

DIDACTIC UNIT

TALES OF ROMANIA



Introduction

TALES OF ROMANIA

A) The Young Cook Girl

With the elaboration of these didactic units, I want to work the tales presented above. These are intended to teach some multicultural aspects concerning Romanian culture and history, as well as the transmission of some values.

Apart from this, I have designed some activities for ESL, specially aimed for secondary school or intermediate level students who will be able to enjoy the experience of reading a tale while learning some English structures and improving their pronunciation and intonation.

Last but not least, the work on these tales will definitely prove that anyone, not only children, can learn from them.

SUMMARY

Two sisters are sent to a nunnery (the Monastery of Humor) in the Kingdom of the Voivode Stephan the Great. Due to the good reputation of the delicacies cooked by the nuns, the Voivode decides to pay them a visit and taste some of them. As a result, the nuns decide to organize a contest. The winner will be the one whose cake the Voivode likes the most. During the contest, one of the girls will try to sabotage her sister's cake.

LEVEL (Spanish education system)

A) 2nd cycle of ESO (3rd or 4th year) according to the general level of the group.

B) Intermediate or 1st and 2nd year of *bachillerato*.



THE YOUNG COOK GIRL

1. AIMS

2. LANGUAGE AND FUNCTION SKILLS

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. ACTIVITIES

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

AIMS

- Getting the students to know some aspects and gain knowledge about Romanian culture, history and gastronomy.
- Developing the students' interest in reading literary texts autonomously.
- Raising awareness of values and concepts such as generosity or forgiveness.
- Promoting respect and tolerance for other people and cultures.

Language and function skills

- Developing the students' communicative competences through reading, speaking and listening strategies.
- Familiarizing the students with adjectives related to people's behavior and verbs related to cooking.
- Learning collocations and idioms in context.
- Reading and listening comprehension by using students' own dictations in pair-work activities.
- Identifying some sounds and phonetic symbols in words.
- Learning how to write a recipe, an informal letter and an organized tour.

ACTIVITIES

1) BEFORE READING: VOCABULARY

Match the words to the pictures:

- a) *Buns* _____
- b) *Crops* _____
- c) *Punishment cell* _____
- d) *Grumble* _____



2) WHILE READING: VOCABULARY

A) Read the following idioms or expressions. Find them in the text and match them with the right definition:

- a) Spread like wildfire b) Heart of gold
c) Pull someone's leg

- 1. *To cheat, to trick, to fool*
- 2. *To circulate very quickly*
- 3. *Very kind, good-natured*

B) Make a list of the adjectives you find in the tale to describe people's character, behavior and physical appearance:

Lazy, conceited, attractive,

3) WHILE READING THE TALE: COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

A) ROLEPLAY ACTIVITY

TS INSTRUCTIONS

Students are given a set of statements. First, they write T or F without knowing the answers (they do not have the part of the text where the answers are). Afterwards, Student A must read the first half of the story and summarize what he/she reads for his/her partner (pages 135 and 137).

Student B listens to Student A, checks if his/her guesses were correct and answers the open questions as well. Student B will do the same with the second part of the story (pages 139, 141, 143), so Student A can check her/his answers.

STUDENT B'S STATEMENTS (answers found in pages 135 and 137)

Say whether the following statements are T or F. Then listen to your partner's story, guess if your answers were correct and answer the last question.

1. Both sisters lived in the Romanian region of Maramures.
2. Alina was lazier than her sister was.
3. *Foi de vita* is made with cheese.
4. The girls were sent to a nunnery, as their parents had no money to look after them.
5. The Monastery of Humor was built in the 17th century.
6. Alina's life changed when she arrived to the monastery.
7. Mihaela helped with the cooking.
8. The novice who won the prize would be given a medal.
9. Alina was jealous of Mihaela.
10. What did Alina do so that Mihaela could not win the prize?

STUDENT A'S STATEMENTS (answers found in pages 139, 141 and 143)

Say whether the following statements are T or F. Then listen to your partner's story, guess if your answers were correct and answer the last question.

