



Ukrainian Language and Culture Education Pack



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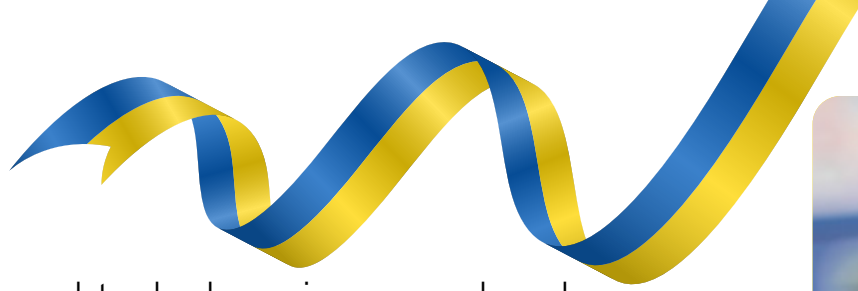
‘By building links... I believe we can help children on both sides expand their horizons, build their confidence, and form friendships that could last a lifetime.’

Letter to schools participating in the UK-Ukraine School Partnerships programme

Prime Minister's Office



Introduction



This education pack is designed to help primary school teachers introduce aspects of Ukrainian language and culture to their pupils. It contains factual information, activities and resources to help young people develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the rich language and culture of Ukraine.

The materials are designed to be flexible and adaptable for use in a variety of settings. They can be used as starting points for individual lessons and assemblies or form part of larger cross-curricular projects involving collaboration over a number of subjects. Your pupils can learn how to greet a friend in Ukrainian, get creative decorating eggs, find out about traditional embroidery skills, and discover celebrations and festivals. They can also read letters from children in different parts of Ukraine, try out a popular recipe, and take part in a wide range of purposeful and achievable classroom activities.

Teachers will know best how to adapt these activities for their pupils, and there are many opportunities to provide additional support or extend the activities for the students in your class.

The resources focus on exploring and celebrating life in Ukraine. However, it is important to approach these topics sensitively, especially given the ongoing impact of the situation in Ukraine and questions that your pupils may have about the invasion and world events.

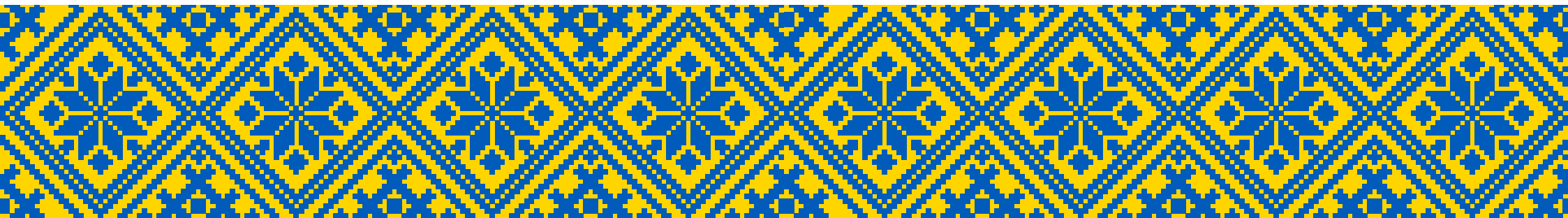
You can find links to specific resources in the [Find Out More](#) section of the pack, from trusted and reputable organisations about ways to discuss war and conflict with your pupils, if this is appropriate. Remember to carefully consider the emotional needs and wellbeing of all your students and create an environment where questions and feelings can be shared thoughtfully and respectfully.



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#Ukraineculturepack



Let's Find Out About Ukraine



Information to share with your pupils

Ukraine is a very large country in Eastern Europe with a rich cultural heritage and beautiful

landscapes. It has

borders with seven

countries. They are:

Poland, Moldova, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Russia and Belarus.



Did you know...



- The capital city is Kyiv, and the Ukrainian currency is the Ukrainian Hryvnia (UAH).
- Ukraine's famous flag is made up of one blue and one yellow horizontal band. They represent the blue sky over large fields of grain.
- The climate and fertile soil

of Ukraine provide ideal conditions to grow many crops including wheat, sugar beet, sunflower seeds, vegetables and fruit.

- Ukraine's exports include neon, which is used to make computer chips.
- Ukraine's embroidered traditional clothing is called Vyshyvanka. Each region of the country has its own beautiful designs.



- The sunflower is Ukraine's national flower, the national fruit is the cherry, and the nightingale is the national bird.
- Popular food dishes include borscht – a special beetroot soup that is a dark red colour.
- Saint Nicholas' Day is celebrated in Ukraine on December 6th. On this day children discover sweets and biscuits under their pillows!





