**ABOUT MYSELF.**

My name is Natalia. My surname is Govorova. I am 15. I was born in 1982 in Chelyabinsk. I live in a small town of Usinsk in the Komi Republic. My address is Flat 116, 19, Pionerskaya Street. My phone number is 41-5-81. I am a pupil. I go to school Numbers 1. I am a good pupil. I do well in all subjects. They say, that I am a hardworking person. To tell the truth, all school subjects come easy for me but sometimes. I have to sit much, for example, to do lessons in Physics or Chemistry, to write a composition or to learn a poem by heart. But my favourite subject is English. I spend much time on it reading books, doing tests etc. May be, English and learning it will be a part of my future carreer. I like reading. I think comics and detective stories are much easier to read but I prefer to read novels - historical or up-to-date. I like music. My musical tastes are different, but it depends on my mood. But I think every apple is good in its season. I play the piano and the guitar, not seriously, but for my soul. Sometimes I like to listen to the Russian classical music. My favourite composers are Chaikovsky and Mozart. I don’t like rock music, but I like “Queen” and “Beatles”. Also I like Russian folk songs. I have not much time to watch IV but sometimes I spend an hour or two watching an interesting film or a news programme. In the evening I often read newspapers (our local ones) or magazines. I like fresh air and exercise. I’m sorry I have not much time for doing sports. But some aerobics in the morning, a swimming-pool twice a week, a ski-walk on a frosty day are of great help. Sports is fun.

I have a wide circle of interests. I’m very sociable, so I get a way with people. I have many friends, most of them are my class-mates. We spend much time together, going out to the cinema or to the disco party, speaking about lessons and music, discussing our problems. But most of all I like my family. We all are great friends and deeply attached to each other.

You see, it’s me - a person with his good and not good characteristics, liking this and hating that. But it’s interesting for me to live, to open new things.

**BOOKS IN MY LIFE**

A book is one of the greatest wonders of world. Why are so many people fond of reading? The world of books is full of wonders. Together with the characters of books you can find yourself in different and countries, have a lot of adventures. The book is a faithful friend. They form our values and characters. We try to look like the characters of your favourite books: to be brave, honest, not to be silly and greedy, to be real friends. We enjoyed the beauty and wisdom of fairy-tales and fables when we were babies and Granny read them. They taught us to be kind, clever, hardworking, to understand other people and help them. They teach us to understand the beauty of nature, take care of it, to love our homeland.

Books have been with us since childhood. Who hasn’t read “Alice in the wonderland”, “Mowgli”? Who hasn’t travelled with Marry Poppins to her imaginary world? Who hasn’t imagined himself to be Robinson Crusoe on the deserted island?

I have read a lot of interesting books, but my favourite book is “The adventures of Tom Sawyer” by Mark Twain. This well-known book is popular with the children all over the world.

The main character of the book is Tom Sawyer, who lived in a small town on the Mississippi River. He was a boy with a wild imagination. He and his friends often dreamed of different adventures. Tom was naughty, kind and brave. Besides he was noble. I like this boy because he teaches us to be true friends.

If you are not fond of reading, take a book to your liking or borrow it from the library and read it. Books are worth reading. Readly, they are our good friends.

**KEEPIHG FIT AND DOING SPORTS .**

I you want to feel fit you’d better go in for one kind of sport or another. I should admit that everyone must do all he can to be healthy. Good health is better than the best medicine. “You have a sound mind in a sound body” as the old Latin saying goes. The English proverb “Sickness in the body brings sickness to the mind” expresses a similar idea but from different point of view. All kinds of physical exercises are very useful to make our bodies strong and to keep ourselves fit and healthy. To tell the truth I don’t do sports regularly and it is not an essential part of my daily life. In the morning I do some exercises just to awake. Then some aerobics for myself. It puts me into the fine moods. In summer I go swimming as there is a beautiful river with pure water where my Granny lives. In winter, it’s rather long at our place, I should say, I prefer skiing (There is nothing like the sight of a winter forest - a real fairy-tale). I like to ride the bike and tobogganing in winter. Mum says that I’m to old to do it, why not after all? I shouldn’t call myself a sports fan. Of course , I like to watch sports competitions on TV . Fortunately , they show different ones - football , basketball . I like tennis tournaments very much . I think , it’s a very intelligent kind of sport for clever thinking people . Also I admire skiing championships , biathlon , swimming . But what I like most is basketball . The best games are viewed on TV. I came to know that modern basketball appeared in 1891 in the USA. The originator, John Naismith was a coach at the college. He invented the baskets and the rules of the game. Since then basketball has be become very popular and is spread all over the world. It is the sport of strong tall men, the sport of giants.

