

ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ ОЛИМПИАДА ШКОЛЬНИКОВ
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ТЕКСТ ДЛЯ АУДИРОВАНИЯ

Audioscript
Listening comprehension

*For items 1–10 listen to a talk about famous people who tried to learn Russian and decide whether the statements (1–10) are **TRUE** or **FALSE** according to the text you hear. You will hear the text twice.*

You have 20 seconds to study the statements.
(pause 20 seconds)

Now we begin.

Over the past centuries, the melodic and lyrical Russian language has charmed quite a few people. They admired it and complained about its complexity and challenges, but nevertheless persisted in their attempt to learn and speak “the great and mighty Russian language”.

One of these people was Herbert G. Wells. The famed writer visited Russia three times, the first time in 1914. Before the author of ‘The Invisible Man’ set out on his journey, he studied the Russian language with much alacrity. At least, he had tried. He later admitted to remembering only the words that he learned using the Latin alphabet. This was how he taught himself to count to one hundred in Russian.

After his two-week trip to Russia, Wells penned an essay “What is Coming? A Forecast of Things after the War”, in which he suggested introducing Russian as a third foreign language in schools in Great Britain, in addition to French and German. The great writer thought that the major challenge in learning Russian consisted in its Cyrillic script, which Wells referred to as the “irrational spelling of words”. He suggested using Latin transcriptions and even publishing Russian-language books in the Latin script. Even more interesting, in his novel ‘Joan and Peter’, the main characters travel from St. Petersburg to Moscow, just like the writer himself. The book abounds in descriptions of the capital with its bright shop windows, the Kremlin walls, sledge rides along the frozen river, as well as performances at the legendary Moscow Art Theatre.

Alexandre Dumas was another one who tried to learn Russian. The author of ‘The Three Musketeers’ traveled across Russia at the suggestion of Earl Grigory Kushelev-Bezborodko. His route wasn’t limited to only Moscow and St. Petersburg, and he also sailed along the Volga River to Astrakhan and visited the Caucasus. He wrote several books about Russia, as well as published a newspaper featuring his travel notes. In total, the writer spent a year in Russia, and eventually mastered the

language. He noted in his travel essays that “Russian doesn’t have neutral expressions”, with its “choice of insults being as wide as that of expressions denoting affection and love”. Apart from his travel notes, Dumas managed to translate into French some poetry by Nikolay Nekrasov, who he had met in St. Petersburg, as well as works by Pyotr Vyazemsky and Alexander Pushkin. To do this, he made use of literal translations by writer and translator Dmitry Grigorovich.

You have 20 seconds to check your answers.

(pause 20 seconds)

Now listen to the text again.

(text repeated)

You have 20 seconds to check your answers.

(pause 20 seconds)

For items 11–15 listen to the dialogue. Choose the correct answer to answer questions 11-15. You will hear the text once.

You now have 25 seconds to study the questions.

(pause 25 seconds)

Now we begin.

Melanie: I can’t remember. Do you take milk?

Simon: Please, but no sugar. Thanks. It's weird, you know, but I've been to your house three times now, and I still haven't met your parents.

Melanie: Yes, they're out a lot. My dad works for the BBC and my mum's er, she does sort of temping work for a company. You know, like an advertising agency. They're both really busy.

Simon: Oh, they sound really interesting.

Melanie: Do you think so? I find my dad a bit dull, to be honest. He works late every day, even works some weekends, doesn't read, doesn't go out. I mean, don't get me wrong, he's quite nice, but I don't know, I just don't have anything to say to him. I think the thing is, we just don't spend enough time together.

Simon: How old is he, then?

Melanie: About fifty-five, I think. I can never really remember.

Simon: Oh, yeah.

Melanie: But my mum's lovely. She's really nice, a bit too nice though, sometimes, always trying to look after me. She worries about me leaving home. She's a bit over-protective, if you know what I mean. I'm an only child, so ...

Simon: Oh, I didn't know that.

Melanie : What? You mean you can't tell!

Simon: I don't know. I've never thought about it, I suppose.

You have 1 minute to complete your answer.

(pause 1 minute)

This is the end of the listening comprehension part.