

A Visit to a Theatre

Today, with the wide spread of television and cinema the theatres become less popular, though it is still one of the best ways of spending your free time. To my mind the people who speak about the death of the theatre are simply mistaken. They don't understand that the theatre is the parent of radio, cinema and television. Without the theatre these dramatic genres can't exist. Surely, the new mediums have certain advantages over the theatre. To see the film costs much less than to see the play. Besides you can enjoy the film at home with the minimum of efforts turning your room into a playhouse.

But there are some differences. For example in the restaurant you are served the dish that was specially created for you, while at the canteen you get the standard meal. The same is with the theatre and TV. Besides during the play the audience is the part of the performance, people are considered to be creatively receptive; their presence heightens the drama and influences its course. So there is no wonder it remains one of the best ways not only to entertain oneself, but also to stir the imagination and expand the boundaries of the familiar world.

As for me I'm not much of a theatregoer, though I can't but miss a chance to go there with my friends.

As it was a New Year Eve, so called Millennium, my friends and I decided to celebrate it in a particular way. And the only idea, which had come to us, was to go to the theatre. The first trouble we had faced with was that almost all the tickets were sold out long before. So we had to buy seats at the gallery, though I prefer orchestra stalls or the seats at the center of the pit at least. At Last the day of the performance came. When we came into the hall all our anxieties fade away. Though the seats were far from the stage we had a wonderful view of it. Soon the bell rung and the show began. It lasted for 3 hours during which I completely forgot about everything and linked up (plunged) with that fantastic world, the actors tried to create on the stage.

To my mind the play was splendid. The stage director tried to combine all the repertoire of the theatre in one play and no wonder it was a success. The audience had been clapping rather powerfully and the actors had their certain calls for several times.

The cast acted rather naturally, but the main actor was the best. He had several roles in the play and I was greatly impressed by his ability to identify with the character in such a short term. Due to his profound understanding of the human nature the actor managed to convey the thinnest emotions and to depict the feeling rather vividly. No matter whether he was playing good character or not his monologues had their own particular sense and reveal the reality hidden under the surface of things.

Though he had a hard task as for an actor he coped with it perfectly.

No wonder theatre is considered to be the enduring home of 'dramatic experience', which is surely one of the most searching, rewarding and enchanting one of the different kinds of experience.

ABOUT MYSELF

Let me introduce myself. My name is Kostya; I was born on the 8 of June 1984 in Nikolaev. Now I'm a pupil of the (ninth) form at the secondary school. Among the school subjects I prefer humanities to sciences. Especially I like History. Probably it because I'm good at it. It's interesting for me to get acquainted with ancient customs and traditions. Besides studying History gives me good opportunity to get to know more about my country many years ago and nowadays. Indeed school teachers think that I'm industrious and hardworking, though sometimes it's hard to get through to me. The others think that seldom I can be lazy and a little bit insolent (наглый). A good friend of mine thinks that I'm just that kind of person to spend good time with, that I'm sociable and friendly. Some of my classmates try to convince me that I'm a snob but I don't share their opinion.

I think I spend much time with my friends but much more time I spend with my family. I'm sure we are a friendly one. My parents consider me to be lazy because I sometimes I can't help them. Nevertheless they always praise me and say I'm hardworking. Anyway I like being me. I believe that I'm a mixed up kind of person. Surely sometimes I can be lazy but I always try to do my work properly and in time.

Indeed if I have drawbacks I seem to be trying to do well. I feel people that surround me love me the way I'm.

Books in my Life

It's no doubt that books are an essential and necessary part of mankind's civilization. It gives us an opportunity to link up with authors who lived hundreds and thousands years ago. Through reading books we can understand their thoughts, feelings and emotions better. Book is the surest way to bring people together. I think it is faithful and undemanding friend: it can be put away and taken up at any moment. We must admit that we can't do without them.

As for me I became keen on literature early in life. Probably it happened so because we had a very good and widely read library at home. Since my childhood I was enchanted by Pushkin's tales and Krilov's fables. Gogol was one of the greatest authorities to me. Later on my heart was won by Fet and Blok. Pasternak's and Vysotsky's poetry filled my heart with expectation of joy and happiness. Luckily, our country is rich in such remarkable authors.

And as for the classical authors I study rather than read their books. For example after reading William Shakespeare's tragedy "Hamlet" I came to a conclusion that this rich work demands great erudition on the part of a reader. One must know the Middle English History and the peculiarities of relationships between people then. I'm sure that Shakespeare was a highly educated person and it is hard for me to keep up with him.

To tell the truth I give my preference to the science fiction. As far as my favourite book is concerned it is hard to choose a one. Lately I have read a wonderful book entitled "The Sands of Mars". It was written by Ray Bradbury – famous American science-fiction writer. His stories have a special charm that lies in its interesting plot, exciting situations and at the same time conveys deep thoughts, keen observations and sharpness of characterization. This book tells us about the fantastic events, which took place on Mars. I think this book has got everything: actions, many interesting ideas to think over, witty characters and, surely, a great deal of dialogs, Ray Bradbury is a master of. With the help of vivid descriptions the author carries the reader into the wonderful world of his imagination. The story is so beautifully told that it is hard not to believe it. This book stirs my imagination and expands the boundaries of the familiar world. Normally I read a book once but this book I read again and again, discovering something new for me. No matter how many times you read it, as it always gives you the same feeling of freshness and exciting that you experienced on the first reading.

Though Ray Bradbury has written many science-fiction books this one is definitely the best.

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And as for the classical authors I study rather than read their books. I'm sure they have a lot to teach me as Bacon once said "Old wood best to burn, old wine best to drink, old friends best to trust and old authors best to read".

I consider Ivan Franco to be one of the highest authorities in the Ukrainian literature. His greatest masterpieces of prose are the novels "Boa constrictor" and cycle "Borislav is Laughing". These novels for the first time depicted the incipient forms of revolutionary struggle among the workers and the awakeners of working class conscience. These books are not for the general reader. To read it one must know the Ukrainian history and the peculiarities of relationships between people then. There is no doubt the Franco was a highly educated person and it is hard for me to keep up with him.

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Constitution of Ukraine

Governed by the act of Ukraine's Independence of August 24, 1991, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on behalf of all Ukrainian people adopted the Constitution – the Fundamental Law on June 28, 1996. The Constitution establishes the country's political system, assures rights, freedoms and duties of citizens. It is the basis for its laws.

It asserts that Ukraine is the sovereign, independent, democratic, social and legal state. It is a unitarian state with single citizenship.

Ukraine is a republic. The people is the only source of power which is exercised directly or through bodies of state power and local self government.

The land, mineral raw materials, air space, water and other natural resources which are on the territory of Ukraine are the objects of the property right of Ukrainian people. The state language in Ukraine is Ukrainian.

The state symbols of Ukraine are the State Flag, the State Emblem and the State Anthem of Ukraine. The State Flag is blue and yellow banner made from two equal horizontal stripes. The main element of the Great State Emblem of Ukraine is the Sigh of the State of Prince Volodimir the Great (the Small State Emblem). The State Anthem of Ukraine is the national anthem with the music of M. Verbitsky. The capital of Ukraine is Kiev.

The Constitution states that every person has the right to the free development of his/her personality, and has obligations before the society where free and full development of the personality is assured. Citizens have equal Constitutional rights and are equal before the law. There no privileges or restrictions based upon face, colour of skin, political and other beliefs, gender, ethnical and social origin, property, ownership, position, place of residence, language and religion. The articles of the Constitution guarantee the rights to live, personal inviolability and the inviolability of dwelling, noninterference in private and family life, free choice of residence, work, rest, education, social security, housing, health protection, medical care and medical insurance, legal assistance, a safe and healthy environment.

Defense of the Motherland, of the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and the respect for its state symbols are the duties of citizens. Citizens of Ukraine perform its military services in compliance with the law. No person can damage the environment, cultural heritage. Every person shall pay taxes and duties in the order and amount determined by law.

The Constitution outlines the structure of the national government and specifies its powers and duties. Under the Constitution the powers of the government are divided into three branches – the legislative, which consists of the Verkhovna Rada; the executive, headed by the President, and judicial, which is led by the Supreme Court.

The Parliament – the Verkhovna Rada is the only body of the legislative power in Ukraine. There are 450 people's deputies, which are elected for the term of four years on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot.

The Verkhovna Rada's main function is making laws. Law drafting work is performed by its committees.

