**1.** I was born in Russia and I’m proud of this.

I can say that I truly love my motherland. But nowadays a lot of people leave our country and move to the other ones: America, United Kingdom, Israel e.t.c.

I don’t think that they are right. I think that no matter how difficult is the situation in our country at present, every citizen of Russia must remember about the gloriuos history, wonderfull culture and traditions of it.

A lot of the world-famous scientists – Lomonosov, Mendeleev, Timiryasev, Sechenov etc. -were born in Russia. The first sputnik and space ship started from Russia. A lot of discoveries and inventions in chemistry, geography, physics, biology and medicine were made by russian scientists.

The greatest poets, writers and composers known all over the world were also born in our country - Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoy, Gogol, Dostoevski, Griboedov, Tchaikovski, Rashmaninov and many others.

Russia won many biggest wars in History. Although we lost 29 millions people in Second World War, Russian soldiers conquered Berlin and saved the world from Fascism.

We must know our history and remember our ancestors. I believe that Russia will become the strongest and richest country in sprite of all the problems.

**2.** I am going to tell you about Moscow.

Moscow, the capital of Russia, is one of the largest the most beautiful cities in the world. The total area of the city is about 900 square kilometers. About 10 million people live in the city. Moscow was founded in 1147 by prince Yuri Dolgoruky.

Nowadays it is a political, commercial and cultural center of our country. It is also an industrial center with highly developed engineering, electric, light and chemical industries.

The heart of Moscow, the central and one of the most beautiful places is the Red Square. Here one can see the Cathedral of St. Basil, the monument to Minin and Pozharsky, the Kremlin, the History museum and take a walk in the Alexandrovsky garden.

Some skyscrapers decorate Moscow, including the Moscow State University, the oldest university in Russia that was founded in 18th century by Lomonosov. I can be said that Moscow is a city of students. There are over 80 higher educational institutes in it.

The are more then 80 museums in Moscow. The largest and the most famous ones are the Pushkin museum of Fine Arts and the State Tretyakov art Gallery.

Moscow is also famous for it’s theaters. The best-known of them is the Bolshoi thetre, the Moscow drama thetre ( MHAT), Sovremennik and Lenkom.

There are many parks and gardens in Moscow, that’s why its citizen like to spend their free time out home. The most beautiful and the lagest ones are the Gorky Park and the Poklonnaya Gora.

Moscow is a scientific center of our country. The Academy of scientists of Russia, the oldest university, many scientific institutes are located in Moscow.

**3.** There is a a lot of english-speaking countries in the world, for example: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand. English is used as one of the official languages in Canada, the Republic of South Africa and the Irish Republic. It’s also spoken as a second language by people in many parts of Asia and Africa.

But I would like to tell you about the USA.

The United States of America is located in the North America continent. It is one of the largest countries in the world. The population of the USA is about 250 million people. The administrative units of the USA are called states. There are 50 of them and the largest of the America’s states is Alaska. The capital of the country is Washington DC ( the District of Columbia). It was chosen as a permanent site for the nation’s capital in December 1800 by George Washington. The largest and the most imporatnt cities of the USA are New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Boston. There are many tall buildings in them that really scrape the sky, that’s why they are called skyscrapers.

Among the most famous sites of interest are the Great Lakes, Niagara falls, the Golden Gate bridge in San Francisco and other. There are many beautiful National parks and protected areas of wilderness in America.

The USA is a highly developed country. It is rich in such natural resourses as coal, oil, iron and natural gas. On the other hand, it exports a lot of raw materials, industrials and agricultural products.

By constitutional regime the United States of America is a federal republic. The American parliament ( called Congress ) has two chambers : the House of Representative and the Senate. The head of the State is the president, who is elected for four years and whose powers are limited by the Constitution. Now the President of the USA is George Bush Junior.

The flag of the country has 13 red and white stripes representing the original 13 states and 50 stars - for each of the state at present.

**4.** I was born in Buryatia that is situated in the Eastern part of Siberia and I can say that my native region is very beautiful.

There are a lot of large beautiful forests there, where one can see many kinds of different plants and animals. Cedar, larch, firtree, birch, pine and many other trees grow in our woods, as well as various kinds of berries, like cranberry, great bilberry, raspberry and the most popular one - foxberry. In august people begin to pick berries for selling and for eating.