Doing sports a man become strong, healthy and gay. He begins to take care of his health.

“Good health is better than wealth”, you know. It’s true, I should say. In our school we have a nice gym. Sports and games are popular among pupils. A lot of children train at special sport schools.

**LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGE.**

The great German poet Goethe once said: “He who know no foreign language does not know his own one. Learning foreign languages is specially important nowadays. Some people learn foreign languages because they need them in their work, others travel abroad, for the third studying languages is a hobby.

Every year thousands of people from Russia go to different countries as tourists or to work. They can not go without knowing the language of the country they are going to. A modern engineer or even a worker can not work with an imported instrument or a machine if he is not able to read the instruction how to do it. Ordinary people need language to translation the instruction or the manual to the washing-machine or a vacuum-cleaner, medicine or even food-products.

Some people are as a rule polyglots. Historians diplomats need some languages for their work. If you want to be a classified specialist you must learn English, the language of international communication.

English is one of the world languages. It is the language of progressive science and technology, trade and cultural relations, commerce and business. It is the universal language of international aviation, shipping and sports. It is also the major language of diplomacy. Hundreds and hundreds of books, magazines and newspapers are printed in English, most of the world’s mail and telephone calls are in English. Half of the world’s scientific literature is written in English. English is spoken by more than 350 million people. Geographically, it is the most widespread language on earth, second after Chinese. It is the official language of the UK, the USA , of Australia and New Zealand, it is used as one of the official languages in Canada, the South Africa. Millions of people study and use English as a foreign language. In our country English is very popular. It is studied at schools, colleges and universities.

Learning English is not an easy thing. It is a long process and takes a lot of time and patience. But to know English today is absolutely necessary for every educated person. I want to know English because it’s interesting for me to know foreign countries, their cultures and tradition. English will be of great use in my future profession connected with computers.

**MOSCOW**

The best way to see a strange city is to buy a map and a guide-book. If you want to learn, more about a city, it is useful to walk along the streets and look around to see historical places, buildings and monuments. There is no doubt that you should visit art galleries and museums.

Moscow, the capital of Russia, is one of the largest cities in the world. It stands on the bank of the Moskva River. About 10 million people live in the city. Moscow is famous for its historical and architectural monuments that were built by outstanding architects and sculptors: Kazakov, Bazhenov, Martos and others.

The best starting point of the tour around the city is Red Square, the central and the most beautiful square in Moscow. It is the place of parades, meeting and demonstrations. Here one can see the Cathedral of St.Basil the Blessed, or St.Basil’s cathedral, erected by architects Postnik and Barma to commemorate Russia’s conquest of the Kazan Kingdom in 1552. It is a masterpiece of Russian architecture. Tourists can see the monument to Minin and Pozharsky designed by Ivan Martos in 1818 in

memory of the Russian victory over the Polish invaders, the History Museum. The heart of Moscow is the Kremlin, a wonderful architectural ensemble with 3 magnificent cathedrals, the Bell Tower of Ivan the Great palaces, fortress walls and 20 towers. The most famous of the towers is the Spasskaya Tower with a big clock. The Kremlin with golden domes and tower makes a strong impression on tourists. The Alexander Garden with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is the place of memory. Some Skyscrapers decorate Moscow Including Moscow University, a palace of knowledge and students. Moscow is a scientific and cultural centre where there are a lot of institutes, universities, libraries, museums. The city leads a varied cultural life. It has a lot of cinemas, clubs, concert halls, more than 40 drama and musical theatres, including the Bolshoi Theatre, the Art Theatre. The Maly Theatre. The Vakhtangov Theatre.