The Verkhovna Rada adopts the State Budget for the period from January 1 to December 31 and controls the execution of it. The monetary unit in Ukraine is Hryivna.

The President of Ukraine is the head of the state and speaks on behalf of it. He is elected directly by the voters for a term of five years with no more than two full terms.

The highest body of the executive power in Ukraine is The Cabinet of Ministers. It is responsible to the parliament and is accounted to the Verkhovna Rada. It carries out domestic and foreign policy of the state, the fulfillment of the Constitution, as well as the acts of the President. Justice in Ukraine is exercised entirely by courts. It is administered by the Constitutional Court and the courts of general jurisdiction. The Supreme Court of Ukraine is the highest juridical body of general jurisdiction. The constitution defines the territorial structure of Ukraine. The constitution of Ukraine consists of 15 chapters, 161 articles. The day of its adoption is the national holiday.

MY ENGLISH LESSONS

I think nowadays it is very important to know foreign languages. Today in the era of computers when the boundaries of the countries become more and more invisible, people need a universal language to speak to each other. And one of such language is English, which now spread the world over. Knowing English you can easily travel to The USA, Canada, The Republic of Southern Africa, The Irish Republic, Australia, New Zealand and many others. It is the language of science, trade, culture and computers. I'm sure that every educated man should know English, and not only in order to communicate. Almost one half of periodical literature is issued in English, and in such a way you can read most of the famous newspapers and magazines in original.

And as for me I think we have good opportunity to study English thoroughly because we have it six times a week.

At our lessons of English language much attention is paid to developing good speaking habits as well as grammar and pronunciation. Holding different discussions and conversations, describing pictures and developing situations we gain experience in using English words and phrases properly and speaking correct English.

It's interesting for me to read and translate texts, discuss different subjects, make up dialogues and develop situations, but I find it difficult to express my own ideas in a proper way. Then I turn to my teacher, friends and parents for help. I'm sure that their encouragement and advice together with my diligent and persistent work will help me to overcome all the difficulties in studying English grammar and lexics.

At our English lessons we read extracts from the books of by different foreign authors. It helps us to get acquaintance with foreign writers and their creative works and gain some life experience as well.

Our English lessons are held in a special classroom, which is equipped with a tape recorder, a record player and a slide projector. There is no doubt that all this technical devices will be of great value for all those whose aim is mastering English.

I think that much more attention should be paid to out-of-class activities. Because learning songs, reading poems, taking part in different parties and staging plays we can practice our speaking habits.

I think it is very important for me to learn English because it is a language of international communication, business, science and culture. Besides I'm sure it will be of great value for me in my future career. You know I have made up my mind to become a lawyer. With the help of English language I can get acquainted with the works of other foreign writers and their works on philosophy and logic. Besides it gives me a unique chance to communicate with my future foreign colleagues and probably exchange experience.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

I think, that nature is the most wonderful thing in the world. It gives us its loveliness to enjoy and to admire. Scent of wild trees and flowers, blue waves of snow, lovely birds' songs give us that singing hour of peace we need so much. When I get in touch with nature it is like a breath of ecstasy which fills my heart with expectation of joy and happiness.

Besides nature provides us with its riches: water and air, soil, mineral resources, flora and fauna, forests and fields. But gone are the days when people thought that mineral resources couldn't be exhausted. Unfortunately, man's activity has

Damaged greatly the state of the environment. It's common knowledge that many species of flora and fauna have already disappeared or are disappearing because of harmful actions of people. Dolphins and whales are often found dead. Chemicals are accumulated in their bodies which caused problems with their liver, immune and reproductive systems.

Intensive way of farming and wide use of pesticides are the main reason why the soil of our country is exhausted. Besides pesticides reduce birds' food supplying. They kill worms and snakes. This food shortage leads to death of many rear birds and animals.

More than that great damage is also caused by acid rains. Industrial plants send harmful substances and gases into the air. There they mix and are carried for hundreds of miles by the wind. Finally they fall back on earth when it rains.

Acid rains kill fish, trees and destroy the environment.

I think the thing that affects mostly the health of our environment is, undoubtedly, the Chernobyl accident, which took place in April, 1986. It caused radioactive contamination of a vast area. Twenty years ago the nuclear power seemed to be the main source of energy. But today after the Chernobyl accident, many people begin to speak about the natural sources of energy: the energy of sun, wind and underground.

There is no doubt, that there is a serious threat to our environment. More and more people realize it. I think it's the moral duty of every citizen of our country as well as of the government to take care about nature. As for our government its main aim is to preserve and to enhance the natural inheritance of our country. It tries to cut inputs of industrial waste into the water and air and in such a way to make sure that they are clean and safe.

Many people are involved in Greenpeace organization. Its main aim is to gather valuable information about the state of the environment and to draw people's attention to this vital problem.

I think we have to look after our planet and to hand it on in good order for the future generations. Otherwise our debts will lie on the shoulders of our children.

Environmental Protection

I think, nature is the most wonderful thing in our artificial world. It gives us its riches and loveliness to enjoy and admire. Scent of trees and wild flowers, waves of snow on a cliff, lovely twitter of birds give us that singing hour of peace we need so much. When I get I touch with the nature it's like a breathe of ecstasy which fills my heart of expectation of joy and happiness.

But gone are the days when natural resources seemed to be unexhausted. Unfortunately, man's activity has damaged greatly the state of the environment. Forty years ago hardly anybody concerned about the environmental problems because industrial and economic development, progress and profit were more important. But now more and more people are aware of the environmental problems such as a pollution of air, the exhaust fumes and factory chimneys, misuse or over use of fertilizers, the contamination of the oceans, cancer-producing chemicals in our drinking and our food. Environmental protection has become a global concern.

The problems of the contamination became urgent in Ukraine in the middle of the XIX century with the industrial development.

Nowadays air pollution is severe in many industrialized cities of the southeastern Ukraine such as Donetsk, Kharkiv, <skip>. Coal using industries, steel mills and thermal power stations are the major sources of uncontrolled emissions of the harmful substances into the air. The level of air pollution is also high in the towns with little industry as Poltava, Uzhhorod, Yalta, Khmelnytsky etc. It is aggravated by the use of leaded gasoline and inefficient engines as well as a lack of catalytic converters. The problem of water pollution is also very serious in Ukraine. Almost all the surface waters of Ukraine belong to the Black Sea and the Asov Sea basins. The high population density and high rates of industrial development have given rise to the chronic and serious levels of water contamination in Ukraine. More that that, about one half of all fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides is washed off into the rivers.

One of the areas suffering most from the coastal water contamination is the Sea of Asov. Now it is experienced serious problems of industrial and municipal waste-water contamination and the increased level of salinity since the early 70th. As the result of it the fish catches dropped down by 60%-90%. Despite the warnings and special government resolutions the conditions of the Asov Sea continue to deteriorate.

But surely the greatest trouble for all the Ukrainians still remains the Chernobyl accident, which took place in April 1986. There was an explosive leak, caused by overheating of one of the reactors. As the result, the cloud of radioactive materials spread as far as the UK and Greece. Thousand of people died because of long-term effects of radiation, including cancer. Thousands of square kilometers of land were contaminated by the radioactive fallout. On the place of the power station a sarcophagus was built. It was built in a hurry and mainly by the remote control. So nowadays it has started to crumble. It's riddled with holes big enough to pass the truck through. The supporting beams are cracked and skewed, the stability of the roof is uncertain. They said, one big snowstorm and the whole thing will come tumble down, sending 10 tons of radioactive dust into the air. Today scientists are carrying out some experiments in order to make the soil of Chernobyl area available for agriculture. They are scrapping off the top layer of the ground and then bury it in the safe place. But it is estimated that this land will be unsafe for the human occupancy for 8-9 thousand years.

When a man discovered the nuclear power it seemed that we had solved all our problems. But today, after the Chernobyl accident, more and more people begin to speak about the natural sources of energy: the energy of tides, sun and wind.

To my mind, we must do our best to preserve nature because otherwise, our debts will lie on the shoulders of our children. Anyhow, the prevention is better than cure.

Great Britain

“Great Britain” has several different names. Some people say “Britain”, or “the United Kingdom”, or just “UK”. There are four different countries in the United Kingdom: England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Altogether more than 56 million people live in Britain, many of them in big industrial cities like London, Liverpool and Manchester, but people are often surprised by how much of Britain is open country, with lonely hills and woods, quiet rivers, lakes and farmlands.