We have such kinds of animals like bear, dear, elk, fox, wolf, and, of course, sable, that has very reach and beautiful fur, that’s why poachers kill it. Nowadays poaching is encreasing and it is one of the biggest problem for our region.

The most popular sight in Buryatia is lake Baikal, that attracts tourists from all the parts of the world. Baikal is the biggest freshwater lake on the planet and the deepest one. There are a lot of fish in the lake, the most popular of which are pike, grayling, whitefish and sturgeon. Only in Baikal one can see such kind of fish as omoul and such specie of animal as nerpa.

Every year a lot of tourists from different foreign countries come to Buryatia. People come to see all these reaches of nature and to enjoy this perfect fresh air, but we don’t understand what treasures possess and don^t spare them. Some people often leave rubbish in forests and on the coast-line of Baikal in summer and throw empty bottles in its watter, and make fires. If we don^t change our behaviour, very soon we can loose our wonderful nature forever.

**5.** When I was a child I didn^t have much problems, and the ones that I had were very lunimportant and stupid.

As I became more adult I understood that my life consists of different kinds of problems – personal and global.

The first personal problem for me now is to choose the way of my future life, that is, to realise what I want to be and what profession I want to have. Thats why I should consider in what institute I will get my education after graduating from the school. What my future life will be depends on the answer to this question.

Sometimes I don^t have enough time and energy to do all my home work. It is a big problem too, as it doesn^t let me study better.

Every time I hear from TV bad news about our country. It is getting on my nerves. Altough it isn^t my personal problem, it’s very unpleasant to hear such things about your home country that you love.

The biggest problem nowadays is drugs. There are very many teenagers now, who sell it and buy it. They leave school and drop heir studies and degrade and become thieves and bandits.

( Many times they told me to give them money. I was compelled to fight with them. But they are weak and each time they loose the battle and run away.)

Drugs endanger the future of our country and our town. It is a very big menace for all the people.

So, as every teenager I do have problems, but I don^t let myself give in / surrender ( сдаться ) and always try to fight them.

**6.** Now I want to tell you a few words about my family. My family is not very large, there are 5 members – my parents, my sister, grandmother and me

First of all I’d like to speak of my parents. My mother is a speech therapist by profession, but now she helps my father in his work. My father is a director of a restaurant and the brewery in our town.

My parents are hard-working people. My mother keeps house and takes care of us. She is very good at cooking and she^s got golden hands. We try to help her with the housework; for example we wash the dishes, go shopping and tide our flat.

My grandmother is a very old woman. She is 79 years old. She doesn^t live with us, but we come tosee her every day to take care of her. We love our granny very much.

My sister Yana is 21. She studies in Moscow. This year she is graduating from the University. She will be a lawyer but she can also work as a translator from English and French languages because she knows them quite well.

We all like to spend our time together. Sometimes we stay at home and watch TV or just talk, and on weekends we go out of town to Baikal or to visit our friends. We also like tom invite people to us and I can say that every guest who comes to us, goes back smily and in a good mood, because my parents are very hospitable and nice people.

**7.** When one finishes school one understands that its the time to choose a future profession and the way his life will be. It’s not easy to make a right choice of a job. It’s very important question for me **- w**hat I want to be when I leave school . A few years ago it was to make up my mind and choose one of the hundreds jobs. As a child I wanted to become an inventor or a scientist to invent different things to make peoples life better and more comfortable.

Then I decided to become an officer of FSS (ФСБ in Russian) , then a mariner.

But all of these ambitions are in the past now. I have considered this question for a long time and decided that the profession that siuts me most is a manager. It is very popular and demanded

( требуемая ) nowadays, just like a profession of lawyer or economist. I think that management coresponds my personal qualities because I like to communicate with people and to be a leader if its necessary.

**I** also want to say that the profession should be chosen according to the character and preferencies of a person. Children must choose their profession themselves because they must love the things they do, believe that people need them and their job brings them peasure, not just money.

**8.** People all over the world like doing sports because it makes them healthier, keeps them fit and it is just a great passing of time.

