**Country: Romania**

**Name: Camelia Mantarosie**

**Position: Documentary teacher**

**Organization: “Mircea Eliade” Theoretical Highschool; Intorsura-Buzaului; Covasna; Romania**

***LET’ S IMAGINE!***

***“The books are written in solitude but against it”***

***(Octavian Paler)***

***The Documentary Centre of “Mircea Eliade” Theoretical Highschool from Intorsura Buzaului invited the students and teachers to take part in the celebration of the International School Library Month on the 24th of October 2019.***

Inspired by the 2019 slogan “Let’s imagine” proposed by the International School Library Association, the students and teachers of “Mircea Eliade” high school, guided by the school principal Maria Bularca, celebrated the connection between books, reading, school libraries and the development of the imagination. In the previous years the focus was on competitions. This year instead, the activities were centred around sharing the reading and writing experiences of the participants. The aim was to develop a sense of belonging to the high school reading community. It was believed that by sharing their experiences, students to students and students to teachers, a general trend encouraging reading would be generated.

The inspiration for the activities came from the project created by Angelica Leu, Romanian language and literature teacher at “Mihail Sadoveanu” school. The event organised by the XI-B class students coordinated by Camelia Mantarosie, documentary and information teacher. Their goal was to create a day to remember, so everything took place in open air, under the pleasant autumn sun.

Seven literary workshops were organised which had the students and teachers as the “main protagonists”. The ultimate aim for each workshop was to promote books and to ease the way of students into the reading experience. The difference between the workshops was that each one of them used a different method to achieve the set target.

In the first workshop called “A BOOKMARK – A MARK OF ME READING” – the students found materials and made bookmarks which either introduced their favourite books or encouraged reading.

The workshop “I AM READING… WHAT ARE YOU READING”, led by Sanda Vieru, was the place where the students introduced their favourite books and also took part in a book exchange event.

“ALIVE LIBRARY” – was the workshop during which the students interviewed Ștefan Emilia , Neșa Voichița, Lungu Cătălin, Corina Gyorgy (teachers) on the topic of reading. Loads of questions and even more books discussed – the general feeling was that the teachers were keen to share as much of their soul and their love for books with their students.

Maria Badiu, Monica Iuliana Muntean, Costina Văcăruș, Rodica Bărbuș (teachers) joined their students in the literary workshop called “A LETTER TO MY FAVOURITE WRITER”. Here the students and teachers wrote letters addressed to their favourite writers. They also discussed quote from their favourite books.

“A BOOK IN WAITING” -this was the workshop during which the students and teachers donated books for the “empty shelf”. The “empty shelf” is the bookshelf from which the students can borrow books they want to read without an official record. It is also the place where they can leave the books they would like to donate. More than 100 books are now waiting for their readers…and we all know they come highly recommended.

During the workshop “WOUNDED BOOKS” the students repaired degraded books.

But what happened when cinema and reading, two of the biggest passions of the young people met? Everyone was extremely happy. Moving beyond the long-lasting debate “movie vs. book” and accepting that some of the greatest movies of our times were inspired by equally famous novels, during the “BOOKS MADE INTO MOVIES” workshop the students watched the movies on DVDs donated by each class. The conclusion: reading the books is a must, but watching the movie is also essential. Together they provide the insight of different minds, from different times, together building and extraordinary story.

24th of October 2019? – A celebration of reading. There was a lot of debate around various books belonging to Romanian or foreign authors, around choosing books, auround the emotion of reading, around the authenticity of the literary context etc. But what mattered the most was that the students talked and wrote about their favourite books – they talked with passion and from the heart. In today’s world, were we often hear that young people do not read – this was a breath of fresh air. It was inspiring to have around a group of young people who not only read but who are passionate about their books, a group of young people who wanted to share their love for reading and not because they had to, but because they felt like it.

And what if in the end this is what is all about– about the freedom of choosing to read what you like, to write what you like, to feel responsible? The student – reader of our times will not read because a book is given to him. The pleasure of reading is associated with other things – playing, coffee, team movies etc. What is lost or gained in this new approach towards reading is to be discovered, but meanwhile our students deserve the change to explore them.

Camelia Mantaroșie

Documentary Teacher