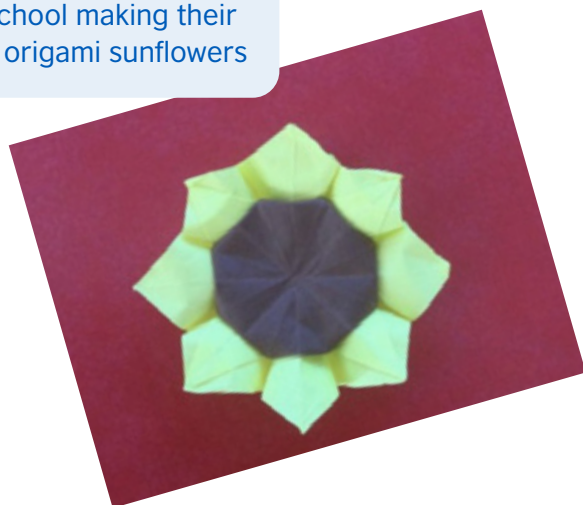
Activities

Sunflowers are embedded in Ukrainian culture representing hope, peace and resilience. They are also important for biodiversity attracting bees and other pollinators. Why not start your learning about Ukraine by decorating your classroom with colourful sunflowers made by your pupils. These could be created using a variety of materials and techniques. Painting and drawing, paper crafts and collage, finger painting, or paper plates can all be used to fill your classrooms with bright sunflowers.

One primary school in Shropshire chose to celebrate their partnership with a school in Ukraine by making origami sunflowers. You can find instructions for this activity and other sunflower designs in the find out more section of the pack.



Children at St. Mary's C of E school making their paper origami sunflowers



If you are teaching in spring, your pupils could also plant sunflower seeds in soil or compost in small pots and then transfer them to the school grounds as they grow. Encourage the students to keep their sunflowers watered and measure and record their growth. You could award a prize for the tallest sunflower and most dedicated gardener!

Partner school activities

If you are working with a partner school you could exchange pictures of your sunflower themed classrooms and tallest sunflowers!

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An introduction to the Ukrainian Language



Activities

Learning objectives: To learn about the Ukrainian alphabet and Ukrainian vocabulary associated with greetings, counting and celebrations.

Curriculum Links: Languages, PSHE

Transferable skills and values:

Communication and collaboration, empathy.

Resources: You will need copies of the Ukrainian phrases and numbers on slides and in the pack and access to the Internet.

Being able to communicate in other languages is a fantastic skill for young people to develop. Explore with your class the nature of verbal and nonverbal greetings. Why do we use them? How many different greetings do we use in English? Ask your pupils to demonstrate how they might greet a friend, an elderly relative, their Head teacher or a member of the Royal family! Discuss how these may be different and how many greetings your pupils know in different languages. You could display these on a poster in your classroom.

Activities

Encourage your pupils to try out these Ukrainian phrases with a partner. The phonetic pronunciation is given in brackets, and you can listen to the links using the sound buttons.



Hello (informal)

Привіт
(pry-vlt)



How are you?

Як справи?
(jak sprA-vy)



I'm fine, thanks!

Добре, дякую!
(dO-bre, djA-ku-ju)



What is your name? Як тебе звати?
(jak te-bE zvA-ty)



My name is...

Мене звати...
(me-nE zvA-ty)



Nice to meet you!

Праємно
познайомитися
(pty-jEm-no po-zna-
jO-my-ty-sia)



Bye!

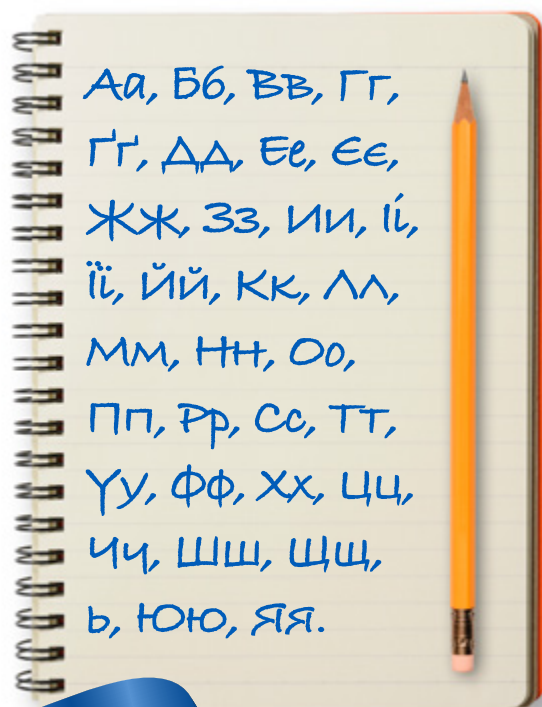
Бувай! (bu-vAj)

They could also explore using the phrase, “Веселого свята!” (Veseloho sviata!). This translates as “Happy holiday!” or “Have a fun festival!”.



The Ukrainian alphabet is not the same as the English alphabet. It is called a Cyrillic alphabet and contains 33 letters. Some letters look or sound similar and some are completely unique.

Share a copy of the alphabet so that your pupils can compare it with the letters that they are familiar with and start practising writing Ukrainian letters.