Every sports makes the one who is doing it you stronger, harder improves his reaction and qiuckness. What is more, some sports help to develope special physical skills and train particular groups of muscles. For example: skies, swimming and jogging helps to strengthen make legs and hands and trains one^s breath. Peole going in for bodybuilding can lift up large weights and their bodies become beautiful and relief. Team games like football, basketball, volleyball and hockey make you well- coordinated, quick and dexterious ( проворный) and teach how to cooperate wth the other players in order to win a game. Fighting sports, especially Eastern ones, like carate, aikido, oushou, help to develope all aspects of fitness – strength, quick reaction, dexterity, and spirit as well, because each of them based on philosophy. To my mind, fighting arts are the best sports.

For me sports is a hobby. I do some exercises every day, because it keeps me in a good form and makes me stronger. When you begin to go in for sports you can give up it after some weeks, because it is not easy to do hard exercises every day. But you must make yourself doing it, or you will not have any results. For example, if one wants to make his muscles grow he must keep on working very hard and consistently (последовательно ), from day to day to get some results.

As a child I went to many sport clubs and gave up it after half a year, but I^ve always done something to keep fit. Since last summer I do weight-lifting and push-up exercises to develope my muscles 5 times a week. Sometimes I go jogging with my father. I like it because it makes me strong and more active.

The ancient Greeks said there is a healthy spirit in a healthy body. I think thats true and every man, who respects himself must go in for sports. It is the way for healthy and long life.

**9.** More and more people realize that every educated person should know at least one foreign language.

The most popular and wide-spread ( распространенный ) language in the world now is English.

Spanish, French, German languages are also popular, but as much as English, because it is more difficult to learn them – because of their grammar and lexiks. They are spoken mostly in Europe and in the former colonies of France and Spain in Latin America and Africa.

English is spoken by more than 350 million people .It’s the language of aprogressive science and technology, trade and cultural relations, commerce and business. It’s 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 and all over the world. 75% of the world’s mail and 60% of the world’s telephone calls are made in English. Half of the world’s scientific literature is written in English too.

In Russia English is very popular : it is studied at schools, colleges, universities, and sometimes even at nursery schools. All the qualified specialists nowadays must know English.

Learning a foreign language is not an easy thing. It is a long and slow process that takes a lot of time and patience. But to know languages today is absolutely necessary for everyone.

I^ve studied English for about 2 years by now and I^m very glad to do this because I have always been interested in foreign countries, their culture and traditions.

**10.** Nowadays a lot of people in the world like to travel. The level of the technical deveplopment allows to voyage practically to any country of the world in the shortest time.

People travel by different means of conveyance, even on foot. But everybody likes to go to different places and see various sites of interest.

Some Russian tourists prefer to trip to foreign countries. I understand them, because it’s always interesting to visit a place where you have never been and to learn something new about the other nations, their culture and traditions, to see architectural monuments and famous masterpieces with your own eyes.

Every place on the Earth has its own sights, flaura and fauna and climate, which makes visiting it yet more interesting. So one of the main reasons for travaling is to get new experience and impressions.

To my mind, our country has a lot of places that are worth seeing. Although the climate of Russia sometimes is not very favourable, our forests are the largest in the world and there are lots of rare species animals and plants there. The lakes, rivers and seas in our contry are also very beautiful and picturesque ( живописный ), for example our lake Baikal, the deepest and the most pure lake in the world and the only place on the planet where you can find such a fish as Omoul.

The territory of our country is big enough and our historical and cltural heritage is rich enough to satisfy all the tastes and wishes of travellers. That is why the majority of the Russian tourists prefer to travel in our country. Some of them travel only for hunting and fishing, the others change places simply to spend their free time.

As for me I like to travel throughout Russia, to learn more about my motherland.

My favorite place for having rest are the surroundings ( окрестности ) of our freshwater lake Baikal, where the nature is so beautiful and calm and the air is so fresh. I also like to travel to the Black Sea where the climate is so warm and mild and where there is always plenty of fruits in summer.

**11.** The word «Ecology» is very popular word today. But what does it mean?

Ecology is a science which studies relationships between all forms of life on our planet and the environment. This word came from the Greek «oikos» which means «home». This idea of home includes our whole planet and its population, nature, animals, birds, fish, insects and all other living beings, as well as the atmosphere around our planet.

