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English

УСТНЫЕ ТЕМЫ

для подготовки
к обязательному
выпускному экзамену по



АНГЛИЙСКОМУ
ЯЗЫКУ

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Адресуется учащимся 11-х классов, а также учителям и учащимся гимназий и лицеев.

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СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

Предисловие.....	4
Card № 1. Let's talk about accommodation.....	5
Card № 2. Let's talk about the education.....	7
Card № 3. Let's talk about the environment.....	8
Card № 4. Let's talk about Belarus.....	10
Card № 5. Let's speak about Great Britain.....	11
Card № 6. Let's talk about science and modern technologies.....	13
Card № 7. Let's talk about art.....	15
Card № 8. Let's talk about your future career.....	17
Card № 9. Let's talk about your family.....	20
Card № 10. Let's talk about youth and society.....	21
Card № 11. Let's talk about the mass media.....	24
Card № 12. Let's talk about the mass media.....	26
Card № 13. Let's talk about international cooperation.....	28
Card № 14. Let's talk about national character and stereotypes.....	31
Card № 15. Let's talk about outstanding people.....	33
Card № 16. Let's talk about tourism.....	35
Card № 17. Let's talk about accommodation.....	37
Card № 18. Let's talk about your family.....	39
Card № 19. Let's talk about your future career.....	41
Card № 20. Let's talk about Belarus.....	42
Card № 21. Let's talk about any English-speaking country.....	44
Card № 22. Let's talk about national character and stereotypes.....	47
Card № 23. Let's talk about youth and society.....	50
Card № 24. Let's talk about education.....	52
Card № 25. Let's talk about tourism.....	54

ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Выпускной экзамен по учебному предмету «Английский язык» по завершении обучения и воспитания на III ступени общего среднего образования проводится по билетам, утвержденным Министерством образования Республики Беларусь, и включает собеседование по содержанию прочитанного текста, собеседование по содержанию прослушанного текста и беседу по ситуации общения.

Данное пособие состоит из 25 разделов, охватывающих все ситуации общения, представленные в билетах, утвержденных Министерством образования Республики Беларусь для обязательного выпускного экзамена по учебному предмету «Английский язык» на 2017—2018 учебный год. Пособие содержит примеры устных высказываний по ситуации общения, а также ответы на уточняющие вопросы и задания, побуждающие учащихся задать вопросы, высказать и обосновать свою точку зрения.

Пособие предназначено для самостоятельной подготовки к беседе по ситуации общения и адресовано учащимся 11-х классов, сдающим обязательный выпускной экзамен, а также учителям и учащимся гимназий и лицеев, изучающим английский язык.

CARD № 1

Let's talk about accommodation.

1. What types of houses do people live in?

There are different types of houses. People can live in a detached house, which is a house that is not joined to any other. It can be a mansion which is a very large expensive house, a bungalow (a house which has only one floor), a cottage (a house in the country usually with a garden). Some people live in a semi-detached house, which is two houses joined together; others live in a flat in a block of flats.

Each type of housing has its own advantages and disadvantages. Living in a detached house gives you privacy but all repairs in the house should be made by the owner, you need more time to clean the house. To my mind those people, who prefer to live in a cottage adore nature: they want to wake up to songs of birds, to enjoy beautiful landscapes, to breathe fresh air or in other words they want to have a calm and measured rhythm of life. Usually such people keep the poultry and the cattle. One of the advantages of living in such a house is that you have your own land where you can grow fruit and vegetables, make flowerbeds and plant beautiful flowers, lay out an orchard, etc. You can also build some outhouses like a green-house, a garage, a tool shed or an arbor. But the greatest disadvantage of living in a farmhouse or in a cottage, in my opinion, is that it takes much time to get to the nearest town, but if you have a car it isn't a problem for you. That's why I think living in a cottage is the best option for farmers and retired people.

The largest part of population in this country lives in blocks of flats. Living in a block of flats is the cheapest type of dwelling in a town. A flat can be a studio unit, a one-bedroom, and two-bedroom or three-bedroom unit. It is easy to clean and maintain but your neighbors can make a lot of noise when they, for example, hammer or drill the wall, or when they organize a party.

2. Would you like to have a house or a flat?

Well, I would like to have a big house in the suburbs of the city with lots of fresh air, with a big play ground for my kids and with some place to practice my gardening skills. If I had a chance to choose I would choose quieter green suburbs rather than crowded multi blocks of flats. Though each way of living has advantages, to my mind, a private house has more pluses for getting a pleasure.

3. Ask me what my house/flat looks like.

- *Where do you live: in a private house or a flat? What does it look like?*
- *How many rooms are there?*

- *Do you have your private room?*
- *What colors are your rooms decorated in?*
- *Are your rooms furnished with luxurious things?*
- *What place in your flat is your favourite? Why?*

4. Your relative wants to decorate his/her flat. Give him some advice on how to furnish it.

With a bit of careful planning, list writing, budgeting, and not rushing into things, you can make your new house a home, while not spending more than you can afford, and hopefully with a few less headaches and sleepless nights.

First of all, start with choosing the colors you'd like to have, if you hesitate, *choose neutral colors*. Neutral tones will always work, and can always be easily dressed up with a dash of color in elements such as floor rugs or cushions in the future.

Invest in a quality bed and bedding. We spend a third of our lives in bed, so it seems logical to own a quality bed and bedding.

Don't buy everything at once. As a general rule, it is better to shop around to see what is available, and to live in your home for a period of time before deciding what you actually need, and what will work best.

Painting is often the easiest, most affordable, and most impactful way to bring a room to life. This brand new kitchen immediately stands out from the crowd with its bold choice of colors.

One room at a time. Just not to make you go crazy about loads of work at once.

And last but not least, *relax*.

5. They say that the room which you live in reflects your character and personality. What do you think about this idea?

I fully agree that the room you live in reflects your character and personality. When you look around someone's room and pay attention to the way they decorated it you can gain an insight into their lives. First and foremost you can tell from someone's home what their hobbies and interests are, as well as their general tastes. In other words, if someone has a lot of films you can say that they enjoy movies, while if they have a set of weights this tells you that they like working out and staying in shape. If you see shelves full of books you can say that they are intelligent, well-read as they are fond of reading. If you see any posters you can understand what actors or singers someone is crazy about. If the room is messy you can see that the person is not organized, untidy or laid-back. He could be too busy to tidy up or he could suffer from an addiction or depression. If, on the contrary, the room is extremely clean then this could suggest a person who is obsessed with cleanliness, with so much attention to detail that it annoys other people.

CARD № 2

Let's talk about the education.

1. Let's talk about your school. What's your school like?

It's one of the best educational establishments in Minsk that is famous for its high-quality teaching and good equipment. I want to say that our school is one of the modern schools in Belarus. It provides eleven years of education which offers a general course of academic and non-academic subjects. Besides it offers a number of courses giving a profound knowledge in a variety of fields: humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, etc.

The building itself is of typical design with the same layout and the distribution of classrooms, administrative offices, canteens, gyms and libraries as you can see in most other schools. But when you come in through the front door you find yourself in a spacious hall with comfortable sofas and large windows.

