

RUSSIAN

Paper 9782/01
Speaking

Key messages

Part 1. Candidates need to choose a topic of interest to them and be able to express their opinions in accurate Russian.

Part 2. 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.

General comments

Many candidates spoke with enthusiasm about their topics, demonstrating a wide range of language skills. They had prepared thoroughly and the strongest candidates were able to take the lead in the conversation and/or respond to unpredictable questions.

Comments on specific parts

Part 1. Discussion of article and related themes.

The majority of candidates used the preparation time effectively to extract the main points of the article, and were able to express their opinions confidently and in detail. Many candidates displayed a consistently high level of grammatical accuracy and used a wide range of structures. The best candidates were able to take the discussion further than the immediate content of the text and give and justify their opinions.

The most popular card was No 4 (Education and Employment). Cards 1 (Scientific and technological innovation) and 3 (Lifestyle) attracted some interest and the least popular was Card 2 (War and Peace).

Card 1 dealt with the problems associated with new technology such as mobile phones. The strongest candidates could discuss the effect of mobiles phones on relationships with friends; the control of internet information; state censorship and state surveillance.

Card 2 led to discussions on the morality of one country entering another to 'police' it; terrorism, the radicalisation of young people and the social problems of young soldiers returning home.

Card 3 led to a discussion of other addictions such as drugs and tobacco, peer pressure and binge drinking.

Card 4 led to a discussion of the importance of individual school subjects, the value of university education, whether too many young people go to university, and, if there are too many graduates, who will do the menial tasks in society?

Part 2. Prepared topic.

Again this year there was an interesting range of topics including Russian cuisine, racism in football, the Soltsevskaya brotherhood, the Cossacks, and the crisis in the Crimea. Others chose biographical topics including the lives and work of Stalin, Mussorgsky, Peter the Great, Dostoevsky and, more unusually, Yakov Dzhugashvili. Most candidates showed good factual knowledge and were able to analyse and express their opinions with confidence.

The very best candidates demonstrated that they had researched their topics carefully, showing in most cases pertinent detail and extensive knowledge. It was also important to be prepared for the possibility of some unpredictable questions arising from discussion of the subtopics on the Prepared Topic form.

Language

Overall the level of language was pleasingly high. The vast majority of candidates showed an excellent command of Russian at this level, using a wide range of lexis and structure. Pronunciation and intonation was generally good or very good. Less able candidates made some basic errors and the influence of English on their Russian language constructions was apparent.

Common errors included noun/adjective agreement, problems with aspect, dative constructions, accusative case, verbs of motion, irregular plurals such as дети and compound conjunctions such as после того, что. This year there were also more stress errors especially in words such as достаточно.

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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 response to 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 text. Useful vocabulary can be found in the preceding text, 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

It is advisable to spend about 1 hour on this section. 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: Candidates scored variably on this exercise. Marks ranged between 2 and 10. The text was about access to a museum for visitors with reduced mobility.

Question 1

Candidates needed to mention what was particularly unique about the collection in the museum. It was not enough to say коллекция документов, книг. The text clearly says there is a unique этнографическая коллекция.

Question 2

Candidates generally did well on this question and scored the full two marks.

Question 3

Candidates needed to be careful to avoid lifting their answer directly from the text in this question. Они участвовали в выставках was tolerated, accepting the они as an alteration from посетители, however candidates needed to add они again to score the second mark. Candidates also needed to answer in the correct tense. Some candidates tried to find an alternative way to express “interesting people”, with varying degrees of success. In fact it was not necessary to find alternative words for this phrase, as changing the case is sufficient to demonstrate understanding.

Question 4

Most candidates scored the mark here. There were some interesting renditions of “disabled”, but only candidates who expressed themselves in usable Russian were awarded the mark. For example, both людям с физическими невозможностями and которые нехватает физические способности were rejected. However, маломобильные люди was accepted (this appeared later in the text and many candidates showed initiative by using it).

Question 5

This question caused very few problems. Candidates needed to include the word узкая when relating to the stairs to score the mark.

Question 6

This question was aimed at the higher performing candidates. It was necessary to specify правительство республики rather than simply answering with правительство.

Question 7

This question proved to be challenging for all but the strongest candidates. They needed to read the question carefully and answer the question with a verb for each mark. Thus, парковать was accepted, but есть парковка was rejected. Marks were awarded for подниматься на второй этаж музея and использовать пандус у входа.

TEXT 2: All candidates scored more than 6 marks on this text which discussed a fund raising marathon for a children’s home. Many candidates scored full marks.

Question 8

All candidates scored this mark and recognised that it was a charity putting on the event.

