Fișă de lucru -LEGENDE- optional limba engleză

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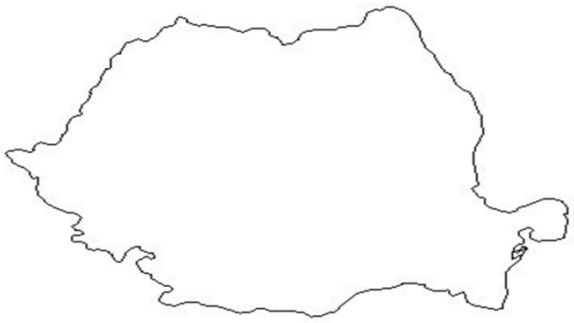
Școala Gimnazială Nr. 1 Gura Humorului

The legend of Gura Humorului - reading comprehension exercises(intermediate level)

What do you know about Romania?

What do you know about Gura Humorului?



Gura Humorului is:

- *a town in Suceava County, in the north-eastern part of Romania, in the historical region of Bukovina,*
- *a beautiful mountain resort, with an area of 60.90 km$^{2.}$*
- *situated at the confluence of Moldova river and Humor river,*
- *its population is about 12000 inhabitants.*

And here goes its legend

A long time ago, in the distant past, when all the things were not properly set, in a valley where a turbulent stream used to run to the east of Obcina Mare, there lived some praiseworthy people. Since old times the habit of these people had remained unchanged – and so they lived in peace, bred their flocks, brought up their children in fear of God, always admiring their forefathers and ancestors. And for nothing in the world did they think of leaving the area where they were born.

The reign of Dragos Voda had passed in songs. The Tatars[1] had begun to live on our lands as if it were their own home, wandering about as they pleased. This is how they reached our lands. For some time, a road had been walked along, a road that led through the mountain crest from the north of Europe to the famous fairs of the sea from Byzantium. The trouble was that the road would often be invaded by these Tatars, avid to steal by using violence.

Those days on our lands there lived a lad, his soul made of the Holy Spirit and his beauty taken from the Sun, his eyes like stars and his mind from Heaven, his voice given by angels, his heart as strong as a forest and his mind like lightening.

On the desforested side of the Obcina Mare, at Toaca, the villagers had built a bell tower where men were guarding in turns, knowing what signal to use in times of danger. Now it was again Bogdan's turn to guard the land. It was a Sunday in the year 1241 and it so happened that this was the day of his wedding. All

decided that Bogdan be replaced by someone else.

”Nothing will go wrong”, they held council. The enemy have not come for quite some time. They wouldn’t dare attack on Sunday!”

The Sun had not yet come down from his chariot that beautiful spring evening. The villagers were resting in their homes, ready to defend their peace.

In the village, the weddding had started. In the centre of the village the best man stroke the ground with his large flowered stick, saying:

”Honourable wedding guests,
You will all be asked
To listen to a word of forgiveness!
`Cause this son and daughter
Are about to leave their mothers and fathers,
And go to their own home.”

[1]Tatars/ta:tə/-from ancient Turkey

But alas, they did not get the chance to speak their words of forgiveness. The bells began to toll and the vesper bells sounded up on the hill, fortelling danger. Long after that not a sound could be heard and all the people kept silent. Everything remained still. And yet, the woods slowly began to rumble. All were shaken by what they had foretaken:

”The Tatars! The Tatars are coming, good fellows!” Bogdan screamed.

Full of rage and fear, Bogdan ran to his father:

”Father, take the women, children and the elderly and go quickly to the Rarau mountains!”

”I’m coming with you, Bogdan!”, he heard his young wife next to him.

”No, you go with them, Maria!”

Then he firmly added:

”All the lads are coming with me, each of you grab whatever you have! We will defend our village as we can!”

Hardly had the poor people got the chance to leave in a great hurry, taking almost nothing with them. Hardly had the best men had time to change their flowery clubs with scythes and axes when the Tatars rushed upon the village noisily, riding their small hairy horses, holding burning torches.

Bogdan’ men stepped aside, dividing themselves into two groups so as to attack the pagans from behind and push them afterwards towards the swollen waters, where they could go no further. The Tatars were taken by surprise from both sides thus falling off their horses right into the water, swollen by the heavy rains that had fallen that spring. The Tatars were screaming in terror, as loud as they could:

”Homor…! Homor…! Homor…! Murder! Murder! Murder! Homor…!

But in vain! They had no escape! The fight became fierce as in a raging anger. Big dogs rushed out of the yards, drawn by the big noise. Bogdan and his men crushed the Tatars – just as they well deserved it. Many died, being swallowed by the fast foaming waters, others surrendered, only a few escaped trying to catch the horses, mad with fear.

Since then these places have born the name of Homor. No wonder that since then (1241) until now, the place where the brook Humor (Homor) flows into the Moldova river (mouth or "gura" in Romanian) is called Gura Humorului (the mouth of Humor)! The Tatars called this water HOMOR, which in the language spoken by them means FAST. The evolution of the name led from Homor to Humor.

Gura Humor gets its name from its location at the mouth of the brook Humor into the river Moldova. Regarding the name of Humor brook, one of the local legends speaks of the Tatars passing on these lands at an unspecified date (possibly in 1241), when the heavy rains swelled the brook waters, making it impossible to cross. The evolution of the name led to Homor's transformation in Humor. But even today, some elderly pronounce Homor instead of Humor.

Now it's your turn

I. ***Skim the text and find:***

1. the characters_____
2. name of a place_____
3. an event_____
4. name of tools_____
5. the wife's name_____
6. the enemy's name_____

II. **Say if the sentences are true/false and justify your answer with information from the text**

1. Bogdan was the ruler of that time.

   _____

2. People decided that Bogdan be replaced by someone else.

   _____

3. All the Tatars died, being swallowed by the fast foaming waters.

   _____

4. There was a festival in the village.

   _____

5. The attack took place at the weekend.

III. **Match the columns**

1. as strong as	*a. Humorului*
2. Obcina	*b. crest*
3. mountain	*c. forest*
4. bell	*d. Mare*
5. foaming	*e. tower*
6. Gura	*f. waters*

IV. *Write another ending for our legend*