

# RUSSIAN

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Paper 9782/01  
Speaking

## Key messages

- In **Part One**, candidates need to choose a card that features a topic of interest to them and be able to express their opinions in accurate Russian.
- In **Part Two**, candidates need to prepare a topic related to a country where Russian is spoken. In order to do well, candidates should choose a subject which is of interest to them and about which they can offer evidence of in-depth research and opinion.

## Comments on specific parts

### **Part One: Discussion of an article and related themes**

Most candidates were well prepared for this section of the exam. They used their preparation time effectively and were able to give a confident précis of the article. A range of opening formulas was used, including phrases like «в статье речь идет о том, что» and «в статье говорится, что». The best summaries lasted close to one minute and included the key details from the beginning, middle and end of the article. A small number of candidates summarised the text in only a cursory fashion, which was not a successful approach. The best candidates demonstrated that they could do more than list the facts presented in the article («В первом параграфе автор говорит... Во втором параграфе автор говорит...») and presented the main idea of the article.

Card 1 led to discussion of parental control over children and the age at which certain freedoms should be given. There was also discussion of other inter-generational relations, such as the attitude of young people towards the elderly, and vice-versa.

Card 2 led to discussion of the role of the media in society and whether newspapers are losing their influence.

Card 3 led to discussion of gender equality in the workplace. Candidates were also sometimes asked about which other groups in society experience discrimination and what can be done to help them.

Card 4 led to discussion of the extent to which developed countries should help developing ones, the role of resources in economic development in the post-industrial society and the impact of modern technology.

The best candidates steered the discussion, rather than leaving this solely to the examiner. Candidates are encouraged to introduce new ideas into conversation and give their opinions readily. This could allow them to achieve the highest marks in the section 'Comprehension and Discussion', as it would satisfy the requirement of '(showing) initiative in developing discussion'. A small number of candidates were overly cautious, gave perfunctory answers and made little effort to develop the conversation.

### **Part Two: Prepared topic**

Candidates selected a wide range of interesting topics for this part of the exam. Biographical topics were particularly popular, with figures from the fields of literature (including Solzhenitsyn, Dostoevsky, Gogol, Akhmatova, Dovlatov), music (Stravinsky, Shostakovich) and politics (Gorbachev, Trotsky, Zhirinovsky) especially favoured. Other topics included Russian Poetry of the Silver Age, ballet in Russia and the history of Mariinsky Theatre. There were interesting and unusual topics on a variety of areas from the fur trade to the history of Baikal-Amur Rail line and the reform of the Russian language. Some successful topics concentrated on various periods of Russian history from the Kievan Rus to the rise of Moscow Principality, to the post-Soviet reforms in Russia. These broad topics require substantial research and an ability to organise

the extensive material, but they were rewarding topics for the candidates who were interested in these issues and most of these topics were very successful.

Whilst most candidates were well prepared, a few did not demonstrate sufficiently detailed knowledge of their sub-headings and were unable to deviate from a pre-learned script. Candidates should remember that, as with the first part of the paper, this section is also a discussion. It is therefore important to listen carefully to the question and avoid simply reverting to a pre-prepared response upon hearing a key word.

Candidates should have a sound factual knowledge of each of their sub-headings and remember that they will find it hard to score above 10 for factual knowledge and opinions if there are obvious gaps in their knowledge of their chosen topic. They should go beyond general broad statements. This was sometimes the case in the discussions of Russia's contemporary policy (the issues of the Crimea, the events in the Ukraine). Less able candidates might be better advised to choose five sub-headings and know them thoroughly, rather than eight and know them only superficially.

### Language

Overall the standard of language was high. The vast majority of candidates demonstrated a wide vocabulary and good grasp of grammar. All candidates should take care with verbs, including conjugating less familiar verbs ending *-авать* and *-овать*. Weaker candidates occasionally attempted to use *сказать* in the present tense instead of *говорить*. Prepositions also posed some difficulties: *от* and *из* were confused, for example.