Your students could also try counting from zero to ten in Ukrainian using the following information:

Ukrainian numbers from 1 to 10:

- ▶ 1 **один** (odyn)
- ▶ 2 **два** (dva)
- ▶ 3 **три** (try)
- ▶ 4 **чотири** (čotyry)
- ▶ 5 **п'ять** (p'jat')
- ▶ 6 **шість** (šist')
- ▶ 7 **сім** (sim)
- ▶ 8 **вісім** (visim)
- ▶ 9 **дев'ять** (dev'jat')
- ▶ 10 **десять** (desjat')

When your class have mastered this, you could divide them into teams of ten and write the Ukrainian numbers on cards. Shuffle up the numbers and give one to every child in the team. Time how long it takes for them to sort themselves into numerical order. Can the next group do even faster?



Ukrainian Children's Literature

Activities

Learning objectives: To engage pupils with an award-winning Ukrainian story and carry out activities to deepen their comprehension, understanding and engagement with the text.

To encourage reading and writing for pleasure.

Curriculum Links: English, Art

Transferable skills and values:

Communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination

Resources: You will need copies of the extracts from *Toreadors from Vasyukivka*, and art materials.

It tells the story of two friends, Yava, and the narrator Pavlushka, who live in a small Ukrainian village called Vasyukivka. The boys are always looking for adventures and new things to try in their quest to become famous! These do not always go to plan!

The book is about friendship and bravery and has won many awards including the Hans Christian Andersen Honour List in 1979 which recognises outstanding works of modern children's literature.

In the following extract, Yava and Pavlushka decide to stage a "bullfight" with a harmless village cow, to be like the toreadors or Spanish bullfighters that they have recently learnt about.

Activities

Read extract 1 with your pupils and ask them to discuss the following questions with a partner:

- Who is telling the story and where is it set?
- What did you like about the extract?
- Was there anything you disliked about it?
- Did anything puzzle or surprise you?
- How would you describe the two boys? Give some examples from the text to back up your points.
- Do you think there is a moral to this extract? If so, what do you think it might be?

Invite your pupils to reread the story together in pairs up until the sentence, "**We drove the cows to the far end of the pasture, near the pond, far from anyone's eyes.**"

Ask your students to use art materials to create a picture to illustrate this scene from the book. Encourage the children to annotate their artwork with words and phrases from the text, to show what the boys are wearing and carrying, the setting where this adventure takes place and the weather on the day. They could then add thought or speech bubbles to their pictures to illustrate what they think Yava, Pavlushka and Contribution the cow might be thinking and feeling at this point of the story!

Invite your pupils to share their illustrations and descriptions with each other and discuss what worked well. In the next lesson, ask them to go on to create a comic strip with thought and speech bubbles which retells the narrative of the whole extract. This could be done individually or in small groups using art or digital tools.

Information to share with your pupils

Ukraine is famous for its literature and storytelling traditions. Vsevolod Nestaiiko was one of Ukraine's best-known children's authors. His books have been translated into many languages around the world and are included in the school curriculum in Ukraine.

The following extracts are from one of his most famous books called *Toreadors from Vasyukivka*.



Extract from *Toreadors from Vasyukivka* by Vsevolod Nestaiiko

The next morning we met on the path that led to the pasture. I was driving Man'ka (the cow), and Yava was driving Contribution (the other cow.). The cows plodded along, lazily swishing their tails, never knowing what a historic day this would be.

On Yava's head was a wide-brimmed lady's hat we had inherited from a summer guest at our dacha¹ two years ago. The hat was far too big for him and kept slipping over his eyes. To see anything and not trip, he had to jerk his head back every now and then, looking as if he were bowing to someone.

Under my arm I carried a little rug. A famous rug. I remembered it for as long as I could remember, because it had hung over my bed since I was born. The rug was red, with three funny puppies embroidered on it, sitting close together with their heads touching. Their names were Tsiutsia, Hava, and Reva. My mother used to tell me all kinds of bedtime stories about them — what she called banaliuky² — until I fell asleep. For the past two years, since I had grown up, the rug had been lying in a chest, and now Tsiutsia, Hava, and Reva reeked of mothballs.

The rug and the hat were our toreador gear. On the way, we also cut two fine hazel sticks to use as swords. Now we were fully armed and ready.

We walked along, singing José's aria from Bizet's opera Carmen, which we'd heard many times on the radio.

We sang, not knowing at all what awaited us.

The sky was deep blue—just like a real Spanish sky.

The weather was perfect for a bullfight.

We drove the cows to the far end of the pasture, near the pond, far from anyone's eyes.

— Drive Man'ka off to the side so she doesn't get in the way, — Yava said, — and let's begin.

I didn't argue. Especially since Man'ka was very nervous — it was better for her not to witness a bullfight.

Yava adjusted his hat, pulled up his trousers, took my rug, and tiptoed toward Contribution, dancing as he went.

He came right up to her nose and waved the rug in front of her eyes.

I held my breath — any moment now it would begin...

Yava waved harder.

