

THE WORLD WITHIN US

NAMES: Filipe e Ricardo
AGE: 7 years old
COUNTRY: Portugal
CITY: Miranda do Douro

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Filipe and Ricardo during the winter in Miranda do Douro¹

It is winter and it is very cold, almost zero degrees. Filipe and Ricardo get ready to go to school.

They are twins and therefore look very similar. They decide to wear different clothes for their teacher to distinguish them more easily. They live in the city of Miranda do Douro, in the North of Portugal, very close to the Spanish border to Spain. They are 7 years old and they are in the second grade and both like school very much. They also love their city, which is full of history and it is so special to them. It is the only city in Portugal where you don't speak only Portuguese. There are not many people who know how to speak Mirandese (the language spoken in Miranda do Douro), but the number is increasing. Filipe and Ricardo learn Mirandese in school. They have fun rehearsing dialogues which almost no one understands and they like calling Portuguese "grave", as all other Mirandeses do.

The first school term is almost over. Very soon they will be off Christmas holidays. Filipe and Ricardo are anxious for those days to come. For Christmas, they hope to get Asterix books in Mirandese. Their father promised to organize an adventurous filled around the cliffs of the village in search for the gold of the enchanted Moors. Not long ago, grandmother Belarmina told them many legends. The brothers are sure they will be able to find one of the treasures the Moors left hidden, before going back to their country many centuries ago.

But there are still a few days left, before Christmas holidays begin and today the two boys still have to go to school. School is not far away from the boys' house, only some minutes by foot. Filipe and Ricardo push their bobble hats down to the ears and rub their hands to warm themselves. It's so different from the summer, when it's so hot that the clothes stick to the skin. They will be back for lunch. Grandmother will be waiting for them; she always cooks very tasty food to spoil the boys. Today they will be eating "Posta Mirandesa", a veal steak dish from the region.

Finally Christmas holidays begin. The first weekend they leave the house very early with their father. The frost covers the fields with white. They wore very warm coats, otherwise mother wouldn't have allowed them to go. They go to the high cliffs overlooking the River Douro. Everything is so beautiful there. You can feel a sense of peace by looking at the landscape. Sometimes a bird of prey flies high up in the sky in a majestic way. The twins are so happy they forget how tired they are. But they are soon reminded of it, when father calls

¹ If you decide to include different topics in this module, the text will be too long for the concentration capacity of children of this age. Therefore, the story has to be read in little pieces, followed by an exchange of ideas related to the story. You should also ask questions like "Do you want to know what happened to Filipe and Ricardo afterwards?"

them to take a walk to the source of the stream, at the top of the mountain.

- It is said, that the enchanted Moors hide at land openings. Who knows, maybe we will meet one up there?

The twins let themselves fall down on a stone in the middle of the path. They have no energy left . Father guides them back home. It has been a beautiful day! What a pity they didn't find any treasure, so they could buy the most beautiful Christmas present for their mother...

Christmas holidays passed by quickly. The boys were busy reading the books they received and were keen on finishing them. It was already the first Sunday after the Three Kings Day. Wearing the "Capa de Honra"² , their father takes them to the "Pauliteiros de Miranda"³ show Uncle Antonio will also be there, exhibiting the flag. The twins have been practicing since they were five years old and now they can take part in the performances of their group. Today is the feast of the Menino Jesus da Cartolinha⁴ and the two boys are very proud of having the opportunity to dance today and show everyone what they have learned. They take the sticks and the castanets which they will use to make sounds. Around the Miranda Cathedral, there is a crowd. Some people came from far away to see the dances, which are so old and so different from, any other dance. Filipe and Ricardo are a little bit nervous. Will everything go well? The mother waves to them with love. The artists play the bagpipe, the tambourine and the shepherd's flute. The show starts with a group of 8 boys, to whom also Filipe and Ricardo belong. They will dance only "lhaços"⁵ , leaving the more difficult parts to the elder ones who have more experience. It looks like they are fighting, but without anyone getting hurt. The sticks hit each other and the dancers come together and move away during the whole dance. Filipe and Ricardo will continue to learn this dance in the future and one day, they will be able to jump over a pyramid of other boys who stay in balance doing the "Assalto ao Castelo".