School has become an integral part of my life. Our social and cultural life is well organized; both teachers and classmates are so friendly and easy to get along with. I am on good terms with my classmates, as all of them are interesting and enigmatic persons. We often spend our free time together and I think I will never forget these years and I will regret that everything has finished.

2. Does your school have any traditions?

It is very important to have some school traditions, because it unites pupils and gives a sense of belonging and pleasant memories. Our school has a busy and eventful life.

In February we celebrate the "School Reunion Day." Ex-pupils and former teachers of different years come to the school, remember their school years and share their life experience with us.

On Valentine's Day a special "love post" works, and by the end of the day Cupids deliver love letters to pupils and teachers.

There are different events connected with volunteering to help disabled children.

I will never forget a "Self-government Day," when pupils performed the functions of school administration and teachers. It was very useful and a great fun.

And, finally, I can't wait for the "Graduation Ceremony," when 11-formers say goodbye to the school family, thank their teachers and parents. They say it is a glamorous event, full of style, warmth and gratitude.

3. Ask me what problems I had when I was a student.

- *What problems did you have when you were a student?*
- *Were you lazy or hardworking?*
- *What subjects made you feel disappointed?*

- *Did you get bad marks? How did you feel?*
- *Did you miss your classes without any serious reason?*

4. What can you advise a student who wants to continue his education after finishing school?

I must say that when you leave school you understand that the time to choose your future profession has come. It's not an easy task to make the right choice of a job. People choose profession according to their own interests and abilities. And the most important thing is to understand what exactly you want to do and enter the university according to the sphere of your choice: whether it is medicine, economy, machinery or humanities. But what I fully support is the idea of having a good education.

5. Today young people think that having a good education is very important. Do you agree with them?

Certainly I do. Our today's modern world needs qualified people in all the spheres of life. Those people, who think that having a good education is not very important, have their own plans. Some girls want to be good mothers and have big families. Other people think that manual professions do not need a good education. In this case they are mistaken. To my mind all professions need special education. Nowadays only highly qualified workers can deal with rather sophisticated equipment and computers. Sure, there are talented people, but to my mind, all the gifts should be developed and supported by education and by more experienced people.

CARD № 3

Let's talk about the environment.

1. People say that our planet is in danger. Do you share this opinion?

Environment is the nature around us: air, water, trees, flowers, animals, birds and insects. Nature has served people for many years, but people's interference in nature has increased and the results are dramatic. Nowadays mankind faces numerous problems which threaten our environment.

Among the most urgent problems are the ozone layer destruction, acid rains, global warming, air pollution, soil pollution, contamination of underground waters by chemical elements, disappearance of forests, animal extinction, etc.

The poisoning of the world's land, air, and water is the fastest-spreading disease of civilization. It probably produces fewer headlines than wars, earthquakes and floods, but it is potentially one of history's greatest dangers to

human life on earth. If present trends continue for the next several decades, our planet will become uninhabitable.

Every ten minutes one kind of animal, plant or insect dies out for ever. If nothing is done about it, one million species that are alive today will have become extinct twenty years from now.

Industrial enterprises emit tons of harmful substances. These emissions have disastrous consequences for our planet. They are the main reason for the greenhouse effect and acid rains. An even greater environmental threat comes from nuclear power stations. We all know how tragic the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster are.

2. Do you think people should protect the environment? What should they do?

People should understand that the planet needs their immediate help if they want to survive and they should take measures to protect nature.

First of all, they should understand that natural resources are limited and we can't use them uncontrollably. Nothing can last forever. When you are aware of that you ought to start to do something. You should recycle things and use gas, electricity and water more economically. People should use public transport instead of private cars to reduce air pollution. They should recycle paper and cardboard to save trees.

They should join and support various international organizations and green parties. If governments also wake up to what is happening, perhaps we'll be able to avoid the disaster that threatens the natural world and all of us with it.

3. What would you like to ask your British friend about measures that are taken to protect the environment in Britain?

- *What measures are taken by your government to protect rare animals and birds?*
- *Are there any civil societies in Britain that aim at nature protection?*
- *What does your government do to protect marine species?*
- *Do your mass media share knowledge on nature protection?*
- *Do the British actively participate in protecting actions?*

4. A friend of yours wants to develop a programme to protect the city where he lives. Give him a piece of advice.

If I were you I would carry out a research on the use of private cars and their bad influence on the atmosphere and then, with the results, I would draw people's attention to the problem.

I think shooting a 2-minute video about animals in danger and people's help to them would be a good idea too.

5. An ideal Eco-House contest is held in the country and you want your school to enter it. Give some "green ideas" about houses.

People aren't going to change their habits just to save the environment. They need to see the benefits for themselves. Here are some ideas to make your house ecological:

- install underfloor heating;
- buy furniture made from recycled materials;
- use water-based paints with natural pigments;
- if renovating or building, insist that your builder reduces waste and recycles rather than sending material to landfill;
- consider investing in solar panels;
- choose wood-framed windows rather than plastic or metal;
- replace old-style bulbs with energy-saving ones;
- monitor your electricity consumption;
- fit a water-saving showerhead;
- reduce, reuse, recycle.

CARD № 4

Let's talk about Belarus.

1. Let's talk about our country. What can you tell me about our Motherland?

Belarus is my Homeland. It is a country with unique history and rich cultural heritage. Officially it is called the Republic of Belarus, a sovereign independent state with its own government, constitution, state emblem, flag and anthem. Belarus is situated nearly in the centre of Europe and borders on Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Russia and the Ukraine. The territory of Belarus is 207.6 thousand square kilometres. Its population is about 10 million people. The largest cities are Minsk, the capital, Gomel, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Grodno and Brest. Belarus is a country of rivers, lakes and forests. The longest river is the Dnieper. The largest lake is Lake Naroch. The largest forest is Belovezhskaya Pushcha. The climate of Belarus is temperate and mild. My country is a developed industrial state. Its enterprises produce tractors and automobiles, motor-cycles, TV-sets and many other goods. Beautiful Belarusian scenery and unique history attract a lot of tourists. There are a lot of famous people among Belarusians: writers and poets, politicians and cosmonauts, artists and sportsmen. They are historic figures and our contemporaries whom we are proud of.

2. What parts of Belarus have you visited?

I have visited a few towns in Belarus such as Minsk, Mogilev, Grodno but most of all I was impressed by my visit to Belovezhskaya Pushcha. As you know there is the Residence of Ded Moroz (Slavic Santa Clause) in Belovezhskaya Pushcha and we saw European Bisons there.

3. What questions do you expect to hear from a British teenager?

- *Where is Belarus situated?*
- *What city is the capital?*
- *Do people of Belarus speak Belarusian?*
- *What places are worth seeing in Belarus?*
- *I wonder people of what nationalities live in Belarus?*
- *What sights would you recommend to visit in Belarus?*
- *What dishes would you recommend me to eat in Belarus?*

4. What Belarusian sights would you advise a foreigner to visit?

If I were you I would visit the National Library of Belarus, Mir and Nesvizh castles and Lake Naroch. Mir castle is a UNESCO World Heritage site in Belarus. Brest fortress is a must for those who are interested in our history.

To my mind you should visit Belovezhskaya Pushcha, a beautiful national park, where you can see a lot of rare species of animals and birds, for example the European bison the oldest trees in Europe, the forest features the residence of Grandfather Frost, known as Ded Moroz, the Eastern Slavic Santa Claus.

