal with the harshness of life, as well as providing entertainment around a fire on a cold, winter's night. All things begin and end with a story.

Great stories are not the only interesting thing from the Romanian culture. Writers, painters, sculptors, musical composers and actors made Romania an internationally known country. For example, *The Story of Harap Alb* is written by Ion Creangă, a main figure in 19th century Romanian literature, known not only for his *Childhood Memories* volume, his novellas but also for stories and anecdotes.

Creangă's main contribution to fantasy and children's literature includes narratives structured around eponymous protagonists like Ivan Turbincă, Dănilă Prepeleac and Harap Alb.

Like Swift or Mark Twain, Creangă is more than a story-teller for children or simply a humorist. His work is a human and social document of the ways of thinking and the life of a Romanian village in the nineteenth century. His works gained international recognition, owing to the local peasant setting, as well as to the mastery over language in which and how it was written; it carries nevertheless all the joy and pathos of a book of universal significance.

Romania's folk tales remind us of a time out of mind when heroes brought order to chaos, when the dark forest still withheld its secrets, and there were simple fables to answer the world's ultimate questions. Stories are still being passed down through the generations, but they are dissolving in our fast-paced, modern age; where people don't have the time nor interest in listening and letting their imaginations unfold. The world has moved on, but sometimes, when you hear the wolves howl at night, or feel a cold wind brush your skin sending shivers down your neck, your soul remembers...

Why do folktales still charm us? They hold ancient wisdom, ceremonies and life lessons but they also unravel old rituals of passage, family ties, and ancient human desires, offering us a moment of contemplation and a much needed respite from our own life stories.

No Romanian cannot speak about national identity unless he refers to the traditional Romanian costume which best defines its dwellers, their customs and well preserved

traditions. It was born in and lasted since ancient times; in fact, the Romanian folklore might be one of the best preserved and most varied in Europe. The costumes, their line of the design, the theme and the chromatics not only reflect ethnic identities but also document the historical and artistic values of the Romanian people. Their source of inspiration can be traced to the environment, nature, to the vegetation and the fauna.

What's the inspiration behind the Romanian motifs and what do they represent?

The motifs sewn on the Romanian textiles are stitched as a code, exploring the fantasies of the anonymous artisans who made them. It's a language of signs and symbols specific to the mythical thinking of earlier times - times when clothes facilitated a dialogue with the unseen forces of the cosmos.

Some even believed that specific items of clothing were protective and brought good fortune and fertility, so the women who were embroidering the clothes would pray to Gods: "*Inspirit my clothes, the secret of my soul*", and that embroidery on the chest and sleeves channeled the energy through the body, down the arms and into the hands. These motifs, sewn on fabrics, carved on objects or painted on the walls of their houses, created a symbolical shield against evil spirits.

Nowadays, it is fascinating to decode messages from our ancestors by just learning how to read their needlework, the colors, patterns and motifs they've embroidered on their clothes. The earlier embroideries were inspired by geometric patterns but in the second half of the 19th Century, non-geometrical floral motifs were introduced. Over the centuries, different regions of Romania frequently borrowed and shared motifs between them. The decoration became more elaborate around the turn of last century, using many different techniques on a single garment. One of the most known sources of inspiration is The Tree of Life, symbolizing the eternal life, vitality and spiritual growth, and it's still used in Romania; it can be found on ceramics, gates, rugs, clothes, accessories and even jewelries.

Another symbol is the cross, which is seen as a balance: horizontally it connects people and vertically the people get connected with God.

Romanians, as most peoples around the world, have been wanting to ascent to higher dimensions since ancient times. So some of the most used symbols are *the protection symbols*, used as a shield against evil. In this category we can find: the rooster and the eye: the rooster is considered to be a watcher of the gates between night and day, good and evil, and the eye symbolizes the window to the soul, where love begins.

The Romanian ancestors also used *cosmic and ascension symbols* such as the stars and the circle: the stars are a source of light helping us to find the right path, and the circle represents the sun; also a symbol of regeneration, repetition of seasons, death and rebirth of nature. This category lead to the idea of rotation which is represented by symbols such as the column, the spiral, the diamond shape, the M cross, the S shape. All these symbols reflected the idea of returning, the idea of energy, of bringing back something that was lost.

The spiral was inspired by the horns of the ram, symbolizing both femininity and masculinity, and the evolution of life. It never appears alone but as a dual sign. As an example of its dual characteristic let's take the Shepherd's hook; represented by 2 opposite spirals, but linked

between them to show the connection between lost and found, gone and back, beginning and ending, everything as an infinite balance.

Furthermore, the S shape, also seen as a dual sign, can be doubled or tripled to form the solar rosette, since the Sun is the main hero in most ancestral ways of thought.

Other motifs used on the Romanian embroideries are the *symbols of fertility and abundance*, such as: the snail, the wheat, leaves and fruits; the snail is a symbol of the moon and water, a feminine sign symbolizing pregnancy and fertility and the wheat means peace, life, wealth. The leaves and the fruits symbolize vitality.

As humans, we naturally need food, water and shelter to survive. But equally important is understanding. To survive, we need to understand our environment, each other and ourselves. We invented culture to meet this need: we found a short-hand to take the essential values and truths a society holds, and collapse them into coded narrative, sound, images and symbols that mean something to all of us. This is culture's potential. The truth is that politics, whose currency is power, and economics, whose currency is money, only get us so far. We also need culture, whose currency is trust. And the complexity of this moment demands that we approach our global challenges with a more comprehensive lens, in which politics, economics and culture work in concert.

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