

School 33



The Essay

“English in my life”



8 “Б” form

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I can't imagine an educated person who doesn't know any foreign language. It is especially important nowadays. Some people learn languages because they need them in their work, others travel abroad, for the third studying languages is a hobby. Foreign languages are socially demanded especially at the present time when the progress in science and technology has led to an explosion of knowledge and has contributed to an overflow of information. The total knowledge of mankind is known to double every seven years. Foreign languages are needed as the main and most efficient means of information exchange of the people of our planet.

Every year thousands of people go from one country to another either on business or for pleasure. And the knowledge of languages opens the door to any foreign country and gives them a possibility to communicate, to understand people and to be understood.

More and more people realize that every educated person should know a foreign language, especially **English** as it is international language.

Russia is integrating into the world community and the problem of learning English for the purpose of communication is especially urgent today. Learning a foreign language is not as easy thing. It is a long and slow process that takes a lot of time and patience. But to know English is absolutely necessary for every educated person, for every good specialist.

Over 350 million people speak it as a mother tongue. The native speakers of English live in Great Britain, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand. English is one of the official languages in the Irish Republic, Canada, the South African Republic. As a second language it is used in the former British and US colonies.

It is the major international language for communication in such areas as science, technology, business and mass entertainment. English is one of the official langua-

ges of the United Nations Organization and other political organization. It is the language of the literature, education, modern music, international tourism.

It is well known that reading books in the original , listening to the BBC news, communicating with the English speaking people will help a lot. 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 read all over the world. 75% of the world's mail and 60% of the world's telephone calls are in English. Half of the world's scientific literature is written in English too. English is spoken by more than 350 million people . When learning a foreign language you learn the culture and history of the native speakers.

While learning English at school I have known many interesting facts from traditions & customs in the English speaking countries, such as the USA & of course the UK. For example, **Halloween**.



Halloween falls on the thirty first of October. Originally, Halloween was a religious holiday. Today it is a day of fun & excitement. Children make faces in pumpkins (turnips are used in Britain) by removing the pulp & seeds & cutting holes in the shell for the eyes, nose & mouth. These pumpkins are called jack-o-lanterns. A lighted candle is put inside to shine through the holes.



Children dress up in costumes; sometimes according to tradition, as ghosts, goblins, witches, vampires & werewolves, sometimes as pirates, sailors, ballerinas,



folk heroes, etc.

After dark, children walk around their neighbourhood, knocking on their neighbours doors. They say “trick or treat”, & their neighbours give them fruit or candy.

In the old days “trick or treat” had to perform songs & shifts for their neighbours. If the neighbours liked the performance, the children received a “treat” – fruit or candy. If not, the neighbours played a trick on the children – like throwing water on them. As a matter of fact, they don’t do that any more.

The costumes of the trick-or-treaters are related to ancient traditions, according to which ghosts, witches walked in the streets on the last day of October & the pumpkins with a lighted candle inside were supposed to frighten the evil spirits.

On Halloween most adults stay at home, waiting for children to knock on their door. However, teenagers & young adults often go to costume parties as ghosts, goblins, witches, etc.

Another holiday – **St. Valentine’s Day** – the most lovely holiday by teen-



agers.

The 14th of February is a day when boys & girls, sweethearts & lovers, husbands & wives, friends & neighbours will exchange greetings of love or satirical comment. And the quick, modern way to do it is with a Valentine card.



Valentines as we know them first appeared in the 18th century, & were cards with drawings & verses made by the sender. In the 19th century shop-made

valentines appeared & became decorated with lace, real flowers, feathers, and



moss.

Valentine-sending has now become less, though it does revive from time to time.

The first Valentine of all was a bishop, a Christian martyr, who before he was put to death by Romans sent a note of friendship to his jailer's blind daughter.



Comic valentines are also traditional.

Here is the story about St. Valentine's Day in one family. The story may be called "A Valentine' Fiasco: Her Heart was Full – His Stomach Empty".

My mum's Great-Grandma and Grandpa had been married a good many years when she decided that they should exchange Valentine cards as they used to during their courtship.