Candidates' pronunciation and intonation was usually good or very good, but practice of the correct stress would increase the mark for pronunciation and intonation.

Other areas to concentrate on in preparation include numerals, noun and adjective endings, structures such as complex object («родители хотят, чтобы дети имели успех») and the use of «*есть нет*» instead of «*у них нет*». Generally the candidates demonstrated impressive command of Russian grammar, with broad and idiomatic vocabulary.

# RUSSIAN

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Paper 9782/02

Reading and Listening

## Key messages

- In preparation for this component, candidates should have experience of reading and listening to a wide range of authentic materials related to the topics in the syllabus.
- During the examination, candidates need to focus on conveying the required information in clear language, but there is no need for full sentences in the comprehension or summary exercises.

## General comments

### **Part I: Reading**

Text 1: Candidates need to produce answers to questions in Russian which to some degree manipulate the language of the original text. Full sentences are not required.

Text 2: Candidates need to respond in English. Full sentences are not required.

Text 3: Candidates need to translate, into Russian, a short passage which is thematically connected to the preceding two texts. Useful vocabulary can be found in Text 2, although it may have to be adapted for the translation passage; for example, verb and case forms may need to be changed.

### **Part II: Listening**

Candidates should be familiar with the individual listening equipment before the examination so that they feel confident.

Text 1: Candidates need to respond in Russian. They should focus on giving only the information required for the answer, rather than full sentences or lengthy sections transcribed from the audio. The information has to be conveyed successfully, so candidates should aim for as high a degree of linguistic accuracy as possible.

Text 2: Candidates need to respond in English. Complete sentences are not required; candidates need only write the information required to answer the questions.

Text 3: Candidates must address all four bullet points in the summary and answer in concise English in order not to exceed the word limit. Complete sentences are not required.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Part I: Reading**

**TEXT 1:** The text was about exchanging homes for the purpose of a holiday.

#### **Question 1**

There were a number of acceptable alternatives for this answer. The majority of candidates were able to convey that holidays were spent in another club member's home.

#### **Question 2**

The majority of candidates who scored on this question successfully manipulated their answer from *необычной программы*, although the mark could also have been gained from focussing on the phrase

*сайты для нетрадиционного туризма*. Candidates needed to understand that Eduard Kuznetsov was not the author of the article.

### Question 3

This was well answered by the majority of candidates, who displayed pleasing manipulation of the required vocabulary.

### Question 4

Candidates responded well to this question. Few candidates referred to the lack of a traditional guide in their response.

### Question 5

This proved to be the most challenging question in this section of the paper. Some candidates did not grasp that Eduard would communicate with **prospective** club members. Others were unable to manipulate the required vocabulary successfully.

### Question 6

This was well answered by the majority of candidates.

### Question 7

Few candidates referred to the paparazzi in their answer. This question could have been answered in two words - *давать автографы*. Many candidates provided longer answers and successfully gained the mark. Candidates are again reminded to read the question carefully as some evidently mistook *не любят* for *любят*.

**TEXT 2:** This text dealt with reasons why people migrate.

### Question 8

This question was answered correctly by virtually all candidates.

### Question 9

Most candidates answered this well, but a small number misunderstood *приняты* to imply Anna's parents had been taken to work in the factory against their will.

### Question 10

Candidates answered this question well – most were able to understand that most of Anna's friends still lived in Switzerland.

### Question 11

Good candidates grasped the meaning of *выздороветь* and were able to make the link between good weather and better health. All candidates focused on the **family related** issues when answering this question.

### Question 12

It was important to focus on what happened **to Victor** to gain the mark. A small number of candidates were too vague and did not show how the factory closing affected him.

### Question 13

It was important that candidates expressed that Victor was aiming to open a business **in his homeland**, in order to gain the mark. Again, some answers were too vague to gain credit.

### Question 14

This was generally well answered by most candidates.

