RUSSIAN FEDERATION (RUSSIA)

Russia is one of the largest countries in the world. It occupies about one-seventh part of dry land. It is situated in Europe and Asia. Its total area is over 17 million square kilometers.

The country is washed by seas and oceans.

There are different types of climate on the territory of the country. It is very cold in the North even in summer. The central part of the country has mild climate: winters are cold, springs and autumns are warm or cool, summers are hot and warm. In the South the tempera­ture is usually above zero all year round, even in winter. Summer is really hot, the climate is very favourable. The climate of Siberia is continental: summers are hot and dry, winters are very cold.

Some parts of our country are covered with mountains and hills.

There are many rivers in Russia, the longest rivers are the Volga in Europe and the Yenisei and the Ob in Asia. The deepest lakes are the Baikal and the Ladoga.

The Russian Federation is very rich in mineral resources, such as oil, natural gas, coal, iron, gold and others.

Russia borders on many countries. Among them are Estonia, Latvia, Fin­land, Poland, China, Mongolia, Korea.

Moscow is the capital of our country. It was founded in 1147. It is a wonderful city. There are many sights in Moscow. You can see many museums, art galleries, theatres, churches and monuments in our capital. People of our country are proud of the Moscow Kremlin. There are also many big beautiful cities in Russia.

The population of Russia is about 150 million people. 83 per cent of the population are Russians. 70 per cent of the population live in cities.

**MOSCOW**

Moscow is the capital of Russia. It is one of the biggest and most beautiful cit­ies in the world. Moscow is a modern city now. The population of the city is about 9.8 million people. Moscow is a political centre, where the government of our country works. Moscow was founded in 1147 by Yuri Dolgoruky. The total area of Moscow is about nine hundred square kilometres.

We say that Moscow is a port of five seas, as the Moscow—Volga Canal links Moscow with the Baltic, White, Caspian and Black seas and the Sea of Azov.

Moscow is an industrial centre too. There are many factories and plants in it. One of the best-known plants produces many lorries, and the other one produces cars.

The Bolshoi Theatre is one of the fa­mous theatres all over the world. If you are fond of painting you can go to the Tretyakov Art Gallery or to the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum and see a lot of inter­esting portraits and landscapes there. We say that the Tretyakov Art Gallery is a treasure-house of Russian art. Young people like to visit the Central Military Museum. There are many tanks, guns and war documents there.

One can see the Kremlin and Red Square in the city. There are many fine buildings, wide streets, green parks, large squares, churches and monuments in Moscow.

It is necessary to mention such famous monuments as monuments to the great Russian writer Alexander Pushkin and to the first Russian printer Ivan Fedorov.

Visiting the capital a lot of foreigners from all over the world come to see these monuments.

One of the highest buildings in Moscow is the State Moscow University. It was founded in 1755 by the great scientist Mikhail Lomonosov.

Transport. Moscow is a very big city, and its transport must be comfortable and fast.

One can see a lot of cars, buses, trolley-buses, trams in the streets of our city. The Moscow metro began its work on the 15th of May, 1935. There were 13 sta­tions at that time. Now it has 190 sta­tions. Our metro is a beautiful and con­venient one.

There are nine railway stations in Mos­cow and five airports around the city.

There are many stadiums in Moscow. The Central Stadium is in Luzhniki. Many competitions and football matches are held there.

The Olympic village was built for the 22nd Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980. It is a big complex for sport games.

I live in Moscow and I am proud of this city.

**THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

The United Kingdom is situated in the north-west coast of Europe between the Atlantic Ocean on the north-west and the North Sea on the east.

The U. K. includes Great Britain and Northern Ireland. I

Great Britain, the largest island in Europe, contains England, Scotland and Wales.

The United Kingdom has an area of

244,000 square kilometres (94,249 square miles). The capital of the country is London. English is the official language.

The population of the U. K. is nearly 60 million people. The population lives mostly in towns and cities and their suburbs. Four out of every five people live in towns. Over 46 million people live in England. Over 3 million — in Wales. A little over 5 million — in Scot­land. About 1.5 million— in Northern Ireland. London's population is over 7 million people. The British nation con­sists of the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish. There are many people of all colours and races in the United King­dom.

