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Across Countries (Britain, Russia, the USA)



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Учебное пособие “Across Cultures (Britain, Russia, the USA)” адресовано широкой аудитории: студентам, изучающим английский язык в качестве основного и второго иностранного, студентам неязыковых специальностей вуза, а также учащимся старших классов, находящимся на среднем и продвинутом уровнях языковой компетенции. Корпус материала подобран по широкому тематическому спектру. Выбор конкретного материала продиктован его аутентичностью и современностью языкового материала, наличием культурологических и страноведческих сведений, предоставляющих широкое поле для обсуждений и формирования кросс-культурных представлений, что способствует расширению общеобразовательного и гражданского кругозора студентов и учащихся.

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The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Facts in Brief

  <p>(National Flag) (Royal Arms)</p>	
<p><i>Royal motto: <u>Dieu et mon droit</u></i> <i>(English: <u>God and my right</u>)¹</i></p>	
Official language	None; English is de facto ²
Capital	London
Largest city	London
Monarch	Queen Elizabeth II
Prime Minister	David Cameron
Area - Total - % water	Ranked 75th 243,590 km ² 93,278 mi ² 1.319%
Population - Total - Density	Ranked 21st 60,270,708 249/km ² 646/mi ²
Establishment	1801 Act of Union 1800 ³
GDP - Total - GDP/capita	Ranked 4th \$1.666 trillion \$27,642

Currency	<u>Pound Sterling (£)</u>
Time zone	GMT, Summer: GMT +1
National anthem	<i>God Save the Queen</i> ⁴
Internet TLD	<u>.uk</u> ⁵
<p>¹ The Royal motto in Scotland is <i>Nemo Me Impune Lacessit</i> (Latin: "No-one harms me with impunity").</p> <p>² Officially recognised regional languages: in Wales: Welsh; and in the Western Isles: Scottish Gaelic.</p> <p>³ Formed as <i>United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland</i>. Name changed to the <i>United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</i> in 1927.</p> <p>⁴ Unofficial.</p> <p>⁵ ISO 3166-1 is <u>.gb</u>.</p>	

Great Britain has the official name — The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (or UK — for short). It is situated on the British Isles. England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are the parts of Great Britain. Administratively the UK is divided into 55 counties. The total territory is over 243 thousand square kilometers (the 75th place among other countries in the world).

The population of the UK is over 60 mln. Great Britain is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. The majority of the British population lives in cities and towns.

The country is washed by the North and Irish Seas, the Atlantic Ocean and the English Channel. North and West of the country are highlands, South and East — lowlands. The highest mountain of the UK is Ben Nevis in Scotland.

There are many rivers in the country. The longest and most important of them are the Severn, the Thames and the Clyde. The climate is mild due to the mountains, the Atlantic Ocean and the warm waters of the Gulf Stream.

Great Britain is a highly developed industrial power. It possesses some mineral resources: coal, iron ores, oil, gas and some metals.

The country is known as one of the world largest producers and exporters of electronics and machinery, chemicals and textile, various aircraft and navigation equipment. Among the main industrial branches are also coal-mining, automobile, ship-building, metallurgical.

The capital of the country is London. It is the largest political, cultural and industrial centre of the country and one of the largest ports of the world. Its population is over 11 mln. people.

Among the largest cities of the UK are Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff.

Great Britain is a country with old cultural traditions and customs. The

official language of the state is English. The national symbol of the UK is «Union Jack» — the British state flag having 3 white and red crosses on the dark blue field. The weave of crosses symbolizes power and might.

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy. Officially the head of the state is the Queen. But her power is not absolute; it is limited by the Parliament. The British Parliament is the oldest parliament in the world. It consists of 2 chambers: the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The British Government is headed by the Prime Minister — the leader of the party having the majority in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister appoints the ministers to compose the government.

There are several political parties in the UK. The largest and most influential of them are the Conservative (the Tories), the Liberal (the Wigs) and the Labour Party.

Vocabulary

The United Kingdom — Соединенное королевство

to comprise — включать

total — общий

densely populated — густонаселенный

highland — возвышенность

lowland — низменность

mild — мягкий

power — держава

to possess — обладать

aircraft — авиационный

equipment — оборудование

custom — обычай

cross — крест

weave — переплетение

might — могущество

monarchy — монархия

head — глава

to limit — ограничивать

the House of Commons — палата общин

government — правительство

majority — большинство

influential — влиятельный

England

The United Kingdom is very small compared to many other countries in the world. However it is very densely populated, and London is the world's seventh biggest city.

The Southeast is a highly populated region of England; there is a lot of industry near the Thames and there are a lot of roads and motorways. London, the capital of the UK, and such historical cities as Windsor, Dover and Brighton are situated here. When people travel to Britain by sea or air they usually arrive in the Southeast, for this is where the main passenger ports and airports are. Heathrow Airport, one of the world's busiest airports is about 33 km west of central London. However, there is still attractive countryside in the southeast. The Country of Kent situated here is known as the garden of England. The Southeast is famous for its resorts; Brighton is, probably, the best known of them.

The Southwest is the region where the main activity is farming. Although there are some very big farms, most of them are small family farms where dairy products are produced. The Southwest used to be known for its pirates. The romantic past makes it a popular place for artists, writers and holidaymakers. The most westerly point of Great Britain "Land's End" is also in the Southwest.

East Anglia is very flat and it is another farming region. It has beautiful cities with fine historic buildings such as Cambridge. Oliver Cromwell, an English general and politician who was leader of the army against King Charles I in the Civil War and later became Lord Protector of England was born in the Fens area.

The Midlands, known as the heart of England, is the largest industrial part in the country. The most important industrial cities are Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, which is one of Britain's big ports and Birmingham. The two famous Midlands cities, Stratford-upon-Avon and Oxford are connected with English culture: Stratford is the birthplace of great William Shakespeare and Oxford is famous for its university.

The Economy of Great Britain

The United Kingdom has a developed mixed private- and public-enterprise economy and ranks among the top industrial countries in growth rates, productivity, and competitiveness. The gross national product (GNP) is growing faster than the population. The GNP per capita is among that of most other European countries.

The state sector was reduced during the 1980s and 1990s owing to policies of privatization, or denationalization, of publicly owned corporations. There was also an improvement in the standard of living. Unemployment and inflation rates were gradually reduced but remained high.

Nowadays, government policies include the close monitoring and frequent adjustment of interest rates; a gradual reduction in the level of direct personal taxation; a reduction in the levels of power and influence of national trade unions in national labor negotiations; the encouragement of wider home ownership and of individuals' share holdings in companies. Considerable emphasis is placed on increased exposure of the economy to market forces. The government controls the production of coal, steel, and ships; it also runs certain utilities, the railways, and most civil aviation.

Manufacturing industries account for one-fifth of the GNP. Small companies predominate, though companies with 500 or more employees employ a larger percentage of the work force. Major manufactures include motor vehicles, aerospace equipment, electronic data-processing and telecommunication equipment, metal goods, precision instruments, petrochemicals, and other chemicals. High-technology industries are being developed.

Agriculture accounts for less than 2 percent of the GNP and employs some 2 percent of the work force. Farming is highly mechanized, though farms are not large, and is dominated by the raising of sheep and cattle. The United Kingdom is not agriculturally self-sufficient. Chief crops include barley, wheat, sugar beets, and potatoes.

The mineral industry accounts for approximately 6 percent of the GNP but employs less than 1 percent of the work force. Production from oil fields in the North Sea has allowed the United Kingdom to become virtually self-sufficient in petroleum. The United Kingdom's coal industry, despite its steady decline since the early 1950s, remains one of the largest and most technologically advanced in Europe.

Public revenues ordinarily fail short of expenditures and are chiefly derived from income taxes, which are highly progressive, and excises. A single graduated income tax was introduced in 1973. Deficits are offset by public borrowing. The country (as well as its capital) is a major world financial and banking centre.

Chief imports of Great Britain are: metallic ores, except iron ore, food. Chief exports are: china, automobiles and other vehicles, wooden goods, steel, electrical and mechanical machinery, tractors, scientific instruments, chemicals, petroleum.

Just under half of the total population is in the labour force. The highest proportion of employees (more than two-thirds) are in the service sectors, financial services and distribution. Manufacturing, although it has declined, employs more than one-fifth of all workers. Smaller numbers are in construction, energy, agriculture, forestry, and fishing.

Vocabulary

barley — ячмень

beets (sugar beets) — сахарная свекла

public borrowing — государственный заем

competitiveness — конкурентоспособность

considerably — значительно

crop — культура; урожай

decline — спад

electronic data processing equipment — электронное оборудование для обработки информации

excise — акциз

expenditure — расход

exposure — зд. подвергать воздействию чего-л.

to fall short — не хватать
 to fall short of expenditures — зд. быть меньше расходов
 gross national product (GNP) (per capita) — валовой национальный продукт (ВНП) (на душу населения)
 holdings — вклады, авуары
 manufacturing industry — обрабатывающая промышленность
 labour negotiations — переговоры об условиях труда
 to offset — зд. покрывать
 ore — руда
 owing to — благодаря
 petrochemicals — продукты нефтехимии
 precision instrument — прецизионный (точный) прибор
 to predominate — преобладать, господствовать
 to prevail — преобладать, господствовать
 private-and public-enterprise economy — экономика, основанная на частной и государственной собственности
 productivity — производительность
 to rank — занимать определенное место, быть в одном ряду с
 in growth rates — по темпам роста
 interest rate — процентная ставка
 unemployment and inflation rates — уровень безработицы и инфляции
 self-sufficient — самостоятельный, независимый экономически
 share — доля, акция
 steady — устойчивый
 graduated tax — прогрессивный налог
 taxation — налогообложение
 direct personal taxation — прямое налогообложение физических лиц
 utilities — зд. коммунальные услуги, услуги общественного пользования
 virtually — фактически, в сущности
 wheat — пшеница

BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

System of Government. Britain is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch -Queen Elizabeth II- as head of state. The British constitution is not set out in a single document. Instead it is made up of a combination of laws and conventions.

Parliament. Parliament is Britain's legislature, it comprises the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the Queen in her constitutional role.

The Commons has 659 elected members (MPs), each representing a local constituency.

The Lords is made up of 1,259 hereditary and life peers and peeresses, and the two archbishops and the 26 most senior bishops of the established church of England.

The center of parliamentary power is in the House of Commons. General elections to choose MPs must be held every five years. The simple majority system of voting is used.

Monarchy. Political stability owes much to the monarchy. The royal title of the Queen is: "Elizabeth the Second, by the grace of God of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and of Her other realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of Faith". In law the Queen is the executive, an integral part of the legislature, head of judiciary, the commander-in-chief of all the armed forces of the Crown and the "supreme governor" of the Church of England. As a result of long evolution, the Queen is impartial and acts on the advice of her ministers. (The Queen and the royal family continue to take part in many traditional ceremonies and attract interest and publicity).



Political Party System is an essential element in the working of the constitution. Although the parties are not registered or formally recognized in law, in practice most candidates in elections belong to one of the main parties: the Conservative Party (the Tories) or the Labor Party (the Wigs).

Government is the executive body of the country. The Government is formed by the party with majority support in the Commons. The Queen appoints its leader as Prime Minister (David Cameron today). He appoints about 100 ministers, of whom about 20 are the Cabinet. The second largest party forms the official Opposition, with its own leader and "shadow cabinet". The Opposition has a duty to challenge government policies and to present an alternative program.

British Ways

There is no end of myths about Britain and Britons. They live in fog all the time... All their riches come from the colonies... They are so stand-offish that one can't have a heart-to-heart talk with them...

There is no other nation that *clings to the past* with the tenacity of the British. The Briton has a sense of continuity of history. He loves to go through the ancient ceremonies. Today Queen Elisabeth II appoints sheriffs of England by pricking holes in the listing of their names just as Queen Elisabeth I had first done with her knitting needles because no pen had been handy at the moment. The brilliant parades and spectacles preserve the colours of medieval times.

The British value their *home life* much more than work. It is considered rude and improper to ring home and speak about work affairs. They are very inventive in spending their *free time*. Much leisure time is spent in individualistic pursuits, of which the most popular is gardening. Flower-shows and vegetable-shows, with prizes for the best exhibits, are immensely popular. To many gardeners the process of growing plants seems more important than merely aesthetic pleasure of looking at the flowers or the prospect of eating the vegetables.

The Britons take sports and sporting activities very seriously. It's a well-known saying of General Wellington, popular all over Britain "The victory at Waterloo was won in the golf fields of Eton".

The Britons scan kilograms of the *press* every day. In no other country does 90% of population read local press and 60% of national newspapers. The total circulation is 20 million copies of morning newspapers and 48 million copies of evening, weekly and free-of-charge newspapers printed in a country with a 60 million population!

A Briton takes for granted that a foreigner should have a fluent command of English. They are seldom burning to learn a *foreign language* themselves.

British *houses* are not very big, mostly two-storied with many little gardens behind them. Central heating is found in very few houses in London. In most rooms there is a fireplace which is a symbol of happy family life. *Streets* often have unusual names, Milk Street or Honey Lane, for example. The *traffic regulation* in GB is very peculiar - cars keep to the left side of roads. *Roads* in Britain ignore the laws of geometry and logic, because they are rarely straight.

The Britons are great animal lovers. It was in Britain that the first Royal animal protection society had been formed -in 1824! And in 1884 only- the Society of Children Defense.

The Britons are rather strict to their children. "Spare the rod and you will spoil the child" they used to say. A well-bred child has to be quiet, undemanding, not interfere into his parent's life, best of all - not to be seen and even heard! Nobody tries to help a child who has fallen off a bike. Tears are considered shameful. Parents seldom get worried how well their child has eaten. Very often pets get better meals than children do. Britain is the country where dogs don't bark and children don't cry.

Morality problem is treated in a peculiar way in GB. No one will rebuke a Major if he has a lover. But everybody will turn away from him if he lies that she doesn't exist.

The *national character* of the Britons is very stable, but controversial and even paradoxical. On the one hand, they are truly materialistic - on the other, it's the nation of idealists and mystics. The nation of colonists - they love their own country and their homes. Being the nation of sailors and discoverers, they are ardent gardeners. They are a law-abiding nation, but they delight in reading about crimes and violence! Being the embodiment of conformism, they are at the same time long-standing individualists and eccentric people! They use to speak in a low, kind of tired voice. Englishmen hate being private, poking noses into other people's life. Being tolerant to other people, they expect the same attitude to themselves.

The English have many customs and ways and strong points they can be proud of, the English humour is one of them. It is ironical, often self-critical.

Symbols of the UK

The BULLDOG symbolizes the very essence of Brutishness. He is solid, reliable, unshakably loyal, very individual, and VERY nice when you get to know him - and kind of cute in his own funny little way! He also bears a startling resemblance to Winston Churchill, Britain's great wartime leader whose memory is still held in great esteem by the majority of the British.



JOHN BULL is a fictional character, used to personify the British nation, and is always depicted as an elderly gentleman, rather portly in build, wearing full riding kit complete with breeches and boots, and a Union Jack waistcoat. He was created by John Arbuthnot (1667-1735) a Scottish author, scientist, and physician who wrote five satirical pamphlets in 1712 on the politics of the day, using John Bull as the typical Englishman. The character obviously struck a chord and he has persisted ever since: the picture on the left comes from a 1916 British Army recruiting poster.

A BRITISH LION is really a member of a Rugby Football team (a very GOOD one, though) - the Lion is the emblem of England. It is actually a "lion passant gardant" - a walking lion, looking out at you full face, and was first used by Rollo, Duke of Normandy (father of William the Conqueror, who added the second lion.) The third was added by Henry II, and Henry VIII added a crown to the lion. In heraldry, the lion stands for "deathless courage" and the lion passant gardant for "resolution and prudence" The Scots also have a lion as their heraldic emblem: theirs is a red lion rampant (standing on its hind legs, looking straight forward.)

BRITANNIA is the personification of British nationalism. She is portrayed as a young woman in a neo-classical gown and helmet, seated by the sea ("Britannia Rules the Waves.") She is holding a trident in one hand and a shield, decorated with the Union flag, in the other.

The Romans called their newly-conquered province, just across the sea from Gaul, Britannia, and the coinage of the day featured the image of a woman in armour. This image was not used on coins again until the reign of King Charles II, and Britannia became a popular figure in 1707 when Scotland, Wales and England were finally united to form Great Britain. She was immortalised in 1740 when James Thompson wrote the words of "Rule Britannia" and set it to music by Thomas Arne. It was performed on the London stage where it immediately captured the public imagination. The song "Rule Britannia" is still sung every year on the last night of the "Proms" - the Promenade Concerts held in the Royal Albert Hall in London - when the whole audience joins in a burst of nationalistic fervor and flag-waving, invariably drowning out the soloist who is supposed to be doing the singing! Britannia has continued to feature on British coins since her reintroduction, mostly on copper (penny and halfpenny) coins but occasionally on

silver, and at present is to be seen on the 50p coin.