Contribution — she didn't care a bit!

She just calmly nibbled the grass.

Yava brushed the rug across her nostrils.

Contribution only turned her head,

shifting lazily from foot to foot, turned her backside to him.

Yava ran ahead again, dancing...

Half an hour later he said:

— She's just used to me. She even loves me. All right, you try!

An hour later, completely out of breath, I said:

— She's no cow—she's a log! Too bad Man'ka doesn't have horns, or I'd show you what a real bullfight looks like.

Yava took over again. He kept changing tactics: sometimes sneaking up and smacking the rug, sometimes charging straight at her, sometimes rushing from the side. But Contribution refused to fight. Our hair dripped with sweat, the rug quivered nervously in our hands — it seemed as if Tsiutsia, Hava, and Reva were about to start barking. Contribution — she didn't care about us at all, no matter what we did.

Once, when Yava grabbed Contribution by the ear, she turned her sad eyes on him reproachfully and said:

— Moo-o-o!

Translated from cow's language, this probably meant: "Boys, clear off. Don't bother me."

But we didn't catch on to her warning in time.

We kept hopping around, challenging her to a duel. I could see Yava was embarrassed by Contribution's behaviour.

Finally, furious, he shouted:



— Come on, Pavlusha! Hit her
with the rug or I'll do it myself!

He swung the rug but then suddenly...
suddenly I saw Yava high up in the air.

From above came his desperate cry:

— Waa-waaay!

He began running, I think, while still in the air. By the time his feet touched the ground, he was already dashing headlong toward the pond. I bolted after him — the only escape. We splashed into the pond, raising fountains of water and mud, and stopped only in the middle. That place we stumbled into could hardly be called a pond, to be honest. There used to be a rather big pond here — a proper dugout. But it had long since dried up, silted over, and turned into an ordinary kalabanya³. At its deepest, the water came up to our necks. And that's exactly where we were standing now, gasping for breath.

Contribution ran around the kalabanya, mooing some sort of cow-curses at us. She didn't want to step into the kalabanya. She was a squeamish, tidy cow. We knew that.

We stood there in silence.

The bottom of the kalabanya was soft and silted. We were up to our bellies in slimy, disgusting muck.

Only from the belly to the neck was there water — dirty, murky and stinking. Real swill. We stood there in that slop for at least half an hour until Contribution calmed down and went away. She was, after all, a very kind and noble cow, this Contribution, for she had tossed the toreador Yava not with her horns but simply with her head. And when we finally climbed out of the kalabanya, miserable and filthy like piglets (not us but the mud itself), she didn't reproach us even with a glance. We stayed friends with her. After that, Yava was never mean to her again, and always treated her to the sweets his mother gave him.

Extension activity

In the rest of the novel the two friends get caught up in a variety of adventures and mishaps together, including getting lost in an enormous field of corn taller than themselves when they are hiding from two men Knysh and Burmylo who they suspect of being spies!

Ask your pupils to read together the following short passage from this part of the book.

Knysh and Burmylo went along the road, while Yava and I slipped through the corn, crouching low. But we hadn't gone a hundred meters when Knysh suddenly stopped and said:

— Hey, listen, looks like some guys are trailing us...

— Where? Let 'em try! — Burmylo muttered in surprise.

— Over there, in the corn.

— Come on, let's cut through the patch. We'll see.

Yava and I dropped to the ground and, like hares, scuttled on all fours deeper into the corn.

The rough leaves rustled sneakily around us. You couldn't tell if it was the wind or someone moving. It felt like Knysh and Burmylo were right above our heads, ready to step on us like little bugs.

Feeling that nasty "oh-oh-oh" in my stomach, I crawled further and further. When my knees were completely scraped, I stopped, gasping, and pressed myself to the ground. "I can't anymore! Let 'em step on me!"

But no one stepped on me.

I lay there a bit, listening.

Sh-shu-shu... shrrk-hr... shshh-u... shu...

The corn kept rustling without a break.

No sound of Knysh, no Burmylo, no Yava.

And seeing? Forget it. I can't see past my own nose — it's just a tangle of corn leaves everywhere. Wow, this corn is thick, thicker than any jungle I've ever heard of.

I lay there a bit longer, ears pricked up.

¹ *dacha* — a country house or summer cottage, often used for seasonal retreats.

² *banaliuky* — a Ukrainian word referring to simple, often humorous or trivial tales, similar to "little folk tales" or "everyday stories."

³ *kalabanya* — a Ukrainian word for a shallow, muddy pond.



Nothing. Not a thing. Where's Yava? We were crawling right next to each other... weren't we?

— Yava! — I whispered finally.

Not a peep.

— Yava! — I called a little louder.

Still no answer.

I crawled one way, then the other.

— Yava! — I shouted. Damn it! Knysh and Burmylo? We'd lost them for sure. Gone! Off they zipped, probably already in the marshes.

— Yava! — I yelled at the top of my lungs. — Yava! Hey! Where are you?

