

THE PRAGUE POST

The Prague Post, January 23, page A1
Finally thanking the 'gray-zoners'

Before reading:

Work in groups and discuss what you know about Charter 77.
(pronunciation: [č̌a:tr])

Questions after reading:

1. What is Charter 77? When was it presented for the first time? How many people signed it? What happened to the people who signed Charter 77? (use information from the whole article)
2. How did Charter 77 come into existence?
3. Who are the signatories of Charter 77 thanking now?
4. Who were "gray-zoners"? Give examples of their help and support. (use information from the whole article)
5. Where and when will the "gray-zoners" be thanked?
6. Retell the life stories of Mr. Battěk, Ms. Livinská and Ms. Burešová.
7. What does Ms. Burešová say about heroes?

Vocabulary:

scathing – ostr
indictment – obvinění
attorney – právní zástupce

The Prague Post, January 23, page B2
Prior experience not enough

Before reading:

Where do you go shopping? Do you prefer small shops or hypermarkets? What are the differences between them? What are the advantages and disadvantages? Write all the positive points in one column and all the negative points in the second column. What were you considering? Amount of goods, quality of products, service, prices? Anything else? What should a good shop look like? What do you think about discounts?

Questions after reading:

1. What is Prior? How many Priors can be found in the Czech Republic?
2. Why did Prior deteriorate? (use information from the whole article)
3. What can customers buy in big foreign hypermarkets?
4. What was Prior's annual turnover between 1999 and 2001?
5. How many Czechs do their shopping in hypermarkets (like Tesco, Globus)?
6. How does Prior want to attract customers? Give examples from the whole article.
7. What does Incoma's study show?
8. How many hypermarkets are expected to be built this year?
9. Retell the history of Prior.

Vocabulary:

deteriorate – zhoršení
throng – zástup, dav
retail – maloobchodní
outlet – trh
drain – přen. únik, odliv
stroll – procházka
hangover – neblahé dědictví
to linger – setrávat, pokračovat

Activity 1:

Think about a foreign country you have visited. Compare shops there with shops in the Czech Republic. Are there any differences?

Activity 2:

If you had a shop, what would you be selling? The competition is strong, so think carefully about your marketing. How would you attract customers? What services would you offer?

The Prague Post, January 30, page A4
For translator, Rings still rosy

Before reading:

What is your favorite book? Tell your class what the book is about.

Have you read any books by J.R.R. Tolkien or have you seen the film "The Lord of the Rings"? What was it like? Tell your class the story and whether or not you liked it. Find more information about J.R.R. Tolkien and his work.

Questions after reading:

1. When did the first copy of "The Lord of the Rings" appear in the Charles University library?
2. Who is Ms. Pošustová?
3. What did she think about the book?
4. What did Ms. Pošustová decide to do? What problems was she facing? What did she do then?
5. Why was the book found "ideologically troubling"?
6. How was the book published?
7. When was the book officially published? How many copies were sold?
8. What does Ms. Pošustová think about the message of the book?
9. Was it easy to translate the books? What languages are used in the books?
10. How much money did the film make in its opening weekend?
11. What does Ms. Pošustová think about the film?

Vocabulary:

Everything is rosy. = *Everything is great.*

Activity:

Think about your own magic and mystery world. What creatures would live there? What would they do? What would the countryside look like? What amazing things would be happening there? What languages would be spoken there? Describe it or draw it.

Right: J.R.R. Tolkien's illustration from "The Hobbit"



ESSAY CONTEST

Write an essay on the topic
WORLD CITIZENSHIP

Send your essay (min 500, max 700 words) to the address of the Prague Post Endowment Fund (Štěpánská 20, 110 00 Praha 1) by April 1, 2002.



The best essay will be awarded a prize - a Sony CD walkman!

LESSON PLAN:

HEROES AND CHARACTERS



What is your idea of a hero? Give an example of a hero.

Brainstorm and fill in the "spider":



One dictionary definition of a hero is: a man admired for his courage, fortitude, prowess, nobility, etc.