Ecology has become such an imporatnt science because with the progress of civilisation and technical develpment the environment on the Earth gets more and more poluted and the natural resourses – like drinking water, fossils ( полезные ископаемые), forests etc. get exhausted ( истощаются).

For example, every year the atmosphere is polluted by 100 tons of industrial dust and other harmful substances.

Big cities suffer from smog from large factories. Cars with their engines have become the main source of pollution in industrial countries. The forests Africa, South America and Asia are cut down for the needs of industries in Europe and the USA. As a result some species of animals, birds, fish and plants have disappeared and keep disappearing. Rivers and lakes dry up. One of the most known examples is the Aral Sea, which has become much smaller due to men’s activity.

The pollution of the air and of the world’s oceans and the thinning of the ozone layer nowadays are the main problems arising from man’s careless attitude to ecology.

In Russia and the former Soviet republics there are some areas where the environment is in a poor state. The Aral Sea, Lake Baikal, the Kuzbass, Semipalatinsk and Chernobyl are such problematic regions.

For decades nuclear weapons were tested near Semipalatinsk, and the ground is contaminated with radiation there.

More than 20 years ago a pulp-and-paper factory was built on the shore of Lake Baikal. As a result of the pollution, more than 50 % of the world’s purest water has been ruined. The whole ecological system of the lake has change greatly.

After the exploision (взрыв) on the atomic power station

( атомная электростанция) all people who lived near that place were evacuated due to a very high level of radiation. Some of them died and some have become invalids. And even today the Chernobyl region remains deserted (покинутый), as its very harmful to be there for any living creature.

Ecological catastrophes do a lot of harm to Nature, and, consequently (следовательно), they threaten the future exhistence of mankind.

What everyone must do is to try to do his best in order not to pollute atmosphere, water and soil (почва) – not to leave rubbish in forests and on the shores of lakes and rivers, not use pesticides (пестициды ) and the others harmful soil fertilisers (удобрения), prevent forest fires ...

**12.** Every country has its national holidays, but there are also holidays that are common for many countries – for example, New Year’s Day that is the first holiday of each new year. In Russia it is the most popular holiday, but in the West people traditionally pay more attention to Christmas.

The celebration of the New Year begins on New Year’s Eve, that is, on the 31st of December. This day people light colored lamps on their decorated New Year’s Trees and have a late dinner that consists of various delicious courses ( блюда) – salats, fried feesh and meet, cakes, and, of cause, champagne. Some people prefer to stay at home just watch TV-programs and concerts. The others like to go to their friends or to different parties and restaurants. But when the clock strikes 12 at night (часы бьют), everybody congratulate each other and gives and gets presents. Sometimes they also go out for a late walk and to make and to watch fireworks..

In Russia we also have holidays commemorating some important events in our history, for example, Victory Day ( on the 9th of May) , Constitution Day ( on the 12 of December) , the Day of the Sovereignty of the Russian Federation ( on the 12th of June). There are also holidays like May Day and Women’s Day ( on the 8th of March). The most important religious holidays are Christmas and Easter. In Russia Christmas is celebrated on January 7, and in Europe and in the USA, on December 25.

In Great Britain there are also many holidays. Banking Holidays happen four times a year: Easter Monday, Whit Monday, the first Monday in August and December 26th. Day. They are very interesting holydays for all the banks and the other official establishments (государственные учреждения) are closed and people give to their employees (служащим) presents ( thats why they re also called Boxing Days).

The other public holidays celebrated in the Western countries are: Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, Good Friday and May Day. On these days all bank and all places of business are also closed and nearly everyone takes a holyday.

But British traditional national holidays like Pancake Day, Guy Fawkes’ Night, St. Valentine’s Day, April Fool’s Day, Mother’s Day are ordinary working days. **( подробнее про английские праздники)**

There are also many holidays in the USA.

The main holiday in the USA is Independence Day, celebrated on the fourth of July. On that day in 1776, the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

Another traditional American holiday is Thanksgiving Day which falls on the fourth Thursday of November. It has been celebrated since the 17th century, when the English colonists decided to celebrate the end of their first year in America and to give thanks to God.