The British Monarchy

The Crown Jewels, (some shown in the picture) are famous world-wide, and are a symbol of monarchy for the British people and, as such, their value represents more than gold and precious stones. They have been used by English kings and queens since 1660 or earlier. The Crown Jewels are part of the national heritage and held by The Queen as Sovereign. When a sovereign (King or Queen) dies, or abdicates (retires from being King or Queen), a successor is immediately decided according to rules which were laid down at the end of the seventeenth century. The coronation of a new sovereign is a great ceremony of celebration that has remained essentially the same for over a thousand years. The new Sovereign succeeds to the throne as soon as his or her predecessor dies and is at once proclaimed at an Accession Council in St James's Palace. All members of the Privy Council are summoned. Members of the House of Lords, the Lord Mayor and aldermen and other leading citizens of the City of London, and High Commissioners of Commonwealth countries are invited to attend.

British Holidays

In the matter of holidays the British are less well off than other Europeans. Most people have only three weeks paid holidays per year, and the bank holidays put Britain in the bottom of the list of the Common Market countries as far as public holidays are concerned. British bank holidays are: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Bank holiday, Summer Bank holiday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. Only when the UK joined the E.E.C. did the New Year's Day become a public holiday. The patron saints days are not celebrated with a holiday. They are St. David's Day (March 1st) in Wales, St. George's Day (April, 21) in England and St. Andrew's Day (November 30th) in Scotland. Only Ireland, both North and South, has a holiday on St. Patrick's Day (March, 17). National symbols depicting the Welsh dragon leek, the Irish shamrock, Scotland's thistle and English rose are worn on the appropriate days. You will see gatherings of the various nationalities having a drink together or celebrating in the streets - particularly when they are living away from their native country.

Probably the biggest holidays are Christmas and New Year.

Most people in Britain see Christmas as the major festival of the year - an occasion for parties, giving and receiving gifts, eating and drinking, and generally having fun. Traditionally people decorate their Christmas trees on Christmas Eve - that's December 24th. They take down decorations twelve days later - on the Twelfth Night. The most important meal for Christmas dinner is roast turkey and Christmas pudding. An older tradition is Christmas mistletoe. People put a piece of this green plant with white berries over a door. Mistletoe brings good luck. At Christmas British people kiss their friends and family under the mistletoe.

On the New Year' Eve a lot of people go to Trafalgar Square, where there is a huge Christmas tree, a present from people of Norway. And at midnight they all cross their arms, join hands and sing. People have parties in their homes, too.

When Big Ben strikes twelve, they drink a toast to the New Year. Then they listen to the Queen's speech. There still is preserved the tradition of "first footer" (the first person to enter your house must bring a piece of coal to wish warmth, a piece of bread to wish food, and a silver coin to wish wealth. There's also a tradition to make "New Year resolutions" (to clean shoes every day, or not to eat too much chocolate).

The next day after Christmas, December 26th, is called Boxing Day. Traditionally boys from the shops in each town asked for money at Christmas. They went from house to house and took boxes made of wood with them. At each house people gave them money. This was a Christmas present. So the name of December 26 doesn't come from the sport of boxing - it comes from the boys' wooden boxes. Now it's a kind of present giving holiday after Christmas Day.

St Valentine's Day is another favorite holiday. St Valentine is the patron saint of lovers, and on 14 February young men and women declare their feelings for each other. But the tradition is to do so anonymously. Valentine's Day cards and romantic flowers such as red roses are sent which, although they carry messages of undying love, are always left unsigned. Indeed, some people go to great lengths to disguise their handwriting in order to maintain their anonymity. Many people hope for cards on St Valentine's Day and failure to receive any can cause great disappointment.

April Fool's Day also has its peculiarity in Britain. This is a very old tradition from the Middle Ages. At that time the servants were the masters for one day of the year. They gave orders to their masters, and their masters had to obey. Now it is different. It's a day for jokes and tricks. Even newspapers, television and radio programmes join in the fun, publishing and broadcasting amusing and unlikely tales. A few years ago, *The Guardian* newspaper published a whole supplement about a fictitious group of islands called San Serif, with articles on the economy, climate, political situation, weather, etc. But the most famous April Fools' joke was perpetrated by the BBC's highly-regarded television documentary programme, "Panorama". The programme presented an apparently serious report about spaghetti growing on trees in Italy. It examined the problems of cultivating and harvesting spaghetti and included interviews with spaghetti farmers.

Easter is the most famous religious festival. The build-up to Easter begins on Shrove Tuesday. This is the day before Ash Wednesday - the beginning of the 40 days of Lent. On Shrove Tuesday it is the custom to cook and eat pancakes. This is symbolic of using up left-over food -eggs, milk and flour in this case - in readiness for Lent, traditionally a time of fasting and abstinence. Nowadays very few British people actually fast at Lent, but many use it as a time to try to give up something they know is bad for them, such as chocolate, alcohol or cigarettes. Although Easter is the most important festival in the Christian calendar, the majority of the British public pay much more attention to Christmas with its traditions of present giving, eating and drinking. Good Friday (three days before Easter Day) and Easter Monday are bank holidays, and the banks and other financial institutions, offices and shops are closed on these days.

Gift giving is more restricted than at Christmas although most children are

given an Easter egg - made of chocolate and often filled with sweets or a small gift. Tradition says that these eggs are delivered by the Easter Bunny (rabbit) and it is a popular game for the children to hunt for small eggs concealed around the house or garden. Fish is traditionally eaten on Good Friday and Easter cake is an iced fruit cake with a marzipan ring on the top.

Mothering Sunday, or Mothers' Day as it is usually called, falls three weeks before-Faster Sunday. On this day, mother is rewarded for all her work looking after the house and family during the rest of the year. Her husband and children usually buy her a card and a small gift, and traditionally bring her breakfast in bed. Sometimes she will also be taken out for lunch.

Fathers' Day, as the name implies, is when Dad gets his treats. Fathers' Day is on the third Sunday in June but is less widely celebrated than Mothers' Day. Perhaps this is because fathers are seen to be less deserving than mothers!

May Day is not celebrated in Britain to the same extent that it is in many other countries. It became a public holiday only in relatively recent years and falls on the first Monday of May (and not on 1 May). In previous centuries, May Day, which marked the Spring festival, was a potent pagan symbol and was widely celebrated. Today, in many towns and villages you can still find remnants of the old traditions. Often a local girl is chosen and crowned "Queen of the May", and people dance round a May Pole - a tall pole with coloured ribbons attached to the top - on the village green. However May Day is chiefly celebrated as simply a day off work by the majority of the working population. At the end of the month there is another public holiday called Whitsun which was originally a holiday to celebrate the religious festival of Pentecost.

Midsummer's Eve

Although Midsummer's Eve is not traditionally a widely celebrated festival in Britain, it is celebrated by druids (practitioners of an ancient religion now virtually extinct) at the prehistoric stone circle of Stonehenge. In recent years, groups of travellers - caravan dwellers - and hippies have also tried to claim the right to enter the circle to see the sun rise on Midsummer's Day, but they have generally not been allowed, largely because of fears of damage to the ancient monument.

Harvest festival

This is a very old festival, dating from pre-Christian times but nowadays celebrated by Christians. Each October, the churches - particularly in the countryside - are decorated with flowers, fruit, vegetables and other crops, and the local people come to give thanks for the successful completion of the harvest.

Halloween

The name comes from "the eve of All Hallows", also known in the Christian calendar as All Saints. According to folklore, on this night - 31 October - witches and evil spirits roam the country. These days, people dress up as witches and ghosts and have parties. Groups of children also play "trick-or-treat" on their neighbours, going from door to door and playing a harmless but slightly unpleasant trick on anyone who refuses to give them a sweet or other gift.

Guy Fawkes' Night

In 1605 a group of Catholic conspirators, led by Guy Fawkes, attempted to blow up the Protestant Parliament of King James I. They succeeded in hiding 30 barrels of gunpowder in the building, but on 5 November the so-called "Gunpowder Plot" was discovered. Fawkes and his associates were caught and later burned at the stake. An old children's rhyme runs:

Remember, remember, the fifth of November,
Gunpowder, treason and plot!
I see no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot!

Children make a "guy" - an effigy of Guy Fawkes - and burn it on a bonfire, and let off fireworks. Because of recent concern about the dangers of bonfires and fireworks, most local communities now hold, large, organised parties, with the children being kept at a safe distance.

The UK Press

In Great Britain there are no official government newspapers. The government does not exercise any official control over the newspaper industry and most of the British newspapers are very proud of their peculiarities, their individual styles. British newspapers, daily or Sunday, can broadly be divided into the quality press and the popular press.

Quality newspapers are also known as "heavies" and they usually deal with home and overseas news, with detailed and extensive coverage of sports and cultural events. Besides they also carry financial reports, travel news and book and film reviews.

The popular press or the "populars" are also known as tabloids as they are smaller in size being halfsheet in format and contain many photographs and cartoons. Some people also call them "gutter press" offering news for the people less interested in daily detailed news reports. Unlike quality newspapers, popular newspapers are not so serious and their stories tend to be sensational. It is often said that the popular press aims to entertain its readers rather than inform them. They are characterised by large headlines, carry a lot of big photographs, concentrate on the personal aspects of news, with reports of the recent sensational and juicy bits of events, not excluding the Royal family. The language of tabloids is much more colloquial, if not specific, than that of quality newspapers.

In Britain today there are four nationwide quality papers: "The Times", "The Daily Telegraph", "The Guardian" and "The Independent".

"The Times" is read by the minority of people today. It has a rather small circulation, but its influence is great. It is an establishment newspaper, read by lawyers, politicians, and businessmen. It is not an organ of the Conservative Party, but still is rather conservative in views it expresses.

"The Daily Telegraph" is a very conservative paper and has a nickname – "The Torygraph" after the nickname "Tory" of the Conservative Party. It reports national and international news, gives a full coverage of sports and other topics.

Some say it has a more objective reporting of what is going on in the world than any other quality newspaper.

“The Guardian” is a liberal newspaper, noted for its lively reporting and campaigning support for “worthy causes” such as education, medical reforms, the problems of aging people and retirees, protection of environment, and other social issues.

“The Independent” has acquired a reputation for its excellent news coverage, intelligent reports, informal commentaries, and a good balanced sense of humour.

“The Daily Mirror”, “The Daily Mail”, “The Sun”, “The Daily Express” and “The Daily Star” are usually considered to be “populars”.

“The Sun” has a circulation of around four million and outsells all other “populars”. The tabloids as a rule express, thought they are mass circulation papers, no news. There you will find leading articles about murders, games and lotteries. Because they are in constant competition with each other, and want to sell more copies than their competitors in an effort to increase the readership and circulation, they actually all have nude girls in unconventional poses on page three or seven, devote much room to advertising holidays, vacation tours, etc.

In addition to 12 national daily newspapers there are 9 national papers which are published on Sundays. Actually all newspapers in Britain, both the quality and popular ones, have their sister Sunday issues. They contain more reading material, and several of them include color supplement – separate color magazines with articles on music, TV, sports, a lot of advertisements of consumer goods. Reading a Sunday newspaper is an important tradition in many British families.

There are a lot of different regional daily papers in Britain as well. One can mention the following “The Scotsman” and “The Yorkshire Post”. There are also local weekly newspapers which report local news and advertise local business and events.

Newspapers in Britain are privately owned and the editors of the papers are usually allowed considerable freedom of expression. The offices of most papers are situated in Fleet Street in the City of London, which is the centre of British journalism.

The USA

What does America mean to you? Skyscrapers, President Bush, fast food, big cars, cowboys and Indians? But what about the mountains, the deserts and the vast lakes? And what exactly is an American?



FACTS IN BRIEF

Capital:	Washington, D. C.
Form of government:	Republic.
Physical features:	Longest river — Missouri, 2,540 miles (4,090 km). Largest lake within the United States — Michigan, 22,300 sq. miles (57,757 sq. km). Largest island — Hawaii, 4,038 sq. miles (10,458 sq. km).
Flag:	“Stars and Stripes”, adopted on June 14, 1777.
Motto:	In God We Trust, adopted on July 30, 1956.
National Anthem:	"The Star-spangled Banner", adopted on March 3, 1931.
Bird:	Bald eagle, adopted on June 20, 1782.
Flower:	Rose, adopted on October 7, 1986.
Money:	Basic unit — dollar.

Geographical Position

Read the text and try to find the answer to the question: What are the country's differences due to?

The United States of America, commonly called the United States or simply America, lies in the central part of the North American continent with the Atlantic Ocean to the East, the Pacific to the West, Canada to the North, and Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico to the South.

The country consists of 3 parts: the continental part is in the center of the North American continent, the Hawaii and Alaska. The country has many lakes, including the Great Lakes and many rivers, the longest of which are the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Columbia and others. The highest mountains are the Rocky Mountains, the Appalachi, the Cordillera and the Sierra Nevada. The highest peak, Mount McKinley, is in Alaska. The climate conditions are rather different. The country is rich in natural and mineral resources: oil, gas, iron ore, coal and various metals.

The United States covers an area of 3,618,770 square miles (9,372,571 sq. km) and has a population of more than 249.6 mln. The USA past shows scientific, industrial, agricultural growth and welfare and alongside with this economic crises and high rates of unemployment.

The USA is a highly developed industrial and agricultural country. The main industrial branches are aircraft, rocket, automobile, electronics, radio-engineering and others.

The USA is divided into 50 states and the District of Columbia (the territory under the capital Washington), the seat of the national government.

The USA is a country of great differences. At the same time, it has surprising similarities when one considers its size. The differences are partly a result of the geography. One cannot generalize about the weather, the landscape, or even the way of living because the nation occupies nearly half of a continent. In it can be found high mountains and the flattest of prairies, tropical heat and arctic cold, fertile valleys and deserts. There is a variety of natural resources. All sorts of products are raised, and there are industries of every kind. Some of the most densely and most sparsely populated areas of the world are found in the United States.

There are many large and modern cities, but a great proportion of the country consists of open land dotted with farm-houses and small towns. In some regions small communities are still provincial. In spite of this there are striking uniformities in the American scene that surprise foreign observers. There is an appearance of the country as a whole that might be said to be typically American. The usual town of average size, in any part of the United States, has its "main street", with the same types of stores selling the same products. Every town has the same type of drug-stores and supermarkets. There is some variety of architecture, due to the differences in climate, locality, and national backgrounds of the people.

Answer the questions.

1. Where is the United States of America situated?
2. What is the territory and population of the country?
3. How many states does it include?
4. Why is the USA a country of great differences?
5. What strikes foreigners in the American scene?

THE US NATIONAL FLAG

The US flag was raised in its first unified form on January 2, 1776 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It consisted of 13 alternate red and white straps (stripes), equal to the number of states. The original states were Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York,



North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Virginia. For that flag, on June 14, 1777, "Flag Day", Congress substituted a similarly striped flag with 13 white stars on a blue field in the left-hand corner.

The new country began to grow. More states joined it. But there was no place on the flag for more stripes. So in 1818 the original 13 stripes were restored, to remain unchanged thereafter; for each new state admitted to the Union, however, a new star was to be added.

Today the USA flag has 13 horizontal (7 red and 6 white) stripes and 50 white stars on the blue background representing the 50 states. The red stripes proclaim courage, the white stripes proclaim liberty, the field of blue stands for loyalty.

The US flag is known as "Old Glory", the "Stars and Stripes" or the "Star-spangled Banner". The latter name comes from the title of the national anthem of the USA. The words were created by Francis Scott. The melody was taken from an English song composed by John Stafford Smith (1750-1836).

The US flag is the symbol of the revolutionary struggle of the American people, of the American Revolution.

The coat of arms of the US represents an eagle with wings outspread, holding a bundle of rods — the symbol of administering — in the left claw and an olive twig — the emblem of love — in the right claw. The motto on the coat of arms is "E Pluribus Unum".

Answer the questions.

1. Why is the USA flag called the "Stars and Stripes"? What other names of the American flag do you know?
2. The 14th of June is Flag Day in the USA, isn't it? Why is it so, if the US flag was raised on January 2, 1776?

3. What were the original American states and how were they represented on the flag?
4. What do red, white and blue colours on the US flag proclaim?
5. Who are the authors of the American anthem?
6. What is the coat of arms of the USA?

IT IS INTERESTING TO KNOW

Lying between Canada and the USA, **the five Great Lakes** are an important route for ships travelling from the Atlantic to the Mid-West. Together, Lakes Erie, Ontario, Huron, Michigan, and Superior cover 244,108 square kilometres - more than any other group of lakes in the world. If you go there in the summer, it is almost like going to the sea; you can lie on the beach or sail a boat. But in winter it is very cold.

The Mississippi river is 3,778 kilometres long and in the nineteenth century was an important way of travelling from north to south. Mark Twain wrote wonderful stories about life on and around the river.

