Famous Slovaks

worksheets







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worksheets

ICELAND LIECHTENSTEIN NORWAY
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BraDraShip

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INTRODUCTION

Project BraDraShip is based on the institutional cooperation between Gymnázium Grosslingová 18, Bratislava, Slovakia and St. Hallvard videregående skole, Drammen, Norway. BraDraShip is an acronym for BRAtislava – DRAmmen – Ship and it describes cities on the same board which are eager to fight for better education through mutual sharing of tricks and practices in teaching and learning in the spirit of BROTHERSHIP (which sounds similar to BRADRASHIP).

The project BraDraShip was realized from March 2015 to March 2016 and its main goal was to improve not only teaching process but also after-school activities. In order to achieve the main goal we have set up several partial goals:

- create teaching aids for both scientific and social subjects, share proved and create new methods and activities to emphasize using knowledge in real life situations,
- cooperate on assignments and tasks related to different parts of life which are attractive for our students and raise their awareness about other cultures, history and traditions of both countries.

Teachers have written this material, as one of the project outputs. We recommend it to be used not only in English language classrooms in order to improve vocabulary and reading comprehension skills but also in other classes to extend students knowledge about culture of partner country.

Pre-reading task

1. Compare the heroes.







2. Which of their virtues would you like to have?
3. Are firemen, doctors or teachers heroes of everyday life? Why (not)?

While-reading task

1. Read the text and underline the most important facts.
2. Explain the meaning of the saying: Taking from the rich to give to the poor.
3. Describe the relationship between Juraj Jánošík and Tomáš Uhorčík.

Post-reading task

1. What do you know about Jánošíkové dni? Where and why is it held?
2. Put the historical events into chronological order:
    a. Jánošík was caught for the first time.
    b. Jánošík was sentenced to a long-lasting torture.
    c. Uhorčík initiated Jánošík into the mysteries of robbing.
    d. Jánošík is a hero of many folk songs and folk-tales.



JURAJ JÁNOŠÍK

* 25th January 1688, Terchová
┼ 17th March 1713, Liptovský Mikuláš

Slovak folk hero, a famous outlaw and a symbol of the fight against the feudal oppression.

Juraj Jánošík is often attributed to the famous Robin Hood. He took from the rich to give to the poor. During his short life he became a legend. But was he a true hero as described by many authors, or just an ordinary outlaw? There are divergent opinions. The truth is, as always, probably somewhere in the middle.

In Register Office records there is written that Juraj Jánošík was the son of Martin Jánošík – a vassal from Terchová. We do not know much about his youth but his boyhood was probably filled with hard work on the parent homestead. When he was 18 he was enthused by the idea of rebellion so he got recruited to the rebel troops of a magnate Francis II. Rákóczi who with the help of the nobility attempted to overthrow the Habsburg crown. After the crushing defeat of the rebels near Trencin in 1708 young Jánošík got into captivity. Promises and threats forced him, as many other prisoners, to military service on the side of the Emperor. They assigned him as the guardian of the Bytčiansky castle where he met an imprisoned outlaw captain Tomáš Uhorčík.

Uhorčík initiated him into the mysteries of robbing and Jánošík helped him to flee in fall in 1710. After release from military service Jánošík returned to his native Terchová. During the winter months he sought out Uhorčík and offered his assistance. His outlaw initiation was a mugging of wealthy Jewish merchants at Vsetin in September 1711. After proving his ability Jánošík became the leader of the outlaws at the age of 23. After 9 years of robbing Uhorčík gave up the leading position and settled down in the far Klenovec as an honest citizen under a false name Martin Mravec. Jánošík's group was mugging craftsmen, traders but also rich lords across the entire north-western Slovak nearby river Váh. Later, the action spread also to the other parts of Slovakia, Poland and Moravia. They took mostly money but also weapons and valuables. Goods from craftsmen's carriages gave to the people from the nearest village.