The climate of Great Britain is mild. It is not too hot in summer or too cold in winter. It often rains in England. Rain falls in summer and in winter, in autumn and in spring. Snow falls only in the north and west of the country. The sur­face of England and Ireland is flat, but Scotland and Wales are mountainous. Many parts of the country have beautiful villages. There are many rivers in Great Britain. The main river is the Thames. Many ships and barges go up and down the river. The longest river is Severn. It is 350 kilometres long.

There are many universities, colleges libraries, museums and theatres in the country. The most famous universities are Cambridge University, Oxford University, Glasgow University.

The U. K. is a parliamentary monarchy. The British Parliament consists of two Houses: the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The Prime Minister is the head of the government.

The United Kingdom has some mineral resources. Coal and oil are the most important of them. The United Kingdom i one of the world's most industrialize» countries. The main industrial centres are Sheffield, Birmingham and Manchester. The largest cities of the country are London, Birmingham, Cardiff, Manchester, Glasgow, Belfast, Dublin.

Agriculture takes an important sector in economy of the country. The British people grow wheat, fruit, vegetables oats.

**THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The USA is one of the largest countries in the world. It is situated in the central part of the North American continent. The area of the USA is over nine million square kilometres. It is washed by the Pa­cific Ocean and by the Atlantic Ocean. The most northern part of the USA is Alaska,, the largest state, separated from the rest of the country by Canada.

The population of the United States is nearly 250 million people, most of the people live in towns. People of different nationalities live in the USA.

The official language of the country is English. The capital of the country is Washington. It was named in honour of the first President, George Washington.

As the USA is a large country, the cli­mate is different in different regions. Foi example, the Pacific coast is a region of mild winters and warm, dry summers, but the eastern continental region is watered with rainfall. The region arounc the Great Lakes has changeable weather.

There are many mountains in the USA For example, the highest peaks of the Cordilliers in the USA are 6,193 and 4,418 metres.

The main river of the country is the Mississippi. But there are many other great rivers in the USA: the Colorado in the south and the Columbia in the north­west. There are five Great Lakes between the USA and Canada.

The USA produces more than 52 per cent of the world's corn, wheat, cotton, tobacco.

There are many big cities in the coun try. They are Washington (the capital

of the country). New York (the city of contrasts, financial and business centre of the USA), Boston (there are many colleges and universities in it), Chi­cago (one of the biggest industrial cities in the USA), San Francisco, Los Ange­les, Philadelphia, Detroit (one of the biggest centres of the automobile indus­try).

The USA has an Academy of Sciences. There are many scientific institutions, museums, libraries, theatres and other interesting places in the country.

The USA is a highly developed indus­trial country. The USA is rich in mineral resources, such as aluminium, salt, zinc, coppers, and others. The country is rich in coal, natural gas, gold and silver, too. It holds one of the first places in the world for the production of coal, iron, oil, natural gas.

Such industries as machine-building, ship-building are highly developed in the country.

American agriculture produces a lot of food products: grain, fruit, vegetables.

The USA is a federal republic, consist­ing of fifty states. Each of these states has its own government. Congress is the American Parliament which consists of two Chambers.

The president is the head of the state and the government. He is elected for four years.

**NEW ZEALAND**

New Zealand is a very interesting coun­try. It has got total area of 269,000 square kilometers. It is situated to south-east of Australia in the Pacific Ocean. It consists of two main islands (North Island and South Island) and some smaller ones. Nearly 3.5 million people live in the coun­try. The capital of New Zealand is Wellington. It is a financial centre too. The city was founded in 1840 and has been the capital since 1865. The official language Is English.

The climate of New Zealand is moist. New Zealand is rich in minerals. There are some main industries in the country, for example, iron and steel industry. The country has gas and petroleum. There are many mountains in New Zealand. The highest is Mount Cook (3,764 metres or 12,349 feet).

There are many rivers and lakes in the country. The chief rivers are the Waikato and the Wairu. You have heard about the native animals in the country. One of them is the kiwi. This interesting bird lives in the wet parts of the thick bushes. In the day-time the bird does not go out. It comes out only at night to find food. Kiwis cannot fly. Many years ago kiwis were hunted for food. Now the govern­ment does not permit the hunting the ki­wis. The kiwi is now the symbol of New Zealand people. Small children are often called kiwis.

New Zealand is independent state, but formerly it is a part of the British

Empire. The head of the state is the Queen. New Zealand is self-governing state. The Parliament consists of one House only, the House of Representati­ves. The Prime Minister is the head of the government.