Do you have any hero? Tell your class about him/her. Why is he/she your hero? What has he/she done? How has he/she helped other people? How has he/she influenced other people? Would you like to be like him/her? Why? Do you think that it is good to imitate other people or to be influenced by other people? Why? Why not?

Is your hero one of the following persons: an actor, a doctor, a singer, a politician, a family member, a friend, a girl helping an old lady get on a tram, a teacher, a businessman, a hard-working worker, an honest person, a sportsman?

Find out if the famous people below try to help others and if yes, then how. Do you think that the following famous people are heroes? Discuss in groups.

Luciano Pavarotti, Jaromír Jágr, J.K. Rowling, Tereza Maxová, Václav Havel, Johny Depp, Bono, Nelson Mandela, George Bush, Jr.

What do you think the role of famous and influential people is? Do you think charity work should be part of their role?

Do you think that a hero could be someone who, for example, volunteers in a NGO (nongovernmental organization) and helps blind people?

You can see some examples below of how people help others:

Luciano Pavarotti, a famous opera star, dedicates some of his concerts to people and children in need. In his "Pavarotti and Friends" concert series, he has collaborated with stars and has raised millions of pounds for the victims of war from countries that include the Falklands, Liberia, Yugoslavia, Tibet and Afghanistan. "Pavarotti is an inspiration," said an actress Catherine Zeta-Jones, who participated in the most recent charity concert.

Famous model, Tereza Maxová, started her foundation, which helps children without parents and children in orphanages. More about the Tereza Maxová Foundation, can be found on its website: www.nadacetm.cz.

In 1999, Turkey suffered from a devastating earthquake and many people died. Czech rescuers with their dogs helped a lot of people trapped under the ruins of collapsed buildings. They also offered their help after the September 11 attacks on the U.S.A. (but due to limited air-plane connections they could not get to New York).

Last year in March, children (the youngest was 2 years old) and adults (the oldest was 70) were helping toads in Prokopské valley (Prague). The toads, a protected species, were born in parks and in the forest and they needed to get to a stream. But to get there they had to cross a busy road, where they would surely be killed by passing cars. Little rescuers (and adults) helped thousands of toads by putting them into pails and moving them to the other side of the road. The toads got to the stream safely. (This activity was organized by občanské sdružení Školička estetiky pro děti Ohrádka.)

Each year, ten girls or boys from the Czech Republic are awarded the Zlatý oříšek (Golden nut) prize for their outstanding accomplishments in arts, science, sports, ecology and for good deeds and community service. One of the candidates for the award – an elementary school student – lives in Českomoravská vysočina. He is a member of a nature conservancy group and he looks after a certain area where protected plants grow. He also builds feeding stations for the animals of the forest.

(Info from: www.ext.rozlas.cz.)

On July 6, 2001, three boys (16, 18 and 19 years old) were enjoying a sunny day at the shore of a lake near Bystřice nad Pernštejnem when they noticed the unconscious body of an old man in the middle of the lake. They immediately jumped into the water and pulled the man to shore where they gave him first aid. The 85-year-old man survived and the boys were thanked by the town's mayor. They said that they did not consider themselves heroes and they would do it anytime if needed.

(Info from www.jihlavske-listy.cz.)

Are these people heroes? Could you do the same things? How could you help other people, your town, the Czech Republic or on our planet?



Write an essay answering the question 'Who is a hero?' and give examples of your hero's actions or what the hero should do. You can send your essays to us and we will publish the best essay in *Newspapers in Education*.

Activity: Look in magazines and newspapers. Who is mentioned most often? Whose picture is frequently featured? What do the articles and photos suggest about these people? Are readers influenced by the pictures and articles? Give examples.

Think about periods of history and people who had the most influence. Make a list of important events in history and people who influenced the state of the world, politics, fashion, art, music, architecture, media and sports. Was their influence positive or negative?