The wonderful **Rocky Mountains**, skiing in the Rockies in the states of Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Idaho and Utah, are great for holidays. Visitors like to go there for walking, climbing, fishing, hunting, or horse-riding. You can also go skiing in winter at towns like Aspen. The only big city in the Rockies is Denver, which is one mile (1.6 kilometres) above the sea. The air is so thin there that it can make your head hurt when you first arrive.

South of the Rockies lies the **desert state of Arizona**, where the land has fantastic colours: not just brown and green, but red, pink, orange and blue. The most famous place in Arizona is the Grand Canyon. This deep river valley was made by the Colorado river cutting through the rock many thousands of years ago. Today it is 2,000 metres deep, 349 kilometres long, and between six and twenty-nine kilometres wide.

Next to Arizona, **New Mexico** is another dry, desert state, where farming is difficult and the people are poor. Many Native Americans live there on big reservations. The Navajo, Hopi, Pueblo and Zuni are known for the beautiful things that they make from silver, for their colourful blankets, their pots and for their dancing.

The Black Hills of Dakota are famous for **Mount Rushmore**, where the faces of four American presidents: Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt were cut in the rock. It took fourteen years, from 1927 to 1941.

States and Cities

CALIFORNIA is a state of differences. It has the lowest, driest place in the USA: Death Valley, which is 86 metres below sea level. It is very hot there (56.7°C on the hottest day, in 1913) and in some years it does not rain at all. But the north of the state is quite cold and wet. This is where the great redwood trees

grow - the biggest trees in the world. California grows more fruit and vegetables than any other state in the USA, and it is famous for its wine. But it is also a centre for computers and business. It has more people than any other state.

San Francisco is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It was nearly destroyed by an earthquake and the fire which followed it in 1906.

Los Angeles is the second biggest city in the USA. It can take hours to drive from one side to the other - and people almost always drive! The number of cars means that the city has a problem with dirty air; it also has a lot of violence. But visitors still come to see Disneyland, Hollywood, where films are made, and Beverley Hills, where you can look at the houses of famous film stars.

Travelling north from California, you come to **Oregon** and then **Washington**. These states are cool and wet, but very beautiful, with big forests and high mountains.

Since the 1980s, Seattle has become one of the most popular cities in America; it is the home of new music and of coffee bars selling lots of different types of coffee.

Away across the country is another city which has changed a lot in the last twenty years: **Atlanta, Georgia**. It is big and modern, with one of the busiest airports in the world; the Olympic Games were held there in 1996. There are plenty of jobs, and people think that, like Seattle, it is a comfortable city to live in. It is very different from the old cities of the south: Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina, for example, where there are still many beautiful old houses which look the same as they did 150 or more years ago. There are so many interesting and exciting places to visit in the USA that we cannot show you them all.

Cold, lonely **Alaska** is the largest state in the USA and is separated from the other states by Canada. The American government bought it from Russia in 1867 for \$7.2 million and it became a state in 1959. People used to make money from fishing and hunting, and gold was found there too. But today, it is important for its oil. North America's highest mountain, Mount McKinley (6,194 metres), is in Alaska.

Nearly 4,000 kilometres west of California lies **Hawaii**. This group of beautiful islands became the fiftieth state of the USA in 1959. Today, people visit Hawaii for beach holidays in the sun.

Texas is the second biggest state after Alaska. There are still cowboys who work with cattle, but the modern state of Texas, like Alaska, is rich because of its oil.

Florida is known as the 'Sunshine State' because it is so warm and sunny. Many Americans choose to live in Florida when they retire. Oranges grow there, and visitors come to enjoy beach holidays. They can also visit Disneyworld and the Kennedy Space Center.

The states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island are known as New England. Visitors go there to see the beautiful colours of the trees, which turn red, yellow and gold in the autumn.

Use the map to plan your own journey across America, by car, by train, by bus, or just in your dreams!



Government of the USA

The government of the USA has three separate but equal branches: Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court. Women were given the vote in 1920 and all Americans can now vote when they are eighteen years old.

Congress makes the laws. There are two 'houses' of Congress: the Senate and the House of Representatives. There are a hundred people in the Senate (two from each state) and they are elected for six years. There are 435 people in the House of Representatives, and they are elected for two years only. States with more people, like California, have more Representatives. Some states, like Wyoming or Delaware, which do not have many people, only have one Representative.

The President is head of the departments of government which carry out the

laws. He (until now the president has always been a man) is the leader of the country (like a king or queen) and head of the army. He is elected for four years, and can only be elected twice. He can say 'no' to laws passed by Congress (but Congress can also say 'no' to him), and he chooses the judges for the Supreme Court. He lives and works in the White House in Washington DC.

The Supreme Court is the most important court in the country and has nine judges; their job is to decide what the laws mean. They can also say that Congress has made a law which is wrong, or that the President has done something wrong.

The USA is a union of fifty states, and as well as the national government in Washington, each state has its own government. Laws can be very different from one state to the next. They say very different things about, for example, how old you must be to vote, get married, leave school or drive a car. Different states punish criminals differently too; in some states, you can be killed for murdering someone, in others you only go to prison.

There are only two important political parties: the Republicans and the Democrats. The Republicans want people to work to help themselves, and so they think that taxes should be low. The Democrats think that the government should help the poor and so it needs taxes. But the difference between the two is not always clear and it is not always easy to say that one party is on the 'left' or on the 'right' of the other.

The United States is a federal union of 50 states plus one independent district - the District of Columbia. Forty nine states, including Alaska, form the continental United States. The 50th state is the state of Hawaii - a group of islands in the Mid-Pacific Ocean.

The District of Columbia is the territory of the city of Washington, the national capital. Washington DC, is the seat of the federal government of the United States.

Each state has its own Governor and its own laws. People in the States also obey national laws. The head of the country and government is the President (Barak Obama now), who is elected for 4 years. The Judicial branch is represented by the Supreme Court.

The federal government is made up of three branches - **the Executive, the Legislative and the Judicial branches.**

The President is the head of the Executive branch of the Government.

The function of the Executive branch is to carry out the laws of the nation. It consists of the president, vice-president and the president's cabinet. The president and the vice-president are chosen in a national election for a four-year term of office and may be reelected for a second time. In the United States there are two major parties: the Democratic Party, Republican Party, and many small parties.

The Legislative branch. Congress, is where the laws are made and adopted. Congress has two houses: the House of Representatives, whose members serve two-year terms; and the Senate, whose members serve six-year

terms. Each state has his representatives in it.

The Judicial branch is headed by the Supreme Court which settles any disputes involving the national government or disputes between two or more states in accordance with the Constitution.

Individual states hold sovereignty over their territory and have rights that are not reserved by the federal government. Each state has its own legislature. The federal government deals with national and international problems and problems that involve more than one state.

There are 2 main political parties in the USA: the Democratic Party (its symbol is a "donkey") and the Republican Party ("an elephant"). The national Motto of America is "In God We Trust". The American Flag is a fifty-star, 13-stripe banner.

The history of the USA

Think of a big, beautiful, empty land with mountains, forests, lakes, animals and fish, but no people. This was America 30,000 years ago. Around that time, the first people probably arrived in Alaska from Asia. They travelled south and became the North American Indians, and the Aztecs, Mayas and Incas and other peoples of Central and South America. Later came the Inuit (Eskimos) of Canada and the Arctic. But there are only a few of these early peoples in America today.

In the sixteenth century Europeans started to come to America, and soon after that, they brought workers - slaves - from Africa. Large numbers of immigrants continued to arrive from all over the world until the middle of the twentieth century. The empty land was now full of people, speaking different languages and with different ideas. There are just three countries now in North America: Canada, Mexico and the USA.

The Pilgrim Fathers

For thousands of years, America and its peoples were unknown to the rest of the world. The Vikings visited Canada from Scandinavia around AD 1000, but did not stay. Then, in 1492, a brave Italian sailor called Christopher Columbus reached the Caribbean, while he was looking for a sea route from Europe to India.

Columbus did not stay either. It was only in the sixteenth century that the French, the Spanish, and the British all started to come in North America.

In the early seventeenth century, two very different groups of English people made the dangerous journey across the Atlantic. In 1607, a group of farmers began the colony of Jamestown, in Virginia. They fought with the Indians, and many died because they were ill and did not have enough to eat. But Pocahontas, the daughter of an Indian chief, became a friend of Captain John Smith and helped him and the other English people. She later married a man called John Rolfe and went to England where she died.

In 1620, another group of 101 English men, women and children arrived in Plymouth, Massachusetts. We know these people, who had very strong ideas about religion, as the 'Pilgrims', or 'Pilgrim Fathers'. They did not want to live in England because they did not agree with the Church of England, so they sailed to America

in a ship called the Mayflower. They became not only farmers, but also businessmen who bought and sold animal skins. They thought that all men were equal and so they did not have slaves. The Pilgrims too were often ill and hungry, and nearly half of them died in the first year. But they were helped by friendly Indians, who showed them how to grow corn. In the autumn of 1621, the Pilgrims had a big dinner to give thanks for the first food that they had grown themselves.

This day became known as Thanksgiving, and Americans still celebrate it every year, on the fourth Thursday of November. It is one of the most important holidays in the year, and people often travel many hundreds of kilometres to be with their family.

IT IS INTERESTING TO KNOW

America was named after an Italian businessman called Amerigo Vespucci, who sailed to South America between 1499 and 1502.

Columbus called the Native Americans 'Indians' because he thought that he had reached India.

Amerigo Vespucci (1451 or 1454-1512)

Amerigo Vespucci, a native of Florence and a navigator, was first employed by Spain and later by Portugal, to make explorations. In 1499 he skirted the coast of Venezuela and northeastern South America. During the next four years he made several voyages to Brazil, and explored its coasts as far south as the mouth of the La Plata River. On returning to Europe he wrote a good description of what he had seen. This was published in 1504, and constituted the first printed account of the mainland of the New World. Up to that time Europe, Asia, and Africa were known. As the three parts of the world, and one distinguished geographer believed there was an unknown southern continent which constituted the fourth part.

It now seemed clear that Amerigo Vespucci proved the existence of the fourth part. In consequence of this belief a German professor, suggested that the fourth part should be called America, after Amerigo Vespucci. According to this suggestion the name America was at first applied to Brazil, later to South America, and later still to the whole of the New World.

Find sentences with the following words and phrases in the text and translate them into Russian:

a native of, a navigator, to be employed, to make explorations, to skirt the coast of, to make several voyages, to explore, to write a good description, to be published, to constitute, the first printed account of, the mainland of, to prove the existence of, in consequence of, to be applied to.

Find answers to the following questions in the text:

1. What city was Amerigo Vespucci a native of?
2. When did he skirt the coast of Venezuela and northeastern South

America?

3. What other voyages did Amerigo Vespucci make?
4. What did Amerigo Vespucci do on returning to Europe?
5. When was his description of the New World published?
6. What constituted the first printed account of the mainland of the New World?
7. Which three parts of the world were known up to that time?
8. Was the existence of the fourth part of the world proved?
9. Who was America called after?
10. What country was the name America at first applied to?

Christopher Columbus (1451—1506)

Christopher Columbus, as well as some learned men of his time, had decided that the eastern coast of Asia could be reached by sailing westward across the Atlantic. Columbus thought, also, that Asia was no farther from Europe on the west than we know now America to be. He thought the East Indies were directly west from the Canary Islands. In these far-away lands men thought they should find honour, wealth, and fame.

Such an enterprise would require the equipment of vessels at much expense. Money and influence were essential. Columbus had neither. He sent his brother to England and France. Then went to Spain again. Finally, after seven years of waiting, Columbus found success. Isabella, Queen of Spain, agreed to aid him in carrying out his plans. Three small vessels, only one of which had a deck, were fitted out. The largest of these, the *Santa Maria*, was commanded by Columbus. The others were the *Nina* and the *Pinta*. Before sunrise, August 3, 1492, this little fleet, with one hundred and twenty men and provisions for a year, sailed out of the port Palos.

At last, after a voyage of ten weeks, land was discovered on October 12, 1492. Columbus had discovered one of the Bahama Islands which he called San Salvador. He coasted along the shores of Cuba and Haiti.

He did not find the cities of Asia as he had expected, but he had no doubt that he was in the East Indies, and therefore called the natives Indians.

When Columbus returned to Spain with the news of his discovery the people were enthusiastic with delight. Men were now eager to go where they expected to get all kinds of wealth. Four voyages were made in all, but when adventurers reached the land of their hopes and found no silks, no spices, no precious stones, no gold, they reproached Columbus. The Court of Spain, also, finding no return for the great expense of fitting out these expeditions, censured him. His enemies increased, and his last days were spent in disappointment and neglect. Heart-broken, he died ignorant of the greatness of his own discovery.

Find sentences with the following words and phrases in the text and translate them into Russian:

small vessels, to have a deck, to be fitted out, a little fleet, one hundred

and twenty men, provisions for a year, to sail out, a voyage of ten weeks, to discover land, to call, to coast along, to have no doubt, to be eager, adventurers, to be ignorant of, disappointment, to neglect.

Find answers to the following questions in the text:

1. In what way did Columbus decide to reach the eastern coast of Asia?
2. Where did Columbus think Asia was?
3. Where did he think the East Indies were?
4. What was essential for Columbus' enterprise?
5. How many years did he wait for carrying out his plans?
6. How many vessels were fitted out for the expedition?
7. Why did Columbus call the natives Indians?
8. Why were adventurers disappointed when they reached the land of their hopes?
9. Did Columbus spend his last days in fame or neglect?
10. Did Columbus realize that he had discovered a new continent?

The War of Independence

By 1770, there were thirteen colonies along the east coast of North America, all governed by Britain. But Britain was a long way away and the people of the colonies became angry at the high taxes that the government made them pay. In December 1773 a group of men threw 342 boxes of tea into the sea at Boston because they did not want to pay the British tax on it. This was the 'Boston Tea Party'.

The British government was now angry too, and in April 1775 some Americans fought a group of British soldiers at Lexington and Concord, in Massachusetts. A few months later, after the Battle of Bunker Hill, near Boston, it was clear that Britain was at war with its American colonies. A farmer from Virginia, George Washington, became the leader of the American army.

But the colonies did not say that they wanted to be fully independent until the summer of 1776. Thomas Jefferson wrote the famous 'Declaration of Independence', where he said that the king, George III, had broken his agreement with his people, because he had not let them have their rights: rights to life, freedom and happiness. The day of the Declaration of Independence is another important American holiday, celebrated each year on July 4.

The Americans finally won the war five years later, in October 1781, and two years after that, they were free to govern themselves. In 1788 they made Washington their first president. The thirteen colonies, which became known as 'states', grew by adding land to the south and west.

The Civil War

This great country of 31 million people was known as the Union, but in fact there were deep differences between the North and the South. And in 1861 war

broke out - the most terrible war that the world had ever seen. At least 600,000 people died in the fighting or from illness.

The war was fought to keep the United States united. It began because the southern states kept slaves to work in the cotton fields. Slaves were not allowed in the North, and the two sides argued about whether they should allow them in the new lands of the West. In 1860, Abraham Lincoln, who belonged to the Republican party, which was against keeping slaves, was elected president. On December 24, South Carolina said that it wanted to be independent and the other southern states soon followed; they called themselves the 'Confederate States of America'. The fighting began on April 12 1861, at Fort Sumter.

The South had some of the best soldiers - one was the great Robert E. Lee - and they had plenty of money from selling their cotton to England. But the North had more men and more factories. They also had Lincoln, one of the best presidents that the USA has ever had.

Two famous soldiers helped the North to win the war: General Sherman is remembered in a famous song about how he took 60,000 of his soldiers on a journey from Atlanta, in Georgia, to the Atlantic coast, breaking the Confederate states in two; after the war, he became head of the American army. General Ulysses S. Grant was the man who represented the North at Appomattox in 1865, when the South, under Lee, accepted that they had lost the war. Grant was very fair to Lee's soldiers, who did not have to go to prison. Some years later, in 1868, he became president.

Sadly, in April 1865, just after the end of the war, Lincoln was shot at the theatre by a man called John Wilkes Booth. After Lincoln's death, the new president was not strong enough to bring the North and the South together. Anger and arguments, mostly about the rights of black people, continued.

Traditions of the USA

America is a relatively new nation, so its traditions are also newly formed, and are seldom or never based on old standing historical events (like ravens in the Tower in London, for example). American traditions and ways of living, some peculiar American styles are grounded on and connected with the country's geographical position, its eventful, though comparatively short history, social and cultural background.

For example, America is known as a "melting pot" of nations, which has different consequences. The first is, the Americans never consider it important to learn foreign languages seriously. The second result entailed very peculiar, yet dynamic attitude towards ethnic minorities. During the period of America's formation and technical development non-whites were treated very rudely (we can't but mention Ku-kluks-klan racist movement). But nowadays things have radically changed. Americans themselves are becoming anxious at the so-called "reversed racism". They don't say "negroes" or even "blacks" now, they say "Americans of Afro-American origin" now. They now use the so-called "Politically correct

English" trying to avoid being rude to ethnical and some other minorities.