New Zealand has got heavy industry. There are many plants in the country. Pa­per and rubber industries are developed too. New Zealand exports wool, meat, butter.

There are some big cities such as Auck­land, Wellington, Christchurch, Dune-din, Nelson. Auckland and Wellington are the main ports of the country.

There are some educational and cultu­ral institutions in Wellington. They are the University of New Zealand, Victoria University College and others. Victoria University was established in 1897.

New Zealand is a very interesting and beautiful country.

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**

The Commonwealth of Australia is a federal state. It has got six states: New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, Tas­mania and two internal territories. The official language is English.

Australia is situated in the south-west of the Pacific Ocean.

The area of this country has got 7,687,000 square kilometers. Australia is the largest island in the world and it is the smallest continent. The Dutch were the first Europeans to visit Australia. In 1770 the English captain James Cook dis­covered the east coast of Australia.

Nearly 20 million people live in Austra­lia.

Australia's climate is dry and warm. Australia is situated in the southern hemisphere and that's why there is summer, when we have winter and there is winter, when we have summer. It is in­teresting to know that January is the hottest month in Australia.

Australia is separated from many coun­tries. The animals in Australia have a lot of original, and they are interesting, for example, dingoes (wild dogs), koala bears, kangaroos.

The kangaroo and koala have got the pouch in which they carry their cubs. There are many birds in the country, too. One can see parrots and cockatoos. The emu is the most interesting bird in Aus­tralia. It is big and can't fly.

There are many rivers and lakes in the country.

Australia is an industrial country. It has coal, nickel, zinc, gold. Several fac­tories and plants work in the country. Australia is one of the most important producers of metals and minerals. It exports wool production, meat, fruit, sugar.

The capital of the country is Canberra. The city became the capital in 1927. Fed­eral Government works in Canberra in the government buildings. It is interest­

ing to know that there are no industrial plants in Canberra.

The population of Canberra is about 300,000 people.

There are many sights in the city. They are the Building of the Australian Acade­my of Sciences, the Australian National University and others. There are two big industrial cities in Australia: Sydney and Melbourne.

The habited part of the country is situ­ated near ocean. Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and others are the ports of the country.

Australia is a part of the British Empire. Formerly the head of the state is the Queen, but in fact Australia is inde­pendent, self-governing state. The Par­liament consists of two Houses.

There are many universities, theatres and museums in Australia.

**YOUTH PROBLEMS**

All people have problems. Some of them have many problems, the others have one or two problems only.

Young people have as many problems as the grown-ups. It is possible to solve some problems but sometimes we can not solve this or that problem. The first problem is to choose a good friend. I know the prov­erb "A friend in need is a friend indeed." I agree with it, that's why I try to make friends with gay and true persons.

I want to have a friend who under­stands me. It will be simple and interest­ing to speak to him or her.

I think that young people have prob­lems with their parents. What are they? Sometimes we have different tastes. I like the proverb "There is no accounting for tastes." For example, I go to the shops with my mother. She likes this dress but I like that one. My mother wants me to buy this dress. But I am sure, that dress is much to my taste.

My parents want me to be a teacher as they are skilled teachers but I have a taste for music, and my dream is to be a com­poser.

Where can we go? What can we do if we have free time? My friend Nastya lives in the village. Her village is far from Mos­cow. It takes her three hours to go to Mos­cow. She says that there is nowhere to go and there is nothing to do in her village. There are no clubs, museums, cinemas, parks there. If she wants to go to Moscow it'll take her a lot of money. She can't af­ford it.

It is a problem to get a good education.

It is necessary to pay for a good educa­tion. I think it is difficult to learn En­glish, for example, without additional classes.

I can't enter the Institute without good knowledge. To get it it is necessary to pay for it and have heavy expenses.

Many good teachers leave schools be­cause they haven't got enough money. Persons without special experience can't teach the pupils well.

I am sure that all teenagers want to have a lot of money to dress well, to go to the theatres, to visit foreign countries, ito eat what they want, to buy books-How can they solve all these problems?

They have to earn money. I think it is possible to do it. Some boys wash cars, the others sell newspapers, some of my friends help old persons. Many of my friends have load of care.

We have some problems but we are sure that we solve them in a proper way.