A hero is considered to have good qualities. **What qualities should a hero have? Work in groups and write down a list of qualities. Then write a list of opposite qualities. First, try to make the list without using a dictionary. After you have all contributed to the list, you can use a dictionary and write the new words on the blackboard, so that the whole class can learn them.**

Complete the adjectives below describing personality:

She tells no lies: **t . u . hf . .**

You won't find him in the corner at the party: **o . tg . i . g**

She thinks she's good: **p . o . d**

He thinks he's superior to everyone: **a . r . g . . t**

She won't share her presents with her sister: **s . . f . . h**

'How did I beat him 6-0, 6-0, 6-0? It was just luck.': **m . d . . t**

Be careful what he's saying about you behind your back: **h . po . r . t . c . l**

He'd always stop to help a disabled person across the road: **c . ns . d e**

She'll tell you if she doesn't like your after-shave: **f . . . k**

He loves money, loves having 'things': **m . t . r . a . i . t . c**

She'll do what she's told: **ob . d . . . t**

She always sends a card on her parent's anniversary: **th . . ght . . l**

(correct answers: truthful, outgoing, proud, arrogant, selfish, modest, hypocritical, considerate, frank, materialistic, obedient, thoughtful)

Which qualities are most important for you? Which qualities do you have? How do you think your character has changed or developed over the years? Are there any aspects of your personality you still do not like? What can you do to have more good qualities?

How would you say your national character is different from other countries?

GOOD CHARACTER:

"Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves."

- James Barrie

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

"After the verb 'to Love', 'to Help' is the most beautiful verb in the world."

- Bertha von Suttner

"Our character is what we do when we think no one is looking."

- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

"To measure the man, measure his heart."

- Malcolm Stevenson Forbes

"A loving person lives in a loving world. A hostile person lives in a hostile world. Everyone you meet is your mirror."

- Ken Keys

STORY TIME: A THIEF OF CATHAY (a Chinese Folk Tale)

What do you understand by 'righteousness'? Give examples.

Once an honored man was having a birthday celebration. His sons and servants were busy receiving guests and messengers bearing gifts and congratulations. A thief, knowing that there would be valuable items among the gifts, slipped into the house and hid himself by lying face down on a beam in the roof of the hall where a great banquet was to be held. From this vantage point the thief could look down over the guests and see all the gifts -- silk and jewels. He wanted to steal them after the banquet.

Later that evening, the host lingered over his presents. He was very happy. As he leaned over them to take a final look, he turned his back to the thief hiding on the beam. The thief took a chance to look at the layout of the room so that he would be able to find his way once the lights were put out. As he hung his head over the beam he cast

a shadow on the floor.

The host betrayed no sign of having seen the shadow, but he called for his servant and asked him to lay a table for one guest and bring the best food and drink. Turning towards the beam on which the thief lay, he said, 'Will the gentleman who is on the roof-beam now come down and partake of refreshments?'

There was nothing the thief could do but comply. He was led to the table and his host fed him well. When he finished, his host gave him a bag of silver coins and begged him to make good use of them. Then the host saw the thief out courteously.

Ten years passed, and again the honored man held a big birthday celebration. Many visitors came to wish him well and to bring him presents. The man was old by now and could not greet everyone who called. His grandson met the visitors at the door and invited them to dine with his grandfather

and took the gifts for him.

Towards the end of the day a stranger came, bearing handsome gifts of gold and jewels. He would not give his name, but insisted that he see the honored man.

The stranger was admitted to the old man's room. The host did not recognize his guest.

The stranger smiled and said, 'I am an honest man. I have learned to live a righteous life. But it was not always so. Do you not recall how you once asked me to come down from the roof-beam and partake of refreshment?'

The host was astonished when he heard how his own kindness to the thief had changed the thief's life to one of righteousness and honor. The coins he had given the thief had been used to begin a small business which had prospered and given work to many.

(adapted from 'Thoughts, Education for Peace and One World', by Irene Taafaki)

WHAT'S LIFE LIKE IN the United States of America ?

Wendy Purnell, an American living in Prague, told us about her country.

What shouldn't a visitor to the U.S.A. miss?