1. Stephen the Great tasted the soup.
2. Stephen could not finish eating the food.
3. The Mother Superior got very angry.
4. Stephen the Great liked Alina's dessert.
5. Alina was ordered to prepare *poale în brâu*.
6. Mihaela felt sorry for her sister.
7. Mihaela prepared a new *placinta* for the Voivode.
8. The Voivode did not like Mihalea's *placinta*.
9. Alina ended up doing the cleaning.
10. What happened to Mihaela and Alina in the end?

B) WORKING WITH PHONETICS

TEACHER'S NOTES - Students will have to look for three words on page 139 containing the following sounds: /θ/ and /ʃ/

STUDENT EXERCISE - Look through page 139 and find two words containing the sound /ʃ/ and one word with the sound /θ/.

C) WORKING WITH THE PAST PERFECT TENSE

TEACHER'S NOTES - The teacher lets the students listen to page 141 and tells them to stop him/her whenever they hear a verb in the past perfect tense form. Once the students have finished listening to the page and correcting the answers, the teacher asks them to read the page, spot the verbs and explain why they are used in each case.

4) AFTER READING THE TALE: COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

- a) Describe how Alina's behavior changes along the story.
- b) Imagine you are Alina or Mihaela: write a letter to your parents describing the daily routine in the monastery.
- c) Imagine you work for a tourist information office. Some visitors would like to go on a tour to visit the most important Bucovina monasteries. Look at the following website:

<<http://www.romanianmonasteries.org/bucovina/bucovina-geography>>
and write an organized tour explaining them the most interesting
sightseeing spots and how to get there.

WRITING RECIPES

In the tale we find the word *sprinkle*, which means to drop or spread small pieces or amounts of something over other thing. This word is used a lot in cooking. Let's learn some other cooking verbs!

A) Romanian recipe: *Poale'n brau* cheese pies



Read the recipe and complete the blank spaces with the following verbs:

Stir, add, cut, put(x5), mix, fold(x2) incorporate, knead, oil.

PROCEDURE

First work on the dough.1. ____ the flour in a bowl and make a small hole in the middle for the crumbled yeast and the glass of warmish water.2. ____ gently to dissolve the yeast. Then.3. ____ the glass of oil, 100 g of sugar, half of the lemon zest and two eggs. Slowly.4. _____ the flour into this mix until obtaining an elastic, non-sticky dough.5. _____ energetically for a couple of minutes, then let it rest in a warm place until it doubles in volume.

After that, .6. _____ some flour on the table or the work area and from the dough create a finger-thick layer using the rolling pin.7. ____ this layer into many squares with sides of around 15 cm.

Meanwhile prepare the stuffing.8. ____ the cheese with the raisins, one egg, 100 g of sugar, the rest of the lemon zest.9. _____ a spoon of this stuffing in the middle of each of the dough squares and then.10._____ every corner in an envelope style. Make sure to press each corner so that they stay together. Then, .11._____ the corners of this new shape again to the middle.

12. ____ the baking tray or sheet and then place a thin layer of flour on it – or use special baking paper – and.13._____ the pies on top, leaving a few centimeters between

them, as they will rise in the oven. Paint the pies with egg – the composition used for scrambled eggs, as it will give them a nice color. Then leave them for ten more minutes. After this, .14. _____ them in the oven for half an hour. When they're done, dust with icing sugar and serve. (*Adapted from Romania_insider.com*)

B) *Placinta cu Brânza*



Now do the same thing with the recipe of *Placinta cu Brânza*

Bake, spread, mix, roll out, grate, roll up.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. _____ the feta cheese in a bowl and _____ with ricotta cheese and egg. The reason I add ricotta cheese is so that the pie does not end up being too salty, so the mixture is half feta and half ricotta.
2. _____ your puff pastry and _____ $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cheese mixture then _____ the dough. Repeat with remainder of puff pastry, brush with egg wash and poke holes in each pastry with a fork.
3. _____ in the oven at 375 F degrees for about an hour or until deep golden brown. Note, you do not have to butter the baking sheet, the puff pastry has plenty of butter in it so it will not stick. (*Adapted from <http://www.jocooks.com>*)

WRITING YOUR OWN RECIPE

C) Choose a dish you like and write the recipe with the ingredients and instructions. Try to use as many cooking verbs as you can.

Once it is written, present it orally to the class pretending to be a chef as if you were participating in a TV program.