— Shh! — finally came Yava's voice, far away and mysterious. — Quieter!

Invite them to discuss inventive ideas with a partner about how the two boys might come up with a plan to get out of their predicament, find each other, and make their way home out of the gigantic cornfield!

Encourage them to then write their versions of this part of the story in their own words and discuss further ideas for other adventures that the two boys might get caught up in in their bid to become famous!

Partner school activities

If you are working with a partner school, you could:

Share your pictures, comic strips and creative writing with each other and organise a Booknic – a reading picnic where staff, parents and pupils can read, relax, have snacks and discuss their own favourite books, comic strips and graphic novels.

Ask everyone to come along with a favourite adventure story or picture book and a post it note explaining why they would like to share this story with other people.

Photographs and clips of these events could be exchanged with your partner school. The Open University Reading for Pleasure research shows that social reading environments like this can make a difference to children's enjoyment of books and encourage reading for pleasure.



Rostyslav Popsky; Publishing House
“A-ba-ba-ga-la-ma-ga”



Ukrainian festivals and celebrations



Information to share with your pupils

The people of Ukraine love to celebrate festivals throughout the year. These occasions are often accompanied by music and dancing, special foods and traditions. There are religious festivals such as Christmas and Easter, national holidays and vibrant cultural events such as Vyshyvanka Day.

Vyshyvanka Day is a celebration held in Ukraine each year on the third Thursday in May to celebrate the traditional embroidered shirts known as “Vyshyvankas.” On this day, Ukrainians of all ages wear their Vyshyvankas, which are embroidered shirts with intricate, colourful patterns reflecting different regions of the country. These are a symbol of national pride and cultural heritage. Streets, schools, and workplaces fill with people wearing these beautiful clothes, creating a sense of unity and showing their connections with Ukrainian traditions.



Easter is one of the most important celebrations in Ukraine. Families come together to decorate eggs with colourful patterns, creating beautiful “pysanky” eggs which are believed to bring good luck and happiness. The detailed patterns are based on folk-art designs. Traditionally they are made with dyes and hot wax but can also be painted. On Easter morning, people often go to church with baskets of special food to be blessed, and afterwards enjoy a feast with their families.

On September 1st, people all over Ukraine celebrate **Den Znan** or **Knowledge Day**. This festival marks the beginning of the new school year. Children dress in their best clothes, bring flowers for their teachers, and gather at schools for a joyful celebration. One of the most important traditions is the ringing of the first school bell, which symbolises the start of learning for the year.

You can find out more about Ukrainian festivals by reading the children’s letters later in the pack.



Ukrainian Arts and Crafts



Activities

Learning objectives: To create designs associated with Ukrainian traditional egg painting and embroidery.

To find out about a well-known Ukrainian artist.

Curriculum Links: Art and design, oracy.

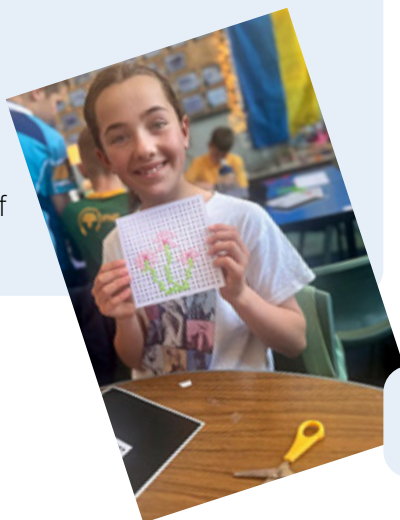
Transferable skills and values:

Communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination

Resources: You will need copies of Pysanky and Vyshyvanka designs, paints, graph paper, coloured pencils, binka, embroidery thread, needles and scissors.

Copies of animal paintings by Maria Prymachenko and books or pictures containing images of animals.

Examples of Maria Prymachenko's work can be found in the links in the find out more section of the pack.



Invite your pupils to experiment with Ukrainian traditional arts and crafts by creating their own Pysanky and Vyshyvanka designs.

The egg designs can be designed on paper or card, drawn on dark sugar paper with bright oil pastels for display or painted on eggs if you are feeling brave! Encourage your students to experiment with different designs and colours before producing their final piece for display.

Your pupils could also try out some simple cross stitch patterns to make their own Vyshyvanka designs.

You will need:

- Graph paper
- Pencils and coloured pencils
- Binka (cross stitch fabric)
- Embroidery thread (various colours)
- Needle (with a blunt point is safest)
- Scissors.

Instructions

- Share some examples of simple Vyshyvanka designs for inspiration and demonstrate how to

sew a basic cross stitch pattern if your pupils have not done this before.