Many people think that the weather is cold and wet in Britain all the year round. But it isn't! True, it sometimes rains and even snows for days and days, but every year there are weeks of beautiful sunny weather then the British take off their sweaters and go out to sunbathe.

Britain is only a small country, but every part is different. Scotland is a land of mountains, lakes and romantic castles. The winters are cold, with plenty of snow, but the summers are often warm and sunny. Most farmers keep sheep, and there're many small factories, which make fine sweaters from their wool. In some parts of Scotland, there are very few people. Deer live in the hills, and the rivers are full of salmon. But Glasgow and Edinburgh are both large and busy, with all that is good (and bad) in modern cities.

Northern Ireland has its problems, but it has beauty, too. In the warm, wet climate, the grass grows a brilliant green, and much of the land is farming country. Belfast is a large industrial city with many fine buildings and big port from which ships come and go to Scotland and England. But Belfast has had many difficult years, and it is not the busy place it once was.

A hundred years ago the north of England was industrial heart of the country. From the factories came cloth, wool, machines, engines and china. The old factories have gone now and the workers have to look for jobs in the new “high-tech” industries. Outside the towns, much of this part of England is beautiful countryside, with green hills, lakes and sandy beaches. Fishing is still a big industry in the North East, and every night (except Sunday) the fishing boats go out to sea.

The centre of England (the “Midlands”) is also an important industrial area, especially near the huge cities of Coventry and Birmingham, the centre of the car industry. But everyone, even in the heart of the modern city, there are buildings from older Britain – cathedrals, castles, and houses built hundred years ago.

Wales is a special place, a country of high mountains and pretty valleys. But Wales has plenty of industry, too, with many factories and coal mines.

The west of England is rich farming country. It produces milk, cream, butter, cheese and apples, which go to make cider, a popular drink. In the villages, country people often grow their own fruit, vegetables and flowers.

Some areas of Britain are very crowded. Around Manchester, in northwest England, and Glasgow, in Scotland, are large city areas of houses and factories. The south east of England, too, has many towns and cities, including London, the giant capital. But quiet near London there are still some quiet villages and peaceful farms.

Britain is an island, of course, and you are never far from the sea. Some of the coast, especially in the west, is wild and rocky, with small, sandy beaches, and romantic old harbours. Other parts are industrial. The East Coast of Scotland, for example, is busy with oil rigs and fishing boats. The most popular beaches are near the many holiday towns on the south coast, where the weather is usually warmer. It is here that Londoners come to relax.

HOLIDAYS IN GREAT BRITAIN

Each people has its own traditional holidays. A lot of holidays celebrated in Great Britain are connected with religion such as Christmas and Easter. Christmas is celebrated on the 25th of December. It is a happy holiday when families get together to share their happiness, attend churches, exchange gifts. Christmas cards are sent to friends and relatives. Children hang up stockings to receive presents from Santa Claus. Christmas carols are sung on the radio and in public places. Churches, newspapers and organizations ask for donations of money for needy.

New Year's Day celebrates the start of the new year. People who follow the Roman calendar celebrate this holiday on the 1st of January. This month was named after Janus, the ancient Roman god with two faces- one looking into the past, another into the future. On the New Year's Day people often think about their past and make New Year's resolutions, which they try to follow.

Valentine's Day is a special holiday observed on the 14th of February. Some people think that the tradition to celebrate this holiday came from an ancient Roman holiday Lupercalia; the other experts believe that this holiday is connected with the name of one or more saints of the early Christian church. Still the others think that birds choose their mates on the 14th of February.

Probably the tradition to celebrate St.Valentine's Day on the 14th of February came from a combination of all this sources and the belief that spring is the time for lovers. On this day people send greeting cards which are called "valentines" to their sweet heart friends and members of their family.

Halloween is a very popular holiday in Great Britain. It is held on the end of autumn when winter is approaching with its snow and cold. It is celebrated on the 31st of October. In old times it was a pagan holiday- the last night when witches and ghosts were out. Its celebrations include wearing masks and costumes, going from house to house, collecting money and sweets, "trick or treating".

Easter is the most important holiday in the Christian calendar. It holds the key to understanding Christianity. Christians believe that God made his son suffer for people's sins so that they could be forgotten and forgiven. The actual day of Easter changes every year. Western Christians agreed that the day of Easter should fall on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the 21st of March. The preparations for it really begin 42 days before it on Shrove Tuesday. This marks the beginning of the period of fasting or Lent.

The main Easter celebrations take place during "Holy Week" which begins on Palm Sunday. "Maundy" Thursday is traditionally the day when Christians try to do good acts.

Good Friday is the most solemn day of Easter because it is the day when Christians remember Christ's crucifixion. Sunday is the day of Christ's resurrection. It is a joyful occasion when Christians prepare to the overnight church services called "vigil".

A tradition to celebrate the 5th of November Guy Fawkes Night (called Bonfire night) is very popular among the British children. It is one of the most enjoyable traditions when children have a lot of fun and remember Gunpowder, treason and plot.

Among the local holidays there are to be mentioned Hogmanay, which is a Scottish name of the New Year's Eve. It's a time for merrymaking, giving presents and observance of the old custom of First Footing. The custom lies in the tradition of greeting the first guest in the New Year's Day. The visitor always brings a piece of coal, symbolizing warmth, fish – wealth, a bottle of whiskey or a piece of bread, which means food.

Another widely celebrated local holiday in Scotland is Bank Holidays – a series of holidays, which includes different festivals and Scottish Sports Day is among them. Its celebrations involve not only sports competitions but competitions in dancing, singing and thinks like that.

Burn's Night is also widely celebrated in Scotland. It falls on the 26th of January. On this day Scottish people make *haggis* for dinner and usually recite a poem of Robert Burns over it before it is eaten. It is considered that this holiday was named after Robert Burns because he wrote a poem or an ode to haggis and it has become associated with its occasion.

Holidays in Ukraine

Very often we look forward to holidays to enjoy ourselves. As you know, the word “holiday” came from a combination of the words “holy” and “day”. The point is that all the holidays were first religious festivals, but nowadays many of them have nothing to do with religion. Each country has holidays honouring important events in its history. Many historical events are of great importance for all peoples and countries throughout the world. And one of such holidays is Victory Day.

Victory Day is traditionally celebrated on the 9th of May. Victory came 54 years ago. It was the victory of all peace loving people over fascism. People call this day “the holiday with tears in the eyes”. And it is really so.

Our country path to victory took 1418 days. Long and hard days of the war were full of people’s sorrow, sufferings and tears and an equal measure of human dignity and greatness. The soldiers came through the hell of fire and the grief of loss. They won the victory for all our people and all Europe as well.

Today we pay a tribute to people who won the peace in the whole world. I think it’s our moral duty to honour the memory of those 20 million people who didn’t see the Red Banner flying over the Reichstag and we must do our best that nobody and nothing should be forgotten. I am sure the war veterans need our care and attention today.

The Victory day is a state holiday. Among them there are the New Years Day, The International Women Day, The Day of Working People Solidarity, The Constitution Day, The Day of Independence and some others.

The other holidays are connected with religion, such as Christmas and Easter. Christmas in Ukraine is celebrated on the 7th of January. The most interesting part of Ukrainian Christmas is Christmas Eve (Sviat Vechir) with its wealth of ritual and magical acts to ensure a good harvest and life of plenty. Dead family members are believed to present and they are personified by a sheaf of wheat, which is called “did” or “didukh”. A characteristic feature of Christmas is caroling, which is accompanied by puppet theatre (vertep) and individual dressing up as a goat, and a handmade star. The religious festival lasts three days and involves liturgies, caroling, visiting and entertaining friends and relatives. The Christmas tree, which had been brought to Ukraine from the Western Europe, is today the essential part of the New Year celebration in Ukraine.

Its celebrations begin when the first star lights up in the sky. It means the birth of the God’s son, Jesus Christ. The families get together to share their happiness. A holly supper is served (called Kolyada)- it is a meal of twelve dishes. It is also celebrated by Carolinas, fortune-telling and symbolic sowing of wheat. Christmas is the time to visit your relatives and acquaintances.

Another important holiday in the Christian calendar is Easter. It holds the keys to understanding Christianity. People prepare Easter pasky and pysanky or krashenky which are blessed in the church. Later on they are given as gifts or exchanged as a sign of affection.

There is no doubt that holidays help us to remember our traditions and our past, be closer and more attentive to each other.