When the show ends, uncle Eduardo is waiting for them. This weekend the family lunch will be at his place. The uncle lives on the outskirts of the city, in the village of Palaçoulo. When they arrive there is a wonderful smell of smoked meat. They cannot wait to taste the delicious chorizos, "alheiras"⁶ and "bulhos com cascas"⁷. When the aunt calls them for lunch, Filipe and Ricardo hear a strange bray. They didn't know their uncle had a donkey! They ran to the back of the house and cannot believe their eyes... there is a little dark brown donkey⁸, tied to a rope, looking at them peacefully.

² Which is a sort of thick mantle

³ A typical dance, where eight or ten boys "fight" with each other using sticks, and at the same time they jump and turn around

⁴ If you want more information on the legend which initiated the veneration of this image, go to <http://www.cm-midouro.pt/cartolinha> and http://www.bragancanet.pt/picote/portugues/imprensa/dn_menino_jesus.htm

⁵ "Lhaços" are the repertoire of the Pauliteiros, i.e. their music, texts and choreography.

⁶ A Portuguese sausage

⁷ A typical Mirandese speciality. The "bulho" is stuffed in the bladder and in the stomach and especially in the larger ribs of the pork. It is made of the meat and of the bones of the ridge and eventually also with some ribs. The casings are made of dried out bean pods, which are cut and dried in the sun. The taste is very strong and therefore it is mostly eaten in winter, to cuddle the stomach during the long and freezing winters of Miranda do Douro.

⁸ Filipe and Ricardo received a Mirandese donkey as a present.

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- This is your present, for being such good dancers!

Filipe and Ricardo are so happy.

- We should name the donkey "Moor" and he will be our companion next holidays, when we will be looking again for the gold in the enchanted Moors again. If we ride on the donkey, we won't get tired when climbing up the highlands.

Filipe and Ricardo are sure they will find another treasure and they are so grateful to be living in such a special place.

Miranda do Douro

Geography and Story

Miranda do Douro is a Portuguese city in the extreme Northeast of the country, near the border to Spain. It is part of the Braganza district and municipality and has 17 parishes.

The city is situated on a hillside at 687m of altitude, on the right side of the Douro river. It lies on a territory which separates the Portuguese province of Trás – os- Montes from the Spanish province of Castilla y León.

Miranda do Douro is a mix of various cultural characteristics from different origins and times Archeological finds date back to the Bronze Era. In 1136, D. Afonso Henriques saw Miranda do Douro as a strategic point to promote resistance against the Kingdom of Leão, reason why he allowed the “Carta de Floral” and ordered his men to build a castle. In 1117, D. Sancho I builds a wall, to hold back the growing population. Miranda do Douro becomes a city during the kingdom of D. João III, and in 1545 it is proclaimed Episcopal diocese, a privilege lost in 1764. That year, the diocese turned into Diocese of Braganza and Miranda, but its main church preserved the status of Cathedral. In this church, the image of the “Menino Jesus da Cartolinha” is still venerated. The image is from the middle of the XIX century and according to the legend, it was linked to the resistance against Spanish

invaders. Parts of the Episcopal palace burnt down in the XVIII century and today the only remains are the ground floor with its huge arcades. In one of the village streets, there are still various typical houses with rectangular doors and narrow windows full of flowers. Between the windows there is a pattern made of stones with double windows and medieval dogs carved into the granite. The Municipal Museum today is located in the old building where the local government used to function.

The climate of the region is very variable, winters are very cold and summers very hot. There are only a few periods where the climate is mild, i.e. some days in spring and in autumn. The climate in this region is so extreme that there is even a proverb that says that “In Miranda there are nine months of winter and three months of hell”.

Economy

The municipality is predominantly rural. The population works in agriculture, e.g. in the cultivation of cereals or in cattle rising (i.e. cows - Mirandese breed ovine – Churra Galician Mirandese race¹⁰; pork – this meat is used to make the famous sausages). Tannery and the production of rough textiles such as the “saragoça” and the “burel” typically Portuguese are important elements for the economy of Miranda, as well as the

⁹ This information is only for the educator, in case he needs to know more about it. He will then pass on the information to the children, using an easy language, according to the age of the children.