Question 9

All candidates recognised the fact that it was orphans who would benefit.

Question 10

Nearly all candidates scored the first mark for this question and identified the fact that a swimming pool was being built. However not all candidates recognised that the swimming pool would be for the orphanage. Some candidates inadvertently changed the meaning of their answer by an incorrect use of the indefinite article. The answer “for a city children’s home” did not score a mark and neither did “for the town of the children’s home”.

Question 11

Virtually all candidates translated the slogan correctly.

Question 12

This question was aimed at the higher performing candidates. Candidates had to mention speed and distance to gain both marks. A perfect answer would have been “Speed was not important and the candidates chose their own distance” (not ‘route’, as some candidates thought).

Question 13

This was a question aimed at the lower ability candidates and it was pleasing to see that all candidates could identify two types of entertainment provided.

Question 14

This was a challenging question, requiring candidates to understand that the objects were handmade. Candidates were given a mark for mentioning either “handmade” or “made by the children of the charity”. Marks were not given for “made by orphaned children” as this could refer to orphaned children not from the charity.

TEXT 3:

Question 15

All candidates did well in this exercise, with many achieving full marks and all candidates scoring over 6 marks.

Throughout the text, verbs needed to agree with subjects, even in cases when the translation of the subject was incorrect.

The most challenging parts of the translation proved to be:

‘Festival’ - nearly all candidates correctly identified the obvious Фестиваль as “festival”, but there were other attempts such as Событие and Угощение which were not rewarded.

‘Took place’ – a pleasing number of candidates correctly translated the verb as прошёл. Those candidates with initiative noticed that it was used in the first sentence of the previous text. Other attempts to use verbs such as случился, происходил were not appropriate in this instance.

‘Thousands of people’ – candidates needed to use тысячи in the plural to score a mark here.

‘Sponsors’ – candidates were offered this word in the text and a surprising number attempted their own versions of this word with varied success. Words such as спонсорски/ спонсорские люди/ спонсорные люди were not rewarded.

‘To a charity’ – The dative was required here. Attempts to use the preposition на – на фонд changed the meaning and did not gain marks.

‘In competitions’ – в соревнованиях was required here in the prepositional. The word конкуренциях had a different meaning here.

‘They listened to famous musicians’ – some candidates confused слушали with слышали here. Candidates ideally needed to use the animate accusative for известных музыкантов, although the accusative alone was tolerated. Other cases were not rewarded.

‘The parents chatted’ – разговаривали was the correct verb here, and a few candidates correctly used the verb. Efforts which were not given marks included говоряли, рассказывали, беседовали; болтали was a good alternative, but not in the reflexive form болтались

‘Their children’ – both words needed to be in the nominative to gain a mark. The use of свои as an alternative to их is incorrect here,

‘Ice cream’ – surprisingly few candidates remembered the basic word for ice cream.

‘Was given’ – it was pleasing to see a lot of candidates correctly use the active voice here.

'To remember the event' – only a few candidates correctly used *напамять/ чтобы помнить* here. Many attempted to use other similar verbs with variable degrees of success. Only variants which did not alter the meaning were accepted. *Событие* was the correct translation of 'event'.

Part II: Listening

TEXT 1: Candidates scored variably in this exercise with marks ranging between 5 and 10. Several candidates scored full marks in this interview with a famous Russian writer.

Question 16

This question caused no problems.

Question 17

All candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 18

The word *psychiatric* was not required here. All got this right.

Question 19

Nearly all candidates correctly identified *early morning* here.

Question 20

This question proved to be challenging. Candidates who answered *потому что он использует ноутбук* did not score a mark here. Candidates needed to understand that the author moved around from place to place. The alternative *он работает с ноутбуком, чтобы может меняться свое рабочее место* was accepted or *он работает в любом месте где можно поставить ноутбук*.

Question 21

The first mark for this question was successfully attempted by most candidates. The second mark caused some confusion. *Это снижает концентрацию* was the correct answer here.

Question 22

This question was straightforward.

Question 23

This question was mostly successfully answered; however some candidates misused the word *свою* here which altered the meaning. *Они читали свою книгу* would mean that his friends were reading their own book.

TEXT 2: This text, featuring an interview with a finance director of a travel magazine, was answered variably with a range of marks between 4 and 10.

Question 24

Nearly all candidates identified the word for *old* in the recording but few recognised the superlative here. Only candidates who understood "oldest" scored the first mark of this question. The second mark was more challenging and several candidates confused the word "few" for "many" and were not rewarded.

