

# Urban Stories in Windows



eTwinning project  
**Urban Snails. Slow  
steps in fast cities**



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# the Storytellers

*In the rush of life, the treasures wait for those who walk.*

The activity “**Urban Stories in Windows**” invites students to engage in a refined exploration of their city through a creative and reflective lens. Using digital tools such as BookCreator, learners capture evocative images of windows, doors, shopfronts, and street corners that silently narrate the life of the urban space.

Each photograph becomes a source of inspiration for a concise yet expressive narrative, guided by the imaginative prompt: “*What does the urban snail see through this window?*”

This perspective encourages slow observation, attention to detail, and a deeper

emotional connection with the surrounding environment. Students transform ordinary urban elements into meaningful stories, blending visual literacy with creative writing.

This activity fosters intercultural awareness, personal expression, and collaborative learning, while also cultivating aesthetic sensitivity. Ultimately, it enables learners to reinterpret their city as a living text, rich in hidden stories waiting to be discovered.

eTwinning Project *Urban Snails. Slow steps in Fast cities* team

*What do you see in the city when you slow down?*



## Section 1

### Ioan Slavici Theoretical High School- Panciu /ROMANIA Gabriela Pricop's students



University of Focșani

#### It all started on a rainy afternoon.

It is known that snails go for a walk after the rain. This is what happened to our little explorers. They removed their tentacles, fastened their shells tightly to their backs, and slowly slid down the streets of our city.

They heard the message: We will meet at the carrot. They thought they would go and enjoy it. Great was their surprise when they arrived near a huge obelisk surrounded by a sea of people talking about the last ruler of Moldova before the unification.

They were afraid that those gigantic beings would break their shells, so they thought of going to the Petrești Grove. But in their slow glide they passed by the university, museum, church, synagogue, theater.

A snail saw some golden leaves at the University and thought they must be tasty. So he climbed the column until he reached the flowered capital. So he got lost among the other snails who had gone on a journey.

And at the end of the day, looking at the city from the level of a leaf, Focșani no longer seemed like an ordinary city, but a gigantic world full of slow adventures.

He wondered what challenges the other snails wandering around the city of Unirii had to overcome.

#### What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?

By visiting Focșani at a slow pace, with attention to detail, I learned more than just local history.



## Section 1

**Ioan Slavici Theoretical High  
School- Panciu /ROMANIA**  
**Gabriela Pricop's students**



**The oldest tree in Focșani**

What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?

I understood how the identity of a border town changes. Focsani was once the point between Moldova and Wallachia. Walking carefully through the center, I saw subtle differences in style, street organization and architectural influences.

I noticed what memory looks like in a building. The city told us the story of earthquakes, communism, prosperous periods and those of abandonment without the need for explanatory panels.

The old trees in the parks and on the quiet streets showed us where people sought shade and coolness before air conditioning.

I received lessons in visual patience. Looking slowly, I saw details that the rush hides: old ironwork, almost erased inscriptions, floral patterns on stucco, differences between the original and replaced windows.

I understood that beauty coexists with degradation. In Focșani, there are elegant buildings next to unkempt spaces. Observing without cynicism, you can understand that real cities are not museums or complete ruins — they are organisms in transformation.

If you walk without a strict objective, just observing the lights, the noises, the rhythm of people and the texture of buildings, you can also learn something about yourself: how much you actually see in a place when you are not in a hurry to get somewhere else.



## Section 2

### Mustafa Hakan Güvençer Science High School / TÜRKİYE (Şenay Yalçın's Students)



#### 2nd Grand National Assembly of Türkiye

Serving as the building of the 2nd Grand National Assembly of Turkey during the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the museum is dedicated to the youth of the Republic, having witnessed the birth of Atatürk's principles and reforms and the multi-party system.