Then, America is geographically a very big country and it used to develop very fast, that is why a car has become an idol of American life. The whole country is "on wheels", and the make of a car is the sign of well-being and prosperity. Americans like to travel very much, especially elderly people. American tourists are said to be everywhere (they are even in Saratov now). So, a car is a fetish and symbol of the USA. No wonder that Henry Ford is a national hero of America.

But buying cars needs money. Americans like making money, saving money and spending money. But it is extremely impolite to ask how much money a person earns. It is thought to be vulgar.

The biggest legend of America is that any American can become a millionaire if he works really hard. The fairy tale that any shoe-blacker, irrespective of his color, can become a financial tycoon is a great stimulus for work.

Americans seem to be very hospitable, friendly and welcoming. They seem to be always smiling. They always say "I am fine/great/OK", even if it is not so. They don't like to see people who look depressed or troubled. And some people say their friendliness is deceitful and not sincere.

Most Americans are religious. They often attend church on Sundays. They treasure the idea of America being a country of liberty. "Free man in a free country", so they used to say and behave. They know their rights and hate them being violated.

They are very patriotic. Many American families have a national flag at home (small or even big). They are sure their home country is the best one.

US HOLIDAYS

There are few national holidays in the United States. Each state has the right to establish its own holidays. But the Federal Government and the majority of states observe 10 holidays. Banks, government offices and public schools are closed on the following holidays:

1. New Year's Day (Dec., 31), 2. Martin Luther King's Day (3d Monday in January), 3. Washington's Birthday / President's Day (3d Monday in Feb), 4. Memorial Day (last Mon. in May), 5. Independence Day (July 4), 6. Labor Day (first Mon. of Sept), 7. Veteran's Day (November 11), 8. Columbus Day (second Mon. of October), 9. Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday of November), 10. Christmas (December 25).

Stores and restaurants may be open for fewer hours on some of these days. Public transportation often follows a limited schedule on federal holidays.

There are in addition such nice holidays as Father's and Mother's days, Halloween, April Fool's Day and Valentine's Day).

The Americans also celebrate some religious days, such as Easter (on Sunday in Spring), Epiphany, Pentecost.

Some *other days* observed in the US are: Election Day (1st Tuesday of Nov.), Hanukkah (eight days of Dec), Groundhog Day (Feb. 2), Saint Patrick's Day

(March 17), Passover (eight days in April), Flag Day (June 14).

INDEPENDENCE day is a historical holiday of the US. On July 4, 1776, the American colonies declared their independence from Britain. Since it is a summer holiday a day off from work, many families celebrate it by having picnics and watching fireworks at night. The occasion is also commemorated by colorful and noisy parades. Sometimes church bells ring in memory of the Philadelphia Liberty Bell that first proclaimed America's independence.

The uniquely American holiday is COLUMBUS day. It commemorates the discovery of America by Columbus in 1492. People observe it on the second Monday of October. It is believed that the first celebration of the discovery of America occurred in New York in 1792 but it was until 1934 that all states were asked to observe Columbus Day as a federal holiday. Columbus is admired for his courage, self-confidence and perseverance. American children love to retell and dramatize the exciting tale of his famous voyage in 1492.

MEMORIAL day honours American soldiers killed in wars. There are many parades on this day.

MARTIN LUTHER KING's day became a legal public holiday in 1986. It's celebrated in January. The American nation gives its tribute to the civil rights leader who struggled for equal rights for black Americans.

The whole country also celebrates Washington's Birthday (now called PRESIDENT'S DAY). George Washington was the first American President.

LABOUR Day honours the American worker and is celebrated on the first Monday of September. For many students, the school year starts after the Labour day.

VETERANS' day pays tribute to all men and women who have served America in its armed forces.

THANKSGIVING day is observed nationally on the 4th Tuesday in November. It was first celebrated in 1621 by English settlers of the Plymouth colony, and the spirit and customs with which they endowed the day have remained unchanged. On this day the Americans thank God and people around for the good they've done. They also recollect the native Indians who many years ago helped the first American settlers to survive in the new land and taught them to cultivate soil. It is very much a family holiday celebrated with big dinners and happy family reunions. It is a time for families to get together for what is often a long weekend. Schools and offices are closed, relatives from other cities, students who have been away at school, and many other Americans travel long distances to spend a holiday at home. The traditional food is Thanksgiving turkey and pumpkin pies.

CHRISTMAS as well as NEW YEAR'S DAY is the most festive time of the year in the US. In the USA the spirit of Christmas arrives about a month before the holiday itself. Late in November, street lights and store windows are decorated with the traditional Christmas colors of red and green. Families decorate their homes, inside and out, with colored lights and evergreen. The manufacture and distribution of Christmas items is big business. To earn extra money, many students get part-time jobs during December, delivering mail or selling gifts, trees, ornaments, or greeting cards. The most beautiful and meaningful aspects of the

holiday occur at home. Usually families gather around the Christmas tree, open their gifts and then sit down to enjoy a traditional Christmas dinner – turkey or ham, sweet potatoes, vegetables, cranberry sauce, and nuts, fruit cake, plum pudding, or mince pie. As for New Year's Day one of the noisiest and most crowded New Year's celebrations takes place in New York City at Times Square. Thousands of New Yorkers and tourists gather there. New Year's festivities often continue until two or three o'clock in the morning.

US Newspapers

The press plays an important part in the life of society. Millions of Americans in their free time read newspapers. The daily paper dominates family life at breakfast.

The English word "newspaper" does not really describe everything that you can read in this kind of publication. Newspapers include not only stories about recent events (news), but opinions, advertising, and other non-news items.

Newspapers in the USA are protected by the "Freedom of the Press" clause of the First Amendment to the US Constitution.

The first American newspaper was published in 1690 in Boston. "The Boston News Letter" was the first regularly published newspaper in the American Colonies.

Now there are about 2,600 newspapers published in the USA. About 1,800 of these are daily papers. They are published in 34 different languages.-

The daily newspapers are of two kinds: quality and popular. "The Wall Street Journal" is a quality newspaper. It covers national and international news. It is a business newspaper with the largest circulation in the country. "The Washington Post", a serious daily newspaper, is of national interest, in particular because it contains full coverage of Congress. A truly national newspaper, "US Today", in its popular form offers news of general interest. It has a circulation of 1.2 million. But this is not enough for the country where state, city and local news, most deeply affects the reader. The problem concerning the national press is acute. One can say there is no national press in the US, as most daily papers are distributed locally.

In another sense there is a national US press, one that comes from the sharing of news. Some of the largest newspapers not only print, but collect and sell news, news features and photographs to the US and foreign newspapers. "The New York Times", "The Washington Post", "The Los Angeles Times" are the best news services of this kind. Other newspapers of international excellence are: "The Christian Science Monitor", "The (Baltimore) Sun", "The Milwaukee Journal". "The New York Times" is ranked as "the world's top daily".

Russia

CHRONOLOGY

- IX century** (500-1000 A. D.*) — *The formation of the Ancient Russian state.*
- 882** — *Kievan Rus ruled by the Varangians.*
- 988 A. D.** — *The Adoption of Christianity.*
- 1136-1478** — *Novgorod the Great.*
- 1147** — *Moscow was mentioned for the first time in a chronicle.*
- 1236—1242** — *The Mongol-Tatars headed by Batu-Khan launched another offensive against Russia.*
- 1240-1480** — *The Mongol-Tatar Yoke.*
- 1240** — *The Battle on the Neva against the Swedes. Russian troops led by Prince Alexander won the battle. This victory earned the Prince the title of Alexander Nevsky.*
- 1242** — *The Battle on Ice; Alexander Nevsky headed the Russian forces and won the battle. (The Invasion of the German Knights. The battle took place on the ice of the large Lake Chudskoye).*
- 1360-1430** — *Andrey Rublev.*
- 1380 (8 September)** — *The Battle of Kulikovo.*
- 1480** — *Overthrow of the Mongol-Tatar Yoke.*
- XV-XVI c.** — *The formation of the Russian State.*
- 1547** — *Reign of Ivan (IV) the Terrible, crowned "Tsar of All Russia".*
- 1564** — *Ivan Fyodorov and Pyotr Mstislavets published the first Russian printed book, "The Apostle".*
- 1603-1604** — *"The Time of Troubles" (a difficult period in Russian history. Boris Godunov).*
- 1613** — *Mikhail Romanov, a boyar, was elected to the throne. The Romanov dynasty ruled Russia for three hundred years.*
- 1654** — *Reunification of the Ukraine with Russia.*
- 1670-1671** — *Stepan Razin and the Peasant War.*
- 1689-1725** — *The Reign of Peter I.*
- 1703 (16 May)** — *The founding of St. Petersburg.*
- 1709** — *The Russian Army defeated the army of Charles XII of Sweden near Poltava.*
- 1700-1721** — *The Northern War.*
- 1725** — *The founding of Russian's first Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg.*
- 1755** — *The founding of Russia's first University in Moscow. (Mikhail Lomonosov).*
- 1773—1775** — *Yemeliyan Pugachyev and the Peasant War.*
- 1812** — *Napoleon's Invasion (The Battle at Borodino — August 26, 1812).*

- 1825 — *The Decembrists' uprising in Senate Square.*
 1855-1881 — *Reign of Alexander II, the Tsar Liberator.*
 1861 — *The Manifesto on the abolition of serfdom.*
 1905 — *The Bloody Sunday.*
 1914 — *Outbreak of World War I and Russia enters the First World War.*
 1917 (*February-October*) — *The People Overthrow the Tsar. The Provisional Government.*
 1917 (*25 October*) — *The Bolshevik Revolution.*
 1918-1921 — *The Civil War.*
 1922 — *The founding of the U.S.S.R.*
 1924 — *Death of V. I. Lenin. J. V. Stalin takes over power.*
 1936 — *The adoption of the Constitution.*
 1937 — *The period of great terror.*
 1941-1945 — *"Great Patriotic War".*
 1942 — *The Battle of Stalingrad.*
 1953 — *The Death of Stalin.*
 1953-1964 — *N. S. Khrushchev — new CPSU leader.*
 1956 — *XX Congress of the CPSU.*
 1964 — *L. I. Brezhnev became new CPSU leader.*
 1982 — *Death of Brezhnev. Y. A. Andropov and K. U. Chernenko.*
 1985 — *M. S. Gorbachev succeeded Chernenko and inaugurates reforms. "Perestroika".*
 1986 — *Chernobyl nuclear disaster.*
 1991 — *Boris Yeltsin - elected president of the Russian Federation.*
 1991 — *Dissolution of the USSR, Formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).*
 1993 (*December 12*) — *The Adoption of the New Constitution of Russia.*
- A. D. (*anno Domini, лат.*) — *нашей эры.*
 - B. C. (*before Christ*) — *до нашей эры*

VOCABULARY

abolition - отмена

adoption - принятие

Alexander Nevsky

Batu-Khan - хан Батый

boyar - боярин

Charles XII – Карл XII

Christianity - христианство

chronicle - хроника

crown - корона

the Civil War – Гражданская война

the Commonwealth - Содружество

defeat – поражение

disaster - бедствие

dissolution - распад

dynasty - династия

the Great Patriotic War – Великая Отечественная война

inaugurate – торжественно открывать

Ivan the Terrible - Иван Грозный

knight - князь

Kievan Rus – Киевская Русь

launch – спуск судна на воду

the Manifesto - Манифест

outbreak - взрыв
the Provisional Government –
 Временное правительство
reunification - объединение
Senate Square – Сенатская
 площадь
serfdom – крепостное право

succeed – следовать за
Sweden - Швеция
the Swedes - шведы
"Time of troubles" – Смутное
 время
Varangians - варяги

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Area: 17,075,500 sq km (6,591,100 sq mi).

Population: over 141 mln (2010).

Male — 47.0 % Female — 53.0 % Urban — 73.3 % Rural — 26.7 %.
 (1995)

Capital: Moscow (10,527 mln - 2009).

Political System: Presidential Republic.

Head of State: D. Medvedev since 2008.

Head of Government: V. Putin since 2008.

National resources: oil, coal, natural gas, iron ore, gold, platinum, nickel, copper, etc.

Industries: mechanical engineering, metal-working, metallurgy, timber industry, oil-extracting, chemical, glass, light, food, woodworking, oil-refining, electrotechnical, pulp and paper, oil-gas-extracting, oil-chemical, petrochemical, extractive, manufacturing, motor industries, iron and steel industries, power industry, basic industries, extraction of peat, ferrous metal, building materials, extraction of coal, non-ferrous metallurgy industry, printing industry, processing and mining industries, electronics industry, etc.

Russia is the world's leading natural gas exporter and the second leading oil exporter.

Agriculture: Vegetable-growing, cereals, cattle-breeding, poultry-raising, gardening, cultivation of flax, sugar-beet, hemp, sunflower, makhorka, essential-oil plants, bee-keeping, hop, fur-breeding, melon-growing, mustard seed, fishing, reindeer-breeding, fur trade, vine-growing, coriander, tobacco, wine-making.

Nationality: Russia is a multinational republic. The largest of its peoples is the Russian people.

Currency: Rouble (The currency is used in Russia).

Language: Russian.

Countries where the Russian language is spoken.

Religion: Russian Orthodox.

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT RUSSIA

Physical Geography. Area. Russia is one of the largest countries in the world. Its total area is about 17 million square kilometres or 6,591,100 sq. mi.

It is washed by... Russia is touched by three oceans and twelve seas. The oceans are: the Arctic, the Atlantic and the Pacific. The seas are: the Barents Sea, the White Sea, the Kara Sea, the Laptev Sea, the East Siberian Sea, the Sea of Chukotsk, the Bering Sea, the Sea of Okhotsk, the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov, the Sea of Japan.

Rivers... The longest rivers are: the Lena (4,400 km), the Irtysh (4,248), the Yenisey (4,102), the Ob (3,650), the Volga (3,530), the Amur (2,824). There are over two million rivers in Russia.

The Volga River is the cradle of such ancient towns as Nizhny Novgorod, Vladimir, Tver, Yaroslavl, Kazan. It runs into the Caspian Sea.

Lakes (about 2 mln. salt and fresh lakes). The largest lakes are: the Caspian Sea (Lake) — 368,000 sq. km; the Baikal Lake — 31,500 sq. km; Ladoga Lake (18,100); Onega Lake (9,700).

The deepest lake is Lake Baikal (1,600 metres). The water in the lake is so clear that you can see the bottom of this lake.

Mountains... There are several mountain chains in Russia: the Urals, the Caucasus, the Altai and others. The Urals separate Europe from Asia.

Plains... There are two great plains in Russia: the Great Russian Plain and the West Siberian Lowland.

Forests... Russia has one-sixth of the world's forests. They are concentrated in the European north of the country, in Siberia and in the Far East.

The Animal World... In the forests (in the taiga). Animals: elk, bear, lynx, sable, fox, squirrel, hare.

It borders on... Russia borders on Finland and Norway in the north-west; on Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia in the west; the Ukraine in the southwest; Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan in the south; China, Mongolia, Korean People's Democratic Republic in the south-east.

Weather and Climate... There are various types of climate in Russia: from arctic in the north to subtropical in the south. In the middle of the country the climate is temperate and continental.

Birds: wood-grouse, heath-cock, hazel-grouse, woodpecker. **Eastern Siberia:** elka, bears, lynxes, sable, fox, squirrel, hare, Siberian stag, wild-boar, kolinsky. **The Far East:** Ussuriisky tiger, black-bear, racoon dog. **In the steppe:** Animals: field-vole, suslik, jerboa, hamster, marmot. Birds: eagle, bustard, etc.

There are more than 30 **preserves** in Russia (area — 5m ha).

The most famous: Altaisky, Astrakhansky, Barguzinsky, Stolby, Teberdinsky, Kavkazsky, Prioksko-terrasny, Pechoro-Ilychsky.

Time Zones... Russia crosses 9 time zones from the East to the West.

Natural resources... Oil, coal, natural gas, iron ore, copper, gold, platinum, nickel, etc. Russia is Europe's key oil and gas supplier.

The largest cities... The largest cities in Russia are: Moscow (10.5 m); St. Petersburg (4.6 m); Nizhny Novgorod (1.4 m); Novosibirsk (1.4 m); Yekaterinburg (1.3 m); Samara (1.2 m); Omsk (1.2 m); Chelyabinsk (1.1 m); Ufa (1.1 m); Kazan (1.1 m); Perm (1.1 m); Rostov-on-Don (1.0 m); Volgograd (1.0 m).

There were in Russia in 1996: 357 religious unions, 2,888 public unions, 90

parties, 111 public political movements, 47 trade-union organizations, 45 women's organizations, 203 Youth organizations, 71 Veterans' unions, 87 Unions of the disabled people, 359 scientific-technical unions, 174 cultural-elucidative, 296 sport organizations.