5. Do you think it is important to follow our grandparents' traditions?

Traditions are a part of our culture, so we should carefully observe them. We must respect our ancestors to feel that we are one nation. Such holidays as Kupalle, Dziady, Kaliady are wonderful examples of our rich Belarusian culture. We are responsible for this heritage and shouldn't forget our history.

CARD № 5

Let's speak about Great Britain.

1. Let's talk about Great Britain. What can you tell me about Great Britain?

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is situated on the British Isles. The country consists of four parts: England, Scotland,

Wales and Northern Ireland. The capital of the UK is London. The population of the country is over 64 million people. Britain is a small, beautiful and densely populated country, separated from the continent by the English Channel and the Straight of Dover.

The UK is inhabited by the English, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish who constitute the British nation. English is the official language, but it is not the only language spoken in the UK, Gaelic and Welsh are also used in some parts of the country.

The UK is a parliamentary monarchy and the Queen is the head of the state. But in practice it is ruled by the elected government with the Prime Minister at the head.

The national anthem is "God Save the Queen." The national currency is pound. The flag of the UK is known as the Union Jack. It has its history. It all began in 1603 when Scotland was joined to England and Wales. The flag is made up of 3 crosses.

Every part of the country has its own national emblem. The red rose is the national emblem of England, the thistle is the national emblem of Scotland, the daffodils and the leek are the emblems of Wales and the shamrock (a kind of clover) is the emblem of Ireland.

2. Would you like to visit Britain? Why (not)?

Though I am not a keen traveler I would like to visit Britain one day. English is spoken everywhere, but as you know it is different in various parts of the world. To taste British English is my main reason for going there. Books can tell us what English was 10—15 years ago, but I want to know what today's English is. The place where I want to head for is London to see all the sights I have read about, to look at Buckingham Palace, at Big Ben, to stay at Nelson's monument at Trafalgar Square and to go on a double-decker bus.

I'd like to have a word with real people in real life situations.

3. What would you like to ask a British teenager about Britain?

- *What do Britons usually have for breakfast?*
- *What is the place you would recommend a foreigner to visit?*
- *What is your favourite place in London?*
- *What kind of people are there?*
- *What dishes would you recommend me to eat in Britain?*
- *I wonder people of what nationalities live in Britain?*

4. What sights in England would you advise me to visit?

There are a lot of interesting places in England. In London I would advise you to see Big Ben, the most famous clock in the world. Buckingham

Palace, Trafalgar square and the Tower are also exceptionally interesting. There are also a lot of museums in London where you can see a number of wonderful things. Madam Tussaud's Museum is an exhibition of hundreds of life-size wax models of famous people of yesterday and today. I would also advise you to visit the Sherlock Holmes Museum devoted to the world-famous private detective. Outside London you should certainly see Stonehenge, an ancient religious site. In Liverpool you can visit the Beatles museum where you will learn a lot of new facts about the greatest band in the world.

5. Nowadays more and more people are getting interested in customs and traditions of different countries. What do you think about it?

"So many countries so many customs" an English proverb says.

By comparing customs and cultures of people from other countries, we can learn how others view the world and why they think the way they do. By understanding others, we can not only form deeper relationship with others but can also learn more about ourselves and our own culture.

CARD № 6

Let's talk about science and modern technologies.

1. What role does science play in our life?

We live in the age of science and technology. The life of every one of us highly depends on the scientific inventions and modern technologies. Science has changed the lives of people to a great extent. It has made life easy, simple and fast. In the new era, the science development has become a necessity to finish the era of bullock cart and bring the trend of motorized vehicles. Science and technologies have been implemented to every aspect of modernization in every nation. Modern gadgets have been introduced to every walk of life and have solved many problems in such sectors as medicine, education, infrastructure, electricity, aviation, information technology and other fields.

Some examples of the advancement in the technologies are establishment of railway system, metro system, railway reservation system, super computers, mobiles, smart phones, online access of people in almost every area, etc.

The technological revolutions of the 21st century are emerging from entirely new sectors, based on micro-processors, tele-communications, biotechnology and nano-technology. Products are transforming business practices across the economy, as well as the lives of all who have access to their effects. The most remarkable breakthroughs will come from the interaction of insights and applications arising when these technologies converge.

But science and technology also have a negative side which affects human lives. If we look around the environment, most places are crowded and polluted due to the development of large buildings, factories and plants, which are all hazardous to our health.

2. Do you use many gadgets and devices at home?

Yes, I do. In frequent use is a modern TV, a microwave, an oven, a laptop, an I-pad and a mobile. In my opinion new gadgets make our life easier. For example, everybody owns at least a basic mobile phone today. What makes it easy to use is its user-friendly nature, small size and its numerous attractive features. However, people are always eager to replace their mobile phones with the latest models having more advanced features. As the technology is scaling new heights, mobile phones are becoming cheaper and cheaper and the customer is getting more for less. A great way of amusing yourself is by playing games on your mobile phone. If you want to store your precious moments, you can use its video recording feature. Mobile phones can become expressions of who we are by getting mobile ringtones, wallpapers, which turn your phone into a unique device.

3. What questions can you ask about a new high-tech device for music fans?

- *What kind of device is it?*
- *Is it brand new? Is it easy to use? What characteristics does it have?*
- *What exclusive functions does it have?*
- *What kind of sound system does it have?*
- *How much does it cost? What is the origin?*

4. What would you advise a person who uses an e-book reader (e-book device)?

- *get a case or a screen protector so that not to scratch or to break it;*
- *get to know good sites for downloading books on your device;*
- *get to know different formats for reading e-books;*
- *download a tool that will help you keep the track of your books not to buy one and the same book again;*
- *take advantage of free book downloading;*
- *check out your libraries, more and more libraries are getting into the digital lending business;*
- *add text-to-speech features in case you want to listen to music while reading or to sound the text or the book you are reading;*
- *learn all the information about the rules of downloading and using later your books from different sites.*

5. People are becoming more dependent on high-tech devices more than reading books. Is it good or bad?

Sure in reasonable limits and with definite targets it is good. We can't imagine our life today without the Internet. With the help of modern devices I have got an opportunity to access news, documents, images, sounds, video and games, to make friends, to book tickets and to purchase different things online. There are a lot of different sites for students, gardeners, businessmen, engineers, for people who are fond of music, cinema, theatre, sports and even for disabled people. What is more, the Internet has revolutionized the way people communicate. Sending electronic text messages is much faster and easier than writing letters. People use e-mail to stay in touch with friends worldwide. The only thing is not to go crazy about constant buying new brand devices though the high-tech world is developing so fast.

CARD № 7

Let's talk about art.

1. How important is art in our lives?

It is human to admire beauty around us, we are often struck when we see a painting or read a beautiful poem, or listen to soothing music. Art is everywhere around us in many forms and holds a significant value in our lives. It is difficult to describe "art" in literal terms, but broadly it is understood as a form to express one's feelings through any object or medium like paper, music, colours, technology, magic, photography, etc. It can be abstract, realistic, naturalistic, conceptual and inspirational.