Muscovites are proud of their museums : the Tretyakov Gallery, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, literary museums.

Crowds of people visit the Tretiakov Gallery admiring beautiful pictures of Russian painters.

Moscovites are fond of going in for sports so, there are a lot of stadiums, swimming-pools, courts and sports ground.

The citizens of Moscow enjoy spending their weekends in parks and gardens - the Park of Culture and Rest, Izmailovo, Sokolniki.

Moscovites do their best to create the atmosphere of the old Moscow with its unique monuments. Before the 850th anniversary of Moscow the Cathedral of Christ the Savior was completed.

Moscow is the place where things are happening in all spheres of life.

**MY FRIEND**

Frankly speaking, I have a lot of friends. Most of them are my classmates. They say that I am a good mixer and always have a way with people. But my bosom-friend is Olga. We are of the same age, we are both 15. She is pleasant looking girt not very tall but pleasantly plump. They say, she is the very image of her father, but, to my mind, she takes a lot after her Mum in looks - fair curly hair and dark blue eyes. When she smiles, 2 pretty dimples appear on her cheeks. To my mind, she is really a beauty. But her inner beauty is more important than physical one. Olga is well bred, jolly and king, life and soul of every company. She is tactful, witty generous and kind- hearted, careful and sensitive. She always ready to help other people. She is well-read and fond of reading very much. She always has 2 or 3 books at hand. Her second hobby is knitting and sewing. She is always elegant and always wears whet suits her. She is good at cooking I think she is cut out for a housewife.

Olga like all teenagers likes different music which helps her to relax. In this point we have much in common. We both go in for sports- aerobics I think, she is very gifted and capable.

She always manages to be cheerful, energetic, full of life and energy. She is a sunny soul by nature, she never feels sour.

As I have told, she is a helpful person and every time she tries to do her best to help somebody when he has problems.

Olga is very attentive to her parents and is simply mad about her dog. She cannot imagine her life without her.

Of course, Olga has some drawbacks - sometimes she is a hurly-burly girl, a bit stubborn. But still like her as she has a good sense of humour and pleasant to deal with.

We spend much time together - watch video or listen to the music, walk or go to the cafe discussing all sorts of things. If there is some misunderstanding between us we try to make peace soon. I respect Olga for intellect and modesty. You know, I miss her very often. Our friendship helps me feel strong and sure of myself.

**MY HOME IS MY CASTLE.**

I think, every person always dreams about the place where he can speak about his problems, chat with close friends, where he can feel happy and quiet. For me it is my family and my home. It is the best place in the world and my dearest people live here.

My family is not large we are 4. I have a father, a mother and a brother. We all live together in a new flat.

My father is 45. He is a tall and well-built man with short black hair and grey eyes. He is quiet and hardworking . Really, he is a bread maker of the family. Dad is handy with many things. His hobby is fixing everything at home.

My mother is very lively. She is life and soul of the family. She is a pleasant woman of forty with beautiful chestnut hair and dark brown eyes. She is a lofty ideal for me. My parents have been married for 20 years they have much in common, in everyday life Dad is impractical and needs mother to look after him. Parents have different views on music, books, films. For example, my father likes horror films and my father likes “soap operas”. My father is a football fat and Mum doesn’t like sports. But they try to have the same opinion about the education and upbringing of their children.

My brother is only 11. He goes to school. He is funny and curious. He is constantly asking many questions often silly ones. But this only a moment - I can’t imagine my life without our little monster.

We all feel happy when we are together. In the evenings we often have little gatherings in the kitchen by the cup of tea, chatting, laughing and discussing the events of the day. Those evening are the best of all. But sometimes I have problems with my parents. They don’t like the clothes I wear the music I listen to and the friends I bring home. It’s not easy to be a teenager. In summer I visit my Granny. I love her when I was a child she used to tell me fairytales and stories of her life.

My parents are hardworking. They combine work with housekeeping. Mum manages our household very well. We all are in the habit of helping her to run the house. They say “Men make houses, women make home”. My home is a cosy place. Our relatives and friends like to come to our place. My parents are very hospitable everybody feels at home in their flat. Really “There is no place like home”.