¹⁰ If you want to know more about the various races of Miranda do Douro, please go to http://www.cm-mdouro.pt/racas_autoctones/

extraction of wolfram and tin. Indigenous races are very important for the Mirandese economy, e.g. the above mentioned cows' breed, which is very prized inside and outside the municipality. The demand for the Mirandese donkey breed is increasing. These animals are in extinction and since 2003, they are protected by the European Union¹¹. They are very popular, because they are used in agriculture on smallholdings as well as in tourism, e.g. in playing activities and recreational use for therapeutic purposes.

For a long period of time, the municipality has been poor, isolated and scarcely populated. In the meantime, thanks to the building of the Damsin Picote (1958) and in Miranda (1960), the city began its development. Today the city is a living museum and a centre of trade for the Spanish neighbours.

An unique Culture

The mix of cultural characteristics of the upland which are unique, find their expression in the handicraft, the gastronomy, the traditional houses and especially in the folklore and in its own language, i.e. Mirandese.

Mirandese

Mirandese is an independent branch of the Astur-Leonese linguistic group of the

Northeast part of the Iberian Peninsula. This language differentiated itself from Portuguese and Spanish, since the early days of the kingdom of Portugal in the XII century, due to the isolation from the rest of the country. Mirandese was spoken until not long ago by roughly 5000 people. This number has been increasing, thanks to the effort of some linguists, such as Leite de Vasconcelos, which turned the language popular. In the school year of 1985/86, the right for the children (who live in Miranda do Douro) to learn Mirandese in schools was recognized. Now students can choose to learn Mirandese as an optional subject, from preschool to grade 12.

In 1999, the Mirandese dialect was officially recognized by the Government as the second language in Portugal and since then was the aim of various studies.

Pauliteiros from Miranda

Various groups from different villages create what is known as "Pauliteiros de Miranda". This warrior dance dates back to the Middle Ages, but its origins are unknown. There are four characteristics which make the Mirandese folklore unique: the dancers are men and dance to the rhythm of bagpipes, tambourines and the shepherd's flute; they wear a special costume and they dance with two wooden sticks. The outfit is comprised

¹¹ If you want to know more about the Mirandese donkey please go to the webpage of the local organization which protects them www.aepga.pt/portal/PT60/default.aspx

of a vest made of “burel” (a thick wool material), skirts in white cotton, welted with English embroidery, a skirt with 4 layers, woolen socks, leather boots and hats with flowers.

The dance consists in the confrontation of two groups of 4 men, with sticks in their hands and move in a coordinated manner to the rhythm of the sticks which clash against each other. Some groups use castanets in the final part of the dance¹².

Outfits

There are two outfits used by the “boieiros” and shepherds to protect themselves from the bad weather: the Mirandese hat made of flannel and “burel” with panels to cover the ears; the “capa de honra”, a simplified version in brown “burel” and textiles made of black wool with a cowl. Originally, wearing the “capa” was a privilege for the wealthy class, due to many adornments and the complexity of its production. Today, it is still worn by important and rich men during the ceremonies in that region.

Gastronomy

The gastronomy in the Northeastern region is very rich. It’s a kitchen of subsistence which takes into account the various seasons. The most known specialties are trouts and sausages, e.g. various types of chorizos,

“alheiras”, “bulho com cascas”, “salpicões” and ham. These specialties are produced in December, when the pigs are slaughtered. During Easter people eat the “bola de carne”. Traditional sweets are poor in eggs and sugar, since those ingredients were very expensive in the past. There are some small differences from town to town, but the most popular sweets are “bola doce mirandesa”, various cakes and biscuits, e.g. “súpticas”, “sodos”, “cavacos”.