**TEXT 3:** This proved to be a demanding task which elicited a wide range of marks. That said, a pleasing number of candidates scored very well on this question and several scored full marks. The most challenging sections of this translation proved to be:

*привыкать/привыкнуть к* (к often omitted)  
*более тёплого* (often rendered as *теплее*)  
*перспектив* (a number of candidates used *проспект*)  
*безработица* (at times unknown or misspelt)  
*необходимость* (this and any suitable alternative frequently not known)  
*вот что* (the most challenging phrase in the text)  
*заставляет* (frequently unknown and an appropriate substitute rarely found)

There was generally very good awareness of case endings and adjectival agreements, irregular forms of nouns in the plural or oblique cases.

### Part II: Listening

**TEXT 1:** This text was about looking for work after becoming a parent.

### Question 16

This was answered successfully by almost all candidates.

### Question 17

Only a small number of candidates did not identify *привыкли* in the text and therefore concluded that parents already had everything they wanted.

### Question 18

A number of candidates missed the significance of *самым важным* in the question and assumed the answer to be *не расстраиваться*.

### Questions 19-20

Each question required two details in response. While most candidates were able to offer one detail, significantly fewer offered two, with references to having a few hours to spare (**Question 19**) and giving times available to work (**Question 20**) often being neglected.

### Question 21

This proved to be a challenging question - a number of candidates became entangled in a wordy answer which did not address the question.

### Question 22

This was well answered by the majority of candidates.

**TEXT 2:** This text was about opening a small business.

### Question 23

This question was answered correctly by virtually all candidates.

### Question 24

There was a variety of answers for which credit could be given. However, a small number of candidates appeared confused by the reference to changes in the market and did not express their answer sufficiently clearly to gain the mark.

### Questions 25-27

These questions were answered successfully by the majority of candidates.

### Question 28

Clarity of expression leading to ambiguous responses was an issue for a small number of candidates. The phrases *дополнительные расходы* and *второго этапа* proved challenging to their comprehension.

### TEXT 3: Summary

This text referred to allergies and how to manage them. Although challenging in parts, the majority of candidates gained at least six marks on this task. Candidates should remember that full sentences are not required and that credit cannot be given for any work beyond the first natural break after 100 words. Most candidates this year kept within the word limit.

The first bullet point concerning types of allergies and their characteristics were generally well answered.

For the second bullet point a number of candidates assumed organs would fail and did not grasp *замедляют* to express more specifically that they slowed down. A large number of candidates understood that *кровенное давление* related to blood pressure but assumed it would be raised, not lowered.

Bullet point 3 proved the most challenging for many candidates. The phrases *под наблюдением врача* and *в несколько этапов* seemed to confuse a number of candidates.

For the fourth bullet point, a large number of candidates assumed allergy sufferers would drink, not wash in mineral water, although *мёд* was widely recognised. Others were unable to make the connection between asthmatics and sea air.

Unfortunately, candidates who went over the word limit tended to lose marks from the fourth bullet point, which could not be marked in its entirety.

# RUSSIAN

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**Paper 9782/03**  
**Writing and Usage**

## Key messages

- In **Part I**, candidates should make sure their response keeps to the specific requirement of the question and not veer into a general essay on the broad theme of the question.
- In **Part II**, candidates should set time aside to check their work very carefully to avoid careless mistakes.

## General comments

The majority of candidates this year had clearly prepared well for the examination.

### **Part I: Writing**

When choosing a title in the examination, candidates should spend some time reading all the titles and think carefully about what each topic is and what is being asked in the title. They should consider whether they have something to say in response and whether they possess vocabulary in the topic area. It is a good idea to make a very rough plan before choosing a title and then, having decided which question to answer, decide what they think and write an essay plan.

When writing the essay, candidates are advised to use the plan to construct a real argument and write an introduction, discussion and a conclusion. They must keep the essay title in mind throughout and keep checking that the points they want to make are relevant to the specific requirements of the question. The strongest responses deal with each point clearly and completely, before moving onto the next. Weaker responses can be repetitive, with candidates not managing to clearly state, exemplify and analyse each point. Candidates should write in paragraphs, making a clear, relevant point in each one.