**OUR TOWN.**

We live in Usinsk. It’s a small town with the population of about 60 thousand people situated near the river Usa in the north-east of the Komi Republic. Usinsk is young it was founded in 1975. It is a multinational town, the people of many nationalities live here - the Russians, the Ukranians, the Tatars, the Komis, the Bashkirs and so on.

The climate is severe, the winter is cold and long it lasts for 6-8 months, the spring and the summer are short and cool.

Usinsk district is rich in oil, so they get oil here. There are many industrial enterprises in it connected with oil extraction, they are “Komineft”, “Arkhangelsk Negtegaz” and others. There are some joint - ventures such as “NobelOil”, “KomiArcticOil”, “KomiQuest” and others where the specialists from Canada, the USA, Great Britain, France work. In autumn 1994 our Usinsk became world - known as the town where the greatest ecological catastrophe took place. The old oil pipeline was broken, a lot of oil and products streamed on and in the ground, flew into the rivers and their tributaries. The news has quickly spread in the world, many foreign correspondents visited Usinsk in November 1994. “Green Peace” called this a great ecological catastrophe but our Komi oil bosses called it only a local incident without much consequences. The rescue operation I has been done to clean the banks of the rivers and the nearest places covered (polluted) with oil and oil products. The old broken pipeline was changed with the new one. I think, it’s such an unpleasant event in the life of our town.

As our town is young we have no theatres and museums, historical and memorial places. But we have a cinema, the Palace of Technics a swimming-pool, a hockey stadium, the House for Schoolchildren where there are a lot of different clubs, studios for teenagers and a lot of pupils attend them.

There is also a musical and art school, seven schools, many kindergartens. There is an airport and a railway station and our people can go to Moscow, Syktyvkar, Ufa, Kazan by plane and by train.

Our town is surrounded by forests, there are also small rivers and lakes. Our people like to spend weekends in the forests picking mush-rooms and berries in autumn, skiing in winter and in early spring. Our men and boys are fond of fishing.

As for me, I like my town, it’s so lovely.

**RUSSIAN TRADITIONS.**

Almost every nation and country has a reputation of some kind. The Englishmen are reputed to be cold, reserved, rather naughty easy-going and fond of sport. They are the nation of stay-at-homes. “There is no place like home”, they say. The English man’s home is his castle is a saying known all over the world. They prefer a small house built for one family, with a small garden are a fire in the centre of the house. They like animals very much and follow the traditions concerning food and meals. We know much about English traditions and customs but now I’d like to say a few words about the traditions of my native land-Russia. First, about Russian people. To my mind, the main traits of their characters which differ them from other people are hospitality, their “open heart”, “golden hands”, wise Russian fairytales reflect this wisdom. Our people are hardworking, patient, never loosing hope for better life. The Russians are the talented nation. Russia gave the world beautiful names of Pushkin and Lermontov, Chaikovsky and Repin, thousands of names of world famous poets, writers, composers, scientists. All of them are the pride of the nation because they sand the beauty of our nature and people.

Besides these great names in literature and music, our country is famous for Russian traditional specific crafts its skilled craftsmen. Painted boxes of Palekh, coloured shawls of Pavlov Posad, clay toys of Dymkovo, laces of Vologda are known all over the world.

The names of Gzhel and Khokhloma are considered to be the symbols of Russia as well as matryoshkas and samovars. The history of khokhloma goes back into the 17th century Producing of tableware-dishes, spoons, mugs was begun at that time in the villages of Suomino and Khokhloma in the Nizhniy Novgorod Province. On the banks of the great Russian river Volga. Many carpenters, painters have been working since then reviving traditions of old masters. The Khokhloma style is characterized by using plant elements in painting the tableware. The prevailing colours are black, yellow, golden, green and red. And nowadays this craft is sure to be saved, it will be developed and brought into the future by the new generation of painters.