Question 25

Several candidates misunderstood the word *обанкротился*, attempting to translate it as "abandoned". For the second mark, "director" and "directors", "poor leadership" and "managers" were all acceptable here.

Question 26

All candidates answered this correctly.

Question 27

A pleasing number of candidates identified that the director's passion started in childhood, but several misunderstood the word for "dreaming" to score the second mark.

Question 28

Most candidates scored the full two marks here, although a handful confused TV shows with TV channels and were not rewarded.

Question 29

Most candidates answered this correctly. "Digital copies" as an answer was not an acceptable alternative to "website".

TEXT 3: Summary.

This question proved to be the most challenging of all the listening exercises with scores ranging from 2 to 10. It should be borne in mind that full sentences are not required and that credit cannot be given for any work beyond the first natural break after 100 words. The majority of candidates kept within the word limit but several candidates exceeded the word limit and their subsequent points were therefore not rewarded.

For the first bullet point, several candidates scored the maximum three marks, but in the main, candidates identified two points. Marks were awarded to those who correctly identified the fact that children had difficulties getting up early and that they struggled to adjust to the school routine. Some candidates had difficulties with the word for "routine", translating it as "ritual" or "school order" which have different meanings. While candidates do not have to write in full sentences, they needed to make clear who they were referring to. The answer "go to school happy and ready to learn" on its own was not enough – the children needed to be mentioned.

For the second bullet point, candidates needed to be precise with their answers. Many identified the need to send the child to bed early, but the recording clearly mentioned "earlier". Candidates also needed to include a time reference to gain maximum points, for example, "a week or two before the start of term" or "every day" parents should put their children to bed earlier. Most candidates correctly understood that quiet music could be played to the children, but some candidates invalidated this answer by misunderstanding that the music was 'to help the child wake up' or 'to help them sleep'. Some candidates gained a mark for answering that parents should go into the child's room quietly.

For the third bullet point, many candidates gained the maximum three marks here as there were several alternatives to choose from. A pleasing number of candidates correctly understood the Russian word for alarm clock. The other marks were awarded if accompanied by the relevant adjective e.g. sharp movements, commanding voice.

For the fourth bullet point, some candidates struggled with the idea of placing a bowl of brightly coloured fruits by the child's bed. Many understood the need for a morning ritual, but to gain the mark, candidates needed to include the word "pleasant" or "nice".

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Paper 9782/03
Writing and Usage

Key Comments

Part I: Writing

When choosing a title in the examination, candidates should:

- spend some time reading all the titles
- think carefully about what each topic is and what is being asked in the title
- think about whether they have something to say in response
- consider whether they possess vocabulary in the topic area
- make a very rough plan before choosing a title
- 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
- write an introduction, discussion and a conclusion
- keep the essay title in mind throughout
- check whether the points made are relevant
- avoid repetition
- write in paragraphs, making a clear, relevant point in each one
- try to use a variety of language and demonstrate linguistic ability
- write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- 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
- avoid leaving any questions unanswered
- 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?')
- proofread carefully their answers to Exercises 1 and 2.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Discursive essay

The majority of candidates wrote a plan for their essay. An essay plan is, it goes without saying, 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. Candidates would be well-advised to use paragraphs carefully in order to structure their work.

As in previous years, in a surprisingly large number of cases the presentation of the work was messy and the standard of handwriting created a barrier for the reader. Particular difficulty came with the handwritten versions of the letters л, ч, м, я and к. A small but significant number of candidates did not use capital letters to begin all their sentences, or when spelling proper nouns. Candidates are advised to make sure that their handwriting is clearly legible, as they may be disadvantaged if the Examiner cannot read what they have written.

“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 illustrated with appropriate examples. Examples from anywhere in the world may be used.