#### THE SNAIL THAT AWAKENED THE CITY

Once upon a time, a snail observed a situation in a dark and chaotic part of the city. It ventured out to uncover the truth. As it wandered through the city, it discovered sculptures, botanical gardens, and bustling streets; it saw swans, encountered books, and learned about the city's past. People often walked aimlessly. The snail gathered them and allowed them to truly see the city. Where people had left their phones behind, they began to notice its art and beauty. They saw the details of the sculptures, the castle, and its objects. Because even if a place remains the same, its appearance is different. Thus, people learn to better understand the place they live in. They realized that beyond what they knew from books, they could learn about areas and explore by questioning. The city became more vibrant. And the snail, emerging from its small world, realized that a place held so much more than it had imagined, and set off on new paths.

#### What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?

We realized that Ankara is not just a capital city; it is a multi-layered city bearing the traces of the Republic, where modern life and traditional fabric coexist. We observed that the streets, architecture, and daily lives of the people reflect the city's cultural memory.



## Section 3

### Automotive Industry Exporters Association Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School/ TÜRKİYE (Ayse Nur YALINKILIC's Students)



#### Tophane Clock Tower in Bursa

This tower is like a giant urban snail itself; it slowly watches the city grow, change, and breathe from its high hill. The windows look out over the roofs, old streets, and the busy life of Bursa, connecting the past with today.

#### THE CLOCK THAT SLOWED DOWN TIME

The world moves very fast, but our urban snail knows a secret: every city has a quiet heart. One afternoon, it climbed onto an old stone windowsill. Through this little window, the busy city suddenly changed.

Standing tall against the sky was the historic clock tower. Great, ancient trees spread their arms around it, carrying colorful leaves. Below, people were not rushing anymore. They walked slowly under the branches and smiled at the sky. The snail rested on the wall and listened to the tower's clock. It made a soft, steady sound: *tick-tock, tick-tock*. It was the heartbeat of the city, whispering a story about how history and nature can live together in peace. The snail realized that when you look through the right window, you can always find a beautiful, slow rhythm.

**What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?**

We learned that Bursa has a double rhythm. On one side, it is a fast, modern city. On the other side, places like Tophane offer a slower, historical rhythm. Through the eyes of the snail, we discovered that history and nature still live together in the heart of our urban environment, teaching us to slow down and appreciate our heritage.



## Section 4

### Mustafa Hakan Güvençer Science High School Ankara - TÜRKİYE (Melek Yılmaz's Students)



Ankara Castle is one of the oldest historical structures in Ankara. It bears traces from the Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman periods. The castle is an important cultural heritage site where you can see the city's history and traditional Ankara houses.

#### What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?

The rhythm of the city allows me to feel the way of life of its people, the culture of the city, and its social relationships. When we walk slowly, we begin to notice not only the buildings but also the soul and details of the city.

#### A Snail's View

One rainy morning, a snail slowly climbed to the window of its tiny home and looked out at the city. Cars rushed through the streets. People hurried by with coffee cups in their hands. Some talked on their phones, while others walked to work without noticing the world around them.

The snail watched quietly and asked itself:

“Is a city only about speed and noise?”

That question stayed in its mind all day. The next morning, the snail decided to discover the city for itself.

As the snail moved slowly through the streets, it noticed things that others ignored. It saw an old clock tower, colorful murals, street musicians, and a peaceful botanical park full of flowers and trees.

Later, the snail walked through a small market street where people welcomed visitors warmly. As evening arrived, the city lights began to shine and the streets filled with laughter and conversation.

At the end of the day, the snail returned home tired but happy. Looking out from the same window once again, the city no longer seemed cold or rushed.

The snail finally understood something important: A city is not only its fast rhythm. It is also its history, art, nature, flavors, symbols, and the people who give it life.

And before falling asleep, the snail whispered to itself:

“Perhaps those who move slowly are the ones who truly discover the city best.”



## *Section 5*

### **Arnavutöy Anatolian High School İstanbul - TÜRKİYE (Ebru Çellik's Students)**



#### **Hagia Sophia Mosque in İstanbul**

Hagia Sophia is one of the most important historical structures in İstanbul. It bears traces from the Byzantine and Ottoman periods. Hagia Sophia is an important cultural heritage site where you can see magnificent architecture, ancient mosaics, and the rich history of the city.