There are the other holydays in the USA besides Christmas, New Year and Easter, which are popular all over the world. For instance, Columbus Day celebrated on October 12.

There are many special holydays, for example, Day of Martin Luther King, Presidents Day, St. Patrick’s Day, and of cause Halloween, which celebrated on October 31.

**13.** I know many American and English holidays but I want to tell you about Russian ones.

There are plenty holidays in Russia, but my favorite one is New Year’s Day. The celebration of the holiday begins at 12 o’clock AM on 31st of December.

First of all, I like it because it is celebrated during winter vacations and when I think of this holiday, I always remember all the things that I^ve done during this time. I have a lot time to sleep and to walk with my friends. There are a lot of interesting and funny programs, famous comedies and concerts on TV on the New Year’s Eve.

We always begin to celebrate New Year’s Day in a very good mood. First of all, we light colored lamps on our decorated New Year’s Tree and have a late dinner that usially consists of very delicious courses like salats, fried fish or meed, cakes, and, of cause, champagne.

Sometimes we just watch TV till the clock strikes 12, and then we go out for a walk to visit our friends and relatives and to watch beatiful fireworks in the centre of our town.

On New Year everybody gives and gets presents, and like this tradition very much. People become very kind and friendly on this day, because it is a great holiday. Everything outside seems very nice, every home, every shop and building becomes beautiful because, people want to make their home and place of work more bright. At home we all stay up until midnight and much later.

On the next day after the celebraton of New Year people can sleep very long, because they don^t need to go to work.

It is very important to celebrate New Year very well and funny because it is believed that you will pass a new year in the same way as you have met it.

**14.** I have studied a lot about different famous Americans and British, so I would like to tell you about some of them.

A lot of famous writers and poets were born in America. For example, Jack London, a writer well- known all over the world. He is best known for his book « The Call of the Wild», the story about adventures of a dog in frozen north.

Mark Twain was born in Missouri and he is famous forsuch his masterpieces as «The Adventure of Tom Sawyer» and «The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn».

My favorite science-fiction writers are Ray Bradbury and Robert Shaklee. Ray Bradbury wrote «the Marsian Chronicles». And Robert Shaklee is known for his very interesting short stories about aliens and space adventures.

American animators and illustrators are aslo world-famous. For example, Walt Disney who created such cartoon-heroes as Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Pluto. He is the founder of the Disney Park. Chuck Jones is also a popular American animator famous for his Roadrunner and Wile E. Coyote.

Many american inventors became famous all over the world for their inventions. Wright brothers are known for their invention, building and flying the first airplane. Henry Ford is known like father of automobile powered by a gasoline engine. Alexander Bell created the first telephone.

I also know some famous architects who lived in America. For example, Thomas Jefferson who is best known as the first president of the USA and the author of Declaration of Independence. But he was also a self-taught architect who designed the Virginia State Capitol Building.

As for actors, directors and singers, America and the Great Britain stand on the first place. Elvis Presley, the king of rock’ n ’roll, was born and lived in America, but the most popular group for all the times and nations, the Beatles, began their career in Britain. Movie- Actors like Al Pachino, Robert De Nero, Tom Cruise, Arnold Schwarzneger and many others live in USA and play in Hollywood blockbasters. The most successful Hollywood film-directors today are Steven Spielberg, George Lucas and James Cameron. Their films are very popular all over the world and in our country as well.

And of cause I can say something about famous politicians who lived in English-speaking countries. Sir Winston Churchill was the prime minister of the United Kingdom in a very difficult period – during the World War II, but he managed to make England a strong country.

George Washington, who was the first president of the United States,

is probably the most famous man in America. There were also such great presidnts as Abraham Lincoln, Teodor Roosewelt and Franclin Roosewelt that did their best to make the USA a leading world-power ( ведущая мировая держава).

**15.** TV has good and bad sides. First of all it keeps people informed, we can learn a lot of information watching TV. We can choose from a lot of channels, and TV offers programs for all the interests and tastes. Sometimes we can relax and entertain ourselves by watching TV when we are tired. TV advertisement gives us information about different products and it makes it easier to make a choice as to what things to buy. When we watch TV we learn about the world, famous people and recent global or our home-country news.

But watcing TV also has a lot of disadvantages.