- Begin from the back of the fabric and bring the needle up through a hole. Use a simple 'X' shape to fill in each square of your design. Each cross is made by doing one stitch from bottom left to top right, and then another from bottom right to top left. There are lots of examples online that you could share with your students.
- Ask the pupils to use graph paper to draw a simple repeating pattern. This could include a flower or star. Remind them that Vyshyvanka patterns often use bright colours and regular shapes.
- Invite the children to colour each square on the paper to show which colour thread they will use. These squares represent the stitches they will make. Encourage your pupils to have fun and be creative!
- Give each student a small piece of binka (cross stitch fabric) that's big enough for their design, leaving extra space around the edges for a border and share the following instructions:

Pupil from YGG Pontybrein with their embroidery



1 Thread the Needle.

2 Choose your first colour of embroidery thread. Cut a piece about the length of your arm, and thread it through the needle. Tie a knot at the end.

3 Start Stitching.

4 Follow Your Pattern.

5 Stitch each coloured square, changing thread colours when you need to. Always start a new colour with a new knot.

7 Display your work!

6 When your design is finished, tie off the thread at the back with a small knot. Trim any loose ends.

They could put their Vyshyvanka design in a card, on a bookmark, or as a little picture to hang up.

Discover a Ukrainian artist



Information to share with your pupils

Maria Prymachenko was a famous, self-taught Ukrainian folk-art artist who was born in 1908 in the village of Bolotria. When she was young, she was ill with polio and during those years, her mother taught her embroidery skills and the art of pysanka egg decorating. She later became famous for her colourful and imaginative scenes, many of which featured fantastic animals and bright patterns.



Activities

Share some examples of Maria Prymachenko's artwork of mythical animals with your class. Ask them to choose one image and discuss the following prompts with a partner. These are from the excellent National Gallery's resources for teachers to help young people to look and talk about paintings.

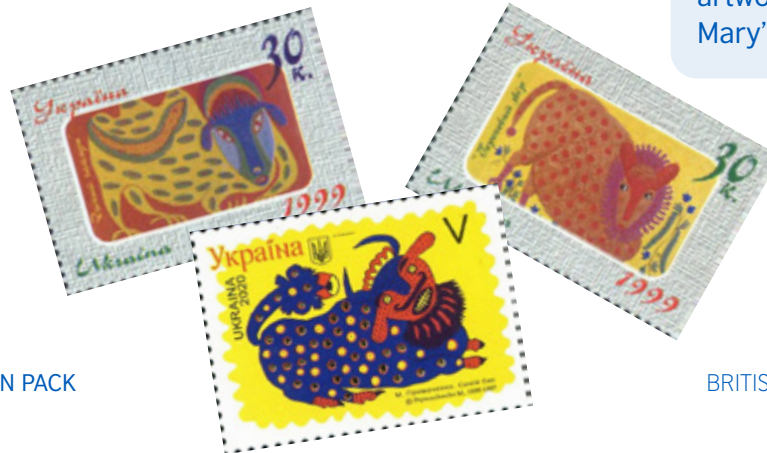
- Look really closely at the picture for 60 seconds. Close your eyes and see what you can remember. Your partner can keep looking and give you clues if you forget something. Swap over.
- Think of 5 words to describe the artwork. You could choose words to describe what is in the painting, the colours, the overall picture, or how it makes you feel.

- Imagine you could step inside the painting! Decide where you would be and think about what is closest to you. What is furthest away? What could you touch if you reached out your hand, and what could you smell if you took a deep breath?
- What title would you give the painting?

After learning about the artist and her work encourage the children to create their own brightly coloured piece of art showing reimagined or fantasy animals filled with bright colours and patterns like the ones right, in a media of their choice.



Maria Prymachenko inspired artwork made by pupils from St. Mary's C of E Primary School



Letters from Ukraine



Activities

Learning objectives: To read and respond to letters from children across Ukraine.

Curriculum Links: English

Transferable skills and values:

Communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, empathy, digital literacy.

Resources: You will need copies of the letters, access to atlases and/ or the Internet, card, colouring pens.

These letters are written by students from schools in different parts of Ukraine. In their letters the children tell us about their families and schools, their favourite foods, after school activities and books. They also describe how they celebrate a popular Ukrainian festival with their friends and families.

Activities

Divide your class into small groups and give each group one of the letters. Ask your pupils to find the location of the town or region where the letter writer is from on a map of Ukraine and discuss the following questions:

- What do you find most interesting about the letter?
- What would you like to find out more about?

- Did anything surprise or puzzle you?
- What question would you like to ask the letter writer?

Encourage your pupils to write a reply to the letter they read, describing their own family, school, activities and favourite books and festivals. Depending on the communication styles that are being studied in your class, this could take different forms such as a letter, postcard, email or Vlog.



Dear friends,

My name is Yana and my family is big. I have 2 older brothers. I live with my mother, father and brother in Nizhyn in the Chernihiv region of northern Ukraine. I am 9 and we are students at Nizhyn Gymnasium No. 3. After school I go to dance classes and love drawing. I train a lot and take part in different competitions. My favourite food is pasta, ice cream, strawberries and raspberries. My favourite book to read is Mowgli by Rudyard Kipling.