#### **The Silent Rhythm of Hagia Sophia**

One evening, a young dervish walked slowly through the old streets of İstanbul. The city was crowded, noisy, and fast. While people hurried around him, the dervish quietly stopped in front of the magnificent Hagia Sophia. Its great dome rising into the sky and its ancient stone walls seemed to whisper stories from the past. From the Byzantine era to the Ottoman period, this majestic building had been a silent witness to centuries of history. The dervish watched the light passing through the windows. The old traces on the walls, the mosaics, and the peaceful atmosphere beneath the dome made him feel that history was still alive. He sat quietly for a while and listened to the sounds of the city. At that moment, he understood that İstanbul was not only a fast and modern city. History, culture, and spirituality were still living in the heart of the city. Hagia Sophia was bringing together the past and the present in the same rhythm.

#### **What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?**

We learned that İstanbul has two different rhythms. One is fast and modern, while the other is calm and full of history. Through the eyes of the dervish, we understood that historical places like Hagia Sophia teach people to slow down, reflect, and feel the spirit of the city.



## Section 6



**Atatürk Vocational And Technical  
Anatolian High School Eskişehir / Türkiye  
Rabia Aslı Aslım Çetin & Project Team**

**Transition from safety to  
adventure...**

### *The Hidden Streets of ESKİŞEHİR*

Near the Eskişehir Cumhuriyet Tarihi Museum, a tiny snail named Milo dreamed of adventure. One afternoon, a little girl lost her red bracelet near the museum gate. The wind pushed the bracelet into a dark storm drain. Milo bravely decided to rescue it. Inside the tunnel, he met a friendly snail named Luna. Luna offered to help him immediately. Together, they walked through the cold underground tunnel. Suddenly, strong water pushed them backward. Luna quickly saved Milo from falling. As they continued, they discovered colorful graffiti on the walls. Finally, they found the bracelet beside a pipe. However, a large city rat guard edit carefully. Milo felt frightened for a moment. Luna distracted the rat by rolling small stones across the floor. While the rat searched for the noise, Milo grabbed the bracelet. The two snails escaped quickly through the tunnel. When they returned outside, the city glowed under the evening sun. They brought the bracelet back to the little girl. The girl smiled happily and hugged her mother. From that day on, Milo and Luna explored Eskişehir together and shared many joyful adventures.

*What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?*  
I learned that the city is always busy, fast and full of movement. Its rhythm connects different people, places and stories together. Even in crowded streets, small moments of friendship, hope and adventure can still exist.



## Section 7

**Automotive Industry Exporters  
Association Vocational and Technical  
Anatolian High School/ Bursa, TÜRKİYE**  
**Hasret ERTEKİN'S Students**



**KOZA HAN**

This image shows Koza Han, one of the most famous historical places in Bursa. The courtyard reflects the peaceful spirit of the city with its old architecture, large trees, and lively tea garden.

### THE SILK GUEST OF KOZAHAN

One autumn morning, the Urban Snail visited Koza Han in Bursa. In the peaceful courtyard, people were drinking tea under yellow leaves and red umbrellas.

Near an old fountain, the snail met a silkworm in its cocoon.

"Why do you move so slowly?" asked the silkworm. "Cities speak quietly," said the snail. "If we hurry, we miss their stories."

The silkworm listened to the sounds of the courtyard and felt the calm rhythm of the city.

The snail explained that Koza Han once welcomed silk traders and was an important place for trade and culture.

Before leaving, the silkworm left a thin silver thread on a branch as a small gift to the city.

As the sun set, the snail continued its slow journey, reminding us that cities are best discovered slowly.

**What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?**

We learned that Bursa is a city where history, culture, and daily life exist together in harmony. Places like Koza Han preserve the spirit of the past while welcoming modern life today. Bursa's true beauty can be found in its peaceful courtyards, historical memories, and quiet rhythm.



*Section 8*  
**Mustafa Kaynak Anatolian  
High School / Denizli /  
Türkiye**



Pamukkale became a silent window into history. The stone paths of Hierapolis felt like ancient doorways opening to forgotten stories. Among the flowing water, white terraces, and quiet corners, the snail discovered that some cities whisper instead of speaking loudly.

