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MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY



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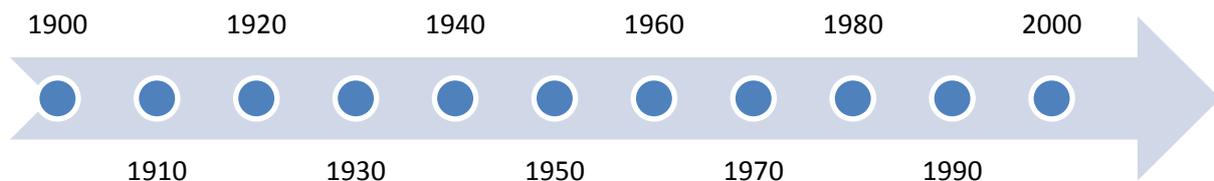
INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

Czech Literature

Jaroslav Hašek, Franz Kafka, Karel Čapek, Josef Škvorecký

Task One:

Place the names on the right places of the timeline according to the most important years of their work.



Match the authors and their biographical dates.

Karel Čapek (1883 – 1923)

Jaroslav Hašek (1883 – 1924)

Franz Kafka (1924 – 2012)

Josef Škvorecký (1890 – 1938)

Task Two:

Read the texts. Complete the headings with the writers' names.

A) _____

was a Czech writer and publisher who spent much of his life in Canada. He was awarded the Neustadt International Prize for Literature in 1980. He and his wife were long-time supporters of Czech dissident writers before the fall of communism in that country, esp. in Sixty-Eight Publishers. His fiction deals with several themes: the horrors of totalitarianism and repression, the expatriate experience, and the miracle of jazz.



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B) _____

was a Czech writer of the early 20th century best known for his science fiction, including his novel *War with the Newts* and the play *R.U.R.* that introduced the word *robot*. Many of his works discuss ethical aspects of industrial inventions and processes already anticipated in the first half of the 20th century. These include mass production, nuclear weapon, and post-human intelligent beings such as robots or salamanders. He also expressed fear from social disasters, dictatorship, violence, human stupidity, the unlimited power of corporations, and greed. He tried to find hope, and the way out.

C) _____

was born into a middle-class, German-speaking Jewish family in Prague, then a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was a German-language writer of novels and short stories, regarded by critics as one of the most influential authors of the 20th century. He strongly influenced genres such as existentialism. His works, such as "*Die Verwandlung*" ("*The Metamorphosis*"), *Der Process* (*The Trial*), and *Das Schloss* (*The Castle*), are filled with the themes and archetypes of alienation, physical and psychological brutality, parent-child conflict, characters on a terrifying quest, and mystical transformations.

D) _____

was a Czech humourist, satirist, writer and anarchist best known for his novel *The Good Soldier Svejk and His Fortunes in the World War*, an unfinished collection of farcical incidents about a soldier in World War I and a satire on the dullness of authority figures, which has been translated into sixty languages. He also wrote some 1,500 short stories. He was a journalist, bohemian, and practical joker, an author of marvellous literary mystifications.

Vocabulary:

expatriate - vypovědět z vlasti

farcical – absurdní

anticipate – předvídat

dullness – tupost

greed – chamtivost

bohemian - bohémský

alienation – odcizení

practical joker – vtipálek

quest - hledání

marvellous - podivuhodný

Task Three:

Read the text. Answer the questions.

- 1) Which book does the excerpt come from?
- 2) Who is the author?
- 3) What can you say about the plot of the book?

a) One morning, as Gregor Samsa was waking up from anxious dreams, he discovered that in bed he had been changed into a monstrous verminous bug. He lay on his armour-hard back and saw, as he lifted his head up a little, his brown, arched abdomen divided up



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into rigid bow-like sections. From this height the blanket, just about ready to slide off completely, could hardly stay in place. His numerous legs, pitifully thin in comparison to the rest of his circumference, flickered helplessly before his eyes.

"What's happened to me," he thought. It was no dream. His room, a proper room for a human being, only somewhat too small, lay quietly between the four well-known walls. Above the table, on which an unpacked collection of sample cloth goods was spread out (Samsa was a traveling salesman) hung the picture which he had cut out of an illustrated magazine a little while ago and set in a pretty gilt frame. It was a picture of a woman with a fur hat and a fur boa. She sat erect there, lifting up in the direction of the viewer a solid fur muff into which her entire forearm disappeared.

b) ...and this frog-like voice called excitedly, "Hello, hello, hello! Chief Salamander speaking. Hello, chief Salamander speaking. Stop all broadcasting, you men! Stop your broadcasting! Hello, Chief Salamander speaking!" And then another, strangely hollow voice asked: "Ready?" "Ready." There was a click as if the broadcast were being transferred to another speaker; and then another, unnaturally staccato voice called: "Attention! Attention! Attention!" "Hello!" "Now!"

A voice was heard in the quiet of the night; it was rasping and tired-sounding but still had the air of authority. "Hello you people! This is Louisiana. This is Kiangsu. This is Senegambia. We regret the loss of human life. We have no wish to cause you unnecessary harm. We wish only that you evacuate those areas of coast which we will notify you of in advance. If you do as we say you will avoid anything regrettable. In future we will give you at least fourteen day notice of the places where we wish to extend our sea. Incidents so far have been no more than technical experiments. Your explosives have proved their worth. Thank you for them.

"Hello you people! Remain calm. We wish you no harm. We merely need more water, more coastline, more shallows in which to live. There are too many of us. Your coastlines are already too limited for our needs. For this reason we need to demolish your continents. We will convert them into bays and islands. In this way, the length of coastline can be increased five-fold. We will construct new shallows. We cannot live in deep ocean. We will need your continents as materials to fill in the deep waters. We wish you no harm, but there are too many of us. You will be free to migrate inland. You will not be prevented from fleeing to the hills. The hills will be the last to be demolished.

"We are here because you wanted us. You have distributed us over the entire world. Now you have us. We wish that you collaborate with us. You will provide us with steel for our picks and drills. You will provide us with explosives. You will provide us with torpedoes. You will work for us. Without you we will not be able to remove the old continents. Hello you people, Chief Salamander, in the name of all newts everywhere, offers collaboration with you. You will collaborate with us in the demolition of your world. Thank you."

c) 'And so they've killed our Ferdinand,' said the charwoman to Mr Švejk, who had left military service years before, after having been finally certified by an army medical board as an imbecile, and now lived by selling dogs — ugly, mongrel monstrosities whose pedigrees



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he forged. Apart from this occupation he suffered from rheumatism and was at this very moment rubbing his knees with Elliman's embrocation.

'Which Ferdinand, Mrs Müller?' he asked, going on with the massaging. 'I know two Ferdinands. One is a messenger at Průša's, the chemist's, and once by mistake he drank a bottle of hair oil there. And the other is Ferdinand Kokoška who collects dog manure. Neither of them is any loss.'

'Oh no, sir, it's his Imperial highness, the Archduke Ferdinand, from Konopiště, the fat churchy one.'

Task Four:

Náchod

Zdena Salivarová

University of Toronto

Sixty-Eight Publishers

Danny Smiřický

The Cowards

The Miracle Game

The Engineer of Human Souls

The Legend Of Emöke

Evaluation

Work in pairs. Imagine this situation: You are talking to an English-speaking friend of yours. Choose a Czech writer. Present the writer to your friend. (Talk about his life, style of writing, books and interesting facts.) Talk for 2 minutes at least. Put down some notes first.

Then swap your roles.