We are surrounded by art and also rely on it in our daily routine. When we enter someone's home, it is difficult to stop ourselves to appreciate the way the living-room is decorated. It's also art. One doesn't have to be a painter, every individual expresses himself/herself, uses imagination and creative energy to embellish and decorate the surrounding.

Art has many forms. Visual and performing arts are the ones that can be related easily. Visual arts broadly comprise of paintings, drawing, clay modeling, architecture, photography, etc. Performing arts include dance, music, opera, theatre, magic, spoken words, circus art and musical theatre. It is inter-related with entertainment.

Music has a great impact on our mood. It makes us joyful and relaxes us and keeps the energy on. Not only music but also movies, plays and theatre also make us active.

It can be concluded that the importance of arts in our lives is very similar to entertainment. Nowadays art and craft education are encouraged at schools for children. It can be inspirational as well.

Art can be defined as communication between an artist and the audience. When an author writes, he takes words to create a story to communicate to us. Through this story, we are able to create a picture of the characters, visit new places, and find new meaning in simple events. An author's writing style is his platform for sharing art.

2. Let's talk about people's reading preferences. What do you like reading?

Undoubtedly, the role of books in our life is really great. Books help to understand people surrounding us better. Devoting much time to reading we become better informed and more educated. Reading plays a great role in my life, too. It develops my literary taste, it makes me think over the important questions, that have to worry everybody. Reading develops my speech and helps me express my views, thoughts, ideas in clear, simple words. It also develops my outlook and my attitude to the life.

Reading plays a very important role in the life of people. It educates a person, enriches his intellect. Books help to mould a person's character, form his moral values. Besides, books bring pleasure and delight. It's a wonderful way to spend spare time. Sometimes we read the same book again and again. Thanks to books we learn to express our thoughts and feelings more exactly. The book is a faithful and understanding friend. There are books which have been our favorites since childhood. People are fond of reading different kinds of books. Some people enjoy reading detective stories, adventure stories, novels, biographies, other prefer classics. Fairy tales are enjoyed and read by children, books about adventures and journeys are enjoyed by those who are fond of travelling. Legends and myths are read by those who are fond of history. Some people devote much time to reading books and reading becomes their free time occupation, their passion.

My reading preferences are various. For me, it is not the genre of the book that matters, but the talent and emotions the author has put into it. The choice of a book to read depends on my mood and the amount of free time I have.

But when I am not pressed for time, I prefer classical literature of the 19th and 20th centuries. To my mind, it was the "golden age" in the history of literature when masterpieces were created.

3. What questions can you ask a British friend about his/her artistic preferences?

- *What arts are you interested in?*
- *What kind of music do you like most? What are your favourite singers, bands?*
- *Are you fond of painting?*
- *Do you like going to the cinema? What movies have you seen lately?*
- *Are you fond of reading books? What authors are your favourite?*

4. What preferences do you have in music?

I'm so enthusiastic about listening to music, which has now become an extremely widespread hobby. You can hardly see any teenager without ear-phones in his ears on the streets today. The world of music is varied and colorful. There is a great range of musical styles. Personally I mostly prefer metal music. It promotes power and might, sense of purpose, true friendship and heroism. Besides I really enjoy glam metal, which is a reflection of 80th, when people were free and emotional. This music moves me through time and plunges me into the atmosphere of freedom. Moreover I am fancy about some Russian and Belarusian rock bands, as well as classic organ music and ethnic motifs.

5. Is cinema still important? Why (not)?

To some extent, yes, it is. Films will always stay as one of the entertainments for people. But I should admit that cinemas attract many people while some new blockbusters are running there. Film producers realize that they have to make up something new to attract people. And with nowadays new technologies it is so fascinating to watch films wearing 3D glasses, for example. You get the full picture of the movie and can experience all the special effects personally as if you were a hero of that movie yourself. You can feel the water splashing right into your face, the blowing sand wind making you close your eyes, some frightening monsters that are ready to attack you!

Some people prefer watching movies at the cinema. They believe that cinema has a better atmosphere to enjoy the movie. However, from my point of view, people who watch movies at home are happier and freer than people who choose the cinema. People who watch movies at home feel more comfortable. Contrary to the fact that you have to book the ticket in advance in order to have a better position, there is no need for people at home to worry about the ticket.

Most experts consider that cinema provides the best conditions for watching movies. However, with good equipment at home, we still have a chance to appreciate the movie.

As far as I am concerned, watching movies is relaxing. Cinema may just provide the best conditions to watch movie not the best way to enjoy the movie. To my mind, watching movie at home is better. But anyway there should be cinemas, it's a good chance to hang out with your mates.

CARD № 8

Let's talk about your future career.

1. Let's talk about your future career. What kind of job would you like to have in future?

I must say that when you leave school you understand that the time to choose your future profession has come. It's not an easy task to make the

right choice of a job. People choose profession according to their own interests and abilities. And the most important thing is to understand what exactly you want to do and enter the university according to the sphere of your choice: whether it is medicine, economy, machinery or humanities.

When choosing a future career, we should consider different factors. In my opinion, money is one of the most important factors when you make a choice. There are highly paid jobs and low-paid jobs. I think everybody wants to earn as much money as possible. Training, promotional prospects and conditions should be also taken into account.

On the other hand, it's good when you get satisfaction from your job. It is very important to choose a profession that suits your interests. In my opinion, a job should be interesting and socially important. Some jobs are considered to be more suitable for men and others for women. For example, the professions of a secretary or a nurse are more suitable for women. A lifeguard or a pilot are more likely the jobs for men. You should also decide whether you want to work indoors or outdoors.

To make the right choice, you should take into account your traits of character. It goes without saying that to become a good doctor you must be patient, caring and kind. Teacher's work requires love for children, profound knowledge of subjects, and the ability to explain. A secretary has to be efficient and careful in order to do the work quickly and accurately. Salespeople need to be friendly and persuasive, to get people buy their products.

I have always been interested in economics and I am good at mathematics. I have an aptitude for working with people, and I think I'm rather communicative and have good social skills. I have good analytical abilities and I am good at problem-solving. Besides, I am good at English.

So after finishing school I want to enter the university and to study marketing or management.

2. Do you want to have a part-time job, when you are a student? Why (not)?

Frankly speaking, I don't know because there are many downsides to having a part-time job when you are a student, as well as some advantages. People often think that part-time jobs are responsible for a student's bad grades because a student pays less attention to the studies.

In my opinion, having a part-time job will actually help a student learn many skills that they might not have the opportunity to learn at university. I believe having a part-time job teaches a student the importance of time management: combining work and studies at the same time. Having a part-time job also teaches a person how to communicate and interact with others.

So having a part-time job teaches students sharp skills which they will need all throughout their careers and lives.

3. What questions will you ask your future employer at a job interview?

- *How does the organization show that it values its workers or employees?*
- *What do you expect me to do in order to help your company achieve its goals?*
- *What are the challenges that I might face in the job if hired?*
- *Have you got any special rules to regulate a working day?*
- *Is there any dress-code in your office?*
- *What is the period of holidays?*
- *Are there any additional financial rewards for the job?*

4. Give some advice on how to behave at a job interview to create a positive impression on the employer?

One thing which all successful people have is the ability to make a good impression.