The reviving of old crafts is connected with the reviving of the traditional arts of all peoples inhabiting our big country. There are 100 of them. They revive their culture, costumes, dances and language. It is the revival of our souls. Now we celebrate the forgotten holidays - Troisa, Maslenitsa, Easter. We again sing Russian folk songs and chastushki, dance Barinya and perform khorovods, ride in troikas. Traditional Russian cooking is world-famous for such dishes as okroshka, shi, pelment, kurnik, kvass. We begin to build and reconstruct churches. The example of it is the building of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow. It is the symbol of reviving human feelings, national pride and patriotism.

**THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN**

**AND NORTHERN IRELAND.**

**THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.**

The UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland occupies the territory of the British Isles. It consists of 4 main countries which are England, Scotland, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Cardiff and Belfast.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is the official name of the state which is sometimes referred to as Great Britain or Britain (after it major island), England ( after its major historic part or the British Isles.

The UK is an Island state it is composed of some 5.500 islands, large and small. The two main islands are: Great Britain to the east and Ireland to the west. They are separated by the Irish Sea.

The area of the UK is 244,100 square kms. It is situated off to the northwest coast of Europe between the Atlantic Ocean on the north and the North Sea on the east and is separated from the European continent by the English Channel (or La Manche) and the Straits of Dover (or Pas de Calais).

The population of the UK is over 57 mln people. The UK is inhabited by the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish who constitute the British nation. English is not the only language. Scottish, Welsh and Irish are also used.

The flag of the UK is known as the Union Jack. It has its history. It all began in 1603 when Scotland was joined to England and Wales. The flag is made up of 3 crosses. The upright cross is the Cross of St.George the patron saint of England. The white diagonal cross is the cross of St.Andrew, the patron saint of Scotland. The red diagonal cross is the cross is the cross of St.Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. All of them are on the blue background.

The national anthem is “God Save the Queen”. The national currency is pound.

Geographically the island of Great Britain is subdivided into 2 main regions: Lowland Britain and Highland Britain. Lowland Britain comprises southern and eastern England. Highland Britain consists of Scotland, most of Wales, the Pennines (or the Pennine Chain) and the Lake District.

The highest mountain top is Ben Nevis in Scotland. The chief rivers of Great Britain are: the Severn, separating England and Wales, the Thames (the longest and the deepest one). The swiftest flowing river is the Spray. Also the Tweed is famous (the woolen fabric is made here).

There are many lakes in Great Britain. The Lake District is the most beautiful.

The largest are London, Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol, Leeds, Cardiff.

The capitals are: London in England, Edinburgh in Scotland, Cardiff in Wales and Belfast in Northern Ireland.

Every country has its own national emblem. The red rose is the national emblem of England the thistle is the national emblem of Scotland the daffodils and the leek are the emblems of Wales and the shamrock (a kind of clover) is the emblem of Ireland.

**THE PRIDE OF THE NATION**.

(Famous People of Russia).

Much was done by people to reach the present state of human development. It is necessary to say that great contribution to the development of the world science and culture, literature, music and painting was made by the Russian people. The names of Russian scientists and writers, poets, composers and painters are world-famous-Pushkin, Lermontov, Chehov, Levitan. This chain can be endless. It is almost impossible to name a branch of science in the development of which the Russian scientists haven’t played the greatest role. Lomonosov, the founder of the Moscow University was an outstanding innovator both in the humanities and sciences. Mendeleev’s greatest discovery was the Periodic System of Elements. Popov invented radio. Sechenov and Pavlov were the world’s greatest physiologists. Russia is rightly called the mother of aviation and cosmounatics. Names of Tsiolkovsky, Korolov and Gagarin are symbols of new space era.

People in many countries admire paintings, portraits and landscapes Surikov, Levitan, Repin works of our Russian writes and poets are translated into many languages.

I want to tell about one of the greatest Russians. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, an outstanding Russian composer, was born in Votkinsk in 1840. He was fond of music since his early childhood. His mother sang him beautiful songs and taught him to play the piano. He graduated from the Petersburg Conservatoire only in 1866 because of his poor living conditions. He was the best pupil of Anton Rubinstein. Wen the Moscow Conservatoire was founded Pyotr Ilyich became a professor there.