Russia has more than 100 different nationalities, though the overwhelming majority are the Russians who comprise more than 83 per cent.

The Russian Federation comprises 83 federal subjects. These subjects have equal representation—two delegates each—in the Federation Council. However, they differ in the degree of autonomy they enjoy.

- 46 oblasts (provinces): most common type of federal subjects, with federally appointed governor and locally elected legislature.
- 21 republics: nominally autonomous; each has its own constitution, president, and parliament. Republics are allowed to establish their own official language alongside Russian but are represented by the federal government in international affairs. Republics are meant to be home to specific ethnic minorities.
- 9 krais (territories): essentially the same as oblasts. The "territory" designation is historic, originally given to frontier regions and later also to administrative divisions that comprised autonomous okrugs or autonomous oblasts.
- 4 autonomous okrugs (autonomous districts): originally autonomous entities within oblasts and krais created for ethnic minorities, their status was elevated to that of federal subjects in the 1990s. With the exception of Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, all autonomous okrugs are still administratively subordinated to a krai or an oblast of which they are a part.
- One autonomous oblast (the Jewish Autonomous Oblast): originally autonomous oblasts were administrative units subordinated to krais. In 1990, all of them except the Jewish AO were elevated in status to that of a republic.
- Two federal cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg): major cities that function as separate regions.

VOCABULARY

bustard - дрофа

elk - лось

field-vole – мышь-полевка

hamster - хомяк

heath-cock – тетерев-косач

jerboa - тушканчик

kolinsky - колонок

lynx - рысь

marmot - сурок

raccoon dog - енот

sable - соболь

stag - олень

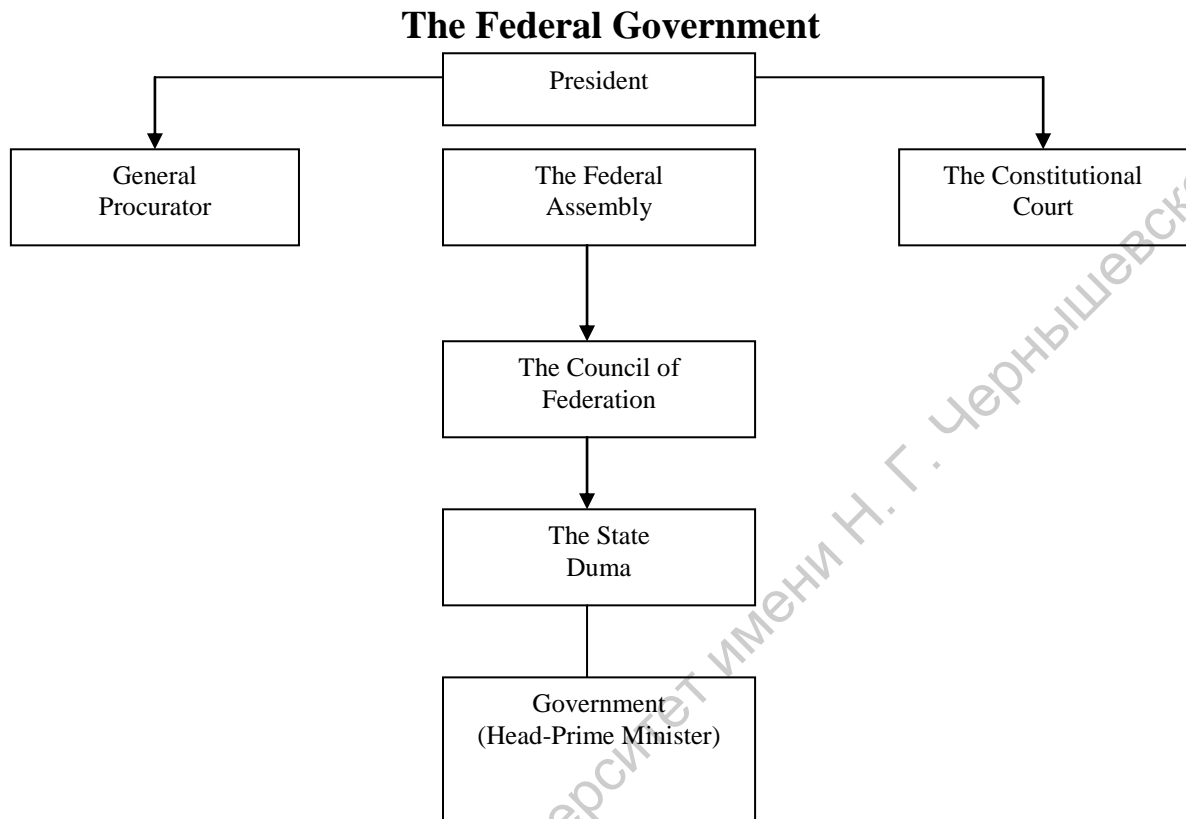
suslik - суслик

wild-boar - енрь

wood-grouse – тетерев- глухарь

woodpecker - дятел

RUSSIAN INSTITUTIONS



The federal government consists of three branches: **legislative** (the Federal Assembly); **executive** (the Government with the Prime Minister) and **judicial** (the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and regional courts).

Legislative power is vested in the **Federal Assembly**. It consists of two chambers. The **Upper Chamber** is the **Council of Federation**. The **Lower Chamber** is the **State Duma**. Each Chamber is headed by the Speaker. Legislature may be initiated in either of the two Chambers. But to become a law a bill must be approved by both Chambers and signed by the President. The President may veto the bill.

Executive power belongs to the Government, which is headed by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has to form the Cabinet.

The judicial branch is represented by the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and regional courts. The Russian Federation has a multi-level government because of its federal structure. Each administrative subject has its own local government with a legislative branch which drafts and adopts local laws and regulations; and an executive branch which is responsible for all matters relating to the economic development of the territory.

The Head of State is the President. His duties are: to call referendum; to appoint the Prime Minister, to appoint the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces; to make final decisions on foreign policy; to declare war and states of emergency; to dissolve the State Duma; to issue decrees and annual any government decisions which contradict them; to suspend any federal legislative act

contradicting the Constitution and the federal laws; to sign and endorse all legislative acts. He is elected for a term of six years and has the right to be elected for two terms only.

The Head of Government is the Prime Minister. He is appointed by the President and endorsed by the State Duma.

The Federal Council. The Federal Council is the Upper Chamber with a total of 166 seats, with two seats per federation subject (republics, regions, autonomous areas, etc.). It is elected for a term of 2 years and cannot be dissolved by the President. Its duties are: to endorse the legislative acts adopted by the Duma; to appoint and discharge the Procurator-General; to endorse declaration of war and martial law; to legitimise any changes of internal borders; to take decisions regarding the impeachment of the President.

The State Duma. The State Duma is composed of 450 members elected for a term of five years, of whom one half shall be elected in single-mandate constituencies and the other half on the basis of proportional representation according to party lists. Its duties are: to endorse the appointment of the Prime Minister; to declare an amnesty; to draft and endorse laws. It can call for a vote of confidence in the government and initiate an impeachment proceeding against the President.

The term of office of the members of the Federal Assembly is five years.

The state symbol of the Russian Federation is a three coloured banner. It has three horizontal stripes: white, blue and red. The white stripe symbolizes the earth, the blue one stands for the sky and the red one symbolizes liberty. It was approved by the Federal Assembly in 1991.



A new national emblem of Russia. The new national emblem of Russia (the Arras of Russia) is a double-headed eagle, which first came into use in the 1490s.

Customs and traditions

What is unusual about Russians?

- There are some topics and questions in Russia, like in any other country, you may or may not discuss.
- You may be surprised by asking questions concerning your private life, relationships, dreams and so on. Also such type of the conversation (discussing personal problems) you can hear sometimes even between not quit known people (for example, standing in line or in train on the way to 'dacha' (so russians call their country house) - in places, where people are united only for a period of time). So be calm and do not hesitate. Representatives of senior generation like to talk about problems with their health, be kind and attentive to them - it is also a part of culture.

- 'The left and right sides' of the Russian mind have many interesting connotations for foreigners. Usually Russian people believe that the left side is associated with the sinister, bad secular. By contrast the right side for the most part has positive connotations such as brightness, good fortune and the sacred. Be careful saying to your girl 'I go to the left, in Russian it means to be unfaithful.
- Never kiss your girl on her forehead. Kissing someone on their forehead is reserved for funerals. Kissing a loved one at the funeral reception is a tradition.
- Now about special gift for your Russian girl. Flowers is the first thing you must give to her. Never buy even number of flowers for alive person. It's a symbol of death. You may buy red roses when you see her in person the very first time (custom meaning of red roses in Russia is love). Yellow flowers have custom meaning 'unfaithfulness', forget about yellow flowers for anybody.
- Never forget about 8 March if your girl is Russian. It's an official 'Womens' Day', the favourite day for all Russian women. On this day men give women gifts and flowers. Men also are supposed to do all the housework this day and women have a chance to forget about cooking, dishes and so on.
- One more Russian tradition is to drink! The person who drinks and does not drunk is always respected. Many business deals are solved while drinking together. But Russians never drink without a reason. Every time they want to drink they bring up a reason. It can be anything from buying a new thing to celebrating a weekend. So, making a friendly visit take with you a bottle. If you go to a girl it is a good chance to show your attitude by buying something.
- If you get married in Russia it's a tradition for the brides mother to hand you and your bride a loaf of bread at your wedding reception. Whoever can take the largest bite becomes the head of the household.
- Don't forget take off your shoes entering a house (residence). Russians do not wear shoes inside the home except for house shoes. Most Russians have several pairs of guest shoes at their home for visitors. If they do not have enough extra house shoes for guests it's normal to enter the room without shoes.

Customs and traditions

In the arrivals hall of the airport you will be requested to fill in a customs declaration form. Respecting the Russian customs is advisable, because breaking customs regulations may result in divestment of your belongings, plus you might have to pay fines measuring in 100 to 300 percent of their cost. If you have more than \$1500 in cash, you should go through the red "to declare" channel and get your customs form stamped by a customs officer (especially if you are intending to leave Russia with a large amount of cash). If not, then you may proceed through the green channel. However, in any case be sure to keep your customs declaration form as you may be asked for it when leaving the country.

You can take along with you any personal belongings which you will be needing during your stay in St. Petersburg, for instance, clothes, objects of personal hygiene, travelling equipment, one videocamera and one photo camera,

one tape-recorder etc. Besides personal belongings you may bring to St. Petersburg duty-free: foreign currency (unlimited, but prohibited to take out more than you have brought) diamonds: 0.5 karats, 5 items of jewelry, 5 litres of alcohol (if you are over 21 years old), 1, 000 cigarettes (if you are over 16 years old), 3 items or 1 outfit of leather clothing, 2 carpets, 3 hats, one set or 3 crystal dishes, 20 litres of petrol, besides that in tank (if you are arriving in your own car), inexpensive souvenirs in reasonable amounts. On leaving, if you have less than \$1500 you may progress through the green 'nothing to declare' channel. It is illegal to take more than \$1500 out of the country without a special certificate.

You may take the following items out of St-Petersburg duty-free: 5 kg of fish, 280 g of black caviar, 280 g of red caviar, medicines (1 pack of each kind), Russian-made colour metal products: not more than 20 kg, gold or platinum jewelry: 5 items of total weight not more than 30 g, silver jewelry: 120 g, precious stone jewelry: 5 items, 20 litres of petrol, other than that in tank (if you are leaving in your own car). Prohibited to import: arms and ammunitions, narcotics, books, videofilms and other items which can inflict harm on Russia. Forbidden to export: weapons, narcotics, invalidated valuables, any Russian orders or medals, books, videofilms and other items which can inflict harm on any foreign state. If you are buying pictures or sculptures in a gallery, don't forget to ask for a written permission from the author of the piece, in which it should be mentioned that he or she does not object to you taking this masterpiece outside the country.

Dress.

Business people dress conservatively with good shoes. Men should not take off their jackets without asking. Dress casually for dinner in somebody's home. In cold weather wear hat or old ladies will lecture you on your foolishness:-).In Russian Orthodox Churches women should wear a skirt and cover their heads with a scarf or a hat. Men should bare their heads.

Food.

A main meal in Russia usually consists of soup, a main meat/fish dish, sometimes vegetable salad. One of the most favourite food in Russia is salted herrings covered by beet root with mayonnaise (we name it 'selyodka pod shuboy'-herring under fair coat :-). Russians drink a lot of tea, usually often with no milk but with sugar, sometimes lemon. It is customary to have something sweet with tea, such as biscuits, cake, jam (eaten by the spoonful!) or sweets. Lately you can meet in Russia many people who prefer coffee (especially black coffee) to tea, many coffee addicts.

There are vegetarians in Russia. Not too many, probably though. Being one is not hard: your environment will be tolerant to your choices.

Eating out in Russia can cost a lot of money if you choose to eat in the centre of a city in Western style restaurants. Check out the prices first. There are however many other places to eat although these are best found with someone who knows their way around and the language.

Healthcare in Russia

If you have stomach problems or have caught a cold, you won't have great difficulties buying medicine to treat them while in Russia. A pack of 10 tablets

against stomach ache or cold (provided being Russian made) should not cost you more than 20-40 Roubles.

If you have more serious problems, it is wise to know somebody, who is Russian and who can take you to a doctor, the one he or she knows, who in one's turn will assist you for either free of a token of payment. No insurance helps much in Russia, strictly speaking.

Religion in Russia

The Russian society is generally tolerant towards various religions. Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, Jews - all of them practice their religions freely and very often live just across the street. When in Russia, one most of the time has the feeling of a wide acceptance of other's values and should not worry too much if he or she will not be properly understood from the values and perceptions point of view

THE MASS MEDIA:

NEWSPAPERS, TELEVISION, RADIO

The Press

In our days, which are dynamic and full of changes, the role of the mass media is growing significantly. Newspapers, journals and television programmes have begun to pulse with life, with all its achievements and contradictions. Our television and radio networks are developing rapidly, acquiring an up-to-date technical level. They have entered our life as all-embracing media, carrying information, and propagating and asserting our moral values and culture. Television and radio programmes have become more diversified and interesting.

Russians are great readers, not only of newspapers, but of magazines and periodicals. There are a lot of newspapers in Russia. Each town or city has its own newspaper. There are national daily newspapers, as well as the local ones; some people prefer newspapers for entertainment, some sports newspapers. There are special newspapers for women, for children, for people of different professions and others.

Do you know...

- The first manuscript newspaper appeared in 1621. It was called "**Kuranty**" (or "The Chimes"). Its readers were tsar Mikhail Fyodorovich and his court.
- The first Russian reporter was **Yakov Sinyavich**.
- The first evening newspaper in Russia was published in 1866. It was called "**Vechernyaya Moskva**".
- The first Russian magazine was printed in 1728. It was called "**The monthly historical genealogical and geographical comments to Vedomosti** "
- The first Russian magazine for women was published in 1779 by **N.I. Novikov**.
- The first Russian magazine for children was published in 1785.

The newspapers have their own language or style; we get information from them and can't imagine our life without them. We can subscribe to newspapers or

buy them in the Metro stations, in kiosks (or newsstands), in hotels or other places.

The most popular newspapers in Moscow: "**Moscow Komsomolets**", "**Arguments and Facts**", "**Moscow Pravda**", "**Moscow News**", "**SPID-Info**", "**Vechernyaya Moskva**" and others. The most popular St. Petersburg newspapers are: "**St. Petersburg Vedomosti**", "**Evening Petersburg**", "**Rush Hour**", "**Nevskoye Vremya**" and others.

A modern newspaper couldn't be sold at a profit without advertisements. The most popular newspapers have a large circulation. All newspapers vary greatly in their ways of presenting news. The newspaper remains a powerful means of spreading information and news.

The Radio

Radio is one of the greatest achievements of modern engineering. It was invented by A. S. Popov, the talented Russian scientist. (He devised the first aerial in advance of Marconi).

Radio is the most powerful and quickest means of spreading news and information. What do the Russians listen to in Russia?

- "Radio of Russia"
- "Radio Station "Mayak"
- "Europe Plus"
- "Radio Baltika"

Some people like the information they get from the programmes; some people like the musical programmes; others like the literary programmes or those about sports.

The 7th of May is annually celebrated in Russia as Radio Day, because on that day in 1895, A. Popov demonstrated the first radio receiving set in the world.

Television

Television is an extension of the now familiar, everyday radio. Television is a combination of the Greek word tele — meaning "distance" — and the Latin video — meaning "to see".

How has television become an extension of radio? Sight has been added to sound over the air.

Television now plays a great role in many people's lives. You can see a lot of informational, educational, entertainment, musical, sports programmes every day. The most popular Television Companies:

- ORT (The Public Television of Russia)
- RTR (Russian Television Company)
- NTV (Independent Television). The most popular programmes are: "Wonderfield", "KVN" and others.