DRESS DECENTLY

The type of dress or clothes you put on says so much about you. The first judgment that interviewers make is basically based on your dress code. Do not dress in casual or dirty clothes. Instead, look for official clothes and make sure that you are groomed properly.

ARRIVE ON TIME

One of the most important factors to take into consideration, whenever you are invited for an interview, is time. It's very advisable for you to arrive for the interview at least 20 minutes earlier before the scheduled time. This will give you enough time to organize and recollect yourself well. Being punctual for the interview will also show the interviewers how serious and reliable you are for the job.

BE CONFIDENT

Self-confidence is also one of the most determining factors in an interview. During the interviewing process, just be yourself and provide relevant answers to the questions being asked. However, you should be very careful not to be overconfident. Do not go inside with chewing gum in your mouth or with your hands inside your pockets.

5. Some people think that it is necessary to have computer skills to get a good job. Do you agree with this?

Nowadays it's almost impossible to imagine any profession without global communication, making presentations and doing many sorts of things on the computer. And sure you must be skillful enough to work with it. Your employer will prefer to have a person who is potentially able to manage all these things.

So, if a person has got a strong motivation, it'll be easy for him/her to make progress in the computer world. First of all it's necessary to join some computer courses in case you are unable to manage some things yourselves. But to my mind, the Internet can offer you a great variety of possibilities connected with advancing your computer knowledge.

CARD № 9

Let's talk about your family.

1. What is family for you?

Family is very important for every person, because it gives you a sense of stability and tradition, a feeling of having support and understanding. You feel secure when there's a family behind you. They are people whom you can trust and rely on, people who won't let you down and who share your joys and sorrows. In happy families parents are honest with their children, they treat their children with respect without bossing them, and children in their turn learn how to treat other people and how to form relationship with their peers.

2. Are you on good terms with your parents and grandparents?

Yes, I am. I enjoy honest and open relationship in my family. I like it when parents trust their children, give them enough freedom and respect them. I think these things make family relations warm and pleasant. There is no so-called "generation gap" in our family, though we may argue and disagree on certain issues. For example, my parents don't always approve of my tastes, views and clothes.

In fact I have a closer relationship with my mother. We understand each other better, which I think is quite natural. We can spend hours and hours talking about our family problems, fashion, views on education, people's relations and ambitions.

I guess when people spend more time together they become closer to each other. It's a pity, but my parents and I are usually very busy during the weekdays and we seldom have a chance to spend time together. Sunday is the day when we can sit at the table and talk over everything what happened during the week. Eating together makes us feel close and we often have our most frank conversations at this time. Also once a week my mum gives the flat a big clean. Of course I help her with it. By the way it's not so boring. I turn on music and we even have fun. Then we may go shopping together. During our shopping rounds we discuss a lot of things and make plans for the next weekend. I try to keep in touch with my grandparents. They are always interested in my daily routine, my plans, my school studies and always show support and understanding when I have some problems. I also do my best to be helpful for them with household duties and summer work at our dacha.

3. What would you ask your foreign friend about his/her relatives?

- *How big is your family?*
- *Do you often visit your relatives?*
- *Who do you get on with best in your family?*
- *What family traditions do you have?*
- *Do you like spending your free time with your relatives?*

4. What can you advise people who want to have good relationships with their relatives?

If you want to have a good relationship with your parents and grandparents you should always remember that they love you and mean the best to you. You should appreciate what they do for you, show respect, and try to understand them. Be polite, don't use harsh words. Remember their birthdays and other special events. Show your gratitude with a little gift, a flower or a hug. Make them realise that you care for them. If you go out in the evening remember that they worry about you, don't forget to call them and tell where you are. Moreover, help about the house because your parents get tired at work. If you tidy up your room, do the washing up, do the shopping or cooking, you will let your parents rest and make them happy.

5. They say that parents and children have difficulties understanding each other because of the generation gap. What do you think about this problem?

Generation gap is some misunderstanding between parents and children, grown-ups and teenagers. Adults and teenagers don't see eye to eye on many things. Teenagers fight for their freedom; they want to be independent, to make their own decisions. Moreover, they don't respect their parents, don't want to obey them, and want to do whatever they want. Teens' protesting shocks people around them. Sometimes they take to drugs, smoking and alcohol. Some of them can be rude, heartless, ill-behaved. It is my firm belief that we must do our best to understand each other, to be polite, and respect each other's opinion. In my family I don't have this problem, my parents love me, understand me, support me and in my turn I do the same.

CARD № 10

Let's talk about youth and society.

1. Who can be considered youth?

Each age group in society has its own role and this is important in many different ways. Youth as a description of a sector of society has many defini-

tions depending on the perspective being used. For the purposes of this discussion youth will be considered to be the stage of life involving transition into adulthood: approximately age 15 to 25.

Young people are often considered to represent the future as they bring new ideas and energy to add to the pool of knowledge that currently exists. They can bring enthusiasm and vitality which can lead to new discoveries and developments that can benefit society or even the world at large. Although not the only drivers of social change, young people are seen to be one of the key drivers engendering change. Whether this is inherent in the beliefs of young people or the hope for the future is placed upon them by older generations is not clear. However, there are many new opportunities becoming available that can provide very different futures for today's youth that were not available to previous generations.

The young generation occupies a special place in social environment. The future of any society depends on the practical and spiritual molding of the youth.

2. What role do youth play in the society?

Youth constitute major portion of the world's population. About 25 percent of the world population is youth. Thus, such a major portion of population can't be ignored. Add to it the energy and determination, youth can be considered to be almost the whole population because a young person can do the works of several old people. Moreover, they are the leaders of future. So, the youth play, probably the most crucial of roles in national development.

All societies pay special attention to the youth. Youth are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but also the partners of today. Young people are social actors of change and progress. They are a crucial segment of a nation's development. Their contribution, therefore, is highly needed.

3. Your British friend is a member of the Scout movement. What questions would you ask him/ her?

- *What is your organization aimed at?*
- *What should you do to become a scout?*
- *Does everyone have a chance to check themselves?*
- *Do you do much training?*
- *What is necessary to become a good scout member?*
- *Are you proud of being a scout?*
- *What famous people of your country took part in scouting?*

4. What do you know about Belarusian Youth Organisations?

There are a lot of youth organizations in Belarus. The most authoritative of them are the Belarusian Republican Pioneer Organization (BRPO), the Belarusian Republican Union of Youth (BRSM), the Association of Belaru-

sian Guides, the Belarusian Republican Scout Association. These activities are managed and directed by the State Committee on the Affairs of Youth.

The most numerous youth organizations are the Belarusian Republican Pioneer Organization and the Belarusian Republican Union of Youth.

The Belarusian Republican Union of Youth was formed on the 2nd of September 2002. This organization works in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus. Every young person at the age of 14 can join the BRSM.

The main aim of the BRSM is to create conditions for all-round development of young people and to contribute to creation of a civil society in Belarus.

The Belarusian Republican Union of Youth and its members accomplish their goals and objectives in the following activities: they elaborate and accomplish different educational, social and other youth programmes; they render assistance in finding employment; they organize conferences, meetings, lectures, exhibitions, concerts and competitions, charity and volunteering; camping, sporting events and visiting memorials; outdoor activities and sports, including football, running, swimming and hockey for young people.