In Ukraine there are many holidays. My favourite holidays are Vyshyvanka Day and Children's Day. On Vyshyvanka Day we wear our very beautiful Vyshyvankas- traditional Ukrainian clothing with vibrant embroidery.

*From
Yana, Age 9*





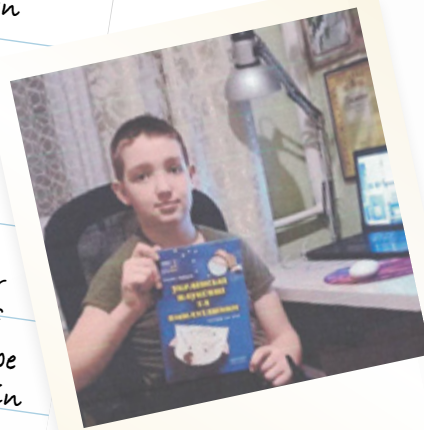
Dear friends,

My family is not big. There are 4 of us. I live with my mother, father and my younger sister. My sister is Daryna and she is five. I study at the Nizhyn Gymnasium Number 3 in Nizhyn, northern Ukraine. Our school is cool! After school, I do combat sambo which is a martial art and play my trumpet. I have two prizes from music festivals and in May we are going to have a concert. I'm going to play a music composition called 'Concert for trumpet with piano.' usually after my concert my family and I go to a café. My favourite food is varenyky (dumplings) with potato and holubtsi (cabbage) - they are Ukrainian dishes. Do you know about Nizhyn cucumbers? They are very tasty!

My favourite book is about Ukrainian scientists and inventors by Oksana Polischuk. It opened for me a lot of interesting facts.

In Ukraine we have many festivals. My favourite is Ivana Kupala. It is on July 7th. We celebrate it in the evening. Traditionally girls wear wreaths on their heads and then they launch them to surf on the water. They also guess who might be their bridegroom one day! Boys take part in different competitions. Finally, two couples jump over a bonfire, sing songs and dance. Ukraine is a very beautiful, interesting and peaceful country.

From
Ivan aged 10



Nizhyn
Chernihiv
Ukraine

My dear friend!

My name is Tetiana. I am 13 years old and I am in the 7th grade. I live in the city of Lutsk, Ukraine. There are 3 people in my family- my mother, father and me. After school I enjoy drawing and like doing crafts. Also, I participated in the Ukraine language competition last year. My favourite food is dumplings with potatoes, especially when my mother makes them.

I love reading Ukrainian fairy tales and my favourite writer is Lesya Ukrainka. Her poems are very deep and beautiful! My favourite holiday is Christmas when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and spend time with our families. We go to church; exchange presents and sing carols. I really like this holiday!

Best wishes

Tanya



Hello – I hope you are well.

My name is Davyd and I am 12 years old. My family isn't big since I don't have a brother or sister. I live in Lutsk which is in the Volyn region of Ukraine. I study at the Lutsk Lyceum

Personally, I think Maths and Physics are not for me. I like English, foreign languages and PE. My passion is music – in fact I am trying to learn to play the guitar.

I like traditional food but I'm not against dishes from other countries. I really like pizza and Ukraine's national dish borsche with sour cream and varenyky (dumplings) stuffed with potatoes.

My favourite book is Two Toreadors from Vasukiva Village by Vsevolod Nestayko. It tells the story of two boys going through funny accidents and crazy adventures that are really interesting.

Lastly, I want to tell you about my favourite festival which is Easter which we call Velykden.

This might be translated as Main Day. Local traditions influence this holiday. On Easter Sunday families go to the church very early in the morning with Easter baskets. We always bake a paska – a sweet Easter bread decorated on top. We also paint eggs that we call a 'pysanka.' After we paint them, we have egg fights – tradition!

I enjoyed writing this letter because I was able to tell you a bit about our culture.

Love from Ukraine

David



#Ukraineculturepack





Extension activities

Research

Ask each group to write down the festival that is mentioned in the letter that they read on a large sheet of paper and encourage them to find out any additional information about this festival and how it is celebrated in Ukraine. This can be recorded on post it notes and stuck on the large piece of paper. When each group has compiled their research ask them to present what they found out to the whole class.

Invite each pupil to then choose one festival and make and decorate a greetings card for that celebration. When the decoration is complete, ask them to carefully write an appropriate greeting from the language section of the pack. For example, if they choose Vyshyvanka Day, they might draw some embroidery patterns and write on their card:

**“Веселого
свята!”**

(Veseloho sviata!) meaning
“Happy holiday!” or
“Have a fun festival!”

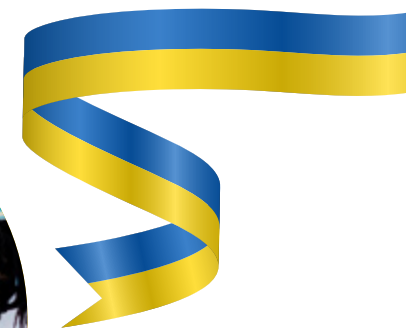


Partner school activities

If you are working with a partner school, you could:

Discuss your favourite celebrations and exchange greetings cards with messages written in English and Ukrainian.