Jánošík was caught for the first time in fall in 1712 in Klenovec at Uhorčík's place where he was spending the winter. Together they were imprisoned in the Hrachov manor but after bribing the guards, they managed to escape. Both of them were caught again at Uhorčík's place in Klenovec in early 1713. They were caught by Liptov soldiers and transfered to Vranov mansion. The process was held in March in 1713. They sentenced Jánošík to a long-lasting torture and on 17th March 1713 he was sentenced to death by hanging on a hook. He was 25 years old. After Jánošík's death Uhorčík's real identity was discovered. He was executed a month later on a breaking wheel.

Shortly after Jánošík's death legends about his life began to spread and folk imagination gave him superhuman power. He is a hero of many folk songs and folk-tales. At the beginning of the 18th century he became a symbol of rebellion against Hungarian empire according to the Štúr generation who fought to have their own language. Many poems, dramas and also movies arose about him. The latest is from 2009 and I think it is worth to watch. The fate of Juraj Jánošík, his group and other outlaws' retinues has become a favourite topic of Slovak musical and folk art and also many natural features and cultural objects are named after him . However, you should create an opinion about this unusual Slovak on your own.

Pre-reading task

1. Can you imagine your life without these devices?
2. Compare and contrast devices and discoveries you can see in the pictures.
3. How did they change human life?







While-reading task

1. Read the text and underline the most important facts about the life of Joseph Murgaš.
2. Discuss with your classmates his studies and his patents.

Post-reading task

1. What do you know about Pittsburg Agreement?
2. Use the Internet and try to find the following information:
   a. Who signed it?
   b. What was it about?
   c. Why was it signed?
   d. Did it influence anything?
3. What is the difference between wireless telegraph apparatus and Marconi system?
4. Use the Internet and try to "spell" your name in Morse code.



Joseph Murgaš

*17th February 1864
┼ 11th May 1929, Wilkes Barre

Inventor - wireless telegraph apparatus.

An Email. A Mobile Phone. Radio. Skype. Mr. President New Year´s speech. World could have been totally different if one extraordinary student of arts had not been born. I am talking about a Slovak inventor Joseph Murgaš.

Joseph Murgaš was born on 17th February 1864, in a small village called Jabríková (nowadays it is a part of Tajov). When he attended an elementary school, he was already an exceptional painter and he exceeded in science as well. After the end of the 4th grade he was interested in science but he was born to a poor farmer's family so he decided to be a catholic pastor. After a two-year seminar in Bratislava he continued his studies in Esztergom and Banská Bystrica then he became a chaplain in Dubová. Later he studied painting in Budapest, then for four years at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. In 1896 Joseph Murgaš, as many other Slovaks, emigrated to the USA. He settled in the newly established mining village, Wilkes Barre, where over 300 Slovak families were already living. This is where his serious interest in electronics began. He started to do experiments and on 2nd October 1903 he applied for a patent for the 1st time. His first patent was the Wireless telegraph apparatus another was the Method of communicating intelligence by wireless telegraphy.

Murgaš wireless telegraph apparatus solved drawbacks of previously used Marconi system. Marconi's system was based on the Morse code, therefore messages had different length of signal which resulted in errors. Murgaš succeeded in redesigning this mechanism so that messages had different tone, not length. Therefore the apparatus could be wireless. This is how his most famous invention called Ton-system was created.

His greatest success was a transfer of sound between the towns of Wilkes Barre and Scranton in USA which are in distance of 30 km. It was a recorded conversation in front of witnesses, between mayors of these two towns. Since then, he is known as the inventor of the first radio.

However, he has registered many other patents like Spinning reel for fishing rod, Magnetic detector or Apparatus for making electrical oscillations.

During World War I Joseph Murgaš collaborated on creating joint state of Czechs and Slovaks. His signature on Pittsburg Agreement is a proof. He also organized a collection to help Slovaks which had a yield of 1 million dollars. In 1920 he returned to Slovakia to teach electric engineering but he was banned from teaching because he did not have sufficient education so he went back to the USA. He died on 11th May 1929 in Wilkes Barre.