Membership has more than 500,000 young people between 14 and 31 years old. Members of the BRSM have certain rights and duties and they can leave the organization at their own free will.

5. You are an active member of a real or imaginary youth organization. Their aim is to find new members. What steps would you recommend?

Get vocal about your organization

In order to draw youngsters to your organization, you need to keep your message simple, fresh and entertaining. Organize events for young people during which you can distribute leaflets, bookmarks and other attractive materials to help spread your message among young people.

Highlight the cause

Millennials are mostly motivated by passion for a cause, so when spreading the word about your organisation, concentrate on your mission. With that in mind, motivate young people to get involved by showing them that they are able to make a difference.

Don't underestimate the power of social media

Social media channels are currently the most successful communication tools popular among the younger generation. Effectively use Facebook and Twitter to share lectures, publish articles and ask engaging questions.

Make sure to know which social networks are used by your target audience and meet them where they tend to hang out online.

Make experiences mutually rewarding

Young people turn to youth organizations to gain precious work and life experience, so offer opportunities that will help with future university admissions, guarantee extra credit or help young individuals launch their careers.

CARD № 11

Let's talk about the mass media.

1. What do mass media involve? How important are they?

The means of communicating *news and information* is termed as *mass media*. *Mass media* is classified in two categories: one is print media and the other is electronic media. Print media include newspapers, magazines, journals and other printed materials, while electronic media include radio, television, satellite channels, internet, cinema etc.

It goes without saying that mass media has become an integral part of modern people's life. The Internet, newspapers, magazines, journals, TV and radio keep us always informed about all the spheres of our life. Mass media offer us a great range of opportunities for education and entertainment. However, I'd like to point out the fact that we can benefit from mass-media sources only possessing critical thinking. The information attacks us all the time and we undoubtedly need to filter it in order to save our sharp mind, creative thinking and bright personality.

Media is called the public forum or people's parliament. Media play the role of a bridge between the government and ordinary people. Media do not simply provide people with information, news and ideas but also raise various issues on social, economic and political matters. They also form consciousness and public opinions in different problems and issues. People express their opinions through media. Various formats of programmes like talk show, street show, documentary, live reporting, video articles, editorials on different local and global issues are broadcast and published. Media keeps us dated about what is happening around the world. Media focus on various social evils, political or economic crisis and guide people through them. Today right to information is recognized as one of the fundamental rights of people and media ensure this right.

2. What influence does the Internet make on us?

The Internet has changed communication as we know it. From education to advertisement, this new technological advance has affected practically every aspect of our lives. Magazines, newspapers and even books are "online" and can be read on the computer. You can find information on any topic — the possibilities are endless. The Internet can instantly connect you to other

computers, allowing you to "chat" with people all over the world. It's actually very easy to learn how to use the system, and once you're online, you'll never want to turn the computer off! The development of such technology has come a long way. These amazing electronic devices have changed many people's life forever.

3. What questions can you ask a friend who has bought an expensive telephone?

- *What kind of mobile is it?*
- *Is it brand new? Is it easy to use? What exclusive functions does it have?*
- *What kind of camera does it have?*
- *What processor and how much memory does it have? What platform does it run on?*
- *How much does it cost? What is the origin?*
- *Are you happy with your new smartphone?*

4. How to make your parents buy you an iPad?

Try to be reasonable when asking your parents for an iPad. Explain the advantages of owning it and let them make a list of disadvantages to compare. If they still say no, don't push it — wait until they're in a good mood, and talk to them then.

See customer reviews on the iPad at certain selling sites. If you don't want to pay full price, check out eBay or Amazon for a used iPad. Try to find a good deal, or trade. You could offer to pay half of the price if your parents seem a little unconvinced.

Ask for it on birthdays, special occasions, Christmas.

Try not to keep on about it, as your parents will likely become stressed and annoyed.

5. People are becoming more dependent on high-tech devices Is it good or bad?

Sure in reasonable limits and with definite targets it is good. We can't imagine our life today without the Internet. With the help of modern devices we have got an opportunity to access news, documents, images, sounds, video and games, to make friends, to book tickets and to purchase different things online. There are a lot of different sites for students, gardeners, businessmen, engineers, for people who are fond of music, cinema, theatre, sports and even for disabled people. What is more, the Internet has revolutionized the way people communicate. Sending electronic text messages is much faster and easier than writing letters. People use e-mail to stay in touch with friends worldwide. The only thing is not to go crazy about constant buying new brand devices though the high-tech world is developing so fast.

Let's talk about the mass media.

1. Let's talk about mass media. What types of mass media do you know? Which of them are the most popular?

Nowadays information communication is an important part of our life. It goes without saying that mass media has become an integral part of modern people's life. People live with a constant necessity of getting new information. How can they satisfy their need? They may communicate with one another or just use the huge space of means of communication. People need information in order to keep up with the whole world around them — with vogue, new trends of life, discoveries and inventions. We live to learn news; we breathe and live with this.

Mass media play an important role in the life of society. Mass media include various types of media such as television, radio, newspapers and magazines. Reading newspapers and magazines, watching TV, listening to the news on the radio are our main means of getting information.

TV is rather popular kind of mass media. We have many different channels through which viewers are fond of watching films, sports, plays, educational and cultural programs.

Newspapers report different kinds of news. They carry articles which cover the latest international and national events. Some people still buy newspapers for the radio and TV programs which they publish. There are newspapers and magazines for young people. They give a wide coverage of news, events and reports on education, sports, cultural life, entertainment, fashion.

Mass media brings to millions of homes not only entertainment and news but also cultural and educational programs. If you watch TV and listen to the radio you can improve your knowledge of history, biology, literature or even learn a foreign language by radio.

2. Do you agree that radio is the least popular mass medium? Why?

I agree to some extent with this idea. Radio is less popular than newspapers and television. But people listen to the radio in cars and at work. I usually listen to the radio when I do my homework because it helps me think. There is a lot of music on modern radio and very few conversations. Every hour radio stations tell us news in brief. There are different types of radio stations. They are divided according to the style of music they play. There are radio stations where you can hear only classical music, rock or pop music. Older people like listening to the radio. So it can be seen that even being less popular than TV or the Internet, radio still possesses great power of influencing the public's minds and tastes and definitely has its fans.

3. Imagine you are given the task to find out how much newspapers are popular among teens nowadays. What questions would you ask your classmates?

- *How often do you read newspapers?*
- *What columns are you most favourite?*
- *What newspapers give us the news?*
- *Have newspapers changed over the years?*
- *Do you prefer to buy newspapers or read them in the electronic version?*

4. What can you tell me about Belarusian press?

Printed press is available mainly in the Belarusian and Russian languages, though there are some newspapers in English, Polish, Ukrainian and German.

The most influential newspapers include "Belarus Segodnya" and "Respublika." Local editions of major Russian newspapers "Komsomolskaya Pravda" and "Argumenty i Fakty" are very popular in Belarus, too. Nine national news agencies, including seven private ones, operate in Belarus.

The BelTA News Agency is the country's biggest news agency, having the correspondent network in all the regions of the country.