KIEV- The Capital of Ukraine

Along the beautiful banks of the river Dniper lies the ancient city of Kiev- the capital of Ukraine, its political, administrative, scientific and cultural center.

Kiev owes its location to the Dniper river on which banks it is attractively situated. One half of Kiev's territory is occupied by parks and gardens. In summer, when trees are in full leaf, the city seems to be one huge park.

Kiev's beginnings are lost in the remote antiquity. Its foundation goes back to the Stone Age and the story of its been founded is connected with the following legend.

Once there were three brothers: Kiy, Shek and Khoriv and their sister Lybed. They settled down on the hills above Dniper and founded a city named after the eldest brother Kiev. In honour of the youngest brothers one hill was named Shchekovitsa and the other Khorevitsa, while the river was called Lybed after the sister. The three Kiev hills which legend connects with the names of the three brothers still exist.

The first is mount Starokievskaya, the second is Mount Shchekovitsa and the third- Khorevitsa, is mount Kiselyovka, which received its present name in the 17th century.

Kiev is one of the oldest cities in Europe and thus it has many places of interest. Among them there are: Kiev-Pecherska Lavra (Monastery), the Golden Gate, St. Sofia's Cathedral, the monuments to Prince Volodimir, Bogdan Khmelnytsky and others.

In 1037 Yaroslav The Wise ordered to build a new cathedral in honour of his victory over the Pechenegs. It was named after St. Sofia- wisdom in Greek. And really St. Sofia's Cathedral became the center of culture and education in the ancient world. Libraries and workshops were set up here.

Another famous attraction of Kiev is the Kiev-Pecherska Lavra. Its sparkling cupolas can be seen outside the capital. The first thing that attracts your attention there is the Church of the Trinity. Its interior is decorated with beautiful frescoes, the work of the 18th century Ukrainian craftsmen.

Kiev's monuments of the past are perfectly integrated with modern buildings: TV Tower, Metro stations, attractive hotels, cinemas, etc.

The city has a well-developed industry. Plants and factories of the city produce many useful goods. The Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and many research institutes are situated in Kiev. There are many higher and hundreds of secondary schools in the capital.

Kiev's cultural life is also rich and varied. There are fine many museums in Kiev: the State Historical Museum of Ukraine, the T.G.Shevchenko State Museum, the State Museum of Ukrainian Art. One of the most interesting Museums is the State Museum of Ukrainian Applied Art.

Kiev is also noted for its theatres. The famous T.G. Shevchenko Opera and Ballet Theatre, the Lesya Ukrainka Drama Theatre and others attract visitors from other towns and countries.

Kiev is a hero city. In the park of the Immortal Glory there is an obelisk for all those who fell in battles of the World War II.

There are some bridges over the Dniper in Kiev. The most interesting one is the Paton Bridge, the first all-welded bridge in the world. Khreshchatic is the central street of Kiev. It's the main shopping center of Kiev. Khreshchatic is packed with elegant shops, pubs, hotels, restaurants and newly styled fashion stores.

LONDON

London is the capital of Great Britain. It is considered to be one of the most attractive cities, where the old rubs shoulders with the past and in every part of its complex and busy life there is to be found a special affection for its traditions. London is an old city with rich cultural achievements. The Romans, Saxons and Danes settled here in turn. Then the Norman's came. London survived the Plague and the great fire, which followed. Little damage occurred during the World War I, but World War II brought tremendous destruction. Many buildings of great historic value were destroyed. Though some of them were spared. Among them there are: the Tower, the Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral. But I'd like to start with the Houses of Parliament, which spread, magnificently on the northern bank of the river Thames. They are famous for its Clock Tower and clock bell Big Ben. It was named so after sir Benjamin Hall, the first Commissioner of works when the Houses of Parliament were rebuilt. In medieval days it was the residence of king. But since 16th century it became the permanent home of the Parliament.

If you were in London you can't but visit the Westminster Abbey, the national shrine of England where famous people were buried. One of the biggest attractions of it is the oaken Coronation Chair on which the kings were crowned. W.A. is also noted for its Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Poet's Corner.

The first thing you notice in London is the St. Paul's Cathedral. Its dome has always dominated the center of the city. It was built by a prominent architect Sir Christopher Wren and it is considered to be the architectural masterpiece. Londoners always have a special affection for the St. Paul's, which is the largest Protestant Church in England.

One of the most famous sights of London is Trafalgar Square, which was named so to commemorate the Nelson's victory in the battle of Trafalgar. In the center of the Square there is a Column which is surmounted with the statue of Nelson. The Column is guarded by the four lions in the foot of it. On the north side of the Square there are the National and the National Portrait Galleries, where the richest collections of genuine works of art are exhibited.

I think to visit London without visiting its Tower is unimaginable. It was built by William the Conqueror to protect the city. Then Tower was used for different purposes: as a royal palace, an observatory, an arsenal and a prison. Now there is a museum there, where the Crown Jewels are exhibited. Tower is guarded by a military garrison of Yeoman Warders or "Beefeaters" who are still wearing their picturesque uniform.

London

London has been a capital city for nearly a thousand years, and many of its ancient buildings still stand. The most famous of these are the Tower of London (where the Crown Jewels are kept), Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, but most visitors also want to see the House of Parliament, Buckingham Palace and the many magnificent museums.

Once, London was a small Roman town on the north bank of the Thames, but slowly it grew into one of the world's major cities with more than seven million people. Fewer people live in the centre now, but the suburbs are still growing.

Places now in the heart of London once stood in the middle of green fields. Many small villages, like Hampstead, Chelsea and Mayfair, became part of London, but they still keep some of their old atmosphere. Different areas of London seem like different cities. The West End is a rich man's world of shops, offices and theatres. The old port area is now called "Docklands". The great ships have gone, and the area is changing very fast. There are huge new office buildings, and thousands of new flats and houses.

Other parts of London are changing, too. Some of the poor areas have become fashionable, and people with money are moving into them. A hundred years ago, the river was crowded by ships, leaving for Java and Japan, New Zealand and New York, but now people travel by air, and London's main airport, Heathrow, is one of the busiest in the world.

Like all big cities, London has streets and concrete buildings, but it also has many big parks, full of trees, flowers and grass. Sit on the grass (you're allowed to!) in the middle of Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens, and you will think that you're in the country, miles away.

Many people live outside the centre of London in the suburbs, and they travel to work, in the shops and offices by train, bus or underground. The trains are full – and expensive – and the roads are crowded with cars, but every day a million people come from far out of London, even from the coast, and spend up to four hours travelling every day.

Most people work from 9 am to 5 pm. From 8 till 10 every morning, and 4.30 to 6.30 every evening, the trains are crowded with people, and after the morning "rush hour" the shoppers come. By the day the whole of London is busy. At night, the offices are quiet and empty, but the West End stays alive, because this is where Londoners come to enjoy themselves. There are two opera houses here, several concert halls and many theatres, as well as cinemas, and in nearby Soho the pubs, restaurants and nightclubs are busy half the night.

Many people think that London is all grey but in fact red is the London's favourite colour. The buses are red, the letterboxes are red and the mail vans are all bright, bright red. London is at its best when people are celebrating. Then the flags, the soldiers' uniforms the cheering crowds and the carriages and horses all sparkle in the sunshine – if it's not raining, of course!

MY ATTITUDE TO SPORT

As the old saying goes health and youth are those things, which are appreciated only when they are lost. So I'm sure that everyone should do his best to stay healthy as long as it is possible. Being in good health means having both: body and mind in good working order free from pain and disease. As they say "A sound mind in a sound body". And I'm sure that all sorts of physical exercises will help me to make my body strong and my mind sound.

Almost all my classmates try to go in for sport. Some of them are sure that such kinds of sport as racing, skating and cycling will help them to keep fit. The others show particular interest to football, basketball and other active games.

But some of my classmates are not fit enough. I think the main reason for it is too much TV. It affects our health through rushed meals, lack of sleep and exercises making it worse.

That's why sport is an essential part of my life. It were my parents who engaged me in it. And today I try to do as much exercises, as it is possible. As a rule I start doing them early in the morning jogging round my house. It helps me to be more organized in my daily activities. Besides every Sunday I go to the sport gym. I show particular interest to gymnastics. As far as I concerned this kind of sport help me to feel more self-confident.