'Goblin valley', Utah

Most Czech people I have talked to like our deserts the best - the stone arches, the red sands, the huge open spaces and the sky that, really, somehow is bigger. I like our mountains in the northwest, because we get lots of rain and they are higher so they are different from your mountains. They are bigger and younger mountains, so they are steeper and rockier. Anything out west is beautiful, because it is so clean. I think that is a big difference from the Czech Republic and it is even different from the eastern United States. There have been a lot more people living there for much longer and that is why it is more polluted. I've also noticed in the Czech Republic, where a lot more people have been living for a lot longer, it is just more polluted. Washington state (my state) is big and some parts of the country are hard to navigate, because no one lives there and there are no roads. There are certain places in Washington from which you just cannot get across the rest of the state in one day. I haven't found a place like this in the Czech Republic, because there are just so many people and so many roads. You can get anywhere in a day. This is a big difference.

Any wilderness areas in the United States - for sure the desert, the Redwoods and the Oregon coast - are worth visiting. In Washington state we have the Olympic Peninsula - the western quarter of Washington state, which is by British Columbia (Canada) and the Pacific Ocean - where you can wake up in the morning in the mountains and play in the snow and swim in a glacier melt and then you can hurry down the mountain and you can get

to the beach that night and sleep on the beach and play in the ocean and dig for clams and then you can wake up in the morning and take a hike through an ancient rain forest, which is a moderate rain forest (different from Amazonian or African tropical rainforests). There are a lot of mosses and old trees.

I've heard you have a kind of Yeti in the U.S.

We have something like the Yeti in Washington state. Across the U.S. he is called Big Foot, but in Washington state we call him Sasquatch. It is an old tribal name for this "man" who lives in the mountains and is huge and hairy and furry. He does not like people. But every once in a while if you are really lucky you might catch a glimpse of him. (laugh) And we have one small local fairy tale about Sasquatch (you can read it in the next issue).

What is the biggest difference between the U.S. and the Czech Republic?

The biggest difference between the U.S.A. and the Czech Republic is probably the size. I grew up on the West Coast, but I also lived in Virginia and Washington, DC and if the teachers and students look on a map, they'll see that it is a big difference. And so I noticed, growing up in different states, the differences across my country. My country is huge. I feel sometimes like my view of the world is a little bit bigger than my Czech friends', because my country is so much bigger, so I have to look at it that way.

How many nationalities live in the U.S.?

My parents live in Denver now and my mother ran into a Czech woman who said there were 10,000 direct descendants of Czech immigrants living in Denver. I have no idea how many nations are represented or how many languages are spoken in the U.S., but we do not have an official language. Everyone assumes our official language is English, but if you, for example, want to get a permit to work with food in

the state of California, you can take your test in any language - Vietnamese, Russian, Indonesian, Thai, Cambodian, and of course Spanish or English. Absolutely any language. So if you go to the state of California and you need a food worker's permit, the state will give you the test in any language or through an interpreter.

Is it true that Americans are fat?

When I first came here everyone told me that and I did not believe them until I went home and noticed that it probably is true. Again, I think it depends on where you're from - for example, most of my family is from Pennsylvania, which is generally considered to be the fattest state.

CZENGLISH? NO!

Match the pictures with the prepositions of place. Where is the black point?

1	2	a) on
3	4	b) above
5	6	c) between
7	8	d) in/inside
		e) outside
		f) below
		g) next to
		h) among

In some of the following sentences the prepositions were not used correctly. Find mistakes and correct them:

1. She is sitting on an armchair.
2. He is sitting at his desk.
3. Dogs like being out.
4. Alena was the only girl between many boys.

Correct answers:

1. She is sitting in an armchair.
2. correct
3. Dogs like being outside.
4. Alena was the only girl among many boys.

MARXISM / SOCIALISM

Before you can understand how the political system of socialism works, you have to understand the time it was born in. While the politics behind monarchies and oligarchies have existed for centuries, the ideas behind Marxism came out of a very specific set of circumstances.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the western world was in an interesting state. The Industrial Revolution had swept across Western Europe and North America. People were moving off of land in the country and moving into the city to be factory laborers. The system of lords and serfs had been replaced by capitalists and workers. Many different kinds of goods were available to wider varieties of people as industrialization had made mass production possible. Unfortunately, in many cases industrialization had happened too quickly and society hadn't developed to a point where everyone could understand the benefits of a free market economy.