It is true that the world today is full of dramatic events and most news seems to be bad news. But people aren't interested in ordinary events. That is why there are so many articles about natural disasters, plane crashes, wars, murders and robberies. Good news doesn't usually make headlines. Bad news does.

Nevertheless, newspapers are worth buying! My father thinks they are a daily source of news, education and fun that no home should be without. He is sure that every home should have at least 3 different newspapers a day to get a balanced opinion of world events. So my father buys newspapers to do our bit for the local economy.

5. Speak about advantages and disadvantages of watching TV.

Let's concentrate on one more of mass media branches — television. As we know, it appeared much later than such kinds of mass media as radio, newspapers and magazines. Nowadays almost everybody has got at least one TV-set at home. Television now plays an important role in our life. It takes a steady place in our daily timetable. However, watching television has two sides: not only advantages, but also disadvantages.

On the one hand, TV keeps people informed of current events; TV gives us wonderful possibilities for education. We can choose any programme according to our interests, mood and needs. There is a great amount of channels which are specialized in various spheres. It can be the sphere of politics, news, sports, animals, feature films, soap operas, art, talk-shows, cartoons,

educational programmes, music, fashion and many others. Such channels as "History," "Discovery," Animal Planet" enrich our knowledge in different fields. There are also channels which offer to our attention some educational programmes for children and adults, for example "Happy English" — a programme focused on teaching the English language.

The second advantage of watching television is that it gives families an opportunity to spend some time together. Nowadays adults are often too busy to give enough attention to their children. When they come home from work in the evening, so tired and exhausted, the only possible way to relax for many is just lay on the sofa in front of TV. In such situations it's high time to choose a family comedy and watch it together with the children. So, watching TV helps us to relax and forget about our worries and problems that are on our mind.

Moreover, television is a great source of entertaining. Every day there is a wide choice of films and serials on TV — detectives, dramas, comedies, action films, thrillers, horrors, cartoons and others. Nowadays you are not limited in your choice. Besides, sometimes television is the only opportunity to watch concerts of world-famous celebrities.

However, watching television has its negative side. It is well-known that television may turn to be harmful for our health. Spending too much time in front of a TV screen may affect our eyesight badly. There are many cases when children become TV-addicted. Every spare minute they try to switch the TV on. Their progress in studies suffers due to the fact that children try to do their homework as fast as they can in order to have more time for watching TV.

Moreover, nowadays some TV programmes and films include a lot of violent scenes that can have a negative influence on a child's psychic development.

Another disadvantage of television is an enormous amount of advertising, as it makes people buy some useless or unnecessary things.

Finally, many children nowadays would rather spend a day glued to a TV-set than go outdoors to play with their peers.

Undoubtedly, we need TV, for it is one of the main and most convenient means of mass media. However, taking into account all its drawbacks, we must try to organize our time in the right way so as not to become a TV slave.

CARD № 13

Let's talk about international cooperation.

1. Let's talk about international cooperation. What is international cooperation promoted for?

International relations are an exceptionally important aspect of citizenship in a global society. As our world becomes smaller and smaller through com-

munication technology, rapid air transportation and a complex international economy, the value of peaceful and cooperative relationships between nations is increasingly important.

Historically, one of the oldest expressions of international relations was the establishment of treaties and agreements between nations. Maintenance of these treaties ensured that ordinary people could go about their everyday tasks of earning a living and raising their families rather than dedicating themselves to armed conflict with neighbors. This function of international relations remains just as relevant today.

Positive international relations also promote effective trade policies between nations in terms of importing natural resources and finished products not available in the country.

Besides the transport of goods over international borders, people also frequently migrate between countries, looking for opportunities to enhance their lives. This travel may be temporary or permanent, but in either case it must be regulated to ensure the rule of law as criminals must be kept out of the country while legitimate business, tourist and immigrant travel is preserved.

Nations often face global issues that are larger than any specific country or even continent, such as concerns over the environment, pandemics and terrorism. Sound international relations are required for nations to cooperate effectively to meet these challenges, allowing nations to share relevant information quickly and pool resources.

International relations are not only about regulating and controlling the flow of goods and information, they are also advantageous for promoting the advancement of human culture in a general way. The diversity of world cultures can be promoted and shared through enlightened international relations policies, allowing programs such as student exchanges and cultural exhibitions to enhance our understanding of the variety of human expression worldwide.

2. What is the position of Belarus on the international arena?

At present Belarus actively participates in an effective international partnership with the governments of different states and international organizations. As a co-founder of the United Nations, Belarus cooperates with various institutions and organizations of the United Nations, World Bank, World Health Organization, International Labor Organization, UNESCO, the European Union, etc. Belarus has a friendly working relationship with such countries as Germany, Denmark, France, Canada, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain, The USA and many others.

As a sovereign country, Belarus enjoys full rights and is active on the foreign arena. From the moment of setting up the United Nations Organization

(UNO) Belarus as one of its constituent member states takes an active part in the work of this association, its organs and institutions. Belarus regularly sends its delegations to the sessions of the UNO General Assembly, has its permanent delegation and its own staff in it. Belarus is a member of some international specialized organizations, commissions, bureaus, funds and other organs.

On the initiative of Belarus the international organizations have adopted a number of important decisions, particularly on the punishment of war criminals, on education of youth in the spirit of ideas of peace and friendship among nations. Belarus has signed many treaties, agreements, protocols and conventions on co-operation with other countries in various fields. Together with representatives of other peace-loving countries the envoys of Belarus are struggling for implementing a policy that answers the basic interests of all nations of the world, for their peace and security, co-operation and friendship.

3. You are invited to take part in the international festival of cultures. What questions will you ask the organizers of this festival?

- *What are the aims of the festival?*
- *What countries will be represented at the festival?*
- *Where will it be held?*
- *Who are the sponsors of the festival?*
- *Is the participation free of charge?*

4. What are the benefits for Belarus from the cooperation with UNESCO?

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) contributes to promotion of knowledge, builds collaborative networks of scientists, conducts researches in the field of social, human and natural sciences, develops the standards for intellectual cooperation.

Participation of Belarusian scientists in UNESCO programmes and activities provides the possibility to obtain expert assistance in the implementation of research projects. It is a means of bringing intellectual, material and technical capacity of other countries, of gaining access to the results and methods of the up-to-date scientific research.

5. How can international cooperation help in solving global environmental problems?

Naturally, global ecological problems cannot be solved by the efforts of individual States alone. National measures to protect the environment must be combined with wide international cooperation at the global level.

In order to decide who has to contribute what, we all have to cooperate and work closely together to create laws and regulations that will supersede conflicting interests.

At the present time, there are a number of international treaties of different kind governing various aspects of the protection of the environment and the rational utilization of natural resources. These agreements primarily concern the prevention of the pollution of maritime waters and the Earth's atmosphere, the protection and rational utilization of the animal and plant world on land; the protection of unique natural objects and complexes and the protection of the Earth's environment from radioactive contamination.

An important role in the development of the international protection of the environment is played by resolutions adopted by international organizations, and above all by the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

CARD № 14

Let's talk about national character and stereotypes.

1. How do foreigners picture a typical Englishman?

Almost every nation has a reputation of some kind. The English are reputed to be cold, reserved, rather haughty people who do not yell in the street, make love in public or change their governments as often as they change their underclothes. They are steady, easy-going, and fond of sport.