Strong responses contain a variety of language and demonstrate the candidate's linguistic ability, with complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument.

Finally, candidates should remember to try to interest and/or persuade the reader.

### **Part II: Usage**

In this Part, the three tests of verbal knowledge, structural manipulation and other aspects of usage cover a wide range of structures, but should not present major difficulty to candidates who have broad experience of the language and an awareness of the need for accuracy in writing. It is useful to be familiar with the format of the tests: this will help candidates to be aware of the type of knowledge required. Intelligent, careful reading of texts in the target language, attention to personal linguistic development in terms of structures, and experience of working through similar tasks can all help in preparation for this section.

In this Part of the examination candidates are recommended to read each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence. They should avoid leaving any questions unanswered.

Successful candidates use their experience of and 'feel for' the language as well as their knowledge when deciding the correct answer (e.g. ask themselves 'Have I heard or seen a similar sentence?')

Of course, it is essential to proofread carefully the answers to Exercises 1 and 2.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Part I: Discursive essay**

Candidates write one essay from a choice of five titles. It is suggested that candidates write 250–350 words in Russian, but where candidates exceeded the upper limit the entire essay was assessed. It is unlikely that an essay shorter than 250 words will include sufficient content and range of vocabulary and structure to access the entire range of marks available.

The majority of candidates wrote a plan for the essay. An essay plan is of great help, if not essential, in writing a well-organised and coherently argued essay. In addition, a plan allows the candidate to note down examples, vocabulary and structures which s/he may wish to include in the essay. The essay plan is not assessed. Many candidates wrote the essay on alternate lines of the page, allowing corrections or additions to the essay to be made neatly when they went back to re-read their work. Candidates would be well-advised to use paragraphs carefully in order to structure their work. Although there was a small number of cases in which the presentation of the work so messy as to make it difficult to read, this was less common than in previous years.

“Accuracy and linguistic range” is assessed out of 24 marks and the essay does not have to be grammatically without fault to be awarded full marks in this category. In order to access the highest marks here, candidates should aim to include a very wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the title they have chosen in addition to demonstrating the ability to use a range of complex sentence patterns and structures appropriately and accurately.

Up to 16 marks are awarded for the development and organisation of the ideas in the essay. Here, in order to access the highest marks, candidates must present an answer to the title which demonstrates that they have understood the question, considered its implications and prepared a well-planned and thoughtful response. Access to the higher boxes of the mark scheme requires the work to be illustrated with relevant examples, and candidates should bear this in mind when planning the essay.

In order to be able to access the full range of marks available for this essay, candidates should choose a title about which they have clear ideas and views. They need to consider the question from different angles and draw a clear conclusion. Relevant examples should be incorporated into the essay and used to support strands of the argument. It is very possible that the candidate will have, at the initial planning stage, more material than can be used in an essay of this length. The skill, naturally, comes in selecting the arguments and examples to be used to address the question and the most successful answers reflected the ability to do just this. Less successful were those essays in which candidates appeared to write everything they knew about the topic, thus losing sight of the question.

### **Question 1**

- (a) This was a popular question and candidates who answered this question were generally able to write a balanced essay, drawing both on personal experience and that of others. Candidates considered other influences on a child's life including school, friends and the media, but most came to the conclusion that the family does play the most important role in a child's upbringing. Many candidates gave a rather personal viewpoint which often contributed positively to the conviction of the argument.
- (b) This title was the most popular, and while, almost without exception, candidates successfully drew a convincing conclusion at the end of the essay, opinion was divided as to whether the internet has indeed significantly improved our lives. The title provoked some thoughtful discussion and candidates used interesting examples taken from both personal experience and other sources. It was a topic about which the candidates clearly had both a good deal of opinion and a lot to say both in favour of and against the suggestion.
- (c) This was not a popular question. The question invited the candidate to compare tourism as a source of pollution with other sources of the same and to come to a clear conclusion as to whether s/he agreed with the statement or not. The candidates who answered this question had a good deal of ideas and examples on which to draw in order to discuss the point, in addition to having the necessary subject-specific vocabulary.