I think that the young people in other countries have many problems too. I have a pen-friend in Italy. He usually writes that his parents make him to do a lot of house-work. It is stange for us, but my friend Jack from London has his biggest problem — his freckles.

**INTRODUCING YOURSELF**

My name is Kostya. My surname is Laznev. I was born in Moscow on the 23rd of June in 1981. I am a tall thin boy. My hair is dark and short. My face is oval, my nose is straight. My eyes are large and brown. My friends say that I am a good-looking boy. I like to dress well. I usually wear black trousers, light shirts, clean boots.

I have a dream to enter the Institute.

I worked hard at school. We studied many subjects such as History, Russian, Physics, Geography and others. I was fond of English and Physics. And I was good at them.

I think that I am honest, serious and polite.

I want to get a good education and find an interesting and useful work. I have a hobby. I like to sing songs. My father likes to sing songs too. He knows many good songs and we usually sing songs to­gether.

Nowadays young people don't like clas­sical music. They prefer pop music. My parents invite me to some very good con­certs of classical music. It is great. I am very grateful to my parents because now I begin to understand how wrong I was going only to pop concerts.

I am proud of my mother and father. They are musicians. We like to spend our free time together. We often go to the museums, to the Concert Halls, to the theatres.

I want to say that I respect my pa­rents.

**I HAVE A DREAM TO BE A DOCTOR**

There are many interesting and noble professions. I want to become a doctor.

I like this profession and I am eager to get a medical education and work at a hospital.

It is a good tradition in our family. My mother is a doctor, my grandfather is a doctor and I want to be a doctor, too.

When I was a little boy my grandfather worked at a hospital and I spent some time at the hospital with him. He is a sur­geon and works in a surgical department.

Day by day he takes care of his hospital patients, he treats them well. He is very attentive. Every day he comes into

wards asking patients, "What do you complain of?"

He wants all people to be able-bodied and he tries to treat his in-patients in a proper way.

To operate on persons is his main task. He is a kind and skilled surgeon.

Every day he comes into an operating-room and operates on his in-patients. After each operation he takes care of his in-patients. Day by day he helps them to recover and he is glad when he can say, "My in-patient is quite recovered."

Sometimes he advises his in-patients to go to sanatoriums after leaving the hospi­tal. He instructs them in detail what they can do and eat after their operations.

My grandfather tells me a lot of true stories about doctors, their profession, their aid for people.

I respect my grandfather. I like his pro­fession and I have a dream to be a doctor too.

**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 sportsground near our school and school-children go in foi 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.

**Sports in Great Britain**

National sports in Great Britain... It is a very interesting question, because many kinds of sport have taken the origin in England.

The Englishmen love sports, they are called sports-lovers in spite of the fact that some of them neither play games nor even watch them. They only like to speak about sports.

Some kinds of sport are professional in England.

Many traditional sporting contests take place in England, for example, cricket. It is played from May till Sep­tember. This game is associated with En­gland. There are many cricket clubs in this country. English people like to play cricket. They think that summer without cricket isn't summer. Cricket is the En­glish national sport in summer. If you want to play cricket you must wear white boots, a white shirt and white long trou­sers.

There are two teams. Each team has eleven players. Cricket is popular in boys' schools. Girls play cricket too.

Football. It has got a long history. Football was played by the whole village teams in the middle ages in England.

Now football is the most popular game in Britain. It is a team game. There are some amateur teams but most of the teams are professional ones in England. Professional football is a big business. Football is played at schools too.

Rugby football. You can see a ball in this game, but it is not round. It is oval. This is a team game. There are fifteen players in each team. It is a popular game in England. There are many amateur rug-by football teams in this country.

If we speak about football we can mention an American football too. It is a game that is played between two teams of players using an oval ball that can be handled or kicked. The captain of the team must be the oldest or best player.

Table tennis or ping-pong. Englishmen heard about table tennis in 1880. Then the International Table Tennis Associa­tion was formed and the international rules were worked out.

Many people like to play table tennis. This game is played by men and women.

There are some tennis clubs in England, but if you play there it is necessary to pay money for it.

Englishmen like playing tennis but many of them prefer to watch this game.

Wimbledon. It is the centre of lawn tennis. Some years ago Wimbledon was a village, now it is a part of London. The most important tennis competition takes place there every summer.

Englishmen pay much attention to swimming, rowing and walking. Usually the Oxford—Cambridge Boat Race takes place at the end of March or at the begin­ning of April. It is an interesting contest between the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It is usually held on the Thames River. The first such race was held in 1820. There were a lot of people watching this race.