But you know I like not only going in for sport but also watching it. Basketball is among my favourite games. Last month I watched the game between Nikolaev and Odesa teams. The match seemed to be exciting because the strongest Ukrainian teams were competing. That's why it was full of thrilling moments. Spectators were shouting enthusiastically for their favourite teams. It seemed some of them got crazy-they stood up on their seats and began to wave with their clothes, hoping to support and cheer up their favourite players. Zabolotniy is considered to be the best Nikolaev team's player and that day he proved his worth. He scored at least 30 points and his skill determined the results of the game. Nikolaev team won the victory. I couldn't help applauding because Nikolaev team proved that it is one of the strongest in Ukraine.

As for me I enjoy not only watching sport games but also participate in them. To my mind such activities will help me to feel more self-confident and believe in my own skill.

Speaking about my best friend I'd like to mention a famous proverb said by Robert Stevenson that "No man is useless while he has a friend". And I entirely agree with it. To be a real friend means to be able to share all happiness and hardships, be able to help and understand. But sometimes it is hard to find the one who is modest, faithful, reliable, and sincere at the same time.

As for me I have a few true friends and I'd like to tell about one of them. His name is Vasya, he is fifteen years old and he is my classmate. I like the way he looks. The first thing you notice when you see him is his blue clever eyes. He has curly hair combed back. I think he is rather attractive both: in his appearance and his character.

In my opinion Vasya is a determined kind of person, who possesses an ability for quick-decision making. Judging by his deeds I'm sure that his is resolute and firm, but sometimes too punctual. He isn't an easy-going kind of person: it seems that he is in the habit of thinking of every word he says.

His friends think that because of his ambitions it seems that Vasya is too conceited. Nevertheless he is always in the mood of joking. Joking he never tries to insult people: his jokes are always pertinent.

Vasya is just that kind of person to spend good time with: he is well-read, good educated, his interests are wide and various. In my opinion we have much in common, so it's easy for us to find what to talk about. We both listen to the same music, read adventure books and are fond of football.

We got acquainted nine years ago and know all good features and drawbacks of each other we still remain close friends.

MY FUTURE CAREER

I'm sure that choosing a career isn't an easy matter. Nowadays there is a great variety of professions such as a doctor, an economist, lawyer and it is hard to choose a one which suits your interests and abilities. As for me I have made up my mind to become a lawyer. I think that justice is the most important in the modern world, and besides I'm fond of arguing and discussing different topics.

But I'm still hesitating whether it is good to choose a career while I'm at school. On one hand it gives me an opportunity to find the necessary course of study and pay more attention to the subjects which will be of great value for me in future. More than that I can attend optional courses in order to get profound knowledge in sciences and humanities. At school I have wonderful possibilities to develop the personal qualities such as understanding, the ability to listen to, to help people and persistence in achieving the aim. I'm sure such qualities will help me to succeed me as a lawyer.

On the other hand choosing a career at school may force me to a career path before I realize my real interests and abilities. As for my interests they change every year but I hope my desire to become a lawyer will not change in future.

As for me choosing a career isn't only a matter of future prestige and wealth. In my opinion job must be interesting and socially important. The profession of lawyer gives me plenty of opportunities to help people in trouble. When I have been choosing a career I consulted nobody, but as for my parents they appreciate my wish to become a lawyer. I hope their support and encouragement will help me to make the final decision.

I understand, my wish isn't enough to become a good lawyer. I must be well educated and broad-minded. And English language will be of great importance for me in it. With the help of English language I can get acquainted with the works of other foreign writers and their works on philosophy and logic. Besides it gives me a unique chance to communicate with my future foreign colleagues and probably exchange experience.

So I think that it is very important for me to think about the future even now because according to a famous saying "If you don't think about your future you can't have one"

MY WORKING DAY

Some people consider all their working days to be extremely monotonous. As regards me I don't share their opinion. I think we can always find something new and interesting if we have some fresh approach to a familiar scene.

On week day the alarm clock wakes me up at half past 6 o'clock and my working day starts. To tell the truth I'm not an early riser, that's why it's so hard for me to get out of bed. Then I switch my tape-recorder and do my morning exercises. After them I feel cheerful and more organized in my daily activities.

While having breakfast I listen to the latest news. To tell the truth I have a sweet tooth that is why I never miss a chance to eat something tasty. At last I'm ready for school. As a rule it takes me ten minutes to get there. Our lessons begin when the bell rings at 8 o'clock. As a rule we have six lessons a day.

At the end of the school day I'm so tired that it is always a great pleasure for me to return back home. After dinner I have a short rest and then start doing my homework. It's quite clear for me that it is not easy for me to make myself sit down at the table especially when the weather is fine. But I try to devote much time to my studying remembering that my diligent work and additional exercises will help me to succeed in future. As it is said "Business before pleasure". It takes me about three hours to cope with my homework. In the evening I do whatever I wish: watch TV, read books, listen to music. And, surely, I always try to help my mother with the household, for example, to wash dishes, to sweep the floor etc. After it I'm so tired that I fall asleep at once.

My Hobby

They say life is nothing if you don't have time to enjoy it. Life must have a certain aim, something with which you fill in your free hours. A man was always interested in this problem, so no wonder this theme was reflected in a great amount of prose works and verses. Among them is the wonderful poem by Davis:

What is this life if full of care
We don't have time to stand and stare

.....
No time to see in broad daylight
Streams full of stars like skies at night.

And I think that hobby is just that thing that helps one to stop an incredible whirl of events and stare around, noticing every tiny thing.

To my mind a hobby is that peculiar thing that distinguishes a man, reveals his inner world. Through a hobby we can learn a lot about the person. Paraphrasing a famous saying "Tell me what your hobby is and I'll tell you who you are".

It's no doubt that a hobby gives us a good chance of enriching our intellect. No wonder sometimes hobby becomes the way of life. For example, owing to the passion for the space exploration provincial schoolteacher Constantan Tsyolkovsky became the father of cosmonautics.

I'm sure that it is a matter of great importance to take up a hobby according to your likings and preferences.

As for me almost all my free time is taken with programming. Since I was bought a computer it has become the major occupation of my spare time. I think that writing a program is like drawing a picture or composing a melody. It demands the same concentration of mind, even intuition and inspiration. While programming I plunge into it, forgetting about the world around. I can spend hours on end searching for a mistake or trying to improve the program. I'm sure that there is nothing better than programming to arrange one's thoughts, to learn logical and consistent way of thinking.

To tell the truth I've never dreamed of becoming a professional programmer. To my mind there is must be a certain boundary between your profession and hobby as thus you can get pleasure from both.

They say there are 1019 different hobbies in the world. How lucky I'm to find the one that really suits me. But it doesn't mean that that I devote all my time only to it. Frankly speaking I'm a great football fan. It gives me pleasure not only to watch football matches but also to play in it. As far as passive kinds of hobbies are concerned I can't help mentioning reading and listening to music. The first enriches my knowledge and gives me an intellectual insight; the latter inspires me and helps to relax. So, waking up in the morning I know that I'll never waist this day as I have so much to do and so much to enjoy.

Newspapers and Magazines

I think we can't do without means of mass media today. Newspapers and magazines, radio and television are the most effective way of keeping people well informed. They give the full coverage of the latest events, draw our attention to different aspects of life and help us to understand the events correctly. Nowadays there is a great amount of newspapers and magazines, radio stations and TV channels that we have to be selective and to give our preference to some of them.

This year our family subscribed to the newspaper "Vecherniy Nikolaev". Our family likes the way the newspaper presents the information. The editorial board pays much attention to different spheres of life. The newspaper offers its readers a wide range of topics. It gives full attention to international and home affairs and raises vital problems of political, social and cultural life. It also informs the readers about the latest achievements and researches in many branches of science.

As a rule on the front page of the newspaper there is a photograph with a short article on the most important occasion of the day. Among the traditional sections of the newspaper there are: serious editorials, news reports, interview with famous people, features and surveys. Catchy headlines attract people's attention at once.

The newspaper has a monthly supplement "Malyok" for children, which makes the readership of the newspaper wider.

"Vecherniy Nikolaev" is issued both: in Russian and Ukrainian. It comes out three times a week. This weekly newspaper is for those whose reading preferences are wide and varied. No wonder its circulation is high.

I think the newspaper is worth reading and subscribing to. I'd like to recommend it to everyone who tries to get in touch with the world.

NIKOLAEV

Speaking about my native town I'd like to mention a famous proverb "East to West- home is best". And it is really so. After exciting tours when our curiosity is satisfied we turn in our mind to our native place. Whenever we live, work or travel we turn in our thoughts to our home, the place where we spent our childhood. Home, sweet home is the dearest and the most beautiful place in the world.