- (d) This question was somewhat popular and the candidates who chose it generally wrote with a good degree of feeling and conviction. Opinion was divided as to whether obesity in children really is one of the most serious problems in modern society, but candidates demonstrated the ability to come to a convincing conclusion, using a range of examples to support their argument. Many candidates made insightful comments about the consequences of childhood obesity for both the people concerned and for society as a whole.
- (e) This was not a popular question. Candidates were required to come to a clear conclusion about their opinion of the statement, drawing on examples to support their argument, and the question provoked some insightful comment about modern society. Candidates has no shortage of examples to use and answers also demonstrated a good range of relevant vocabulary.

## Part II: Usage

### Exercise 1 Questions 2–6

The five questions in this section tested the candidates' knowledge of verb conjugations. Any acceptable correct version of the verb given in brackets in the context of the given sentence was allowed. The answers to **Questions 2, 3 and 4** were generally well-known, while **Question 6** was the one least likely to be answered correctly. In preparing for this question, candidates need to learn regular and irregular verb conjugations thoroughly, then read the question very carefully so as to pick up the clues which indicate which tense of the verb is required.

### Exercise 2 Questions 7–11

In this exercise, candidates were generally able to manipulate *который* successfully, and to use *до того, как* and *после того, как* accurately. It is important when combining the two sentences that candidates use an appropriate conjunction and that, where there is a sequence of events, this sequence is maintained in the resulting sentence.

### Exercise 3 Questions 12–32

As in previous years, many candidates scored full marks or almost full marks for Exercise 3. In preparing for this type of test, candidates should revise thoroughly both the declensions of nouns and adjectives, and the cases which follow different prepositions in Russian. The majority of candidates were able to choose the appropriate forms of adjectives, nouns and verbs to complete the sentences, but choosing the correct pronoun often proved more problematical.

# RUSSIAN

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Paper 9782/04  
Topics and Texts

## Key messages

In both parts, candidates should:

- read the question with care, and think about what they are asked to do
- plan their answer and organise their material with close relation to the question
- define the terms of the question in the introduction
- keep the question in mind throughout
- support any assertions with close references to the text and/or film
- make sure quotations, if used, support the argument
- make sure all quotations are accurate
- use paraphrasing and allusion as an alternative to overlong quotations
- take care to include analysis and argument, and avoid narrative
- demonstrate knowledge by using it as supporting evidence for the argument
- exclude information that is irrelevant to the question.

## **Part I: Cultural Topics**

Candidates should:

- make sure that they learn the necessary vocabulary to write about their topic when preparing for this part
- try to demonstrate their knowledge of underlying themes, and mention comparisons and links between the two works
- proofread carefully after writing, paying special attention to verb forms and agreements.

## **Part II: Literary Texts**

In context questions candidates should:

- make sure they analyse the extract showing how its content is related to the rest of the work
- avoid using the passage as a springboard for a general essay
- be careful to analyse, rather than re-tell the story of the extract.

## General comments

Paper 4 is divided into two sections carrying equal marks. **Part I** requires an answer for each question of between 250 and 400 words in Russian. Twenty marks are available for content while ten are available for language. **Part II** requires an answer for each question of between 450 and 600 words in English. Twenty-five marks are available for content while five are available for structure.

Though there were natural differences in the level to which candidates had prepared for this paper, generally speaking, the standard of content knowledge in the answers was high. Many candidates appeared to have studied their chosen works in great detail, and a number of answers showed evidence of extensive background reading. The degree to which candidates were able to select appropriate material from their stock of knowledge and adapt this to the question they had chosen to answer varied. On the whole, this year, candidates seemed better able to do this than in previous years. The best answers showed a clear ability to exclude irrelevant information which would not have added weight to the argument. This year, it was again noted that almost all candidates addressed both parts of the question in the Topics section, thus enabling them to access higher marks on the grid.