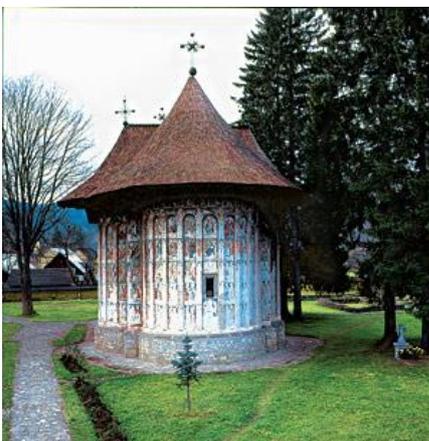


BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Stephen III of Moldavia (also known as Stefan, Romanian: Stefan Cel Mare, "Stephen the Great and Holy" (1433 – July 2, 1504) was Prince of Principality of Moldova between 1457 and 1504, and the most prominent representative of the House of Musat.

During his reign, he strengthened Moldova and maintained its independence against the ambitions of Hungary, Poland, and the Ottoman Empire, which all sought to subdue the land. Stephen achieved fame in Europe for his long resistance against the Ottomans.



Humor Monastery located in Mănăstirea Humorului, about 5 km north of the town of Gura Humorului, Romania. It is a monastery for nuns dedicated to the Dormition of Virgin Mary, or Theotokos. It was built in 1530 by Voievod Petru Rareș and his chancellor Teodor Bubiog. The monastery was built over the foundation of a previous monastery that dated from around 1415. The Humor Monastery was closed in 1786 and was not reopened until 1990. The church has been inscribed by UNESCO on its list of World Heritage Sites, as one of the Painted churches of Moldavia.

Poale'n brau cheese pies

It is a typical dish from the Moldova region of Romania (North of the country). Although the original meaning of this dessert 'Poale in brau' literally means 'the bottom of the skirt raised to the belly band' and to some extent illustrates the form of the pie with the folded margins, it has nothing to do with what it is now: a tasty and delicious sweet.

Romanian recipe: *Poale'n brau* cheese pies

INTRUCTIONS

First work on the dough. Put the flour in a bowl and make a small hole in the middle for the crumbled yeast and the glass of warmish water. Stir gently to dissolve the yeast. Then add the glass of oil, 100 g of sugar, half of the lemon zest and two eggs. Slowly incorporate the flour into this mix until obtaining an elastic, non-sticky dough. Knead energetically for a couple of minutes, then let it rest in a warm place until it doubles in volume.

After that, put some flour on the table or the work area and from the dough create a finger-thick layer using the rolling pin. Cut this layer into many squares with sides of around 15 cm.

Meanwhile prepare the stuffing. Mix the cheese with the raisins, one egg, 100 g of sugar, the rest of the lemon zest. Put a spoon of this stuffing in the middle of each of the dough squares and then fold every corner in an envelope style. Make sure to press each corner so that they stay together. Then, fold the corners of this new shape again to the middle.

Oil the baking tray or sheet and then place a thin layer of flour on it – or use special baking paper – and put the pies on top, leaving a few centimeters between them, as they will rise in the oven. Paint the pies with egg – the composition used for scrambled eggs, as it will give them a nice color. Then leave them for ten more minutes. After this, put them in the oven for half an hour. When they are done, dust with icing sugar and serve.

Placinta cu Brânza

Plăcintă is a Romanian traditional pastry resembling a thin, small round or square-shaped cake, usually filled with a soft cheese such as Urdă or apples. The word *plăcintă* comes from Latin *placenta*, which means cake, from the Greek *plakount*- "flat cake". The *plăcintă* has a Roman origin, and dates from when Romania was a part of the Roman Empire, see *placenta* cake.

INSTRUCTIONS

4. Grate the feta cheese in a bowl and mix with ricotta cheese and egg. The reason I add ricotta cheese is so that the pie does not end up being too salty, so the mixture is half feta and half ricotta.
5. Roll out your puff pastry and spread $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cheese mixture then roll up the dough. Repeat with remainder of puff pastry, brush with egg wash and poke holes in each pastry with a fork.
6. Bake in the oven at 375 F degrees for about an hour or until deep golden brown. Note, you do not have to butter the baking sheet; the puff pastry has plenty of butter in it so it will not stick.

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