**Sports and healthy lifestyle**

- What role does sport play in your life?

- Although I do not go in for sports, I am fond of such activities that allow me to keep fit at home. I start with running then I take exercise programmes.

- Do your friends go in for sports?

- Some of them go in for sports and sports activities such as swimming, skiing, playing badminton, ice hockey, football or basketball. Unfortunately, public sports facilities are not always available to my friends, and they are engaged into outdoor activities. Most of them prefer running. They put on the white 'trainer' shoes and tracksuits and run through the parks or along the streets for half an hour a day.

- Do secondary schools officials pay attention to sports?

- Russian schools use sports activities as a way of teaching social values. Among these are teamwork and sportsmanship. The average secondary school offers its pupils such sports as football, basketball, track-and-field. Being intelligent and being good in sports are regarded as an ideal.

- Do you often attend a swimming pool?

- I enjoy swimming that is why twice a week I go to the swimming pool in autumn, winter and spring. In summer I swim in the lakes and rivers. But most of all I like to swim in the Black sea.

- Is the healthy life-style popular in Russia?

- Yes, certainly. Today everybody wants to be fit, feel good, look slim and stay young. Everyone who wants can participate in sports activities in our country. Many fitness clubs and public leisure centres have been built during the past years. These modern centres with their swimming pools, squash courts, gym and indoor courts for tennis are competing with cinemas and theatres as places for people to go to spend their leisure time. There one can find a leisure pool with a wave machine, water slides and tropical plants Families can spend their holidays at huge indoor water parks. In such pools people in the main splash and not swim.

- What do you know about sports in foreign countries?

- Nowadays sports and activities are fashionable in Europe and America. For example, popular marathons are now held everywhere. Lots of people want to see if they can run 42 kms and do it faster than everyone else. The big city marathons, in London and New York, are important sporting events. Television cameras and newspapers report them in detail. According to the latest figures the most popular sports in Europe and America are walking, cycling, jogging, playing football and golf. Other popular sports are bowling, badminton, tennis. Experts are asking a very important question: should sports be taken seriously or should it be just for fun?

- What do you think about it?

- I think, it depends upon the people's choice. Some people want to go in for sports seriously, others consider it to be a way to keep fit.

- What sports are British fond of?

- Sports play an important part in the life of the English people. All sports are very popular among them. The national British sports are: football, golf, cricket, table tennis, lawn tennis, snooker, steeplechase, racing, darts. The British are fond of football which is of two kinds there: association football (soccer) and rugby. Englishmen like all kinds of racing. Horse-racing, motor-car racing, boat-racing, dog-racing, donkey-racing are very popular in England.

- What sports are popular in American?

- Such sports as hockey, soccer, weightlifting, track and field, tennis, rowing, wrestling, golf, basketball, volleyball, boxing, figure-skating, cross-country skiing, swimming, judo and shooting are popular in the USA. The variety and size of the country, its different climates and the people's love of competitions of any type can explain the large choice of sports in America. The most recent unusual sport that first reached popularity in the USA is triathlon. It includes swimming, bicycle racing and long-distance running and is becoming more and more popular in Europe.

- What do you know about the Olympic games?

- The history of the Olympic games dates back to Ancient Greece. According to the legend Hercules was the founder of the first Olympic Games. An athletic festival with competitions in music and poetry began to attract the Greeks in the 8th century. The year 776 BC was established by history as the first date of the recorded Olympiad. The Olympic Games were held every five years. People dated events by the Olympiads throughout ancient period. The athletes competed in running, boxing, wrestling, horse and chariot racing. The winners were given laurel wreaths. According to the rules established at Olympia all hostilities between warring states ceased for the duration of the Olympiad. The truce was universally respected and no Greek state could break it. In the course of time the festival became so popular that not only athletes competed for the crown of wild olive but artists, poets, philosophers, orators and historians, were trying to create immortal works dedicated to the unity and splendour of Hellenic civilization. The prestige and brilliance of the Olympic Games was so great that other panhellenic festivals were instituted two centuries later - the Pythian (590 BC), the Isthmian (580 BC), the Nemean (573 BC), in honour of Apollo, Poseidon and Zeus respectively. The Olympic Games were held for nearly twelve centuries and were abolished in 394 AD by Theodosius I, the Christian Emperor, on the ground of their pagan origin. At the end of the 19-th century Baron Pierre de Coubertin revived them. In 1894 he addressed the International Congress of Athletes emphasizing the importance of sports in the peoples' life. The first modem Olympic Games were held in Athens in 1896 to signify the succession of the tradition. Since then the Games have been regularly held in different countries of the world.

- What body controls the programme of the Olympic games?

- The International Olympic Committee is responsible for the programme, the number of the participants and the city-host for the Games.

- When did Russia join the Olympic movement?

- Our country first participated in the 1952 Summer and 1956 Winter Olympic Games. The achievements of our athletes in the Olympic Games were a source of great national pride. Although athletes were technically amateurs, they were well supported by the Sports State Committee. In ice hockey, volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, track-and-field athletes, weight lifting, wrestling, and boxing our country was among the best in the world. At the 1992 Barcelona Olympics the team of our country won 45 gold medals.

SPORT AND A HEALTHY MODE OF LIFE

Sport is very important in our life. It is popular among young and old people.

Many people do morning exercises, jog in the morning, train themselves in clubs, in different sections and take part in sport competitions.

Other people like sports too, but they only watch sports games, listen to sports news. They prefer reading interesting stories about sportsmen. But they don't go in for sports.

Physical training is an important subject at school. Pupils have got physical training lessons twice a week. Boys and girls play volley-ball and basket-ball at the lessons. There is a sports ground near our school and school-children go in for sports in the open air.

A lot of different competitions are held at schools, a great number of pupils take part in them. All participants try to get good results and become winners. Sport helps people to keep in good health. If you go in for sports, you have good health and don't catch cold.

Children and grown-ups must take care of their health and do morning exercises regularly.

There are some popular kinds of sports in our country: football, volley-ball, hockey, gymnastics, skiing, skating. Athletics is one of the most popular kinds of sports. It includes such kinds of sports as running, jumping and others. Everybody may choose the sport he (or she) is interested in.

There are summer and winter sports.

My favourite sport is swimming. I go to the swimming-pool twice a week. But I prefer to rest by the lake or the river and swim there.

My friend Kostya goes in for boxing, He is a good boxer and he is a brave and courageous boy. His hobby helps him in his everyday life.

We must speak about the Highland Games in Scotland . All competitors wear Highland dress. There are such competitions as putting the weight, tossing the caber and others. The English are great lovers of sports.