He created wonderful music: 10 operas, 3 ballets, 6 symphonies, 7 large symphonic poems and many other musical pieces.

“Eugene Onegin”, a new type of opera, was a great success all over the world “His Swan Lake”, “The Nutckracker”, “The Sleeping Beauty are musical masterpieces. In his music he used folk melodies for the musical descriptions of Russian nature and life. His compositions are full of realist.

**THERE IS NO BAD WEATHER,**

**THERE ARE BAD CLOTHES.**

Englishmen say “There is no bad weather, there are bad clothes”, It means that they like all the seasons, all kinds of weather. Every season is good in its own way. Each person likes this or that season. It depends on his character, mood. They say that Pushkin liked autumn very much. This season is full of colours, bright and tasty. The sky is blue, but sometimes grey clouds appear. The sun shines but it begins to hide behind the clouds. Its rays are not so warm. Autumn is full of vegetables and fruit, mushrooms and berries. There is nothing like Indian summer in autumn. As for me, I like to walk on the carpet of bright leaves listen to the last songs of birds flying to warm countries, look at the nature. It is like a fairy-tale. It fades away and nothing can be done. Soon drizzling rains will begin and everything will be dull and sad. But still I like autumn.

Winter in Usinsk is long and severe with dark nights, bitter wings and hard frosts. Even sometimes you can see a quiet winter frosty day. It is snowing. Fluffy soft snowflakes are falling to the ground making a beautiful thick carpet. The icicles glitter in the sun the snow sparkles like diamond. Going outdoors in such weather is pleasant. Many people go to the forests and enjoy sledging and skiing, playing snowballs and making a snowman.

As for spring, people in Usinsk long for it and dream about it during long winter days. It comes late but suddenly. I don’t like it because my town becomes grey. But spring is the beginning of new life. Nature awakens from its long winter sleep. The trees begin to bud and soon tiny green leaves will appear. Young green grass appear, fruit trees begin to blossom. Everything looks magic covered with green carpet. Nature looks full of promise.

I like summer because we have holiday and enjoy resting after school year.

In my opinion every season is beautiful and attractive. As one famous poet said:“I see no reason to speak in prize of any season”.

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**TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS**

Almost every nation has a reputation of some kind. The English are reputed to be cold, reserved, rather haughty people. They are steady, easy-going and fond of sports. There are certain kinds of behavior, manners and customs which are peculiar to England.

The English are naturally polite and are never tired of saying “ Thank you ” and “ I am sorry ”. They are generally disciplined, you never hear loud talk in the street. They don’t rush for seats in buses and trains, but they take their seats in queues at bus stops. English people do not shake hands when meeting one another, they do not show their emotions even in tragic situations. They seem to remain good-tempered and cheerful under difficulties.

The English are a nation of stay-at-homes. There is no place like home. The Englishman says “ My house is my castle ” because he doesn’t wish his doings to be overlooked by his neighbours. It is true that English people prefer small houses, built for one family. The fire is the focus of the English Home. Other nations go out to cafes or cocktail bars. The fireplace is the natural centre of interest in the room. They like to sit round the fire and watch the dancing flames, exchanging the day’s experience. In many houses you will still see fireplaces, sometimes with columns on each side and a shelf above it on which there is often a clock or a mirror or photos.

The love of gardens is deep-rooted in the British people. Most men’s conversations are about gardens. It may be a discussion of the best methods of growing cucumbers, a talk about the plot which differs from all the others.

The British like growing plants in a window-box outside the kitchen or in the garden near the house. They love flowers very much.

Britain is a nation of animal lovers. They have about five million dogs, almost as many cats, 3 million parrots and other cage birds, aquarium fish - and 1 million exotic pets such as reptiles. In Britain they have special dog shops selling food, clothes and other things for dogs. There are dog hair-dressing saloons and dog cemetries. In Britain pets can send Christmas cards to their friends, birthday cards. Owners can buy for their pets jewelled nylon collars, lambswool coat for a dog, lace-trimmed panties, nightgowns, pyjamas, and so on. There are special animal hotels at the airports. The English people believe that they are the only nation on the earth that is really kind to its animals. How do they spend their week-ends.