Most workers lived in squalid conditions. Children were working 12 hour days, their parents even longer. The cities were over-crowded and the sanitation systems had not been adjusted to the huge influx of workers and their families. In short, industrial workers had horrible lives. A German philosopher named Karl Marx, who had come from a prosperous family, wrote a treatise suggesting a new political system. It was a system that called for the seizure of power by the working class and the destruction of capitalism. He wrote it with a fellow Philosopher, Frederick Engels. It was called "The Communist Manifesto."

Marx changed the way history was examined. Prior to "The Communist Manifesto" historians had never considered the economic factors behind the major events in history. "Whenever major economic changes take place, political and social changes must follow." Marx believed that history had always been a class struggle between people who owned property and the people who provided the labor. From master and servant in pre-industrial society to capitalist factory, mine, bank or rail owner and the laborers, often called the proletariat. Marx believed that the class with economic power also controlled the state. That class used political power to protect and increase its property and to hold down the laboring class. Marx proposed that there had been, and would continue to be, an epic battle between those who had property and those who had not. Marx would not be able to predict that most great struggles of the twentieth century would not be between classes but between nations.

Marx asserted that the only way that the workers and the capitalists could become equal would be if there was a revolution, if the workers united and took over the

means of production. Marx did not say much about the new society that would be ushered in by a socialist revolution. With the destruction of capitalism, the distinction between capitalist and worker would no longer exist and with it the class conflict. The state would eventually wither away. The production of goods would be carried out through community planning and communal sharing, replacing the capitalist system of competition. It was believed that without capitalism people would become better people - altruistic, sensitive, cooperative and creative. People would be forced to be equal.

The idea of socialism swept across the western world, with communist parties popping up all over the world. Successful revolutions occurred in Russia, China, Korea and Cuba. After World War II, communist governments appeared all over Eastern Europe creating what came to be called "the Iron Curtain" of communist states. This curtain was comprised of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and its satellite states. None of these states evolved into the governmentless communal societies that were promised. Instead they became totalitarian states, where the governments mixed the words and ideas of Marx with their own agendas; turning his philosophy into propaganda.

For many years, opponents of Socialism feared that communist revolutions would sweep across the world, just as Marx had predicted. But then something happened which Marx could not imagine in the mid-nineteenth century. Workers in Western lands did not become the oppressed and impoverished working class that Marx had described. Because of increased productivity and reform-minded governments, Western workers improved their lives considerably, so that they now enjoy the highest standard of living in history. The tremendous growth of a middle class of professionals, civil service employees, and small business people refute Marx's predictions that capitalist society would be polarized into a small group of very rich capitalists and a great mass of destitute workers.

Marx believed that socialist revolutions would break out in the advanced industrialized lands. But the socialist revolutions of the twentieth century have occurred in underdeveloped, predominantly agricultural states. The government in communist lands, far from withering away, grew more centralized, powerful, and oppressive. In no country where communist revolutions seized power have people achieved the liberty that Marx desired. Nor have communists been able to sustain a viable economic system. The phenomenal collapse of communist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe testifies to Marxism's failure.

Vocabulary:

squalid - zanedban
influx - proud, nával
treatise - pojednání
struggle - spor
labor - práce
to assert - tvrdit že
to wither - vadnout
to oppress - utiskovat
to impoverish - ochudit
destitute - bez prostředků, zbaven čeho
viable - životaschopn

Activities:

1. Talk to your parents or someone older and ask them about the Czech period of socialism. Did any of it sound like what Marx suggested in the "Communist Manifesto?"
2. Examine one of the currently existing communist countries. Are they truly communist states or are they something different? What is life like in this country? What kinds of things can people do or not do?
3. Why do you think non-communist governments have been so threatened by communist governments? What issues do they disagree on? Research a conflict between a communist government and a non-communist government. What were the issues? How was it resolved? How was the issue presented in the media of the two respective countries?

DID YOU KNOW?

In Thailand, teachers teaching in villages will soon travel to work on elephants. Why? To save money. The schools used to buy cars for their teachers, but it was too expensive. For the cost of one car, 2,500 people can learn how to read and write.

(information from ČTK)

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