There are some racing competitions in England. They are motor-car racing, dog-racing, donkey-racing, boat-racing, horse-racing. All kinds of racings are popular in England. It is interesting to see the egg-and-spoon race. The runner, who takes part in this competition, must carry an egg in a spoon. It is not allowed to drop the egg.

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.

**LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

It is necessary to learn foreign lan­guages. That's why pupils have got such subject as a foreign language at school. Everybody knows his own lan­guage, but it is useful to know foreign languages.

I learn English, because I understand that I can use it. For example, if I go to England I'll be able to speak English there. If I go to the USA, I'll speak En­glish too. English is used not only in En­gland, but also in other parts of the world.

I learn English because I want to read foreign literature in the original. I know and like such English and American writ­ers as Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Lewis Carroll and others. I understand that I must learn English. If I know En­glish well, I'll be able to go to the library and take books by English and American writers in the original.

I like to travel. But it is difficult to vis­it countries, when you don't know the language of these countries. If I know the language of the country, where I am go­ing to, it will be easy to travel there. If I want to ask something, I can do it in En­glish.

I like to read books. And I like to read newspapers, too. If I know, for example, English I'll be able to read English news­papers and magazines. Knowledge of for­eign languages helps young people of dif­ferent countries to understand each other, to develop friendship among them. For example, we have a foreign exhibi­tion in Moscow. If I know a foreign lan­guage, it is easy for me to visit this exhi­bition.

You can see a lot of advertisements, signboards, names in the streets. They are in foreign languages. Very often they are in English. If you know English, you can read and understand them.

Now we buy many clothes from other countries If you know English well, you can read something about the size of this or that thing. It is clear for you what it is made of.

There are a lot of films in foreign lan­guages. If you know foreign languages, you can understand films without any help.

There are international friendship camps in the world. If you can speak foreign languages, it will be easy for you to visit such camps and speak with the boys, girls, men even they don't know Russian.

In short, I understand that I have to learn English in a proper way and I try to do it.

**I LIKE TO TRAVEL**

I like to travel. First of all, the mem­bers of our family usually have long walks in the country. Such walks are called hikes. If we want to see the coun­tryside, we have to spend a part of our summer holidays on hikes. It is useful for all members of our family. We take our rucksacks, we don't think about tickets, we don't hurry up and we walk a lot. Dur­ing such hikes we see a lot of interesting places, sometimes we meet. interesting people.

I like to travel by car. It is interesting too, because you can see many things in a short time. When we go by car, we don't take tickets too, we put all things we need in a car. We don't carry them.

**THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

Our country. Our environment. There are many big and small rivers, green for­ests, high mountains, lakes and seas in Russia.

Our Earth is our home. I think people must take care of our Motherland.

There are some laws and decisions on this important subject. We have state or­ganizations which pay attention to this problem.

The international conventions pay much attention to the control of pollution too.

There are a lot of industrial enterprises in our country, that's why we can't ignore the problem of the protection of our envi­ronment. Our main aim is the protection. Our environment must be clean. What V must we do for it? We have to control at­mospheric and water pollution, to study the man's influence on the climate. The pollution of the environment influences the life of animals, plants and our human life. If we don't use chemicals in a proper way we'll pollute our environment.

Our plants and factories put their waste materials into water and atmo­sphere and pollute the environment.

There are many kinds of transport in our big cities, that's why we must pay attention to the protection of our nature and the health of the people.

Radiation. Now it has become one of the main problems. It is not good for J health of people. Many people died from radiation some years ago in Chernobyl. It ' was a tragedy. Another problem is earth­quake. We know some terrible earth­quakes in the world. Our scientists try to forecast earthquakes, then we can protect ourselves from them.

The people all over the world do every­thing to protect their nature, to make their country richer, to make their life happier.

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

Every country has its own customs and traditions. English people are proud of their traditions and they keep them up.

It is difficult to speak about England without speaking about its holidays. Christmas Day is among them.

All English people celebrate Christmas (or X-mas) on the 25th of December.

Christmas! What kind of holiday is it? It is the yearly celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It falls on December 25 by the Catholic Church and on the 7th of January by the Orthodox Church. This holiday means the beginning of the new year and the new life. English people cele­brate this holiday with the evergreen tree — Christmas tree. Children rut

along sock, called a Christmas stocking at the end of their beds and Santa Claus conies down the chimney to bring them presents.