"We shouldn't let the custom die out", she pleaded.

However, Great-Grandpa refused to spend any money on "such rubbish".

She didn't require a card from him. She only wanted to surprise him & warm his heart a little. He worked hard. Every day he walked several kilometers across the fields to work, & he was accompanied by his grown sons, all carrying big sticks in one hand & lunch-baskets in the other.

On that day the old lady got up very early. She took a real fresh rose from the garden & fixed it on the card so that when the card was opened, the living rose was revealed to the beholder's (loving, she hoped) eyes. Then she packed the boys' &

papa's lunch-baskets. All day she smiled & sang to herself remembering their first romantic meeting & the few happy days they had before the babies began arriving.

Alas, it all went wrong. When the boys & Great-Grandpa opened their baskets to have their dinner, the boys heard such a yell from their papa, that they were ready to run, remembering their father's heavy hands.

Their father threw out an old card and a rose, not reading the words carefully inscribed with loving hand "Amos – my everything – your wife". "My grub!" – he roared. "Where's my dinner?" – and in case of apoplexy the boys had reluctantly to hand over some of theirs.

Poor Great-Grandma. With love in her heart, her mind had been kilometers away from her work. She had forgotten to do the first thing which all good Victorian wives were supposed to: "First – feed the brute".

Besides saying about holidays, you can hardly find a person who doesn't like or need music, who never sings or dances. Music is beauty in sounds, our magic source of inspiration, part of our lives. I am proud that I can understand songs of my favourite singers & groups. When I was in the 5th or 6th form, we sang children's songs at the English lessons. Such as: "Blue train", "The smile".

I remember those beautiful words:

Smile

1. With a smile a gloomy day is bright,
And a rainbow in the sky at once
appears,
Share your smile and everything's all
right,
And it will return to you and will be near.
*R: Then for sure clouds in sky
Will be merry, dancing high,
A grasshopper'll take at once a tiny
fiddle.
From blue streams all rivers start,
Give a smile from all your heart!
Give a smile from all your heart
Just from the middle!*
2. Give a sunny, friendly, open smile
And the rain will stop immediatly crying.

And a sleepy wood'll past for a while
With its calm and clap green hands, so
gladly sighing.

R.

3. And the smile will warm both great and
small,
Both an elephant and even a tinyhare.
Let them smile and give your smiles to
all,
Let all smiles look like bright lamps both
here and there.

R.

A blue train

1. 1. Slowly the minutes go far away,
And you will not meet them any more.

Though «the past was better», one can often say,
Better life is future, not before.

*R. Faster along the way
Goes a blue train ahead,
Up to horizon spreads
Railway like a cloth.
We know for sure a day
Will be happy again.
Soon it will come of course,
Fast goes our train.*

2. 2. You may have offended someone
nothing for,

We don't need to know Japanese when we go to Japan or Hindi when we visit India. English is spoken all over the world. We can hear it everywhere: in a street, in shops, at restaurants.

A modern engineer or even a worker deals with instruments & machines from other countries. He must be able to read the instruction which is usually written in English.

Scientists & scholars must understand English well because they use foreign literature to write their articles & books. They must speak English fluently to make speeches at international conferences.

Diplomats need foreign languages in their work too. They make contracts, conclude treaties, hold negotiations.

If someone wants to be a stewardess, a pilot or a businessman he/she must learn English, the language of international communication. Even a shopgirl or a cashier in a big supermarket must know at least some phrases in English to understand a foreign customer.

I don't know exactly what job will be mine but I want to know foreign language. I have always been interested in foreign countries and their cultures. The only problem is – we have English lessons twice a week, not four or five times a week. It's not enough.

You know I think that who doesn't know a foreign language, doesn't know his own language.

Calendar will hide that awful sheet,
Wonderful adventures are for us in store,
Dear driver, let's pick up the speed.

R.

3. 3. Our train is rocking, going very fast
Our train is picking up its speed.
It's a pity that the day has gone at last
Let it last as long as all we need.

R.