My native town Nikolaev is attractively situated in a picturesque place on the peninsula. It is washed by the Ingul river in the north and the Southern Bug in the west and in the south. Nikolaev is among those towns in the southern part of Ukraine which are noted for their history. The history of our town dates back to the eighteenth century. It was built as a ship yard on the 23rd of April, 1789. In the commemoration of the seizure of the Turkish fortress Ochakov on the day of St. Nikolay the town was named Nikolaev. The first sailing vessel which was launched here was named "St. Nikolay", too.

The further history of Nikolaev is also connected with shipbuilding and fleet. The Headquarters of the Black Sea navy and ports were situated in the building of the modern Museum of Shipbuilding and Fleet. The names of such famous admirals as Nakhimov, Ushakov, Belinsgausen and outstanding naval architects Kuznetsov and Sokolov are associated with the name of our town.

Our town is rich in the different places of interest. The Olshansky Memorial is erected in honour of brave sailors who defended our town. The Eternal Flame is burning to commemorate the heroic deeds of the soldiers during the Great Patriotic War. I'm sure the visitors of our town will be greatly impressed by the Vereshagin Art Museum, which contains a rich collection of genuine works of art. I think a walk around my town will tell me much about its present and past.

Travelling by train.

Modern life is impossible without travelling. Of course the fastest way of travelling is by plane. But many people make their choice on travelling by train as with a train you have speed, comfort and pleasure combined. Travelling by train is of course slower than by air but it also has its advantages.

If you are going to travel by train you'd better book seats beforehand because many people are fond of travelling by train. There are some reasons why people choose railroad. Train is the cheap means of travelling. If it is summer outside it will be better to think of your trip before the vacation starts. To understand how true this is, you only have to go to a railway station. There you will see hundreds of people hurrying to catch a train. You'll waste a lot of time standing near the booking office trying to buy a ticket.

Modern trains have very comfortable seats in all passenger cars, and there are sleeping cars and dining cars, which make even the longest journey enjoyable. You can buy first-class, second-class and third class sleepers in a separate compartment. If you are early before the train starts you can leave your suitcases in the compartment and walk up and down the platform. Some people forget when and from which platform and track their train will be off. They can always ask for the track, platform and train numbers at the railroad station information bureau and also get information about next trains and their schedules. There are express, slow and long-distance trains. If you want to go somewhere and get there as quickly as possible you'd better know that express trains only stop at the largest stations while slow trains stop at all stations. You can get to far countries only by a long-distance train.

Once you are in your compartment you have to ask the guide to bring in the bedding. There are usually two lower and two upper berths in a third-class sleeper compartment. Some people like to occupy upper berths because it is more convenient and exciting to travel. During your way on the train you can read newspapers, books, look out of the window, drink the tea, communicate with your neighbors or sleep. I prefer to look out of the window, because you can see the country you are passing through and not only the clouds as when you are flying. You can have something to eat at the stations when the train makes stops. Though we all seem to agree that the future belongs to air transport, the railroads today still carry a lot of passengers and goods.

THE OUTSTANDING UKRAINIAN SCIENTISTS

Many outstanding discoveries that serve people in exploration of outer space, medicine, nuclear physics and other branches of science belong to the scientists of Ukraine. The Science of our country is proud of the names of Oleksander Potebnya, Oleksander Bogomolets, Eugene Paton and others.

Oleksander Potebnya was a linguist, folklorist, literary scholar, who regarded language as an individual's and nation's only possible means of perceiving world and thinking. The name of Oleksander Bogomolets is well known throughout the world. He gained worldwide fame by his works in biology, physiology and pathology. He developed the hypothesis that the course of the disease and recovery depends on the resistance of the organism, which in its turn depends on the condition of the nervous system and the connective tissues. O. Bogomolets was not only a brilliant scientist but also a good administrator. In 1930-1946 he was President of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

A real industrial revolution in many branches of metallurgy was made by the development of a new high-speed method of autogenous welding performed by the talented Ukrainian scientist Eugene Oskarovich Paton. Paton carved profound track in the world science. He lived to work and create for his own country. Paton's discoveries, without any doubt, served not only as a theoretical basis for the development of metallurgy in our country but also enabled our scientists to fulfil number of huge problems in construction industry.

Let us take a few examples to illustrate Paton's creative life. The Great Patriotic War broke out when he was 71. In spite of his age Paton put all his life and energy to put new plants for building tanks in a large scale. The discovery of new methods of electric welding made by E. O. Paton solved many problems in supplying the Army with necessary military equipment. After the Great Patriotic War Paton's discoveries were successfully used in construction industry.

A wonderful piece of the metallurgy art- a bridge over the Dniپر, was built under Paton's supervision in 1949. It was named after its creator.

The Electric Welding Institute named after Paton is now the largest center of welding science. New problems of welding in outer space have been developed by its creative staff, serving the scientific and technical progress of our country.

SEASONS

We love nature so much as it gives us that change we need: cold winter gives way to charming spring that turns to generous summer and romantic autumn. I like spring. After winter with its nasty drizzle, melting snow, dark gloomy sky spring comes. It gets warmer and warmer every day. The snow thaws and merry streamlets run along their streets. The trees begin to bud and they burst into blossom. I like to see when chestnut trees show their white and rosy candles.

My native town looks especially nice when lilacs and acacias begin to blossom filling the air with that sweet odor which is so well known since my childhood. Fields and meadows, parks and gardens are covered with fresh carpet of spring flowers: tulips, crocuses, narcissi, pansies and lilies-of-the-valley. The air is filled with fragrance and merry twitter of birds. These changes mean the revival of nature for me.

Everything seems nasty and gloomy when it is cold and rainy. But I like warm spring and summer rains, even thunderstorms with lightning. They are usually short. When the warm sunrays touch the fresh foliage and a rainbow appears in the sky I feel happy. The motley fragrance of air may take your breath away. Spring makes us remember elemental things: no matter what we do to pollute this beautiful part of our planet nature is still willing to forgive us and give us another chance.

Summer is a generous time. The hot sun fills our hearts with "glory of the day and banish every doubt, care and sorrow away". It's an ideal time for spending your vacations at the seaside or in the woods enjoying the ravishing beauty of nature.

Only freshness and fog in the morning will tell us about the coming of autumn. I prefer early autumn when lawns are still in their attire of summer green. The days are still warm but the sun is soft. The gardens are full of ripe fruits and vegetables. Autumn nature isn't as carefree as that of summer but it is probably even more delightful. You only have to take a closer look and listen. The bright fire of autumn leaves is whispering its tuneful melody of people's hopes and anxieties. Nature gives me that singing hour of peace and quiet I need so much. When I get in touch with nature it is like a breath of ecstasy which fills my heart with expectation of joy and happiness.

Some Outstanding places of Great Britain

It has become a tradition to start sightseeing of some country from its capital.

London is an ancient city with rich cultural achievements. Such sights as the Tower, the Houses of Parliament, Westminster, Trafalgar Square and Picadilly circus are well known in the world. Besides these you are sure to have heard about the British Museum, the Tate Gallery and the National Gallery in which the collections of genuine works of art are exhibited.

Besides the capital of the country there are many other places and regions which are worth speaking about and seeing. One of them is the most beautiful part of G.B.-Wales, which is famous for its mountains and valleys. It's an ideal place for spending your vacations. Some people choose Snowdonia, a national park around Snowdon, the highest peak of the Welsh Mountains. Wales has often been called the Land of Songs. One of the Welsh traditions is festivals. The Welsh sing their songs, wear their traditional clothes in their capital Cardiff as well as in the others parts of the country. They say if you visit Great Britain you can't but visit the City of Bath, the splendid monument to the elegance and good taste of the 18th century. The city took its name from the Roman bath, which can be seen in the heart of the city.

I don't think there is a person in the world who hasn't heard about Oxford and Cambridge, known as the most ambitious university cities. They consist of a number of colleges which are autonomous parts of the Universities. They have their own press centers which impress everyone who has a chance of seeing them.