Christmas Day is the greatest holiday in England. It is interesting to visit the shops before this holiday. There are a lot of nice Christmas cards and presents there. English people like this holiday very much and prepare for it beforehand. They buy presents for each other, try to send Christmas cards for their relatives and friends.

It is interesting to visit London during this holiday. There is a Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square. We can see many lights, toys and sweets all over this tree. Everywhere you can see slogans "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year".

The traditional English dinner on Christmas is turkey and pudding.

**NEW YEAR'S DAY**

There are many holidays in our coun­try. They are: New Year's Day, Christ­mas, Women's Day, Victory Day, May Day and others.

I like New Year's Day, it is my favou­rite holiday. The 1st of January is a win­ter holiday and now it is the first day of the New Year.

Peter the First changed the Russian calendar in 1699. He made the 31st of De­cember, 1699 the last day of the year. The first of January 1700 became New Year's Day.

The 1st of January is in the middle of winter. The weather is usually fine and there is a lot of snow everywhere. As the 1st of January is a holiday I don't go to school and my parents don't go to work.

We usually have got a very interesting New Year's party at school. We have got it on the 28th or 29th of December.

Our family prepares for this holiday be­forehand. My father buys and brings home a beautiful New Year's tree at the end of December. Our family has a tradition to buy it. I like to decorate the New Year's tree with toys, little coloured lights, sweets and a beautiful star on the top.

My mother and grandmother prepare our holiday supper and lay the table. I make a cake.

All the members of our family clean the flat before this nice holiday and then each of us try to dress well. We like to see the New Year in at home with our relatives. They come to see us at 11 o'clock in the evening.

At 12 o'clock we are sitting at the table and we are glad to see the New Year in. We say, "Best wishes for the New Year!"

I hope that next year will be better than the last one.

The New Year's Day is always connect­ed with our new hopes and dreams.

It is a pleasant moment to get presents on the New Year's Eve.

I usually get many nice useful things from my parents and relatives.

My parents put their presents under the New Year's tree.

We don't go to bed till morning, we watch TV, dance, eat tasty things and make jokes.

I enjoy this holiday very much.

**YURI GAGARIN (1934-68)**

Yuri Gagarin was the first cosmonaut in the world. Yuri Alexeyevich Gagarin was born on the 9th of March, 1934. He was born in the village of Klushino in the Smolensk region.

Yura was an active, brave and curious boy. His father was jack of all trades and he helped his son when Yura made toy planes by hand. But the war began. Yuri Gagarin and his mother, father, brother and sister left their house and had to live in a dug-out.

After the war Gagarin's family moved to Gzhatsk. Now it is Gagarin. It was named after the first cosmonaut.

In 1951 Gagarin graduated from a voca­tional school in Lyubertsy near Moscow.

Yuri Gagarin attended an aeroclub and began to fly when he was a student of a technical secondary school in Saratov.

In **1955** he entered a school for pilots. Then he became a pilot and joined the first group of cosmonauts.

In 1960 Gagarin began to prepare for the flight into space.

On April 12, 1961 Yuri Gagarin flew into space and spent 108 minutes there. Jt was the first time in history that the Russian spaceship "Vostok" with the man on board was in space. After his flight he visited many countries and saw millions of people. Gagarin became a Hero of our country.

He died in 1968, but people always re­member the first Russian cosmonaut.

# THE MASS MEDIA

**Newspapers**

There are many kinds of newspapers in our country. It is possible to buy them al­most everywhere. But we can't read all the newspapers. We know that it is neces­sary to read newspapers. Reading them we can learn a lot of interesting and use­ful things. I think that everyone must read newspapers every day. I read many newspapers and magazines.

Everyone has its favourite newspa­pers. I like "Vechernaya Moskva" best of all. This newspaper was published on the 6th of December, 1923 for the first time. It usually has 8 pages. You can read some news on the 1st page. You can't know a lot about these events, you read only some facts, which are usually short, but

interesting. If you turn the second page, you can read about our life. You can read out events abroad and about your favourite artists and singers, too. You л see some advertisements on each page the newspaper and use them. You can learn about the weather from the pages of is newspaper.