Biodiversity and the beauty of the landscape

The Municipality of Miranda do Douro is part of the International Douro Natural Park¹³. It is a region of great richness in terms of biodiversity and landscape diversity and in terms of natural, semi-natural and humanized landscapes. The difficult accessibility and mobility of this region, which is due to its geographical characteristics (relief, climate, the river Douro) contributed to its isolation. This has been an advantage, because it has contributed to the preservation of the flora and fauna. It also helped the local community to develop a self sufficient life, using local resources to satisfy their needs. Some examples are the gastronomy, the houses, the outfits and the traditional musical instruments. Miranda do Douro is therefore a good example of a successful integration of human activities in a natural environment.

¹² You can watch various dances by the “Pauliteiros de Miranda” on the internet.

¹³ The Park’s website is <http://portal.icnb.pt/ICNPortal/vPT2007-AP-DouroInternacional?res=1280x1024>

Activities

Before starting any activity, please show the children where Portugal is on the map, then show them where Miranda do Douro is, and where children live

➔ It's cold

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

When the temperature is very low, i.e. below zero or zero degrees, water freezes. That means that water turns solid and isn't liquid anymore.

Solid water is not called water.

- Does anyone know what solid water is called? (ice)
- The story of Ricardo and Filipe takes place in winter.
- Do you know any other seasons? Which season is the coldest one?
- Winter is the coldest season of the year and in Miranda do Douro the temperatures are very low at that time of the year. The average temperature is 0 degrees for 30 days a year!
- Guess what happens to the water? (it freezes and turns into ice)
- Frozen water can be found in nature in various forms
- Who can tell me some of them? (snow, hail, frost)
- When Ricardo and Filipe went out with their father during the Christmas holidays everything was covered by... (frost).
- Have you ever seen frost?

Explain what frost is. It's a thin layer of ice, which covers the open surfaces such as ground, fields, trees, houses, etc., in very cold days (when the temperature drops below zero degrees) and it generally disappears during the day, when the temperature rises.

Hail is made of lumps of ice which are irregular or round-shaped, which fall from the clouds where the rain drops freeze due to a sudden drop in temperature.

★ ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

✂ MATERIALS

PAPER + SCISSORS

➔ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

- And what about snow? Does anybody know what snow is? Have you ever seen it? Did you know that there are no two identical snowflakes? When you watch a snowflake under the microscope you will notice that two identical snowflakes do not exist.
- Do you want to learn how to make a snowflake¹⁴ out of paper? You will notice that it is impossible to make two which are identical, like in nature.

Teach the children how to make a snowflake:

- Take a squared square-shaped piece of paper.
- Fold the paper in the middle, making a triangle
- Fold the paper into a triangle again, four times
- In the last triangle, one of the points has to be folded looking at the middle of the opposing triangle
- Cut one of the points of the triangle
- The folded snowflake is ready to be snipped, but be careful: never cut from one side to the other.
- When you think you snipped enough, unfold the snowflake and the result will be surprising.

¹⁴ You can carry out the instructions and also watch the video on http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFCxjs_gft8 or <http://passatemposdivertidos.blogspot.com/2007/12/flocos-de-neve.html>

➔ Mirandese

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

- Besides Portuguese, there is another official language in our country. Which language is it and where is it spoken? Do the children from that region also speak it? (Filipe and Ricardo even learn it in school).
- Do you want to listen to a little bit of Mirandese? Let's see if you can understand something...

Read to the children pieces of the texts from the video mentioned below and chose parts of the video to watch with the children: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReeTHsjKxw>

Explain to the children that languages, as well as animals can be extinct. Many languages disappeared forever, because no one neither speaks nor writes them. These languages are called “dead languages”. Not so long ago, Mirandese was slowly becoming extinct. Today, thanks to children such as Filipe and Ricardo who chose to learn it in school, it is regaining life every day!

- Here are two proverbs in Mirandese:

“Mais bale um paixarico na mano
Que dous a bolar.”

“Quien cuônta un cuônto
Acrecênta-l’un puônto.”

Check if the children can translate the proverbs into Portuguese and discuss with them, what they think they mean in order to introduce the following activity.

➔ The Big Wall of Proverbs

✂ MATERIALS

PASTEBOARD + MATERIALS TO WRITE AND DRAW

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

In every country there are different proverbs, and Portugal is no exception¹⁵.