Assignments:

Answer these questions:

1. Do you like to watch television programmes or to listen to the radio?
2. Have you got a TV-set, VCR (a radio, a tape-recorder)?
3. What programmes of the Central Television do you like to watch best of all?
4. How many channels has your television got?
5. What stations can you get on your radio?
6. Who invented the radio? (the television)?
7. What are the most popular TV-sets now?
8. What is the Russian system of colour TV based on?
9. What kinds of TV programmes do you like to watch?
10. What telecasts do you like best of all?

Do you know...

Alexander Popov (1859-1905) was born in the Urals. He studied at the seminary in Perm, then went to the University of St. Petersburg. After graduating from the University, he developed a detector for radio waves. On March 24, 1896 he demonstrated the transmission and reception of a radiogram consisting of two words: Heinrich Hertz.

- **The first television picture** was made by the professor B.L. Rozing from St. Petersburg in 1911.
- **The first television broadcast** in Russia was made in 1938.
- **The first coloured telecast** was made in 1960 from St. Petersburg's Electrotechnical Institute named after Bonch-Bruyevich.
- **The 533-metre ferroconcrete TV tower** at Ostankino is one of the world's tallest free-standing structures.
- **The first Soviet television** was made in 1932 in Leningrad.
- **The first coloured televisions** "Raduga-4" and "Raduga-5" were made in 1967 in St. Petersburg.
- **The Russian system of colour TV** is based on the Secam-3, developed by French engineers.

Daily life

Daily life for the majority of Russian women is very much the same. One gets up at 7-8 a.m. depending on working hours of her company. Factories and plants usually work from 6-8 a.m., and offices and shops from 9-10 p.m. After a simple breakfast (normally just a sandwich with tea or coffee), she goes to catch a bus/tram/trolleybus/underground train. Most Russians live in flats in outskirts ("sleeping zones"), work in the center of the city, and have to spend from 30 to 90 minutes to reach their working place. Public transport is always overcrowded during the "peak" time, and she does not have any chance to have a seat. People in the transport are like fishes in a can, some of them are touching her, but it's quite normal - there is nothing one can do. People in transport are always unfriendly and irritated, though if you are pregnant, with a small baby in hands or very old, they will offer you a seat.

Normally the working day is 8 hours with one 30-60 minutes lunch break. If one works for a state enterprise, she may have a few tea pauses - there is a poor discipline on those plants, one can easily leave her job to settle some personal problems. Working for a private company means a better salary than working for the state, but also staying after hours often or from time to time.

Leaving her work at 5-7 p.m., she has to make her way all the way back home using the same overcrowded public transport. Having a car is still considered to be a kind of luxury, and even if the family has a car, it's always the husband who drives it. The price of the cheapest new brand car is about USD 5,100, with the average women's monthly salary 3000 rubles (about USD 100). One can afford to buy a second hand car but it's very expensive to keep it on the road. You will also have to use a paid secure night parking or have a garage, both options will make an average woman run out of money.

Using public transport makes one twice as tired. During the cold season (November-March) it will also make you cold because you can't move there, and it's the same temperature inside as outside. So if it's -20°C outside, it's probably -18 in the bus. I used to have my own car, and used to go to work by bus, and I can say for sure - public transport exhausts you.

After arriving at her stop on her way back home, the woman usually goes to the nearest shop to buy some food - bread, milk and meat. Russians don't go shopping once a week, they buy products when they are finished. One must buy or provide his own plastic bags in a shop, they seldom give the bags away for free. Carrying bags home also doesn't make the woman relaxed - even if it's only a few kilos and few hundreds meters (usually homes are within 0-2 miles from shopping areas), you still feel it.

The woman arrives home completely exhausted. If she has a child, she must fetch him from the kindergarten on her way back. If she has a family, she must make food for it. Cooking in Russia is more complicated and takes much longer, not only because of different recipes, but also because of the lack of half-ready products. There are half-ready products on the market but they are mostly imported and therefore expensive.

After the supper, the family can watch TV for a couple of hours, then they go to bed.

Some people regularly visit gyms, probably about the same proportion of population as in the west (which means most people don't). Weekly movies or dining out are rare, discos or night clubs are more popular but still unaffordable for many people. Entertainment is expensive, and usually they it is limited by visiting friends or relatives on the weekends.

Generally, the daily life of a Russian woman can be described as *home - work - home* or *home - work - shops - home*. You can say that it's normal for the life in any western country as well, but there is one big difference: even small things in Russia require much more efforts. Small things that will take you a couple of minutes, in Russia can take you half an hour or even the whole day.

For example, I know about a case where a foreign company refused to pay 1-day salary to a Russian employee that she spent in some government committee

in order to obtain the necessary information requested by the foreign boss. "You could just make a phone call; there was no need to go there in person to get the information", said the foreign boss. For a Russian, it is crystal clear that a phone call will not get you the complete information on the government procedure, nor the government officials would supply such information via fax or mail it to you for free. Such practice is normal for western world but is a complete alien for Russian officials.

A stop on you way home to buy milk would take you two minutes; in Russia it can take a woman 10 times longer, since she has to specially walk to the shop and there stand in a queue (most shops in Russia, especially in regional cities, still sell over the counter and bill items manually).

This ***time rule*** is applicable to everything: getting things done in Russia takes longer and requires more effort. The word "convenience" was not in favor when the current system of Russian life was designed. The problem is not the availability of goods (food and goods are in abundance) but poor logistics.

Another thing about Russian daily life - they do not really enjoy it. They get awakened not to enjoy a new day but to cope with today's problems. There is little comfort and contentment. Russians are used to minor everyday difficulties, and they don't even bother them anymore. Russian daily life is tough, and it's probably the reason why they smile so seldom. Rarely you will see a smiling face in a bus or on the streets - the fact that usually makes foreigners wonder.

A Russian, living in Russia, might argue some of the points I discussed here, but a Russian, living abroad, will agree with me. There are differences that a person living in Russia cannot realize, and they involve not only better cars and homes ("*New Russians*" have it all!) but the very basic values of existence.

I believe the main difference in Russian and western way of life comes from those base beliefs: western life is built on the cult of "enjoy", Russian life is built on the base of "God endured, so we have to endure too".

Westerners live to enjoy; Russians live to endure. Russians are *survivors*.

This cultural paradigm can be demonstrated by the difference in religious rituals in western and Russian Christian churches: there are no benches and amphitheatres in Russian Orthodox churches. The whole 1-2 hour service people are supposed to spend standing shoulder-to-shoulder in a badly lit, stuffy, one-level room, where one struggles to see the priest. Many people stand on their knees during the service. Russian Christian church service promotes humility through enduring; while a western Christian church service promotes integrity and enhancement.

The very word "enjoy" has some indecent flavor in Russian: it is something that is not very appropriate, but done nevertheless. A Russian would usually say "I love/like [doing something]" rather than "I enjoy" [doing something]. Therefore they love (like) some things but doing them does not result in the feeling of contentment - this is actually what I mean by saying "They don't enjoy it".

Which of course doesn't mean Russians don't know how to have fun! They do know how to have fun, and many Russians abroad miss exactly Russian limitless fun (as comparing to reasonable, appropriate western fun). Also, the

English phrase "to have fun" is hardly translatable to Russian, since Russians do not make their purpose "to have fun" or "enjoy". Fun is just something that happens without plans, when people are happy and cheerful. In general, Russian people are much more spontaneous and playful than westerners.

Family life

The keyword to Russian family life is dependence. The family life is built on dependence, and Russians are attached to their family members.

The roots of this situation are in the way of being. Russians live in small apartments in large blocks, with 2-3 generations living together. It's normal when grown single children live with parents, and even when married children with spouses stay with one of the parents.

During the Soviet time one couldn't buy an apartment (Russians call them "flats"), he could only "receive" it from the state. The apartments were given to people for free, according to the time they worked on the enterprise. One should only pay a small fee for communal services. The state norms for giving the apartments were rather tough, with 5-8 square meters for a person. A family with 2 children of the same gender would get only two-room apartment of about 30 square meters (kitchens, bathrooms and passages were not taking into account). A divorced woman with a daughter would get only one-room apartment.

Nowadays one can buy an apartment, and the state does not give apartments to people for free anymore. Buying an apartment is unachievable for the majority of people because of small salaries. One of my friends, 38-year old single woman, still lives with her mom in one-room apartment, and they have zero chances to get a better one unless she gets married and leaves. (*Which is also doubtful as there are **10 million** (!) more women of marriageable age in Russia than men and all men who wanted to get married are normally married by the time.*)

Living in small apartments together with parents and/or children makes Russians take care of each other. They have to be considerate and ready to compromise. One has to adapt to the family lifestyle and rules.

Any person has his own limit of patience and acceptance of the things but Russians have much higher potential limits. If compare those limits with thermometer, Americans have 20-degrees "thermometer", and when they reach this point, their emotional "thermometer" just fails to work further. For them it's a critical situation. Russians have 100-degrees thermometer, and in the same situation, which is unacceptable for an American, they will act as if nothing happens.

That's why I think that Russian women have the proper skills to make good wives. They usually do not let situation to come to the point of no return. It does not mean that they give up their goals easily, but they try to reach them in a different, less complicated or roundabout way. They do not intend to prove their point, and the result is of more importance than the rightness. You won't even notice how it happened that you eventually did what she wanted! And it does not mean that the woman is devious or the like; for her it's just natural.

Well, coming back to Russian family life.

Russians get married early, at the age 18-22. Because they don't really care much about making a career, they don't wait until they are independent. Young couples usually stay with wife's or husband's parents during the first years of marriage.

Being single in Russia puts a label on a woman. If she is over 25 and still single, it means that something's wrong with her. Not any amount of money she earns or her career successes can give her high social status, if she is not married. From the other hand, it's not such a fortune for a woman - to be married in Russia. A decent woman is supposed to stay at home, while her husband is allowed to spend time with friends in cafes, restaurants and discos. All housework is also women's responsibility, and it's quite a lot if taking in consideration the lack of home electronic utilities. About 80% of Russian families do not have even an automatic washing machine and microwave. Russian society is pretty male dominating.

Infidelity is common in Russia. Women outnumber men, and a guy can easily find somebody for affairs. Sleeping around is a kind of honor for a man. Women are not supposed to do it to be respectable, but still, guys find partners, so I believe that the girls just keep quiet. One of my male friends of 38 years, who has probably about 30 new partners every year, aged from 18 to 40 (*he is not married, at least!*), well-traveled and well-educated guy, a former national level sportsman, told me once in a frank impulse: "The only good thing about Russia is girls. Beautiful, gentle and accessible".

For the women agreeing on casual sex is the way of attracting a partner that she hopes may later offer her commitment. Single girls all desperately want to find a "worthy" man and get married. Marriage for Russian women is the same type of thing as career for western women - it gives them a respectable social status.

Traditions

Russian drinking traditions are very much a cultural thing, and the person who drinks and does not become drunk is always respected. It's called "he can drink". The more you drink and don't fall down drunk, the more your friends will respect you. Many business deals are solved while drinking together, it's probably one more reason why women don't succeed in making careers.

Drinking alone is considered as being an alcoholic, drinking in company is encouraged.

Russians do not drink without a reason. It does not mean that they do not drink just when they want, it means that every time they want to drink they bring up a reason. It can be anything - from buying a new thing (in this case they call it "obmyt" - in literal translation "to wash" the new thing) to celebrating the weekend.

The process of drinking is specific. The glasses of all company members must be full, then somebody should propose a "toast" - what for the company is going to drink this drink. "Toasts" can vary from trivial "Na zdorovie" or "Budem zdorovy" ("For our health") to any other wish or somebody's desire: "Za udachu" ("For good luck"), "Na dorozhku" (before leaving - "For the way"), "Daj Bog ne v

poslednij raz" ("Hopefully it's not the last time when we drink, with God's help") etc. After the toast people clink their glasses with each other and drink their drinks. Everybody must finish his drink, otherwise it means that he does not support the toast. The next toast follows in 5-10 minutes.

National Holidays

January 1 — New Year

January 7 — Russian Orthodox Christmas

February 23 — Men's Day

March 8 — International Women's Day

May 1-2 — Labour Day

May 9 — Victory Day

June 12 — Independence Day

December 31, January 1 — ***New Year's Day*** is the biggest Russian holiday.

In Russia, New Year's Day is a national holiday. Children do not go to school because they have winter holidays at that time. People do not work on that day. Many people celebrate New Year's Eve at home; they organize a party for members of the family or for their friends. A Christmas tree stands in every house at Christmas and sometimes Santa Claus and the Snow-Maiden visit us at home.

January 7 — ***Russian Orthodox Christmas***. People send warm New Year's greetings to each other, wish good health, happiness and great success in their life. During the Soviet time people were not allowed to celebrate Christmas and New Year was the most cheerful holiday.

The next holiday is the **Old New Year** (13 January). Russians had a different calendar before February 1918. The difference between Julian (the old Russian) and Gregorian (European) calendars was 13 days, and after the Soviet government adopted Gregorian calendar Russians started to celebrate many holidays twice: according to the new style and the old one.

Shrovetide (Масленица)

In Russia, Shrovetide is an ancient festival dating from pagan times. At first, it was a festival dedicated to the God Volos to celebrate the arrival of spring and the start of work on the land. This festival, originating in the ancients, worship of nature included rituals (burning a straw effigy of winter, lighting fires, leaving festival food on the ancestors' graves) and feasts, the main item at which were blini. Blini were made from a thin batter, and they were round and golden like the sun. Later, the Orthodox Church included Shrovetide among its festivals. Shrovetide has lost its ritual significance and become a purely symbolic festival of seeing off winter and welcoming spring. Blini are so popular that people make them all year round.

"Men's Day" is 23 February, it is an official holiday called "The Homeland Defender's Day". All men in Russia are liable for call-up (including reservists), so they all are celebrities. On this day women usually give men small gifts.

Official "**Women's Day**" is 8 March. On this day men give women gifts, usually flowers. Men also are supposed to do all the housework, this is pretty nice - at least once a year women can take a break and forget about all those dishes, cooking, kids, take a magazine and relax on the couch...

1 April is non-official "the Day of Laugh". People tell jokes to each other, newspapers and TV publish funny stories and jokes. The motto of this day: Do not trust anybody on 1 April ("Pervoye aprelya - nikomu ne veryu").

1 May is the Day of Labor. During Soviet time there were huge demonstrations on this day, as everybody was obliged to show his loyalty to the state; now only communists organize meetings on this date.

9 May - Victory Day. 2-day public holiday (8-9 May), the day when Nazi Germany capitulated in 1945 after 4-year war with Soviet Union and other countries. Soviet Union lost 20 million people in the war. The minute of silence announced on the Central TV in the memory of deceased at 9:00 P.M., and fireworks thereafter.

12 June - the Independence Day. It's an official holiday but Russians are not used to it yet. They spend this day on their "dachas" - small plots in countryside where they plant some vegetables.

1 September is the Day of Knowledge - it's the beginning of a school year. Children go to schools with flowers for teachers, there are meetings before the classes start - nice and exciting.

Russians LOVE to celebrate. They adopted the Western holidays such as St. Valentine, Catholic Christmas (they celebrate Christmas twice - Catholic and Orthodox) and Halloween. They also appreciate Chinese New Year, Muslim and Jewish holidays, as Russians are very tolerant to other religions.

When there is a public holiday, the weekend is shifted towards the holiday: if the holiday is on Thursday, Sunday will be the working day and Friday the day off. The same when the public holiday is on Tuesday: Saturday becomes the working day and Monday the day off. If the holiday is on Wednesday, there will be no long weekend.

There are quite a few long weekends every year, which many Russians use to travel, locally and abroad, the others spend holidays on their "dachas" (country-side houses).

Do you know...

— The first Christmas tree went on public display in 1852 at the Ekaterinhoff Concert Hall in St. Petersburg.

— The Russians are convinced that Grandfather Frost lives in a well-built wooden cottage (Russian izba) in a wood.

— It is also thought that he travels in a sleigh troika together with the Snow Maiden.

— The Snow Maiden is a beautiful girl with a long blond braid and is dressed in a sparkling snow-patterned sarafan trimmed with polar fox. Her head is crowned by a stellar snow flake.

— Father Frost is dressed in a warm sheepskin coat, felt boots and has big gloves

on his hands.

— People decorate trees in any way they wish.

— New Year is celebrated with the family.

— People like the costumed festivities. Children in different costumes dance around the Christmas tree, recite poetry, sing for gifts.

— Children like to help with the holiday preparations; they make multi-coloured toys from paper, cover nuts in gold wrappers.

Culture background

Russian culture has a long history and tradition and Russians are very proud of it.

Russians consider themselves as a well educated nation. They read a lot, books are cheap, and one can afford to buy 5-10 books a month without serious damage to a family budget.

Russians are also big fond of live performances at theatres and since tickets are affordable (prices in cinemas and theatres are comparable), they enjoy attending theatres: opera, musical, ballet, drama etc.