If you are fond of football, basket-ball tennis, you read articles about sport events in our country and about our famous sportsmen. If you want to buy something you have to read the last page. There are some humorous stories in this newspaper.

**Magazines**

It is interesting to look through some magazines or read them. It is possible to subscribe to some of them or buy them. We usually subscribe to the maga­zine "At the wheel". As we have a car it is useful for us to read it. My mother prefer to read the magazine "Liza". She says that it even helps her in some cases.

# Television and radio

I think that they are very popular means of information. They are popular among young people in our country. We can know a lot of news watching TV or lis­tening to the radio set. All members of our family watch TV very regularly. We like such programme as "My family". I prefer to discuss some problems with my parents after it. I have many favourite TV programmes but I haven't enough time to watch all of them.

**MY HOBBY**

What is a hobby? It is what you can and like to do, when you have free time. We choose a hobby according to our character and taste. When we have a hobby our life becomes more interesting.

Very often our hobby helps us to choose our future profession because we learn a lot of new things.

Many people are interested in music. They collect records. Others like to read and collect books. People living in cities and towns like to be closer to nature and they spend their free time in the country.

Some of us go on hikes, some like to work in their gardens, take photographs or knit.

For example, gardening and growing roses is the most common hobby among Englishmen.

Both grown-ups and children are fond of playing different computer games. It has become one of the numerous hobbies.

I have got a hobby too.

My name is Nastya. Sometimes I have got some free time. As my hobby is cook­ing I like to make cakes and pies. My cakes are very tasty, but I like pies best of all. I'll tell you how I make pies with cab­bage.

First of all I take a head of cabbage, cut and put it into a frying-pan. Then I take carrot and peel it. By the way I have a very comfortable grater at home. I like to use it when I make my pies. I usually grate carrot, onion using my favourite grater. I put grated carrot into the fry­ing-pan, then I salt cabbage and carrot to my taste, mix them and add some water. Then I stew these vegetables in the fry­ing-pan. I usually buy some paste for my pies.

I cut up paste, roll it and make small pies. Then I put pies with stewed cabbage into the oven. It takes twenty minutes

to bake them. My parents and friends like to eat my pies. I advise you to make such pies and I hope that you'll like them too.

# MY SCHOOL

At the age of 6 or 7 all boys and girls go to school. I go to school too. The number of my school is 338. Our school is large and light. It is neither old nor new. There is a schoolyard around it. It is a pity, but there are no flowers near the school. You can see a sportsground behind the school. Sometimes we have physical training les­sons there.

Our school has got three floors. There is a workshop on the ground floor. It is big. There are all kinds of tools and ma­chines there. The boys of our school have a wood-work room too. They learn to make things of wood in this room. There is a room for manual work for girls. It is not on the ground floor, it is on the sec­ond floor.

There are some computer classes, and pupils like such school subjects as Com­puting.

If you enter the school and go to the left you see a dining-room. Here pupils and teachers have their breakfast and dinner.

The dining-room is a clean one. There are many nice pictures on the walls.

There is a gymnasium near the dining-room. All pupils like to go there, because they like physical training lessons.

Our school has got a library. It is on the ground floor too. There are a lot of inter­esting new and old books in it. But our li­brary has no reading-room.

Our school has got many classrooms. We have got two English classrooms. His­tory, Geography and Physics classrooms and others. They are big and light and each of them has got two large windows with green curtains, flowers on the win­dow-sills, a bookcase near the door, the blackboard on the wall.

The teacher's table with many books on it is situated not far from the black­board.

There are twenty desks and some com­fortable chairs in the classrooms.

There is a TV set in each classroom. Sometimes it is used during the lessons.

There is a school hall on the second floor where meetings and conferences take place.

We organize concerts, parties when we celebrate our holidays. Pupils of our school sing songs and dance modern and folk dances and perform some plays there. The last bell is organized at our school in a proper way. It is a very re­markable day in the life of all the pupils. The pupils of the first form and the pu­pils of the eleventh one are preparing for this day with great pleasure.

The teachers' room is on the second floor. There are tables and chairs for teachers, a TV set and a telephone there. It is a comfortable and cosy room and the teachers like to spend their free time in it. I like my school. I go there and get knowledge.

**THE CINEMA**

The Lumiere brothers made their first film in 1895. This film was demonstrated in one famous cafe in Paris.

The first films were silent and short, but they were popular among people.