First of all, it’s quite bad for our health, especially for eyes.

Violence on TV has become a vital problem. Some programs and films with violence and murders make people cruel and affects their psych (психику).

Often there is too much advertisement on TV that encourage us to buy things we don’t need at all.

Watching TV occupies all the leisure time of the majority of people. We just watch it, not concentrate, and waste time.

So, to sum up, it can be said that it can be useful and interesting to watch TV, but in reasonable limits.

**16.** When I don’t need to study at school I have a lot of free time.

Every time my opinion is different and I change my mind many times, before I think up what to do and where can I go. It is quite difficult for me to make a choice.

Sometimes I would like to seat at home and just watch TV or listen to music. Then I don’t want to see anybody, I just want to be alone. Usually it happens when the weather is not good or when I^m in a bad mood. When I am tired, I like to read or to lay and watch something on TV. It is the best time-passing for me, because my eyes and my brain can work, but my body can rest.

The way I pass my time depends on what is the season: in winter I’m less active but in all other seasons I don’t like to seat at home.

On autumn and spring vacations I go to the disco with my friends. There I can relax and meet new people, but my parents don’t like when I go there, because they worry when I come to home very late.

On summer I prefer to do sports every day. I think that summer is the best time for sport, because the weather outside is worm and you don’t get tired at school, so you have a lot of powers and you can do anything you like.

Traveling is my favorite kind of spending free time. I like to go to different places, especially if I havent been there before, to watch the places of interests and to meet new people and make new friends.

I also like to collect different things. Now I collect corks from beer-bottles, but my collection is not very big. I have only 160 kinds of corks.

In my free time I like to sit in the Internet, because its always interesting to find new infomation or to learn something you would like ot know, or just to chat with people who are miles away.

**17.** Everybody knows that education helps to form personality and prepares one for life. That’s why all countries consider the system of education as a very important part of national politicy.

In Russia there is a nine-year compulsory education, but to enter a university one has to study two years more. Russian children go to School at the age of six. But most of them have learned letters in kindergarden, which is now part of primary school. Primary and secondary schools together comprise eleven years of study.

After finishing secondary school one can go to a lyceum or a gymnasium to get a higher education. All the applicants must take competitive examinations.

Americans also value education very much. Universal access to a high quality education has been one of the nation’s historic goals.

Children go to school at the time they reach six or seven years and study there until they are sixteen or seventeen.

Elementary and Secondary schools consist of twelve year –studing, that makes for about 10 months a year, five days a week and five hours a day. Almost in every elementary school such subjects as English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Music, Art and Physical Education are being taught.

After graduating from secondary schools a growing number of Americans go on studing to get to a higher education in colleges or universities, the most famous of which are the Harvard University, the Yiel and the Columbia university

The British system of education has a very long history.

Children go to school at the age of 5 years and continue to study until they are 16 years old. Boys and girls are taught together in the most schools. Around half of 3- and 4- years-olds in Britain receive nursery education and many children attend preschool play-groups. Compulsory primary education begins at the age of 5. Children usually start their school career in an infant school and move to a junior school or department at 7.

At 7 and 11 years in the primary school (and at 14 and 16 in the secondary school) teachers measure children’s progress in each subject against attainment targets. For each target there are 10 levels of attainment. So instead of 2, 3, 4and 5 marks in Russia puipls get A, B, C, D etc. scores.

The secondary level includes the children from 11 to 18. Here they enhance ( укреплять ) and specify the knowledge they have acquired at primary school. At the age of 16 they can get the General Certificate of Secondary Education qualifications on the basis of examinations and course work.

Puiples who got high examination scores hve chances to continue their education in collges and universities without pay. There are 79 universities in the UK , Oxford and Cambridge are the oldest of them.

**18.** Nowadays the theatre is less popular than the cinema. Due to the popularity of television and the since appearance of video, theatre has lost a great deal of its attraction. Besides, theatre tickets are very expensive, especially in good theatres. And one should always book ( бронировать ) and buy the tickets for good plays where famous actors star in advance. So we can say that a visit to a famous theatre has become a luxury.

Still, the theatre is an inseparable part of the intellectual life of any country. In every country theatre has its own history and traditions.