In order to be able to access the full range of marks available for this essay, candidates would be well-advised to 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. 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 candidates’ 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 the most popular of the titles, chosen by nearly half of this year’s candidates. A few candidates misinterpreted the question, answering as if the question asked whether population growth was the **biggest** problem of the 21st century; candidates are advised to read the question very carefully and to make sure they answer the question as it is written. Many candidates had a great deal to say in response to this question, using examples from their reading and/or their experience, relating this issue to other global issues and using intelligent examples and comment to support their argument. Many candidates were able to use a wide range of appropriate and high-level vocabulary in answering the question. Most came to the conclusion that population growth is a major problem of this century and supported their conclusion with well-chosen evidence.
- (b) Approximately one fifth of the candidates chose to answer this title. Those who did were generally able to offer a good range of reasons to support their point of view and to draw a strong and reasoned conclusion. Candidates drew links between climate and a range of issues which affect people’s lives. They referred, for example, to how people earn a living, where they live and also to issues related to the change in climate. Candidates were able to use a good range of topic-specific vocabulary; climate is clearly a topic that has been discussed in preparation for the examination.
- (c) Whether social network sites cause harm is an issue about which the candidates who chose to answer this title (approximately one third of the entry) have strong opinions. Many drew on examples from personal experience to support their argument and most came to the conclusion that, while such sites can cause harm, their positive aspects outweigh any disadvantage. This title did not call for as much topic-specific vocabulary as the others, but candidates were generally able to express themselves clearly, considering a range of relevant factors such as cyber-bullying, crime and the spreading of false or harmful information. Well-balanced essays generally considered both sides of the argument before stating a clear conclusion.
- (d) Very few candidates chose to answer this question, but it provoked some thoughtful discussion and candidates used interesting examples taken from the news and other experience in their responses. Whether 100% employment is possible or indeed would benefit society was considered, and candidates made reference to history in addition to hypothetical situations in order to support their point of view. The reasons for unemployment and whether these reasons could be eliminated were explored. The best answers came to a clear and well-reasoned conclusion.

(e) No candidates chose to answer this question.

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. Verb conjugations were generally well known, with many candidates scoring full marks on this section. **Question 4** proved to be the most challenging. Candidates must offer only one answer to the question, and, if they wish to change their answer, they must indicate such changes clearly.

Exercise 2

Questions 7–11

There were many candidates who were able to manipulate the language as required in this section and this exercise proved to be a good test of knowledge of the structure of Russian. Any successful manipulation of the two sentences to form one were accepted, and candidates found a variety of ways to do this. Candidates are advised to check that they do not inadvertently omit any of the information of the two original sentences when combining them. In this section, **Question 9** proved to be the most challenging, calling for consideration of the verb tense and of the conjugation of the verb.

Exercise 3

Questions 12–32

Many candidates scored full marks or almost full marks for Exercise 3. The advice of previous reports has been that, 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. Many candidates are clearly confident in these grammar points and were able to identify the correct option in every or nearly every case.

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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
- remember that the rubric requires reference to only two of the works. Writing about all three may lead to a lack of depth.
- try to demonstrate their knowledge of underlying themes, and mention comparisons and links between the two works
- proof-read 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

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, candidates seemed better able to do this than in previous years. The best answers showed a clear ability to exclude irrelevant information which, though interesting and accurate, did not add weight to the argument. This year it was noted that almost all candidates addressed all aspects of their chosen question in the Topics section, thus enabling them to access higher marks.

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. 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.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Cultural Topics

Question 1

- A** This question was by far the most popular this year. Some answers could have benefitted from more specific reference to the lives of children in the studied works. Some candidates spent too long discussing the actions of adult characters, without adequately demonstrating how these affect the children in the short or long term. Many answers contained perceptive detail and comparisons, especially with regard to the two films, though few attempted to provide vital basic information about the characters, settings or historical contexts. The second part of the question was often very well done, producing a range of sometimes quite nuanced opinion and discussing the means by which the author and directors manipulate the reader and audience into sympathising with the children and adults of the works.
- B** Answers to this question were generally sound, though some candidates wrote less balanced essays, being hampered by a lack of understanding of *с удовольствием*.

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

Question 4

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

Question 5

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

Part II: Literary Texts

Question 6

- A** There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B** This question attracted a small number of answers, ranging from satisfactory to outstanding in their description of *skaz* as a literary technique and in their analysis of its effectiveness when applied to *Шинель*. Some essays might have benefitted from more quotation in Russian.
- C** This was a very popular choice of question this year. Answers covered the whole mark range, with most offering insightful comment and analysis about the character of Akaky Akakievich, the plot of the story and the nature of Russian society. Surprisingly, few answers made reference to Akaky's encounters with the police or discussed this institution as one of the possible targets of criticism.

Question 7

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B Those who answered this question demonstrated excellent understanding of the concept of the 'superfluous man' as well as considerable knowledge of Lermontov's novel and its main character.
- 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 There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- C There were too few answers to make a general comment.

Question 10

- A There were too few answers to make a general comment.
- B Those answering this question usually identified a number of themes before selecting one as the main one. Most opted for the idea of wasted lives, opportunities and potential, though some suggested the love theme in its various forms was most important. Any answer was accepted provided it was justified.
- C Some candidates were unsure as to what 'heroine' means in a literary sense, and therefore did not quite grasp the nature of the question. Most showed at least adequate knowledge and understanding of the text, but often provided too much information about characters other than Voynitsky and Sonya, making parts of their answers irrelevant.

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.