Those who live in cities and towns like to go out of town. They may go to stay in the country. Every Englishman is fond of the countryside in a nice thatched cottage with roses round the porch and in the garden, the fresh air and bright sun. No crowds of people, silence and leisure.

Those who stay at home try to do all the jobs they, were too busy to do during the week. Some go shopping on Saturday mornings, some do the house - washing, cleaning. Some men do and watch sporting events.

Saturday evening is the best time for parties, dances, going to the cinema or theatre.

On Sunday after breakfast they may go to work in the garden take a dog for a walk, play a visit to a pub. Sunday is a day for inviting friends and relatives to afternoon tea.

There are some traditions concerning food. English cooking is heavy, substantial and plain. The Englishman likes a good breakfast. To him a good breakfast means porridge with, fish, bacon and eggs, toast and marmalade, tea or coffee. It is the same day to day. The English like their toast cold.

Tea is part of the prose of British life, as necessary as potatoes and bread. Seven cups of it wake you up in the morning, 9 cups will put you to sleep at night.

The midday meal is called lunch. This meal consists on week- days of stew, fried fish, chops, liver or sausages, vegetables. Rice and macaroni are seldom served. Then does an apple tart, or hot milk pudding. Sunday dinner is a special occasion, it is a joint of beef or lamb with vegetables. Then goes a large heavy pudding with custard. From 4 to 6 there is a very light meal called 5 o’clock tea. It is a snack of thin bread and butter and cups of tea with small cakes. This became a kind ritual. At this time everything stops for tea.

Dinner (usually at 6 p.m.) is much like lunch and is in many families the last meal of the day. Supper is a snack of bread and cheese and cocoa.

The English have a popular speciality known as fish and chips. They are bought at special fish and chips shops.

**HOLIDAYS IN GREAT BRITAIN**

Every country and every nation has own traditions and customs. It’s very important to know traditions and customs of other countries. It helps to know more about the history and line of different nations.

English are proud of their traditions and carefully keep them up as I know all English people celebrate Christmas on the 25th of December. It’s the season of good will. It’s the most beautiful time of the year - the time of love, joy and hopes. Christmas Day is a family holiday. All the people look forward to it, expecting something special. It is the time when all the family gets together round the Christmas tree decorated with toys and sweets. Little children believe that when they are asleep Santa Claus comes with a big bag of toys. They often hang up large stockings for the presents. All families have Christmas dinners. They eat traditional dishes - turkey, duck, pudding. On the New Year’s Day they watch the old year out and the new year in.

There are some traditions on New Year’s Day. One of them is the old First Footing. The first man to come into the house is very important. The Englishmen believe that he brings luck. This man (not a woman) must be healthy, young, pretty-looking. He brings presents - bread, a piece of coal or a coin. Another best-loved holiday is St.Valentine’s Day on the 14th of February - the holiday of love and affection, the day of sending “valentines” and giving presents to those you love “Be My Valentine” - Englishmen with these word ask to become friends or companion Valentines often are decorated with symbols of love - red hearts and roses, ribbons and laces . In England tradition of celebrating Easter is deep-rooted in the history of the nation . Easter is a church holiday . There is a popular belief that wearing 3 new things on Easter will bring good luck.

Traditionally Easter parades of people in bright new spring clothes are held on this day. Another custom is decorating eggs for children. Eggs are hidden in the yards little children believe that the Easter rabbit comes and leaves eggs for them. Easter candies are maid in the form of eggs, little chickens and rabbits. Halloween is the day or evening before all Saint's Day. Children dress up in Halloween costumes and masks over their faces. They go out into the streets to beg. People give them sweets, cookies and apples. A favourite Halloween custom is to make a jack-o’-lantern (the children scrape our a pumpkin and cut the eyes, nose and mouth). They light a candle inside the pumpkin to scare their friends. A few words about superstitions in Britain. The people believe that if they put shoes on the table, they will have bad luck. The English won’t kill a spider, especially money spiders (small red ones). This is very unlucky Some animals are also lucky (black cats brig good luck, white horses are also lucky. The most unlucky thing is to break a mirror. This brings 7 years of bad luck. The number 13 is the most unlucky number especially Combination Friday, the 13th.