There are a lot of theatres in Russia and some of them are popular all over the world. In Moscow theatre-goers try not to miss the first nights at the Vachtangov, Sovremennik, or Khudozhestvenny theatres. St. Petersburg also has a variety of theatres, which meet all the tastes. Those who are fond of drama visit the Bolshoi Drama Theatre. Alexandrinsky Theatre, Open Theatre and many others. People loving classic music never miss a chance to visit the Philharmonic Society Hall.

I like the cinema too, even though it doesn’t create so festive atmosphere as the thetre does. There is one cinema in our town and it’s open very seldom. So every time when I have the opportunity to go to Moscow, I like to go to the cinema there. There are very many movie-theatres in Moscow, modern and old ones, where one can always see some new film. Moscow movie-theatres are large, comfortable and well-decorated. Before a film starts people can sit in a bar and drink something or eat pop-corn. Before a movie you can see the announcements of new films.

Nowadays video becomes more and more popular. I think that its popular depends on the comfort of viewing things on video. You can just buy a video-tape with your favorite film and watch it whenever you want and have time. So you can lay on a sofa when you are watching video, eat or drink anything you like and even talk on the phone Video is very comfortable and relatively unexpensive because you don’t need to pay money every time, when you are going to watch it).

Maybe when the technology developes enough and everyone will be rich enough to allow this, there will a «home movie-theatre» in every house and people would not need to the cinema to enjoy this art.

**19.** Millions people al over the world spend their holidays visiting museums and art galleries. They visit them to see new things, to know more about other countries, their traditions, about history and even future of the mankind. There are different type of museums : historical, military, nature and many others. ***T***he Tower of London is a historical museum. It is the oldest palace, fortress and prison in Europe. It’s also one of the most popular museums nowadays.

Saint Petersburg is often called « the cultural capital of Russia». Many of Russia’s finest museums are situated here. The Hermitage, for example, is one of the world’s greatest and most famous museums. It houses over 2,5 million works of art. The best works of art from Russia and Europe are situated in the five buildings and over 350 rooms that make up the Hermitage. The main building of the Hermitage is the Winter Palace on Palace Square with the main entrance facing the Neva.

***T***he state Tretyakov Gallery is one of the best-known picture galleries in the world. It takes its name from its founder Pavel Tretyakov, a Moscow merchant and collector of pictures. Today the Tretyakov gallery is not only Russia’s biggest and most important museums of Russian art, it is also a research, cultural and educational center.

**20.** I know a lot of American, British and Russian writers, but some of them I like to read most.

To my mind, the greatest Russian writers and poets are Pushkin and Lermontov. My favorite Pushkin’s masterpiece is the novel «Evgeny Onegin». I like it because it is written in a very beautiful language that is not used nowadays. There are many popular expressions there, which became famous in Russia, and what is most peculiar (особенное) about this novel, that Pushkin invented a special Onegin strophe in which the whole world is written.

Lermontov is also a very talented poet.. He wrote a lot of very popular poems and novels, for example, «The hero of our time» and «Мцыри». I think that he stands at one place with Pushkin, though his style of writing is not such light and optimistic as Poushkins. But all the masterpieces of Lermontov are very profound ( глубокий ) and intellectual.

I prefer to read American science-fiction and I have my favorite writers there.

I think that the best writer of the genre is Ray Bradbury. I like him for his very interesting and fascinating short stories. The most popular novels of this author are «The Martian Chronicles» and «451 degrees on Fahrenheit». His novel «Ice and flame» is the best, I think. The novel is about surviving of the man in very hard conditions of the Mercury. His short stories are also very interesting, they arise such everlasting problems as war, love, bravery and honor. The novels and stories ob Bradbury are unlike all the others, they all are not ordinary.

Another my favorite writer is Robert Shaklee. He wrote only three novels, but they became very popular in the world of science-fiction. There are: «Corporation Immortality», «Exchange of the minds» and «Variants of a Choice». He also wrote more than 90 short stories, which are, too, very interesting.

I think that literature helps one to develop his knowledge of life and his personal intellect. And the books written by great talented people remain up-to date even through centuries ( lets take the masterpieces of Shakespear ), because they consider eternal problems. That’s why they are called classics.