To visit the country without visiting Stratford-on-Avon is unimaginable. The things that attracts people's attention are the places connected with the name of William Shakespeare: the house where he was born, the Grammar School where he studied, the little cottage near Stratford where his wife, Anne Hathaway lived as a girl. But to my mind the biggest attraction is the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

One of the most beautiful and interesting part of Great Britain is Scotland; especially the region usually called Highlands. The tourists go to Scotland to see its beautiful lakes(called "lochs"). Loch Lomond one of the largest, the most beautiful Scottish lakes is situated near the West Coast. Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, is the beautiful and the old city. The first thing you see in it is the Rock, a very large hill in the middle of the city. The Edinburgh Castle stands on it. The Castle looks like a castle from a fairy-tale and parts of it are more than a thousand years old. Scottish national and musical festivals are held there.

TELEVISION: advantages and disadvantages.

It is my firm belief that television is a great achievement of the present day's life. It provides us a great amount of information on the latest news, research in different branches of science. Television enriches our intellect, gives us opportunities to see the best actors, performances, famous people and events, which will path into history. Besides television is a powerful medium. Some TV programmes gather big audiences. Apart from their educational and entertainment value they give us many useful topics to discuss.

But on the other hand television has many disadvantages. The first and, probably, the main one is that television affects our health though rushed meals, lack of sleep and exercises making it worse. More than that it prevents us from reading books, going in for sports, belonging to different sport clubs and other active kinds of spending our leisure time.

Nowadays there is a great variety of TV programmes such as news reports, sports, variety shows, and so you have to be selective and to give preference to some of them.

My favourite programmes are documentary ones. They deal with different materials about the wild life, the history of the country and its present day's life. Some of them are concerned with different art events such as exhibitions, festivals, variety shows and so on. I think interviews with famous people make these programmes more interesting.

But I'm sure that there is no good TV programme without good talk show host. The success of the programme much depends upon the host's personality. My favourite TV host is Posner. He is distinguished by his ability to understand people though we can easily recognize his own attitude to the problem. I think Posner is rather intelligent. He has quiet authority to make viewers listen to what is being said. Posner is speaking in a friendly, likable manner without any hint of chumminess, which is the stamp of insincerity. To my mind Vladimir Posner has all the qualities the real talk show host ought to have.

He announces a great number of programs but I like his program "We" best of all. It deals with the social, economic & cultural problems of (our) the modern society and offers the ways to solve them. I think this program has got everything: intelligent host, interviews with people-in-power, detailed reports etc. It is a weekly program, which is on Wednesday. So I try my best to do all the things beforehand to free my time fro my favourite program. I'm sure it is for you to decide whether television is a great forth or not and what programmes to watch, but still it remains one of the greatest achievements of the human civilization.

28-Feb-01

The Museum of Fine Arts

The Nikolaev Museum of Fine Arts is one of the most outstanding places of interest in our town. The museum is one of the oldest in Ukraine. It was founded by Nikolay Gedroits, ardent art lover and an artist. Owing to the support of the famous Russian artist Ilya Repin the museum was opened in 1914 and named after Vasiliy Vereshagin, an outstanding battle painter. The museum contains a rich collection of genuine works of art, which belong to the brush of such famous artists as Ivan Aivazovsky, Vladimir Makovsky, Vasiliy Polenov, Arkhip Kuindzhi, Mark Antakovsky and other famous painters.

There is a rich collection of portraits, genre painting, landscapes, seascapes and still life-in-it. They are on display on the second floor of the museum.

Before speaking about the museum itself, I'd like to start with a person whose name is given to the museum. V. Vereshagin was one of the famous artists of the XIX century, the man of outstanding talent and unusual fate. He was one of those rare artists who depicted war not as a triumphant march but as a war of people's sorrow, sufferings and blood. In order to understand what the war really is he took part in battles himself. He perished in Port Arthur on board the "Petrovskiy" Battleship in 1904.

One of the central halls of the museum is devoted to Vereshagin's battle paintings. The canvas entitled "The Forgotten Soldier" is one of the most impressive. The dead body of the English infantryman is left in the field. He will soon be torn into pieces by the eagles. Of course, only a man of extraordinary talent could convey the tragedy of war with such severe and simple truth.

The other canvases "The letter to Mother", "The snows of Himalayas", "In the Hospital", "The Man-eater" are worth seeing, too. One can also see the personal belongings of the artist: the Indian armchair, vases from Japan, the palette and some others.

The best starting point for an excursion in the museum is, undoubtedly, the hall of the ancient Russian art. The unique icons, which were the only kind of painting till the XVI century, are exhibited here. One of the icons which is of great historic value is "The Doomsday". It attracts people's attention by its perfect composition and deep inner sense. Portrait painting is represented by such artists as Vladimir Borovikovsky, Piotr Sokolov, Vasiliy Tropinin and some other famous artists.

The museum has a rich collection of Peredvizhniki (members of the Art Society, XIX-XX c) works by Repin, Ladyzenskiy, Savrasov, Polenov and Kuindzhi. I think the collection of our museum is rich and varied. It's worth visiting by those who are fond of art and can understand its divine beauty.

Part I: On The Eve Of The Uprising

On the eve of the uprising England suffered greatly after the Hundred Years War(1337-1453). The internal troubles were great too. England suffered greatly from the outbreak of plague. There was shortage after it and government of Edward the III had to take measures to improve the disastrous state of the country. In spite of it the government made attempts to freeze the wages. It made peasants to work as much as it is possible. That's why many of them run out of their county and moved from place to place in search of job. Thus a new class of migratory wage workers was formed.

The shortage of working hands made lords find the way out. They began to use arable lands for pastures. It gave ground to Tomas More to say that sheep were eating people like hungry wolfs. The church became more and more powerful and more corrupt. It aroused anger and indignation of common people. The church was criticized not only by common people but also by village priests as well. They were as poor as peasants and were ready to share all the hardships of the common people.

John Wycliff was an Oxford University professor who criticized the church and the monks for their attempts to become rich. His ideas were supported by the group of priests who were called the Lollards. John Ball was one of the priests called Lollards who called people for actions. People made him a leader of their uprising together with Wat Tyler.

Part II: The Uprising

In may 1381 the tacks collectors came to the Southern Essex. The villagers killed some of them and it served as the signal to the uprising. In a few days the peasants armed with axes, folks and knives began to ransack the lords' castles and monasteries. Soon the uprising spread all over the country.

Finally Watt Tyler, John Ball and Jack Straw led the army of the peasants to London. They were supported by the poor people, so that they could easily enter the city, seize the Headquarters of the lawyers and destroy all the documents connected with the taxation. The king met the army of the rebellions and promised to fulfil all their demands. Many peasants believed the king and left London. But Watt Tyler and some of his supporters stayed there and had a meeting with a king again. During it Watt Tyler was seized and put into prison. The king used the army to punish the rebellions and thus the uprising was subdued. Watt Tyler and John Ball were executed. The king didn't fulfil his promises.

Conclusion

It was the first serious threat to feudalism, it put the end to serfdom in Britain and helped to the development of the capitalist relations within the country. The church declared the Lollards and their ideas to be the kind of hiresy and threatened everyone who supported it with punishment. The Parliament seized the power. It deposed king Richard II and appointed Henry IV. Later on the power of the Parliament continue to grow.

Travelling by Air.

Modern life is impossible without travelling. Of course the fastest way of travelling is by plane. Many people prefer travelling by air as it is the most convenient, comfortable and quickest means of travelling. Travelling by plane has also its advantages and disadvantages.

If you are going to travel by air you'd better buy tickets beforehand because many people are fond of travelling by plane. There are some reasons why people choose that means of travelling. If it is summer outside it will be better to think of your trip before the vacation starts. To understand how true this is, you only have to go to an airport. There you will see hundreds of people hurrying to catch a plane. You'll waste a lot of time standing near the booking office trying to buy a ticket. Modern planes have very comfortable seats in all cabins, and there are first class, business and economy class cabins. Inside the cabin the air is always fresh and warm. Before the plane takes off the stewardess helps everyone get comfortable in the seats and wishes them a pleasant trip. She also gives all the information about the flight, the speed and the altitude. During the flight you can have something to drink and to eat. You can read newspapers and magazines or simply look out of the porthole. But you will see nothing outside but the clouds. You can buy first-class, second-class and third class. You must be in time for your flight because you must have time to pass custom and passport controls and check in. Before boarding the plane the passenger must register at the airport. While registering he is required to have his luggage weighed. If the luggage weighs more than 20 kilograms you have to pay extra. Sometimes people forget the time and the number of the flight. They can always ask for that at the airport's information bureau and also get information about next flights and their timetables.