Usually every city has a few theatres. The theatre culture was developed during the Soviet times when tickets were sold through schools and enterprises: cities were divided into areas and there was a theatre agent responsible for each particular area. The agent would bring tickets for distribution to every enterprise and school in his area and the person responsible for "culture sector" would organize collective visit to the theatre. I think it was an excellent system since people had the opportunity to attend theatres from the early age, starting from attending performances in a Muppet theatre, then moving to the Youth Drama Theatre, then to Drama, Musical and Opera, according to their age. Also attending performances in a company is always much more fun, which contributed to the popularity of theatres. This is how most Russian people have developed their taste for live performances.

Movie theatres are also becoming popular in Russia and they are equipped with the latest sound systems. When Russian people talk about movie theatres, they will usually say "cinema"; if they talk about "theatres", they mean live performances.

During Soviet times there was a well developed system of community work and in every group (class at school, department at work etc) would be also a person responsible for sport, education, political information of the group etc. People that were doing community work were given benefits (free or discounted travel, ability to buy deficit goods, ability to receive a better apartment from the government for free etc) - remember, there was no private property until Perestroika, everything used to belong to the state, which was controlling distribution and would award the most active citizens. Unfortunately the system of volunteering was broken with Perestroika but Russians still have that great community spirit (which sometimes goes to the lengths a westerner would consider as infringement).

Russian culture is non-individualistic. The power of an individual in Russia is much less than in the west and most deals are pushed through family, friends and

acquaintances. Russian saying is, "One is not a soldier in the battlefield". In Russia, one still needs to know people in power to make things work. This is why they maintain more friendships than an average westerner. They often have to rely on their friends to help them out. You know someone who knows someone who is in power; this is the way they have the things done. If you know the right people, you can have the most difficult things done with little effort. In my life, a few times I ran into dead ends where there was nothing I could do in the straightforward way; the people were right to refuse me, according to the official rules. But once I could find people who knew someone inside the system, a month wait would turn into just a few hours wait or they would find a place for me where they said the rules would not allow them to give me one. Foreigners would just give up; Russians believe there is always a roundabout.

The majority of Russians consider themselves as Christians, and belong to Russian Orthodox Church. It's a great achievement for the country where atheism was the official state religion for more than 70 years. Frankly, most of them are not true believers. They appreciate Christian moral values but do not follow them. Religion is not a real part of their life. Russians are more aware of horoscopes than the Bible. Church service in Russia can be attended any day of the week and performed every day 2 or 3 times (early morning at 3 a.m., then at 8 a.m. and then in the evening at 7 p.m.). People usually attend the church just to "light a candle" and quickly pray. They do it to ask for something to happen (a business deal, an exam) or to remember a close person who is dead. People do not have to be a member of the church to do it and they do not have monthly contributions to the church. Church survives selling candles and reminder notes and charging for services such as baptizing, weddings and funerals. Church marriage is not official in Russia. A couple has to register their marriage with government authorities first to be allowed to have church ceremony performed.

Medical aid and education in Russia are free, though Russians joke that education becomes less and less free with every year. One can still get a university education for free by passing the entrance tests (exams), but the universities have to decrease the number of students studying on a free basis because of poor state financing.

Since both education and culture facilities used to be widely available, Russians can be considered a highly cultured nation. Their general knowledge is very good: they know a little bit about virtually everything. At secondary schools, they study not only the history of Russia but also the world history, including American and European history. In the same secondary school course (11 years school qualification is mandatory in Russia) they study world literature, world music, and world geography. Many books of western authors are mandatory reading in the course of literature (in Russian translation of course). The standard secondary school program includes studying of a foreign language for 6 years (grades 5-11), usually it is English but also can be French, German or Spanish. Most subjects in the course of a secondary school are mandatory for all schools throughout the whole Russia, and only since recently there are some subjects that students can choose in addition to the general course.

On the entrance exams at universities and colleges only questions from the general course of the secondary school can be asked. Universities and colleges accept students according to the results of entrance tests, and not according to their marks at school, though having excellent marks can help (for example, you would only have to pass 1-2 exams instead of regular 4).

Intellectually, Russians are interesting people to talk to and enjoy deep subjects. Philosophy is still a mandatory subject when you study for a degree and one of the 3 compulsory subjects for PhD qualifying exam (the other 2 are foreign language and the specialty itself).

At the same time the majority of Russians don't have what you call in the west "good manners". Their manners are not bad, they are just Russian. Russia is quite a tough country and Russians usually do not hesitate to say what they think in a way that doesn't leave room for any misunderstandings. During the Soviet period having "good manners" was considered as a bourgeois survival. Russians are very straightforward. When they meet or phone each other, they seldom spend time on questions like "How are you?" and go straight to the point. They are not rude, it's just a way of doing things.

Having a university or college degree is common. Russia has the highest educational level in the world (more than 40% of the total population have college or university degree). Since Perestroika, the system of higher (university) education is slowly deteriorating as well as the medical aid system, which used to be among the world's best. The problem with Russian education is that it was always rather theoretical and unrelated to practice. Therefore, it's common for a person having an engineering degree to work in sales, or one with a chemical background to find himself in marketing. In the old days having a degree was an end in itself. They are trying to change the educational programs now, but it will take years to build the system.

It's not of any wonder if a woman with university degree works as a secretary. Having a Ph.D. is also not a big deal, and doesn't give you a big advantage; good knowledge of English will provide you with a better competitive edge. The position that one has in a company is not as important as the company in which he or she works. Foreign companies and even foreign public/charity organizations are considered to be the best employment.

Having your own business in Russia is a big challenge. The tax system works in the way that if one has a small business (individual private enterprise), he must pre-pay taxes *before* he receives permission to act. It's unbelievable, but it's true: one is supposed to estimate his future income, and pre-pay taxes proceeding from the assumption. Then he gets a permission to start his business activity; but he must run to the tax department the second he earns 1 Ruble more profit than it was estimated and paid in advance. Otherwise it will be considered a hidden profit, and one can easily get a fine of the size equal to 200% of the amount of the hidden profit. I understand that it sounds funny, but it just works like this. The authorities are suspicious towards owners of small businesses.

The bigger enterprises have a more convenient tax system. In 2000 the government announced united tax of 12% on profits, and even said the hidden

(*black*) capitals may be legalized if the owner pays this 12% tax. At the same time there were comments from top government officials that this is only a temporary retreat, and the progressive tax system will be brought back as soon as people get used to paying their taxes. Actually, the government hoped that people would start paying tax and show their real profits - but Russians know their government. They don't want to be easily trapped by showing off their true income, and then be obliged to pay again enormous taxes of the past (up to 90% in different taxes on profit - state, region, city and others). Collecting taxes is still the biggest concern for the Russian government. Most serious investors of so called "New Russians" transfer their capitals abroad (of course, it's illegal, but there are so many ways to take a roundabout).

This 12% united tax attracted many foreigners to become Russian residents. In Moscow and St. Petersburg, there are sizable communities of expatriates that live there mostly because of the low taxes - investors etc. Other westerners live there because of the low cost of living; on a western disability pension one can live in Russia as a king. They even have their own expatriate newspapers in English!

Before the year 2000, the Russian tax system was very complicated. Counting all the taxes supposed to be paid, the total amount could reach 90%, including taxes on the salaries for employees. To pay 100 rubles to an employee, an employer had to pay about 80 rubles of tax to the state: pension funds, social insurance, medical insurance and so on. There were many federal, regional and city's taxes, which were different from one region to another. The system made companies have double accounting, and sometimes double salaries - an official one and so called "black cash salary".

Another reality businesses face in Russia is organized crime, which often has close connections with authorities. Small and medium businesses have to pay about 10% of the profits to "raket". Nowadays many businesses prefer to employ "commercial" departments of police organizations or private security companies, which are in reality just a camouflaged "raket". They will "help" you in a case of bad debts, problems with business partners or criminal situations like robbery etc, providing you a "roof". All "criminal cooperations" have official businesses registered, and you pay them an official fee additionally to unofficial.

It was a very funny case in Ekaterinburg at spring 1999, when one of the "cooperations" registered their association as "OPS". In Russian it is a common abbreviation for "organized crime syndicate" ("Organizovannoye Prestupnoe Soobshchestvo"). The guys from "OPS" explained their name differently as "Public Political Union" ("Obschestvenno Politicheskiy Soyuz"). It was one of the most famous and big groups in the city, and the choice of such a name demonstrated that the guys were feeling absolutely comfortable with their status. Well, you consider us as "OPS"? You've got it.

But businessmen are in a better situation than the people that work as employees. With all the headaches and stress, they still have some money and considerably good living standards.

Government employees, particularly medical doctors and teachers, do not receive their salaries for months, sometimes up to 6-8 months. It does not mean

that they don't receive salaries at all. It started in early 90th, first as delays with payments. So the first time one received his salary a week later, then next month - 2 weeks later, and so on. Eventually it happens that in June you receive your salary for last December. One receives some money regularly, and he can survive, though the government owes him thousands. This way was quickly picked up by the other organizations, and now even if one works for a private company, he might not receive his salary on time. The government constantly promises to fix outdated payments, and pay pensions and salaries to people working in a budget system on time, but for many years it's only promises.

Russians are smart. They have so many difficulties and problems in life, that they can easily find a roundabout way for anything. They don't have a deep respect towards any law, including traffic rules. Russians are of some the most reckless, but at the same time skillful, drivers, and the most careless pedestrians in the world.

A famous Russian comic, Mikhail Zadornov (it's also quite a coincidence that he is a name-sake of a former Russian minister of economy; once in a foreign encyclopedia they mixed up their photos - at the article about a minister was published a picture of the famous comic; well, nothing to worry about - Russian economy is also a very funny thing), so, this famous comic said: "The state steals everything it can from people. The people steal everything they can from the state".

Stealing is not considered to be a big deal as long as you have not been caught, and don't steal from your friends or the people you know. Stealing from one's work place was considered for years as an essential "skill of well being". During the Soviet time there was such a phrase: "Everything around belongs to the public (nation), so everything around belongs to me".

There was no such term as "private property", that's why Russians don't care about intellectual property either. No other country in the world has such abuse of pirate software, video and audio records, CDs etc exposed for sale on every corner. They used to publish books of Western authors, and the authors found it out only when started to receive letters of thanks from Russia. The pirate production is very cheap, for example a CD with the newest version of Microsoft Office or Windows will cost you \$4 or less, the same is applicable for any other software product.

The information from my sites was stolen many times. If foreign based services remove offensive sites (or take care that stolen information is removed) within 24 hours, Russian ISP's advised me to contact the thieves and try to regulate the matter myself. I would understand if it was paid subscribers whose money they did not want to lose, but one of the sites was hosted by a free service provider www.narod.ru, and the result was the same: "Yes, we also think it's bad, but we are not authorized to solve such problems. Apply to the site owner". Articles from my Russian site are stolen regularly, I stopped counting. One of my agents also reported a book published in Belarus that was an exact copy of the information from the website. There is no way you can get the thief back. *(I recently started placing them on the Black List though :-)*

Russians are used to a situation where everything is unpredictable and unstable. They live in a society where anything can happen, and don't wonder when the national currency loses 25% of its value 3 days after the president's public promise that there won't be any inflation in the nearest future because the situation has never been more stable. They have to adapt to new rules and laws quickly, and they manage successfully with this task. After "The Black Monday" (17 August, 1998) when the government announced default, and the ruble fell dramatically, people from any Western country would run to change the government. Russians ran to exchange rubles for dollars.

Actually, the crisis of 1998 made good for the country: when imported products became unaffordable, the Russian industry had favorable conditions for development and could occupy the large part of the market. Currently economical situation of Russia is stably improving.

Russians had to make the long journey from the total control of the Soviet times to the total uncertainty of the current situation. Their life has changed extremely, and if taking peoples' happiness means of measurement, it definitely changed for the worse. The older people are very sorry for the Soviet times, when everything was understandable, predictable and stable. One could not get a much better life than the others with all his talents and hard work, but he was confident he would have the necessary minimum: a place to stay, a job, free good quality medical aid and affordable prices for goods, his children would have free education and free access to any sport and cultural facilities. Well, guys, it was not such a bad time!

Nowadays people have lost those advantages of the socialist state, and they have yet to have the full advantages of Western capitalism. The majority of Russian people do not really understand the huge difference in the life in Russia and on the West. **Russians do NOT consider their life as miserable.** They feel that things are changing for the better and "everything's starting to work out" in their country. President Putin with his desire to clean up and stop corruption is very popular in masses. The frantic desperation of early 90th, when there was no food in shops, and late 90th with their economical roller coaster, is no longer there. The child birth rate is on the raise, which is a sure indicator people feel more confident about their future.

Russians like to emphasize their different attitude towards material values and consider themselves as sincere, cordial, understanding and unselfish. They like to talk about "specifics of Russian soul" or "mysterious Russian soul", and repeat the famous phrase of a Russian poet "You can't understand Russia by your mind".

Generally, Russians love their country. They can criticize it severely, but if you try to do the same they will defend it furiously. They feel like citizens of the largest country in the world, which has rich history and deep cultural roots, and they are proud of it.

Test Yourself

THE GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF RUSSIA

<p>1. The first Slav Union of Ros tribes was formed on the banks of the river ...</p> <p>a) <i>Don</i> b) <i>Volga</i> c) <i>Dnieper</i></p>	<p>9. The Russian Geographical Society in Russia was organized in the middle of ...</p> <p>a) <i>the 18th century</i> b) <i>the 19th century</i> c) <i>the 20th century</i></p>
<p>2. Russia is situated in Europe, in its ...</p> <p>a) <i>Central part</i> b) <i>Northern part</i> c) <i>Eastern part</i></p>	<p>10. The territory of Russia which does not have common borders with it is ...</p> <p>a) <i>Kaliningrad Area</i> b) <i>Komi Republic</i> c) <i>Karelian Republic</i></p>
<p>3. The main feature of Russia is that its territory is in two parts of the world:</p> <p>a) <i>1/3 in Asia; 2/3 in Europe</i> b) <i>1/2 in Asia; 1/2 in Europe</i> c) <i>2/3 in Asia; 1/3 in Europe</i></p>	<p>11. In the territory of Russia there are different temporal zones. Thus the difference in time between Moscow and the Far East is ...</p> <p>a) <i>8 hours</i> b) <i>9 hours</i> c) <i>6 hours</i></p>
<p>4. The sea which was the arena of battles and conflicts for a long time between Turkey and Russia:</p> <p>a) <i>the Black Sea</i> b) <i>the Baltic Sea</i> c) <i>the Sea of Azov</i></p>	<p>12. The highest mountains in Russia are ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Urals</i> b) <i>the Caucasus</i> c) <i>the Sayan Mountains</i></p>
<p>5. M. Lomonosov said that "the riches of Russia will be increased..."</p> <p>a) <i>by the Caucasus</i> b) <i>by the Far East</i> c) <i>by Siberia</i></p>	<p>13. What sea was "by a window in Europe for Russia"?</p> <p>a) <i>the Baltic Sea</i> b) <i>the Sea of Okhotsk</i> c) <i>the White Sea</i></p>
<p>6. The deepest and the longest river in Europe is in Russia. It is ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Oka</i> b) <i>the Don</i> c) <i>the Volga</i></p>	<p>14. The largest city in Russia is ...</p> <p>a) <i>St. Petersburg</i> b) <i>Moscow</i> c) <i>Kazan</i></p>
<p>7. The Volga, flowing practically through all the territory of the European part of Russia, runs into ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Caspian Sea</i> b) <i>the Black Sea</i> c) <i>the Aral. Sea</i></p>	<p>15. Siberia is rich in natural resources. The main oil-fields of Russia and Europe are in ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Tyumen Region</i> b) <i>the Novosibirsk Region</i> c) <i>the Altai Territory</i></p>
<p>8. The border between Europe and Asia is the mountain range ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Urals</i> b) <i>the Sayan Mountains</i> c) <i>the Tien Shan</i></p>	<p>16. For a long time the main conflict between Russia and Japan was :</p> <p>a) <i>Kurile Islands</i> b) <i>Marshall Islands</i> c) <i>Seychelles</i></p>