Give the children some examples of proverbs¹⁶, and ask them to tell you any proverb they know. Ask them, when they go home to ask their relatives or friends to find out some more proverbs. Build “The Big Wall of Proverbs”, writing down on the pasteboard what the children have said and asking them to choose one or more proverbs and talk about it. Stick the images next to the respective proverb.

Make the children notice that many proverbs are similar around the world. This shows that some ideas and points of views are shared at a global scale.

★ ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

➔ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

Sit the children in a circle and as they go to the middle of the circle, one at the time, they have to mimic to get the other children to guess which proverb they are thinking of. When the proverb is guessed, it’s another child’ turn to enter the circle, and so on.

¹⁵ A proverb is a popular saying which expresses an idea or a thought in a succinct and also figurative way.

¹⁶ A list can be found on http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ditado_popular or on <http://proverbios.aborla.net/>. Useful resources are the “Dicionario de Provérbios” (Dictionary of Proverbs) from the publisher Porto Editora, 2000 for adults, “Livrinho dos Provérbios” (Little Book of Proverbs) by José Viale Moutinho, from the publisher Afrontamento, 2006 and “Provérbios Coloridos” (Coloured Proverbs) by Tiago Salgueiro, from the publisher Âmbar, 2007 for children.

➔ The box of legends

✂ MATERIALS

BOX OR TRUNK + VARIOUS MATERIALS + PAPER + WRITING AND DRAWING MATERIAL

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

Filipe and Ricardo’s Grandmother told them about many legends.

- Do you know what a legend¹⁷ is? Have you heard any? There are legends in every country. A legend is a story build up by a community, to explain a real or imaginary event of the past or of the local community. These stories are transmitted with a lot of love from one generation to another.

- Who usually tells you legends or stories? (Usually it’s the grandparents or elderly who tell stories. They are old and therefore they know more stories, some of which are very ancient.)

Chose one or more legends, preferably a local or regional one, to tell the children and read the story aloud¹⁸.

- Would you like to invent a legend? Let's create a box of legends, where we will put the characters which you think should be part of the story (they can be humans, animals, plants, objects, etc.)

Select the characters which you would like to be part of the legend and give the children the task to characterize them, e.g. by drawing them, assembling magazine snips, moulding them, describing them. Write those things down or record them with the help of an educator. Afterwards put them into the box or trunk (which should have been decorated first).

If you want to create your own legend, have the children take out one or various characters from the trunk. You can create a different story, according to the order in which the characters come up.

Create all the legends you want, and write them down in the most appropriate way, e.g. by making a drawing, writing it down in letters, making a collage, recording the voice or by making a video.

¹⁷ According to Alexandre Parafita, author of "Histórias de Arte e Manhas", a legend is a "story traditionally transmitted by voice of facts and happenings which the population granted some truth. Generally legends have something real and something imaginary. Legends are therefore more realistic and historical than a fairy tale. It's quite unusual that a legend begins with "once upon a time", a beginning which takes us to the past and to an indefinite place. Every community tries to preserve its own legends, because the population tells its own story through legends.

¹⁸ Portuguese legends can be found on <http://lendasdeportugal.no.sapo.pt/> or on <http://lendasescalendas.omeuforum.net/lendas-mitos-e-contos-tradicionais-portugueses-f3/>
Have a look also at "Contos e Lendas de Portugal e do Mundo" by José Antonio Gomes and Isabel Ramalhete, Publisher: Porto Editora 2009.

➔ Mummy, may I?

✂ MATERIALS

PASTEBOARD OR A BLACK BOARD + WRITING AND DRAWING MATERIAL + GLUE OR STICKY TAPE + IMAGES OF THE FAVOURITE ANIMALS

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

Miranda do Douro is part of the International Douro Natural Park. This means that its landscapes, animals and plants are so special that they have the right to a special protection, so that they won't be became extinct and everyone has the chance to admire them. This area is called Douro International, because the river runs through the frontier between two different countries, Portugal and Spain.

- Let's talk about some of the animals which exist in the International Douro Natural Park (the teacher should have previously cut out images of these animals to show them to the children when giving generic information about the park).