Many essays in both sections of the paper contained pertinent quotations which supported the points being made. Some candidates would have gained higher marks had they been able to quote accurately in Russian and integrate the quotations selected into their own discourse. If possible, candidates should refer to where in the work their quotations come from as even a vague reference gives more force to their argument. The language of the answers in both English and Russian varied from outstanding to satisfactory. This year, the use of appropriate literary critical language was more evident, though a minority of candidates used basic concepts such as *роман* and *повесть* in a haphazard way. Those unsure as to the nature of the genre they are discussing could obviate the problem by simply using the word 'work' in English or Russian. Not all candidates appeared to have written a plan, but organisation of material was generally sound. Poor handwriting remains an obstacle to clarity in a minority of cases. Abbreviated English forms such as 'shouldn't or 'can't' should be avoided.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### ***Part I: Cultural Topics***

##### **Question 1**

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

##### **Question 2**

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

##### **Question 3**

- A** This question attracted a small number of answers. Candidates needed to provide more information about the characters and the most significant events in the works studied. Some answers did not adequately tackle the second part of the question. While candidates generally expressed a view as to whether men or women suffer more in these works, few supported their opinion with detailed reference to the text or films.
- B** Some answers would have benefitted from an initial definition of what heroic behaviour is, as well as from more information about the main characters and detailed reference to specific events. Most essays showed a lack of understanding of the historical and cultural context of the works, especially of Soviet society's expectations of the soldier and bravery in general.

##### **Question 4**

- A** There were some very solid answers to this question. Most answers provided at least an adequate description and analysis of the lives of the chosen characters, though some candidates forgot to mention the most significant elements about them or refer to the obvious main events. While most candidates expressed a view as to whether the creators of the studied works appeared to be casting their characters in a positive or negative light, few discussed the significance of the manner in which they did this or considered what effect this then has on the viewer when interpreting the films' messages.
- B** There were some very well written and persuasive answers to this question, though sometimes not all aspects of the question were adequately addressed. A few candidates were able to write well about one work, but did not do equal justice to the other.

### Question 5

- A** There were many stimulating and detailed answers to this question, providing excellent descriptions of those aspects of Soviet society depicted in the films and offering thorough comparative analysis of the works' themes. Only a few did not refer with adequate detail to the main events depicted or link both parts of the question together in a suitable manner.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

### Part II: Literary Texts

#### Question 6

- A** There were only a small number of answers to this question. Most would have benefitted from a more detailed description of the characters and setting as well as from clear references to the historical context of the work in Russian literature, the presence of the *skaz* narrator in the extract and the effects of this device on the reader.
- B** This question attracted a sizable number of answers. The best ones supported points made with appropriate and accurate quotation. Though most essays featured at least some discussion about the impact of the characters on the reader, not all candidates provided sufficient specific detail about this in relation to the text's story-line. A few candidates provided more or less accurate information about the text, but did not get to grips with the question. Some offered descriptive character studies without analysing the author's methods of characterisation. The concept of the *skaz* narrator did not feature very much or at all in many answers.
- C** Answers to this question often could have made more of the nature and effects of the *skaz* narrator. Candidates needed to discuss the text's potential meanings and how these fail to stand up to scrutiny.

#### Question 7

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

#### Question 8

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C** There were too few answers to make a general comment.

#### Question 9

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** Most answers to this question provided at least an adequate discussion of the general significance of Astrov in the play, but not all candidates mentioned every occasion the character plays a significant role in the plot. Discussing the significance of the character in the play's key scenes and providing more basic details about him would have resulted in higher marks for some. Most answers were well written and skilfully organised.
- C** Few candidates explored the significance of the word 'excessive' in the question, though the best answers did discuss the presence of other moods at various points in the plot. Almost all candidates dealt well with a number of gloomy moments, though not everyone discussed the most important ones from key scenes such as in Act 3. Quoting more frequently would have enhanced the marks of some responses.

**Question 10**

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C There were too few answers to make a general comment.

**Question 11**

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C There were too few answers to make a general comment.

**Question 12**

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C There were too few answers to make a general comment.

**Question 13**

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C There were too few answers to make a general comment.