RUSSIA IN THE 20TH CENTURY

<p>1. During the revolution of 1905-1907 the largest party was the party of ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Mensheviks</i> b) <i>the Socialist-revolutionaries</i> c) <i>the Bolsheviks</i></p>	<p>9. One of the founders of the "White" voluntary Army during the Civil War of 1918-1922 was ...</p> <p>a) <i>A. V. Kolchak</i> b) <i>P. N. Krasnov</i> c) <i>L. G. Kornilov</i></p>
<p>2. Nicholas II was the last Russian Emperor (from 1895) and was overthrown in ...</p> <p>a) <i>1907</i> b) <i>1912</i> c) <i>1917</i></p>	<p>10. The Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic was founded in ...</p> <p>a) <i>1920</i> b) <i>1922</i> c) <i>1930</i></p>
<p>3. Where in Russia in 1905 did the first Soviets of Deputies appear? In ...</p> <p>a) <i>Ivanovo</i> b) <i>Moscow</i> c) <i>St. Petersburg</i></p>	<p>11. In 1922 V. I. Lenin worked out a new plan of economic development for the country which was called ...</p> <p>a) <i>the politics of "military communism"</i> b) <i>"NEP" (The New Economic Politics)</i> c) <i>"GOELRO"</i></p>
<p>4. At the beginning of the 20th century Russia was defeated in the war with ...</p> <p>a) <i>Japan</i> b) <i>Turkey</i> c) <i>Germany</i></p>	<p>12. After Lenin's death the leader of the Communist Party became ...</p> <p>a) <i>J. V. Stalin</i> b) <i>L. P. Trotsky</i> c) <i>G. Zinoviyev</i></p>
<p>5. Before the capturing of authority by the Bolsheviks in 1917, who aspired to establish in Russia a military dictatorship?</p> <p>a) <i>A. F. Kerensky</i> b) <i>L. G. Kornilov</i> c) <i>A. M. Krymov</i></p>	<p>13. The USSR gained a victory in the Great Patriotic War against Germany which began in 1941, in May ...</p> <p>a) <i>1943</i> b) <i>1945</i> c) <i>1946</i></p>
<p>6. The Head of the Provisional Government of Russia before the Bolshevik revolution was:</p> <p>a) <i>A. F. Kerensky</i> b) <i>A. I. Guchkov</i> c) <i>P. N. Milyukou</i></p>	<p>14. "The Cold War" in the world became especially aggravated when the Head of the USSR was:</p> <p>a) <i>N. S. Khrushchev</i> b) <i>L. I. Brezhnev</i> c) <i>Yu. V. Andropov</i></p>
<p>7. The Head of the staff of the organization of the October armed revolt of 1917 was ...</p> <p>a) <i>L. D. Trotsky</i> b) <i>V. I. Lenin</i> c) <i>F. A. Dzerzhinsky</i></p>	<p>15. "The Stagnation" is the period in a history of the USSR connected to the leader of the 60s and of the 70s ...</p> <p>a) <i>Yu. V. Andropov</i> b) <i>I. E. Kirilenko</i> c) <i>L. I. Brezhnev</i></p>
<p>8. The Manifest of Nicholas II from October 17, 1905 proclaimed the creation in Russia of elective legislative authority. What was it called?</p> <p>a) <i>the State Duma</i> b) <i>the Legislative Assembly</i> c) <i>the Zemsky Sobor</i></p>	<p>16. The author of "perestroika" or "reorganization" in 1986 became one of the leaders of the CPSU. Who was he?</p> <p>a) <i>M. S. Gorbachev</i> b) <i>B. N. Yeltsin</i> c) <i>Ye. K. Ligachev</i></p>

RELIGION AND HOLIDAYS

<p>1. In the 17th century in the Russian Orthodox Church there was a split initiated by...</p> <p>a) <i>Patriarch Nikon</i> b) <i>Protopope Avvakum</i> c) <i>Monk Silvestr</i></p>	<p>9. The Orthodox Christians in the 17th century differed from schismatic old-believing sects by crossing themselves:</p> <p>a) <i>from right to left by three fingers</i> b) <i>from left to right by two fingers</i> c) <i>from left to right by all palm</i></p>
<p>2. Christmas-Tide (Святки) in Rus was the name of the period which lasted ...</p> <p>a) <i>from Christmas up to Epiphany (Крещение)</i> b) <i>Easter (Пасха)</i> c) <i>Shrovetide (Масленица)</i></p>	<p>10. One of the most revered Saints of the Russian Orthodox Church is ...</p> <p>a) <i>Andrew the Called (Андреи Первозванный)</i> b) <i>Nikolay the Thaumaturge (Николай Чудотворец)</i> c) <i>Apostle Paul (Апостол Павел)</i></p>
<p>3. Lent (Великий пост) in Rus occurred between ...</p> <p>a) <i>Christmas and Epiphany</i> b) <i>Ivanov's Day and Iljin's Day</i> c) <i>Shrovetide and Easter</i></p>	<p>11. The Orthodox Holiday marking the end of winter and the beginning of spring is ...</p> <p>a) <i>Easter</i> b) <i>Purification (Сретенье)</i> c) <i>Epiphany</i></p>
<p>4. In Russia the clergy belonged to the estate of the people who were ...</p> <p>a) <i>Privileged</i> b) <i>Half-privileged</i> c) <i>Tax (or Duty) People (податных)</i></p>	<p>12. In St. Petersburg there is a Patron Saint whose name is esteemed most of all ...</p> <p>a) <i>Nikolay the Thaumaturge (Николай Чудотворец)</i> b) <i>Alexander Nevshy</i> c) <i>Joann Kronshtadtsky</i></p>
<p>5. The Superior Patriarch (Head of a Synod) of the Russian Orthodox Church is ...</p> <p>a) <i>Metropolitan</i> b) <i>Archimandrite</i> c) <i>Protopope</i></p>	<p>13. The Orthodox Spring Holiday, most popular among the Russian people — ...</p> <p>a) <i>Assumption (Уснение)</i> b) <i>Intercession (Покрова)</i> c) <i>Easter (Пасха)</i></p>
<p>6. The Russian Christian Orthodox Church took its roots from the religious trend that appeared in ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Byzantine Empire</i> b) <i>West-Roman Empire</i> c) <i>England</i></p>	<p>14. Who presently is at the head of the Russian Orthodox-Church?</p> <p>a) <i>the Patriarch</i> b) <i>the Ober-procurator of Sacred Synod</i> c) <i>the Metropolitan of Moscow</i></p>
<p>7. A place of religious pilgrimage (па-ломничество) of the Russian cultural workers of the 19th century was:</p> <p>a) <i>Optin's desert</i> b) <i>Valaam</i> c) <i>Soiovki</i></p>	<p>15. Protopope Awakum, executed together with his allies in 1621, wrote the book which was an angry accusation of imperial and Church authority and was called ...</p> <p>a) <i>"The Life" («Житие»)</i> b) <i>"Prayer-book" or "Chasoslovets" («Часословец»)</i> c) <i>"Legends"</i></p>
<p>8. The famous figure of the Russian Orthodox Church, Sergious of Radonezh, founded ...</p> <p>a) <i>the Trinity Monastery</i> b) <i>the. Donskoy Monastery</i> c) <i>the Solovetsky Monastery</i></p>	

THE CHRONICLERS AND HISTORIANS ABOUT THE HISTORY OF RUSSIA

1. The author of the first chronicles in Rus "Tales of Bygone Years" was ...
 - a) *Nikon*
 - b) *Silveslr*
 - c) *Nestor*
2. The first famous historian of Russia of the first half of the 19th century was ...
 - a) *V. N. Tatishchev*
 - b) *M. M. Shcherbatov*
 - c) *N. M. Karamzin*
3. The first chronicler of Russian history lived in the 12th century in ...
 - a) *Novgorod*
 - b) *Ryazan*
 - c) *Kiev*
4. What is the name of the main work of N. M. Karamzin?
 - a) *"The History of the Russian State"*
 - b) *"The History of Russia since the Ancient Times"*
 - c) *"The Russian History Manual"*
5. The most extensive annals were written on
 - a) *the history of cities*
 - b) *the history of the princely families (kins)*
 - c) *the history of a church*
6. The Russian historian, friend of the famous Ukrainian poet of T. G. Shevchenko, protested against the serfdom was ...
 - a) *N. I. Kostomarov*
 - b) *S. M. Soloviyov*
 - c) *V. O. Klyuchevsky*
7. The first printed book in Rus appeared
 - a) *in the 15th century*
 - b) *in the 16th century*
 - c) *in the 17th century*
8. Who was the author of the work "The Sketches on History of the Russian Culture" (the student of V. O. Klyuchevsky)
 - a) *A. S. Lappo-Danilyevsky*
 - b) *M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky*
 - c) *P. N. Milyukov*
9. The largest historical work about the Ancient Rus was issued in the 16th century
 - a) *"A Regal Chronicler" («Царственный летописец»)*
 - b) *"The Sedate Book" («Степенная книга»)*
 - c) *"The Chronograph" («Хронограф»)*
10. "The History of Russia since Ancient Times" has written by the famous Russian historian of the end of the 10th century ...
 - a) *V. O. Klyuchevsky*
 - b) *S. M. Soloviyov*
 - c) *P. N. Milyukov*

11. "The Life of Protopope Avvakum" is a historical research of the 18th century, calling ...

- a) to the reverence (почитанию) of a church
- b) to the struggle with the tsar's tyranny
- c) to the split (расколу) of the Russian Church

12. Who taught the history of Russia to the future tsar Alexander III?

- a) S. M. Soloviyov
- b) V. O. Klyuchevsky
- c) N. I. Kostomarov

13. The first Russian historian of the 19th century, who wrote "A History of Russia in the stories for children", was ...

- a) A. O. Ishimova
- b) P. Ya. Chaadayev
- c) A. F. Smirdin

14. The most well-known historian of the 19th century, N. M. Karamzin, issued a magazine ...

- a) "The Herald (Вестник) of Europe."
- b) "The Literary Newspaper"
- c) "The Son of Fatherland"

15. What did they call the magazine devoted to the history of the liberation movement issued at the beginning of the 20th century?

- a) "The Days of Old" («Былое»)
- b) "Russian Wealth" («Русское богатство»)
- c) "The Historical Herald" («Исторический вестник»)

Remember: chronicle = annals - летопись

TEST

Match Russian idioms with their English equivalents

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 бальзам на душу | a. as white as a sheet |
| 2 без страха и упрека | b. to take the bull by the horns |
| 3 белый как полотно | c. music to one's ears |
| 4 беседа за круглым столом | d. to come to one's senses |
| 5 брать быка за рога | e. without fear or favour |
| 6 братья за ум | f. a round-table conference |
| 7 будет и на нашей улице праздник | g. a storm in a tea-cup |
| 8 буря в стакане воды | h. to be a scapegoat |
| 9 быть голодным как волк | i. every dog has his day |
| 10 быть козлом отпущения | j. to be hungry as a hunter |
| 11 в расцвете сил | k. to play the fool |
| 12 в чужой монастырь со своим уставом не ходят | l. in the pink |
| 13 валять дурака | m. when in Rome, do as the Romans do |
| 14 великие мира сего | n. to get the upper hand |
| 15 ветер перемен | o. to read one's mind |
| 16 взять себя в руки | p. the great ones of the earth |
| 17 видеть насквозь | q. the wind of change |
| 18 говорить по делу | r. to slip one's mind |
| 19 выскочить из головы | s. to lose one's temper |
| 20 выходить (выйти) из себя | t. to talk shop |
| 21 гадать на кофейной гуще | u. a bolt from the blue |
| 22 гром среди ясного неба | v. to box the ears |
| 23 дать по ушам | w. an article of faith |
| 24 дело чести | x. to read the tea-leaves |
| 25 за словом в карман не полезет | y. two and two make four |
| 26 как дважды два четыре | z. to have a ready tongue |
| 27 как иголку в стоге сена | a'. like a cat on hot bricks |
| 28 как на горячих углях | b'. like talking to a brick wall |
| 29 как об стенку горох | c'. like looking for a needle in a haystack |
| 30 как рыба в воде | d'. don't change horses in midstream |
| 31 как с неба свалиться | e'. like a duck to water |
| 32 коней на переправе не меняют | f'. to appear out of the blue |
| 33 крыша поехала | g'. to confuse the issue |
| 34 называть вещи своими именами | h'. to have a screw loose |
| 35 напускать туману | i'. to call a spade a spade |
| 36 образ жизни | j'. to have too much tongue |
| 37 после дождичка в четверг | k'. a way of life |
| 38 что на уме, то на языке | l'. till the cows come home |

Voyages of Discovery

Great Russian Explorers and Discoverers

This table shows what parts of the world the various explorers discovered or travelled

Data	Name	Places discovered
1466-1472	Afanasy Nikitin	India
1581-1584	Ermak Timofeyevich	Western Siberia
1628-1530	Penda	The expedition from Turukhansk along the rivers Nizhnyaya Tunguska, Lena, Angara, Yenisey to Turukhansk
1633	I. Perfiliev, I. Rebrov	The first voyage along the Lena to its mouth
1639-1641	I. Moskvitin	The expedition to the Sea of Okhotsk
1643	K. Ivanov	Lake Baikal
1643-1646	V. Poyarkov	The first travellings to Yakutia and the Amur Region
1648	S. Dezhnev	The first sea voyage around Chukotsk Peninsula. The discovering of the Bering Strait
1691-1699	L. Morozko, V. Atlasov	Kamchatka
1711-1713	D. Antaiferov, I. Kozyrevsky	Kurile Islands, the drawing up of the first map
1714-1717	A. Berkovich-Cherkassky	The Caspian Sea and Kazakhstan
1719-1721	I. Yevreinov, F. Luzhin	The drawing up the first map of the South Siberia, Kamchatka and Kuriles
1725-1730	V. Bering, A. Chirikov	The first Kamchatka expedition. Discovering the Bering Strait between Asia and America
1732	I. Fyodorov, M. Gvozdev	The first crossing of the Bering Strait and reaching Northern America
1735-1742	V. Pronchishchev, S. Chelyuskin and D. Laptyev	The Laptev Sea, the East Siberian Sea, the Sea of Chukotsk
1741	A. Chirikov	North-Western Sea shores of Northern America
1741	V. Bering	Koraandorskiye Islands
1742	S. Chelyuskin	The Cape of Chelyuskin
1803-1806	I. Krusenstern, Yu. Lisyarisky	The first around the world sailing voyage. The way from Russia to Kamchatka and Alyaska
1820-1824	F. Vrangal	Eurasia
1848-1849	A. Butakov	The seashores of the Aral Sea
1848-1855	G. Nevelsky, N. Bozhnyak	The Nevelsky Strait. The foundation of Nikolaevsk on the Amur and Vladivostok. The Russian flag above Primoriye
1856-1857	P. P. Serayonov-Tyanshansky	Tien Shan, the discovering of Issyk Kul Lake
1858-1859	Ch. Valikhanov	Kashgariya (China) and Takla-Makan desert
1870-1885	N. Przhevalsky	Central Asia: Dzhungariya, Tibet, the Gobi, Lop Nor (China) Lake, the Huai He River and the Yangtze River
1877-1878	N. Severtsev	Central part of the Pamirs
1889-1890	M. Pevtsov, G. Potinin, V. Roborovsky, P. Kozlov, G.M. Grumm-Grzhimailo	Central Asia

Data	Name	Places discovered
1892-1901	V. Obruchev, V. Roborovsky, P. Kozlov	Central Asia. West China and Mongolia
1926	S. Obruchev	The discovery of Cherskogo Range (Asia)
		Africa
1880-1883	V. Yunker	The discovery of the watershed of Nile and Congo
		Northern and Southern America
1648	S. Dezhnev	The first sea voyage through the Bering Strait
1732	I. Fyodorov, M. Gvozdev	North-west of Northern America
1741	V. Bering, A. Chirikov	Northern-Western so called "Russian America"
1814-1817	M. Lazarev, O. Kotsbu, F. Bellingshauzen	Oceania. The Pacific Ocean. Suvorov Island, Islands of Russians, Marshall Islands, Taumota Islands and others
		Antarctica
1820	F. Bellingshauzen, M. Lazarev	The discovery of the Antarctic continent
1821	F. Bellingshauzen	Peter I Islands, the Alexander Archipelago, the Bellingshauzen Sea
1956	M. Sornov, A. Treshnikov, Ye. Tolstikov and other (USSR)	The first Antarctic expedition. The Sea of Cosmonauts, the Lazarev Sea and others. About 1,000 Russian geographical names on the map of Antarctic. The creation of the first detailed map
		Arctic Region
1913-1915	B. Vilkitsky	Severnaya Zemlya (Northern Land)
1930	O. Shmidt, V. Vize (USSR)	Vize Island
1932	O. Shmidt (USSR)	Sea voyage through the Great Northern Sea shipping routes on the side of the steamship "Sibiryakov"
1937-1938	I. Papanin, P. Shirshov, Ye. Fyodorov, A. Krenkel, Ya. Gakkel (USSR)	The completion of the successful work of the I Soviet drifting research station "The North Pole I"
1948	Ya. Gakkel (USSR)	The exploration of the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. The discovering of the Lomonosov Mountain range
1950 up to present days	Scientific workers of the Arctic and Antarctic Institute (USSR)	The continuation of many years work investigations of the Arctic Ocean bottom on the drifting station "The North Pole"
1977	(USSR)	Atomic ice-breaker "Russia" reached the North Pole
1982	Group headed by S. Soloviyev	From the coast of the Bering Strait to Murmansk sea coast (10,000 km for 8 months)
1986	Group headed by D. Shmaro	Subjugation of the North Pole in unusual rigorous conditions of polar night on skis

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