**THE VOICE INSIDE THE WHITENESS**

Pamukkale's white travertines had kept the moonlight within them throughout the night. As the sun began to rise, a small snail slowly moved across the limestone terraces. Its name was Dream. Everyone looked at Pamukkale as if it were a cloud fallen from the sky, but Dream believed it was actually the silent memory of time itself.

As it wandered among the travertines, it felt the traces left by the warm water on the stones. These waters had been flowing patiently for thousands of years. People came and went, took photographs, and hurried on with their lives. But the water never rushed. Because it carried the stories of Hierapolis.

When Dream reached the steps of the ancient theatre, the wind rose softly. For a moment, it thought it could hear the voices of the past. People arriving with hope for healing waters, merchants walking through stone streets, applause echoing through the theatre... The city was silent now, yet the stones still spoke.

At that moment, an inscription standing in the shadow of an old column caught its attention. On it was a quote by the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, who once lived in Hierapolis:

"Without understanding nature, one cannot understand oneself."

Dream felt as if these words were flowing together with the waters of the travertines. Because here, time was not measured by the clocks of modern cities, but by the patience of water.

The snail stopped and looked over the plain below. While Denizli continued to live through its modern streets, the past was still breathing right beside it. At that moment, it realized a simple truth: people often look at a place, but they do not truly see it. Because seeing is possible not only with the eyes, but also with time.

Pamukkale's whiteness taught it something else as well. White was not emptiness. It carried thousands of stories, traces, and silent memories within it. Just like the human soul... The deepest voices were often hidden inside what seemed quiet.

As the sun left a golden light upon the travertines, Dream gently turned its shell toward the sky. Perhaps the rhythm of a city was not hidden in people's rush, but in the patience of water, the memory of stone, and the hearts of those who know how to slow down.

**What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?**

We learned that Denizli's rhythm is shaped not only by the speed of modern life, but also by thousands of years of history and the patience of nature. Pamukkale reminded us that sometimes we need to slow down in order to truly see.

## Section 9

### Kahramankazan Girls Anatolian

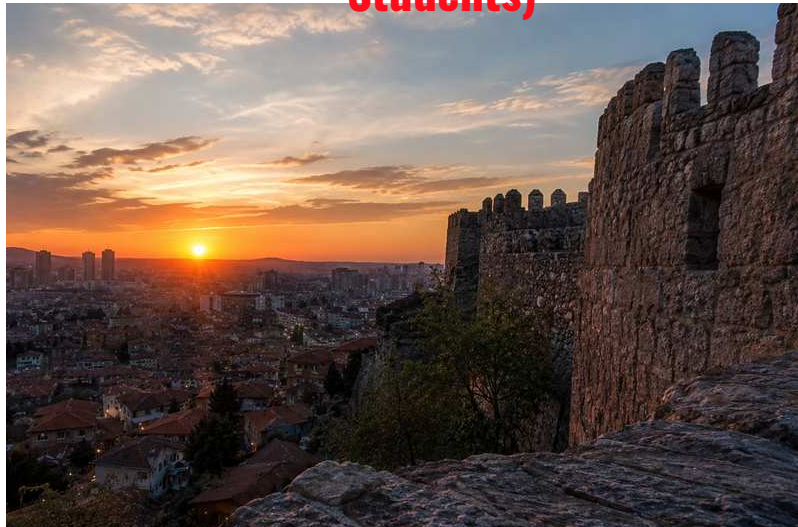


### Imam Hatip High School

### Ankara - Türkiye

### (Melike Ataman Yılmaz's

### Students)



**The sunset over Ankara symbolizes reflection, discovery, and the timeless stories hidden within the streets.**

### Silence Above the Castle

As the little snail slowly climbed the slopes of Ankara Castle, the sounds of the city rose from below. Car horns, crowded streets, hurried footsteps, and distant conversations echoed through the air. People rushed from one place to another without looking around them. But near the old castle walls, time seemed to move differently. The higher the snail climbed, the quieter the city became.