Pre-reading task



1. What do you know about Milan Rastislav Štefánik?
2. What was he famous for?
3. What can you see in the picture?

While-reading task

1. Read the text and underline the most important facts about Štefánik's life.
2. Discuss with your classmates his private life and his relation to astronomy.
3. What was his contribution to the forming of the Czechoslovak state?

Post-reading task

1. Match the words with the correct definitions

    1. Priest
    2. Eclipse
    3. Outbreak
    4. Aircraft
    5. Dissertation
    6. Assembly

    a. a person, usually a man, who has been trained to performreligious duties

    b. a long piece of writing on a particular subject

    c. a group of people, especially one that meets regularlyfor a particular purpose

    d. an occasion when the sun disappears from view,

    e. a time when something suddenly begins

    f. any vehicle, with or without an engine, that can fly, such as aplane or helicopter



MILAN RASTISLAV ŠTEFÁNIK

* 21th July 1880, Košariská
┼ 4th May 1919, Ivanka pri Dunaji

He was an astronomer, a politician and a general of the French army. Thanks to him (but not only him), Slovakia became an independent state (with Czech).

Childhood and youth

Milan Rastislav Štefánik was born on 21th July 1880 in a small Slovak town called Košariská. He was born in a family of an evangelist priest - Pavol Štefánik. He was born as the 6th child and he had 11 siblings. They lived in difficult conditions. Milan spent all of his childhood with books and magazines. He attended a high school in Bratislava. He was an excellent student. After the high school he attended a university in Prague where he was studying constructional engineering. After one year he left constructional engineering and started to study astronomy. He wrote a dissertation called "The new stars and New Cassiopeia". He passed all necessary exams and he graduated as a doctor of philosophy in 1904 in Prague.

Science career

Milan R. Štefánik worked in Paris. His goal was to work with two most famous astronomers - Camill Flammarion and Jules Janssen. His biggest scientific achievement was in 1906, when he published seven scientific works. The General Assembly of the French Astronomical Society awarded Janssen prize to Štefánik in 1907. Štefánik was sent to Tahiti to observe Halley's Comet in 1910. He spent 10 months there. The next two years he devoted himself to the study of the solar eclipse. His research got the best results. Štefánik found out that he was ill. He had serious health problems with his stomach. He had to undergo an operation. After the recovery he received a message of outbreak of the First World War (1914).

Military career

The beginning of the war did not surprise Štefánik. He had predicted it several years ago. During the war he saw an opportunity for Slovakia to become independent. Because of his health problems he came to the front in 1915. He was a pilot and a commissioned officer. Štefánik came back to Paris and tried to present the plan of the Czechoslovak state. Four years later the plan was accepted. Štefánik decided to come back to Slovakia but when he was flying above Ivanka pri Dunaji (a small town near the capital city of Slovakia) his plane fell down and he died. This accident probably happened because of bad weather or technical failure of the aircraft.

Pre-reading task

1. What is the importance of sport?
2. What types of sports do you know?
3. What are the negative phenomena in sports?
4. What is your opinion on extreme sports? Should they be banned? Why/why not?

While-reading task

Read the text and underline the most important facts.

Post-reading task

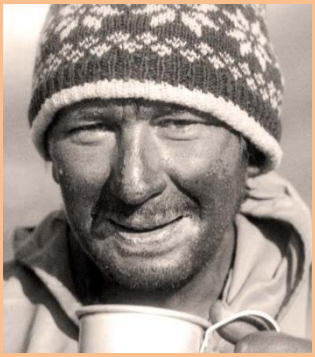
1. Can you name:

    a. 3 peaks in the High Tatras
    b. 3 highest peaks in the world
    c. 3 blind lakes in the High Tatras
    d. 3 caves in Slovakia
    e. 5 rivers in Slovakia