Birds: black stork, griffon vulture, Golden Eagle, Egyptian vulture, Bonelli's eagle

Mammals: wild boar, badger, roe deer, wild cat, Iberian wolf, Mirandese donkey

Fish: carps, barbels, largemouth bass, esox, pumpkinseed

Put together some of these animals, according to how they move: with small or big steps, jumping, trotting, flying, swimming etc.

Play the traditional "Mummy, may I?"¹⁹, but the "Mummies" have to ask their children to walk like the "black stork" or "roe deer" or any other of the selected animals.

¹⁹ To know the rules of the game, please consult <http://cantinodosmiudos.blogspot.pt/39283.html>

➔ Pauliteiros from Miranda

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

Watch with the children one of the many videos of the dances from the Pauliteiros de Miranda, which you can find on the Internet.

Tell the children, that this is a warrior dance. This means that the movements of the fight and of the attack are transformed into a dance, by two groups of four men... There is a sort of confrontation, but no one gets hurt.

Look with the children at the outfits: the men wear skirts, mantles over their back and other elements. Ask the children to identify more components which are characteristic of the outfits of the pauliteiros.

The population from Miranda is very proud of these dances and the pauliteiros are famous around the world for their dances.

- Do you want to see one of the most fantastic moments of this dance?

Show the children the video on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OK-Es0RXBnk>, where they can see the "lhaço" 25, and the "assault on the castle".

Build sticks out of rolled paper or with tubes of card box. Make groups of eight children and have them dance the "dance of the Pauliteiros".

➔ Weavers

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

In the Transmontano plateau, where Miranda do Douro is situated, the population got used to exploit what they had at their disposal to satisfy their needs. Strong and warm clothes were one of their needs, because in that region it is very cold and many people work in agriculture and clothes can get worn out.

Textiles such as "saragoça"²⁰ or "burel"²¹ were the most popular.

- Do you know how textiles are produced manually? Did you ever hear about weaving mills or looms?

Explain to the children what the "cycle of wool"²² is. Afterwards, the children can write down what the circle of wool is, taking into consideration the various phases of the cycle.

★ ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

✂ MATERIALS

A PIECE OF CARDBOARD + 20 CM WIRE + PIECES OF TAPE
+ OLD CLOTHES MADE OF COTTON WHICH YOU CAN CUT IN STRIPES.

★ HOW THE ACTIVITY WORKS

Tell the children to build a very simple loom, (with waste materials), in order for them to make their own clothes²³.

- On a piece of paper, draw a model of the loom and select the pieces of clothes with the chosen colors.
- Trace a margin around the piece of cardboard, some centimetres from the margin
- Make little holes every centimetre one from another in both upper sides
- Fold the wire in the middle and cover its points with tape for paper or normal tape
- Cut the old clothes in stripes of the same size, but of different colours
- Stretch the stripes, making a fine snail-formed object
- With the help of the wire, which is used as a needle, make the stripes pass through the holes vertically, joining every stripe to its counterpart in the opposing hole. The two threads have to stay very loose
- When the loom is ready, start weaving
- With the help of the wire, make the snail-formed object pass over and underneath the strings which constitute the canvas
- Press the strings against each other, so they stick together
- Tie up the loose ends, so they don't get lost
- Cut the cardboard through the holes and let the textile loose, taking away the cardboard

Tell the children how a loom works even if the mechanism is very complex. The Mirandese weaved their "saragoça" and their "burel" in a similar way!

²⁰ Thick textile of white or brown wool which was used for making outfits for work

²¹ Artisanal textile made of black wool

²² The explanation of the process can be consulted on <http://www.trajesdeportugal.blogspot.com/2007/02/o-ciclo-da-l.html>

²³ The instructions can be found on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSzk8LSYwME>

Miranda do Douro

➔ TOPICS TO BE EXPLORED IN THIS MODULE

Linguistic and cultural diversity + biodiversity + outfits and costumes

➔ CONTENT

Personal and Social Development

Knowledge and Understanding of the world

Improvement of communication and expression

ACTIVITIES

It's cold

Mirandese

The big Wall of Proverbs

The box of legends

Mummy, may I?

Pauliteiros from Miranda

Weavers



CO-FINANCIAMENTO

