

ROOTS OF RHYTHM – CHAPTER 3: THE *BUHAI* FROM ROMANIA
FUNSHEET

Name _____

Date _____

FIND FACTS AND OPINONS: THE *BUHAI*

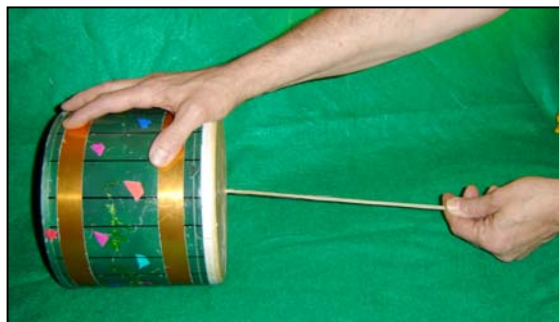
The *buhai* (boo-hi) is a friction drum that is played in the eastern European country of Romania. It is made to imitate the sound of an ox in a New Year's festival, an old agricultural custom lasting 12 days. One of the most important traditions associated with this festival is “Plugusorul” (plue-guh-so-rul - a small plow), which is one of the oldest and most beautiful Romanian traditions. During this time singers go through the village and wish the farmers good luck with the new agricultural season. In this tradition, carol singers recite the plowing carol, accompanied by whip snaps, *buhai* noises, shouts, and sometimes flutes and other musical instruments. The plowing carol is a long verse about work of the field, from the plowing to the kneading and baking of rolls of pure cornflower. For example, the singers recite,

Our plow works wonders
It has four or five coulter
Sharpened, tempered
Sharp and cutting,
Never sleeping

And where it passes it leaves
A soft and fertile furrow;
And where it furrows!
And where it furrows!
The field laughs and blooms.

Since traditionally an ox pulls the plow in the field, this animal sound is very important to hear during the procession.

The *buhai* is made from an open barrel or bucket that has one end covered with a goat skin. Strands of horsehair knotted at one end, pass through a hole in the center of the drumhead. The performer pulls down the horsehair, causing friction, and this makes the drumhead vibrate with a growling sound. The pitch of the drum can be raised by pressing into the drumhead as the horsehair is being pulled. The instrument is a very old type and dates back many centuries.

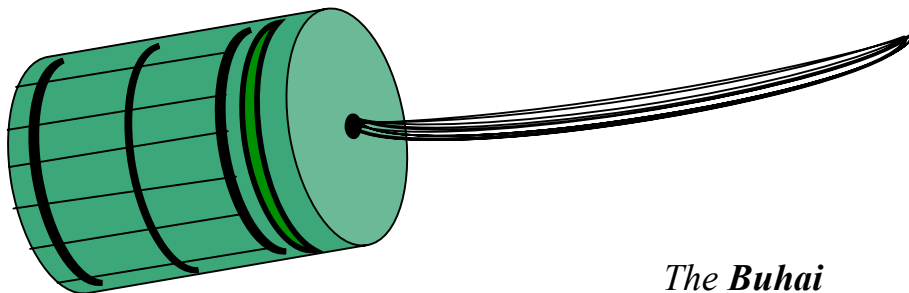


The Buhai

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Directions: Read each of the following sentences and draw an X in the box to tell whether it is a fact or an opinion.

1. The *buhai* sounds interesting. Fact Opinion
2. The *buhai* is a friction drum from Romania. Fact Opinion
3. Romania is a country in Eastern Europe. Fact Opinion
4. The "Plugusorul" tradition should last a month or even longer. Fact Opinion
5. The *buhai* is supposed to imitate the sound of an ox in the Romanian New Year's festival. Fact Opinion
6. Romanian traditions should include modern songs about modern farm equipment like tractors. Fact Opinion
7. The carolers' song says that the plow is tempered and sharp. Fact Opinion
8. I think it would be fun to visit Romania during this New Year's festival and hear the *buhai*. Fact Opinion
9. The *buhai* is made from an open barrel with animal skin and horsehair. Fact Opinion
10. The *buhai* should be used in American popular music. Fact Opinion



The Buhai