2. Match the words with their definitions:

    1. Graduation
    2. Stretching
    3. Binoculars
    4. Summit
    5. Elevation
    6. Sea level

a. spreading over a large area or distance
b. the height of a place above the level of the sea
c. the highest point of a mountain
d. the average height of the sea where it meets the land:
e. the fact of finishing a degree or other course of study at university or school
f. a pair of tubes with glass lenses at either end that you look through to see things far away more clearly



Jozef Psotka

* 12th February 1934, Košice
┼ 16th October 1984, Mount Everest, Nepal

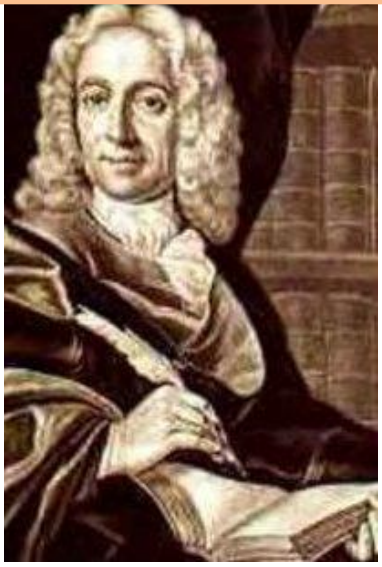
Slovak mountaineer, the first Slovak to climb Mount Everest without supplementary oxygen, in his time the oldest person to climb Mount Everest without supplementary oxygen.

Jozef Psotka was born in Košice, the second largest city in Slovakia. He attented a local high school and graduated in 1953. To celebrate his graduation he decided to climb west wall of the Lomnický peak (2,634 m, the second highest mountain in Slovakia). He went on to study at the Technical College in Bratislava. Ever since he was young he had a passion for mountains and climbing. He learnt mountaineering especially in the Slovak highest mountains the High Tatras, which he loved more than any other mountains. In 1965 he took part in an expedition to Hindu Kush, an 800 km long mountain range stretching between Afghanistan and Pakistan, climbing 7 peaks all of them over 6,000 meters high.

In 1967 many important British newspapers wrote about him when he saved two of his colleagues from a snowstorm on their way down from Matterhorn (4,478 m), one of the highest mountains in Europe, stretching on the border of Italy and Switzerland. Due to extremely bad weather nobody went to help him and nobody believed he would succeed. Even the most experienced Swiss mountain guides were merely watching his attempt to save his two colleagues in their binoculars.

He took part in the most important Czechoslovak mountain expeditions to the Himalays including a 1971 expedition to the world's ninth highest mountain Nanga Parbat (8,126 m), two expeditions to Makalu (8,463 m, the world's fifth highest) in 1973 and 1976. In 1981 he ascended the 8,586 m high (the third highest in the world) peak of Kangchenjunga together with another famous Slovak mountain climber Ľudovít Záhoranský. It was the highest one that any Czechoslovak mountaineers had ever been to in that time.

In 1984 he set off for his last expedition. On 14th October 1984 after a 14-day long march a base camp was built under Mount Everest at an elevation of 5,400 m above sea level. The highest camp was located at 8,300 m above sea level. The first who tried to reach the summit was Ján Provazník. However, he had some health problems and was forced to return to the base camp. The second team was Jozef Just together with Sherpa Ang Phurb. They encountered a heavy storm and had to return as well. Then it was Jozef Psotka's turn. He and Zoltán Demján left the base camp on 11th October and three days later they reached the highest camp together with Sherpa Ang Rita. They started to reach the summit on 15th October early in the morning. Originally they had planned to take the Soviet route to the summit using oxygen bottles. But at the bottom of the mountain their decision was changed. They decided for the Polish route and to drop the oxygen. However, their route was so different from the Polish one that experts consider it as their own way. They reached the summit without oxygen at 3:15 pm. The pre-planned descend route was inaccessible, so they had to take a different route. Jozef, almost 51 years old at the time, was exhausted and told Demján to go ahead. Psotka was unable to continue and decided to sleep. Next morning he fell into the Western Cauldron. Demján and Ang Rita made it to the base camp. Jozef Just found Psotka's dead body on 17th October 1984 in the afternoon. Since 1985 Slovak mountaineers have been organising the Memorial of Jozef Psotka - running under the High Tatras peaks.