The USA was the leader in the produc­tion of films. The first sound film appeared in 1927. Soon coloured films appeared.

Cinematography has a long history in our country too.

Pioneers of the Russian cinema were Protozanov, Gardin, later Pudovkin and Dovzhenko. At that time films were si­lent and black-and-white.

Later films became sound and colour­ful.

Some years ago it was popular to go to the cinemas in Moscow. It was difficult to buy a ticket for a good film and we had to stand in a queue for hours.

But now we prefer to stay at home and watch TV and video films.

In England the cinema is usually called "the pictures". The prices of cinema seats in London are high. In the past cinemas were more popular than they are now. It is interesting that in some towns in Brit­ain the cinemas are closed on Sundays.

I like to see documentary films best of all. Some of them are rather interesting, because they tell us the truth about the history of our country.

I like to see films about school life. As I study at school, such films are connected with me. It is interesting to see films bout school life in England, France, Spain and in the USA. It is interesting to know about foreign education and to see their schools.

My favourite Russian film is "Moscow doesn't believe in tears". It is the true story about the girl. She leaves her vil­lage for Moscow. This film tells us about her difficulties, about her wish to live in the capital, about her friends. I am sure that it is a kind and a clever film.

**THE TRETYAKOV GALLERY**

There are many interesting galleries in our country. The Tretyakov Gallery is one

of the famous and well-known picture galleries in our country and all over the world.

The State Tretyakov Gallery is situated in a Russian-looking building in the cen­tre of Moscow. This gallery is named af­ter its founder Peter Tretyakov. He began to collect Russian paintings in 1856. He wanted these paintings to be seen by peo­ple.

This gallery and collections of paint­ings were nationalized in 1918.

The first works in Tretyakov's collec­tion were the paintings of the "Pere-dvizhniki". The collector bought paint­ings "Morning in a Pine Wood" by Shish-kin and "Ivan Tsarevich on the Grey Wolf "by Vasnetsov.

The gallery has got many halls. There are halls devoted to the great Russian painters of the 18th and 19th centuries. We can see pictures by such painters as Serov, Repin, Ivanov, Levitan and others. You can see the landscapes "After Rain" and "Golden Autumn". These paintings by Levitan are beautiful. I like to see his paintings because he is one of my favourite artists. I compare his painting "Golden Autumn" with the poem "Au­tumn" by Pushkin.

There are some paintings by Repin in the Tretyakov Gallery. His paintings are connected with the history of our coun­try. For example, his painting "Ivan Grozny Murders His Son Ivan". There are some portraits of Lev Tolstoy and a self-portrait of Repin in this hall.

I like the painting "Trinity" by Andrei Rublyov. This work reflects the life and soul of the Russian people.

This gallery has many new exhibits now. You can see works of the painters of the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century there. I like works by Gerasimov. I think that he is a very tal­ented painter.

**BOOKS IN OUR LIFE**

Books... I think that we can't live with­out them.

I consider that books are with us during all our life. When I was a child my par­ents read them to me. I was pleased to lis­ten to the stories and tales. I learned a lot of interesting things from books. I re­member, I liked thick books.

Later I could read myself. I like to read books about animals, nature and child­ren.

I like to get presents on my birthday. I am happy if it is a book. It doesn't mat­ter what kind of book it is. I like to read almost all books. If I have got time I like to spend it with my favourite book. When I was fifteen I was fond of reading too.

But I preferred to read books about trav­els. I travelled with the heroes of the sto­ries. I saw many interesting places and learned a lot of important facts about other countries and people.

Now I like to read books on science. You can learn many things from books. I am sure that books play a very impor­tant role in my life.

Our family has got many books. All the members of our family buy books and read them. My mother says that books help us in self-education.

In ancient times books were written by hand. It was difficult to write a book with a pen. Then printing came into our life. Printing played an important role in the development of literature and culture.

Now there are a lot of books in the shops, there are many books in our flats. But it is difficult to buy all books which we want to read. That's why we get books in public libraries.

There are some problems in our life and sometimes it is difficult to solve them. I think that books can help us. Last year I read a very interesting book "An Ameri­can Tragedy" by Theodore Dreiser. This novel was published at the beginning of the 20th century. The novel describes the tragic fate of a boy and a girl, Clyde and Roberta by name. It is a sad story. This novel was written many years ago, but it is popular nowadays. Books must be our friends during all our life.