Use the topics raised in the letters – schools, activities, festivals and favourite books to find out more about each other in your online meetings.



Ukrainian Recipe: Varenyky



Activities

Learning objectives: To learn how to make a simplified version of a traditional Ukrainian dish.

Curriculum Links: Design and Technology, PSHE

Core skills: Communication and collaboration,

Resources: Recipe ingredients, cooking utensils.

We can see from the children's letters that traditional food is central to Ukrainian festivals and celebrations. In their letters both Ivan and David mention that Varenyky are their favourite Ukrainian food to eat. These are dumplings made by wrapping dough around different sweet and savoury fillings.



Why not try out this simplified version of a Varenyky recipe with your students.

This version with cottage cheese is from the following website: rud.ua/en/consumer/recipe/desertu/linyvi-varenyky-iz-syrom/

Remember to check for any allergies with your class before you begin, and to have an adult present to boil the water and insert the dumplings.

Ingredients:	
Cottage cheese	400 g
Flour	1 cup
Egg	1
Sugar	2 tbs
Salt	pinch
Lemon zest	3 g
Butter	30 g
For the sauce:	
Sour Cream	200 g
Powdered sugar	1 tsp.
Fresh mint	2 sprigs



Instructions:

- Mix the cottage cheese with an egg, sugar and salt. Add lemon zest and flour. Knead the dough well until smooth and supple.
- Cut the dough into four equal pieces. Roll each piece into a long "sausage" and cut it into small, 1 cm thick dumplings. Press each dumpling slightly and roll it in flour.
- Pour enough water into a pot and bring it to a boil. Cook the dumplings in boiling water for 3 to 5 minutes. Take them out and put on a serving plate and pour some melted butter over the dumplings.
- For the sauce, mix the sugar with the yoghurt, add the finely chopped mint. Serve it with warm lazy dumplings. You can also add different types of berries to your lazy dumplings or try a savoury topping.

Enjoy!



"Смачного!"



Hold a Ukrainian language and culture celebration event

To share your students' learning about Ukraine, why not invite friends and family to your school for a special celebration event? Your students could begin by ringing bells as Ukrainian children do to start the school year on Knowledge Day, then share their pictures and comic strips of the story and impress their visitors with their knowledge about Ukrainian arts, language and festivals. They could also teach them how to write messages using the Ukrainian alphabet and sample some delicious dumplings.

You could also share examples of your pupils' work on social media using the hashtag:

#Ukraineculturepack



Find Out More

We hope your pupils enjoyed learning about the different aspects of Ukrainian language and culture. If you want to find out more, the following links contain additional information and resources:

Information about discussing war and conflict with children and young people:

Talking to children and young people about war and conflict, Place2Be:

- www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2022/march/talking-to-children-and-young-people-about-war-and-conflict/

Teaching about conflict and war: Support for educators:

- education.gov.scot/resources/teaching-about-conflict-and-war-support-for-educators/

Oxfam Talking about Ukraine in School:

- views-voices.oxfam.org.uk/2022/03/talking-about-ukraine-in-school-here-are-eight-ways-to-help-young-people-learn-think-and-act/

Ukrainian Language greetings:

- www.ukrainianlessons.com/episode1/

Months of the Year in Ukrainian:

- www.ukrainianlessons.com/months

Ukrainian arts and crafts:

How to draw a sunflower tutorial:

- artprojectsforkids.org/how-to-draw-a-sunflower/

Sunflower origami:

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=B95eyDTaLR4

Creating pysankys:

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=vC08h4whiKQ&t=75s

Artwork by Maria Prymachenko:

- blogs.bl.uk/european/2018/02/maria-prymachenkos-fantastic-world-of-flowers-and-animals.html

www.wikiart.org/en/maria-primachenko

Ukrainian recipes:

Ukrainian syrnyky:

- rud.ua/en/consumer/recipe/desertu/linyvi-varenyky-iz-syrom/
- Banosh with toppings such as cheese and mushrooms:
- authenticukraine.com.ua/en/food/berlibaskij-banos

General information:

- Blue Skies and Golden Fields Celebrating Ukraine by Oksana Lushchevska (2023)
- National Gallery – ways of looking and talking about art:
www.nationalgallery.org.uk/learning/search

These links were correct at the time of publication.



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There are lots more ways you can get find out more and get involved in international work with The British Council:

Find a partner school

International school partnerships can inspire pupils by bringing the world into the classroom through joint learning activities which bring language learning to life. They also offer teachers the chance to share experiences and learn new practices from colleagues in other countries. Our Partner Finder site gives you the tools you need to find and work with like-minded schools around the world.

school-partner-finder.britishcouncil.org/

Access resources

Check out our global learning resources, including classroom activities and lesson plans:

www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources

Get recognition

Sign up to our prestigious British Council International School Award scheme to earn accreditation for your international work:

www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/accreditation/international-school-award



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