Pre-reading task

1. Who is considered as magnus decus Hungariae (the Great Ornament of Hungary)?
2. What do you know about his life?
3. Where is the university that is named after him?

While-reading task

1. Read the text and underline the most important facts about the life of Matej Bel.
2. Discuss with your classmates his contribution to the Enlightenment.
3. What were his famous publications about?

Post-reading task

1. Use the Internet and try to find the following information about the Enlightenment:
   a. Where was it founded?
   b. Who founded it?
   c. Who were the main representatives?
   d. Did it influence anything?
3. Use the Internet and try to find the information about his private life.
4. Create the concept of your own newspaper consisting of political and economical news, current affairs and other topics you would like to include.
5. Who would you call the Great Ornament of Slovakia nowadays?



MATEJ BEL

* 24th March1684, Očová
┼ 29th August 1749, Bratislava

Slovak historian, philosopher, pedagoguea founder of modern national geography; the first newspaper in the Kingdom of Hungary, pioneer of the Enlightenment, supporter of modern methods.

Matej Bel was a Slovak historian and pioneer of Enlightenment. He published several scientific theses in which he supported modern methods such as teamwork or a study of archives. He was also an idol for a French philosopher Denis Diderot.

He came from a rural family in Očová of which an "aftername" (a name after the surname) was Funtík. He studied in lots of places – Lučenec, Banská Bystrica, Bratislava, Vesprém, Pápa – thanks to which he learnt fauna, flora, geography and people from many sides of the Kingdom of Hungary. After graduation he went to the University of Halle where he liked theology, philosophy, medicine, languages and a lot of other courses. He ended his study in 1707 and came home with an idea to spread his knowledge among younger generations.

He didn´t spend a long time at home, not much after his homecoming he became a vice principle and later a principal of a grammar school in Banská Bystrica. In 1714 he became a principal of a lyceum in Bratislava. There he modernized education, introduced teaching of a mother tongue and so called real subjects. It was mainly geography, but also physics and botany too. Under his conducting the school became one of the most visited in the Kingdom of Hungary.

In Bratislava he reached the top of his scientific career. In 1722 he started to publish a newspaper called *Nova Posoniensia* which was the first regular newspaper in the Kingdom of Hungary. He published there his biological and philological findings. The newspaper was totally adapted to European requests – it consisted of news and lots of scientific reports. By means of the newspaper he wanted students to have an opportunity to improve their Latin grammar and stylistics, because the newspaper was written in that language. He also brought information about political affairs happening in the Kingdom of Hungary and from abroad to ordinary people.

He also dedicated his time to translation and publishing the religious writings. But his main work was a project of national geography of the Kingdom of Hungary – *Posol starého a nového Uhorska.* In 1735 his first volume of *Notitia* was published in Vienna and he became famous. He wrote there about his findings and about several Slovak districts. He also wrote a publication about agriculture in the Kingdom of Hungary in which he talked about lives and a hard work of Slovak farmers. In his publications he emphasised the ancient origin of Slovak people, defended their role and admired their language. He said that Slovak language can not only compete with other European languages, but also win this "competition". As much as he was proud of Slovak nation, the Slovaks were proud of him. They called him "magnus decus Hungariae" which means the Great Ornament of Hungary. A lot of societies from abroad accepted him. The pope Kliment XII awarded him a golden medal and the emperor Karol VI awarded him as a nobleman. Even today his publications are highly admired by people. He was one of the greatest European scientists. He died suddenly on 29th August in 1749 on his way back from Germany to Bratislava.

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