Sometimes passengers don't feel as if they are walking on good solid ground when on board the plane. They can get airsick and then travelling by air becomes a real torture for them. Nowadays travelling by air is one of the dangerous means of travelling. There are a lot of air crashes and many people die in them. And I think people prefer safety to comfort on board a ship. Though we all seem to agree that the future belongs to air transport, other means of travelling are still popular today.

2. Travelling by Air.

I think it is hard to imagine the modern life without travelling. To understand how true it is you may go to a railway station, an airport or a seaport. There you will see thousands of people who are hurrying to board the train, airplane or an ocean liner.

People who have made up their mind to travel have at their disposal different means of travelling: by train, by sea or by air. Some people prefer travelling by sea. They say everyone feels safe on board a big ocean liner. Besides such liners have all the modern conveniences and all sorts of entertainment facilities.

The others prefer travelling by air. There is no doubt this means of travelling is more comfortable and surely much quicker. But there is one great disadvantage: the price is too high, but it makes no difference to you if you are travelling on business.

As for me I prefer travelling by train. I think it combines both: comfort and speed. Besides it doesn't depend upon weather so much as for example plane does.

So if you have made up your mind to travel by train the first thing you should do is to buy a ticket. If it is a busy season you may book it in advance or to buy it just at the railway station. So in the proper time you ought to be at the station with a suitcase where all your necessary things are packed. If you need porter will take care of your luggage and help you to load it into the carriage. There are always bustle and confusion at the station. Different trains are standing there: an express, fast train and mail ones. And so no wonder that it is hard to find the train you need. But you may ask the number of your train in the Information Bureau.

At last you bid farewell to the friends that had come to see you off, show your ticket to the guide and in you go into the carriage. Then the shrill whistle is heard and the train with a jerk pulls out of station. You are on your way. If you get tired you may take your bedding and turn in. During your journey you needn't worry about your meals. In the train there is a dining car where you can get your dinner.

There is nothing like watching fields and meadows passing by your window. Though there are any entertainment facilities on the train I'm sure that a good conversation with your fellow-passengers can substitute it. That's why I consider travelling by train to be the most pleasant one.

UKRAINE

Ukraine is one of the countries situated in the southeastern part of Europe. Its population is about 52 million people. It covers the territory more than 600000 sq. km. It borders on Belaruss and Russia in the north and in the east. In the south it is washed by the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. IN the west it is bounded by Moldavia, Rumania, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland.

The territory of Ukraine is largely vast and firetile plain. Great areas are occupied by step and forest-step regions. Within the boundaries of Ukraine only two groups of mountains can be found: Carpathians in the west and the Crimean mountains in the south. Ukraine is rich in its natural resources: oil and gas, soil, different oz. Together with good geographical position and climate conditions it makes it possible for the development of intensive agriculture.

Ukraine is an independent, democratic, sovereign legal state. It is a republic. The only source of power in Ukraine is its people. It is exercised directly or though bodies of state power and local self-government.

The political center of Ukraine is its capital Kiev. It is considered to be its administrative, scientific and cultural center, too. Kiev's beginnings are lost in the remote antiquity. It is one of the oldest cities in Europe and thus it has many places of interest: the Kievo-Pecherska Lavra(monastery), Golden Gate, St. Sofia's Cathedral, monuments to Prince Volodimir and Bogdan Khmelnitsky. Kiev manages to reflect its past and at the same time to fulfil the functions of the modern city.

Besides the capital of the country there are many other places which are worth speaking about and seeing, such as national reservation of Askanya Nova, cathedrals in Chernigov. In Ukraine there are four Hero-cities: Kiev, Kerch, Odesa and Sevastopol.

Holidays

Holiday is a day set apart for religious observance or for the commemoration of some extraordinary event or distinguished person, or for some other public occasion. National holidays are days set-aside by official government proclamation to celebrate different occasions.

The U.S. has no national holidays. Legal holidays – days on which banks, schools, or other public institutions and most places of business are closed. Memorial Day is a legal holiday, observed annually on the last Monday in May in most of the United States. It honours the nation's armed services killed in wartime. The holiday, originally called Decoration Day, is traditionally marked by parades, memorial speeches and ceremonies, and the decoration of graves with flowers and flags. Memorial Day was first observed on May 30, 1868, on the order of General John Alexander Logan for the purpose of decorating the graves of the American Civil War dead. It was observed on May 30 until 1971, when most states changed to a newly established federal schedule of holiday observance.

Independence Day is an annual holiday commemorating the formal adoption by the Continental Congress of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia. Although the signing of the Declaration was not completed until August, the Fourth of July holiday has been accepted as the official anniversary of United States independence and is celebrated in all states and territories of the U.S.

The Fourth of July is traditionally celebrated publicly with parades and pageants, patriotic speeches, and organised firing of guns and cannons and displays of fireworks. Family picnics and outings are a feature of private Fourth of July celebrations.

Thanksgiving Day, a legal holiday in the U.S., was first celebrated in early colonial times in New England. The actual origin is probably the harvest festivals that are traditional in many parts of the world. After the first harvest was completed by the Plymouth colonists in 1621, Governor William Bradford proclaimed a day of thanksgiving. In 1863 President Abraham Lincoln appointed a day of thanksgiving, and since then each president has issued a Thanksgiving Day proclamation, generally designating the fourth Thursday of November as a holiday.

New Year's Day is the first day of the year, January 1 in the Gregorian calendar. In the Middle Ages most European countries used the Julian calendar and observed New Year's Day on March 25, called Annunciation Day and celebrated as the birth to the Son of God. With the introduction of the Gregorian calendar in 1582, Roman Catholic countries began to celebrate New Year's Day on January 1.

The custom of visiting friends, relatives and neighbours on New Year's Day is one of the Old World traditions that has taken on a new form in the United States. A favourite place to see the old year out is New York City's Time Square. Christmas is an annual festival, held on December 25, to celebrate the Nativity, or birth of Christ. The Christmas tree, an evergreen trimmed with lights and other decorations, is derived from the so-called paradise tree, symbolising Eden.

Saint Valentine's Day, a holiday honouring lovers, is celebrated on February 14. There is a custom of sending greeting cards or gifts to express affection. The cards, known as valentines, are often designed with hearts to symbolise love. The holiday probably derives from the ancient Roman feast of Lupercalis (February 15). The festival gradually became associated with the feast day (February 14) of two Roman martyrs, both named St. Valentine, who lived in the 3rd century. St. Valentine has traditionally been regarded as the patron saint of lovers.

Washington

Washington is the capital city of the United States. It is located on the north bank of the Potomac River. George Washington, the first President of the USA, after whom the city was named, selected an area for the capital. A hundred square miles were taken from states of Maryland and Virginia. It was called the District of Columbia. The city is divided into four sections: NW, NE, SW, and SE. Numbered streets run north and south: First Street, Second Street... Lettered streets such as A-street, B-street run east and west. Bear in mind that every section has an independent street system. If you're looking for Third Street, you need to know what section of the city it is in. Washington is one of the most beautiful and unusual cities in the United States. It has little industry, and only one million people. One reason Washington looks different from other cities is that no building in the city may be more than 40 metres tall. There are no skyscrapers, because they would hide the city's many monuments from view. One can easily find a park, a square or an open area there. The most impressive and the best-known ones are the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.

The heart of Washington is the Capitol, which is connected with the White House by Pennsylvania Avenue. It dominates the city of Washington. All the tourists begin sightseeing from the Capitol and see the Senate Chamber, the Hall of Representatives, the Statuary Hall and some others.

Thousands of tourists visit Washington every day. People from all parts of the United States come to see their capital and the monuments to those who in past centuries struggled for the independence of their country. The Washington Monument, the tallest stone structure in the USA, is in the Potomac River. It was opened to the public in 1888. It is 555 feet tall, is called the "Pencil" because of its shape. It is three blocks south of the White House. There is an elevator, which will carry you to 500-foot level observation windows. The Lincoln Memorial is in the west of the Washington Monument. It is designed like a Greek temple. The dominant figure is the realistic figure of Abraham Lincoln seated in the centre of the open temple. The Jefferson Memorial is worth seen, too. It is situated south of the Washington monument near the Potomac River. The Library of Congress contains millions of books and manuscripts. People are also interested in churches and cathedrals. The Washington Cathedral is on Massachusetts Avenue, and the Arlington National Cemetery is outside the city limits just across the Potomac River near the Pentagon in Virginia. The famous Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is visited by millions of people every year. Washington is the place where mass demonstrations take place against unemployment and racism, for democracy and civil rights.