According to the Act of Parliament of 1871 there are 4 bank holidays Easter Monday, whit-Monday, Des 26th - Boxing Day. Other public holiday are Good Friday, May Day, Also there is a Pancake Day, April’s Fool Day, Mother’s Day.

**TRAVELLING.**

People are fond of traveling. They spend their holidays traveling. They travel to see other countries and continents, to learn a lot about people’s traditions, to enjoy picturesque places. It is interesting for them to discover new things, different ways of life, to meet different people, to try different food.

Those who live in the country like to find themselves in large cities with their shops, cinemas, crowds of people. City-dwellers usually like a quiet holiday by the sea or in the mountains with nothing to do but walking and bathing, laying in the sun. Most travelers and holiday makers take a camera with them and take pictures of everything that interests them - beautiful views of waterfalls, forests, unusual plants and animals. These photos will remind them of the happy time of holiday.

These are many ways of traveling - by train, by plain, by ship, on foot. Everyone chooses his favourite one. My favourite way is traveling by plain. And not because it is very comfortable. It is exciting. I also like traveling by train. I’ve traveled this way a lot. When you are in the train you can see the beauty of nature.

I envy the tourists because I think that they study geography traveling and visiting different parts of the world. They can tell you many things which you didn’t know before.

They are interesting people from whom you can learn much new for yourself. Any kind of travel helps you to understand many things that you can never see or learn at home. Though you may read about them in books and newspapers.

As for me I’d like to have a coach tour to some foreign country. Coach tours are planned and I’ll have a chance to do a lot of sightseeings and have a good rest at the same time.

**U.K. POLITICAL SYSTEM**.

The U.K of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch, Queen Elizabeth II as head of state. The organs of government are : Parliament, the executive and the judiciary. The legislature, Parliament, is the supreme authority. It comprises 2 chambers - the House of Lords and House of Commons - together with the Queen in her constitutional role.

The executive consists of the central Government - that is the Prime-Minister and Cabinet and other ministers who are responsible for iniating and directing the national policy, government departments, local authorities, and public corporations. The judiciary determines common I am and interpret status and is independent of both the legislature and executive.

The Government derive its authority from the elected House of Commons. A general election. For all seats in the House of Commons, must be help every 5 years. The Government is normally formed by the political party which is supported by the majority in the House of Commons. The Party’s leader is appointed Prime-Minister by the Queen. He chooses a team of ministers of whom 20 or so are in the Cabinet. The second largest party becomes the official opposition with its own leader and Shadow Cabinet. The House of Commons comprises members from the constituencies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who represent people whose history and traditions differ.

The House of Lords is a hereditory Chamber.

**YOUR PASTIME AND HOBBY.**

Hobby is what a person likes to do in his spare time. Hobbies differ like tastes. If you have chosen a hobby according to your character and taste you are lucky because your life becomes more interesting. The most popular hobby is doing things. It includes a wide variety of activities from gardening to traveling, from chess to volleyball. Both grown-ups and children are fond of playing different computer games. This hobby is becoming more and more popular. Making things include drawing, painting, handicrafts. Many people collect something - coins, stamps, compact discs, toys, books. Some collections have some value. Rich people often collect paintings, rare things and other art objects. Often such private collections are given to museums, libraries.

As for me, I like to listen to music. 3 months ago my parents bought me a compact disc player and I decided to collect compact discs. I like different music, it should be good. I collect discs of my favourite groups and singers. I carefully study the information printed on discbooklets. I try to find everything about my favourite singers. Also I like to watch music programmes on TV. I want to keep up with the news in the world of music.

Of course, I like to spend my spare time with my friends. We talk about all sorts of things ( politics, teachers, girls). We discuss films, books, TV programmes. In fine weather we like to be in the open air. We find a nice place somewhere in the forest. We make a fire, bake potatoes and have a lot of fun. When the weather is bad, my friends come to my place. We have a good time together.