The snail stopped beside an ancient stone and gently touched its rough surface. It thought about how these stones had stood there for centuries. They had watched old markets, travelers, children playing in narrow streets, and sunsets over Ankara for many years. The city kept growing and people kept changing, yet the castle still protected the stories of the past.

As the snail continued its journey, it noticed the small details hidden around the castle: colorful windows, old wooden doors, ivy climbing the walls, cats sleeping under the sun, and birds circling above the rooftops. Most people could no longer see these details because they were always in a hurry.

As the sun slowly set, the lights of Ankara began to shine across the city. Looking down from the castle, the snail realized something important: truly discovering a city is sometimes possible only by slowing down, listening carefully, and quietly observing the stories hidden within its streets.

### What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?

We discovered that the city has both a busy and a peaceful side. While people move quickly through the streets, places like Ankara Castle still preserve the silence and memories of the past.



*Section 10*  
**Hüseyin Özbuğday**  
**Anatolian High**  
**School (Eylem Karaçay and**  
**her students) Hatay /**  
**Türkiye**



Hatay is a city with deep-rooted tolerance where different religions and cultures live together in peace.

**Hatay / TÜRKİYE**

**A Snail in the Footsteps of the Bell**

The Autumn Hymn, and the Call to Prayer In the ancient streets of Hatay, a small snail lived, slowly making its way between the stone walls. Its name was Seyyah (Traveler). One morning, as the sun painted the Hatay skies golden, Seyyah awoke on the banks of the Asi River. Just then, a faint sound rose from afar. This sound was the call to prayer soaring towards the sky from the minaret of the Habib-i Neccar Mosque. The snail gently lifted its shell. "To whom is this call?" it whispered. Towards noon, as it moved through the stone streets, it heard another sound. This time rhythmic, echoing, and clear... The bell of the Antakya Catholic Church was ringing. Seyyah stopped. Two different sounds rising to the same sky... In the late afternoon, a melancholic melody spread through the streets. This tune, rising from an old courtyard, was an autumn hymn sung in the Antakya Synagogue. The traveler retreated into his snail shell, lost in thought. At that moment, he understood that in Hatay, rituals were not merely worship, but also a silent pact of living together. The traveler's slowness had taught him a secret: those who are quick hear the sounds, but those who are slow feel the meaning. Because some cities are not only seen, but also listened to. And Hatay was a fairytale city where three voices became one heart.

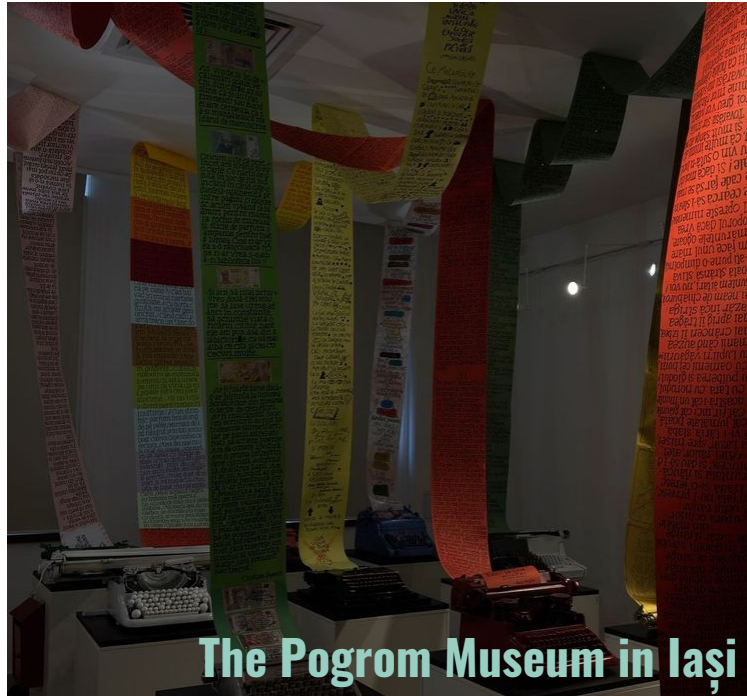
**What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?**

*Hatay has a rhythm born from cultural harmony. Its texture carries the traces of history and daily life.*



## Section 11

### Spectrum International Theoretical Highschool from Iași, Romania



**The Pogrom Museum in Iași**

*The Pogrom Museum is a memorial museum that commemorates the over 13000 jews during the 1941 Iași Pogrom, one of the deadliest massacres of the Holocaust, operated by Romanian and German.*

**What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?**  
Perhaps the strongest lesson that we learned about Iași is that the city is negotiating between aspiration and memory.

### **The machines that never forgot how to speak**

As I gaze out the paper covered window of the Pogrom Museum in Iași, I imagine how this city has carried so many stories on its shoulders heavy, unspoken, and desperate to be heard. And then I turn around, and I see them. The typewriters. Not the modern ones, not these cold and impersonal laptops but the old ones, heavy, with keys that clattered and left ink on your fingers if you didn't know how to handle them properly. They stood there, on their white pedestals, like dethroned kings. Each one had its own color burning red, blue like the morning sky, grey like an unfinished thought. And from each machine came a long strip of colored paper, rising toward the ceiling like a cry. As if someone had written so much, with such desperation and love, that the paper simply ran out of room on the ground and had no choice but to climb upward. On the strips there were words. Many of them. Crowded together, sometimes handwritten, sometimes typed. Poems, probably. Or letters that nobody ever sent. Or maybe thoughts that people kept inside for too long and finally released right there, in front of the machine. Standing right in front of these paper-covered window, I imagined how many hands had touched these keys. How many people had sat down, taken a deep breath, and started writing something they didn't know how else to say. The writer crying at three in the morning. The girl writing about her boyfriend just to keep herself sane. The old man remembering the war, unable to sleep.

This room looked like a city. A city of stories growing upward, toward the light colorful and loud and alive even though the machines that gave birth to them haven't worked in decades. And I thought that maybe this is what literature really is. Not the beautifully bound books in a bookstore. But that long, colorful, slightly crumpled strip that comes out of you and never stops.

## *What did we learn about the city and its rhythm?*

Although people move quickly in Ankara, when we slowed down, we realized that Ankara carries traces of all its history, from the Hittites to the Republican era. We understood that *Ankara's rhythm* is also shaped by memory, history, and the values of the Republic.

We learned that *Istanbul's rhythm* can be felt in both its crowded streets and its historical atmosphere. The Bosphorus, lively streets, and energetic people show that the city never stops. Istanbul taught us that history and modern life can exist together in harmony.

We learned that *Denizli's rhythm* lives in both nature and history. Pamukkale reminded us that slowing down helps us truly see the city.

We learned that in *Iași*, slowing down reveals that beneath the rush, the city still remembers how to breathe.

A city's true rhythm is not measured only by traffic flow or economic speed, but by how much room it leaves for human presence, attention and encounter.

We understood that beauty coexists with degradation. In *Focșani*, there are elegant buildings next to unkempt spaces. Observing without cynicism, you can understand that real cities are not museums or complete ruins — they are organisms in transformation.

We learned that *Ankara's rhythm* is not only made of crowds and speed. Historic streets, quiet corners, and people's daily lives reflected the true spirit of the city. When we slowed down, we realized that we could observe the city more carefully.

*Hatay* has a rhythm born from cultural harmony. Its texture carries the traces of history and daily life.

Ankara feels serious and fast-paced, but as we explored it slowly, we realized its quiet history, old streets, and peaceful corners. *The rhythm of Ankara* is silence, history, and movement.



## ABOUT THE eTwinning Project

### *Urban snails. Slow steps in fast cities*

People lose sight of urban details and feel trapped within them. Because of that, many people escape this cycle by exploring the city's civil architecture and cultural heritage. To do this, they only have to walk slowly through the streets. Every city is filled with stories that have hosted significant historical events. Walking is more than just a physical act; it offers people the opportunity to generate ideas, ask questions, speak out, question, and gain knowledge. To transform this opportunity into a habit, walking is essential.