The foreigner's view of the English is often based on the type of Englishman he has met travelling abroad. Since these are largely members of the upper and middle classes, it is obvious that their behaviour cannot be taken as general for the whole people. There are, however, certain kinds of behaviour, manners and customs which are peculiar to England.

The English are a nation of stay-at-homes. There is no place like home, they say. And when the man is not working he withdraws from the world to the company of his wife and children and busies himself with the affairs of the home. "The Englishman's home is his castle" is a saying known all over the world; and it is true that English people prefer small houses, built to house one family, perhaps with a small garden. But nowadays the shortage of building land and inflated land values mean that more and more blocks of flats are being built.

The fire is the focus of the English home. What do other nations sit round? The answer is they don't. They go out to cafes or sit round the cocktail bar. For the English it is the open fire, the toasting fork and the ceremony of English tea. Even when central heating is installed it is kept so low in the English home that Americans and Russians get chilblains, as the English get nervous headaches from stuffiness in theirs.

Foreigners often picture the Englishman dressed in tweeds, smoking a pipe, striding across the open countryside with his dog at his heels. This is a picture of the aristocratic Englishman during his holidays on his country

estate. Since most of the open countryside is privately owned there isn't much left for the others to stride across. The average Englishman often lives and dies without ever having possessed a tweed suit.

Most English people have been slow to adopt rational reforms such as the metric system, which came into general use in 1975. They have suffered inconvenience from adhering to old ways, because they did not want the trouble of adapting themselves to new.

2. In which way are Scots different from the English?

The two nations of the United Kingdom have each derived from mixed sources, racially and historically. Each has developed strong national characteristics which separate them in custom, habit, religion, law and even in language.

The English are amongst the most amiable people in the world; they can also be very ruthless. They are generous in small matters but more cautious in big ones. The Scots at first glance are not so amiable. They abhor compromise, lean much upon logic and run much to extremes. They are penny-wise but can be prodigally pound-foolish. They can be dour and gray, or highly coloured and extravagant in gesture and manner.

3. Imagine you and your peer from Britain are discussing stereotypes. What questions would you ask him/her about the British?

- *What are the main national characteristics of British people?*
- *What are the specific qualities of the British national character?*
- *Are the British individualists?*
- *What is your favourite saying about the British?*
- *What stereotypes connected with the British do you know?*

4. How not to behave badly abroad? Give some tips to travellers.

In France you shouldn't sit down in a café until you've shaken hands with everyone you know.

In Pakistan you mustn't wink. It's offensive.

In the Middle East you must never use the left hand for eating, drinking or smoking. Also, you should take care not to admire anything in your host's home. They will feel that they have to give it to you.

In Russia, you must match your host's drink for drink or they will think you are unfriendly.

In America you should eat your hamburger with both hands and as quickly as possible. You should try to have a conversation until it's eaten.

5. Do stereotypes connected with the British sound true?

Foreigners have ideas about what is "British". But some of these things are not part of most ordinary people's everyday life. The great British

breakfast and afternoon tea, for example, are mostly found in hotels and "bed and breakfast" places for tourists. Though coffee is also popular, the British drink as much tea these days as before.

The British population (over the age of ten) drinks about 200,000,000 cups of tea a day. That is an average of nearly 1,040 cups of tea a year for each person. Tea came to Britain in the late 1500s, but it was only for the very rich. It became cheaper about three hundred years later, when it was planted in India and later in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). People from all classes started drinking it. But some people thought that too much tea was bad for your health. So they started putting milk in it, to make it healthier!

It takes time to know a British person well. British people are generally quite shy, and they do not make friends easily with strangers. Perhaps this is because they live on an island! And they are not good at learning foreign languages.

British people spend less money on clothes than the people of other European countries. Most of them are not very interested in clothes. Many British people wear suits to the office during the week, but at weekends they prefer to wear jeans.

Dr Johnson, a famous English writer, said over 200 years ago, "When two Englishmen meet, their first talk is of the weather." This is still true! Conversations between British people today often begin with the subject of the weather.

CARD № 15

Let's talk about outstanding people.

1. What is to be outstanding, to your mind?

Once in our life we start to consider what actually to be an outstanding person means.

In my opinion to be an outstanding person means to possess personality, not to be like anyone else and it is someone who is not trying to emphasize it. An outstanding person is the one who wants to do something good in his or her life and who likes to help other people and leaves some kind of trace in the life of others, I believe, an outstanding person is not a person who is famous all over the world. A great number of remarkable people surround us and we may not even know about it.

All famous people we can speak about are outstanding, because to make yourselves known and be spoken about you have to be different in some way and not only people born to famous and rich families can be called outstanding.

Vice versa, people who have to find their own way in life, people who have to do everything by themselves, they have a chance to become famous, strong, confident.

Americans are very proud of Bill Gates and they consider him an outstanding person. Why? He was able to create something from nothing. He is not like everyone else, he is one of a kind and that makes him an outstanding person. A young man who used to work in his garage became famous all over the world and when you exchange a word with him you'll never get a message, that he is better than you are. This is an example of becoming an outstanding person, a respectable and strong person.

We have to live our lives to be respected, we shouldn't do harm to anyone, we have to help people, that will make an outstanding person from each of us.

2. What famous Belarusian poets and writers can you speak about?

Belarusian national art has deep roots in the past. During the First Russian Revolution the voices of the young poets Yanka Kupala, Yakub Kolas, the revolutionary poet Tyotka-Elaisa Pashkevich and other talented writers could be heard throughout the country. Elaisa Pashkevich was a teacher, the author of poems written in defence of ordinary people. Kupala represented one of the peaks of Belarusian poetry. He fully expressed the spirit, the character and hopes of his people, hatred for the oppressors of the people. Kolas also created many remarkable poems about the destiny of Belarus and later two larger epics — "The New Land" and "Simon the Musician."

One of the wonderful Belarusian lyrists was Maxim Bogdanovich. He lived only 25 years but raised Belarusian literature to the world level. His poems preserve national spirit and express real pain for the people. His poems and songs are known everywhere in the world.

I also appreciate Vasil Bikov's works. They have been translated into many languages of the world. His books "The Cranes Are Crying", "The Obelisk", "Sotnikov", "The Wolves' Pack" are well-known. There are films made from his stories.

3. What questions would you ask a famous writer?

- *What characters are your most favourite?*
- *What can inspire you to write a new book?*
- *Do the characters of your books come from a real life?*
- *Was it your dream to become a writer?*
- *Is it easy to create a new story?*

4. What outstanding personality do you admire?

It's difficult to speak about Kupala, Scorina, Tadeush Kostyushko. Little message about their biography is not enough to understand what kind of people they were. For me it's easier to talk about my friends or someone I know, and it's my grandfather. What I know, the person I'm becoming is all

thanks to him. He is the person who helps everyone and never asks anything in return, he taught me to love books, never to stop and to go on. That was the main idea he taught me and he gave me the message: you have to do everything in life just to respect yourself and no one will give you more in the world to be desired. These few rules my grandpa passed on to me and I'm a lucky person because I have this kind of man in my life and thanks to him I'm accepting the world as it is.

There is place for heroic deeds, each of us is able to do it, to respect others and to be respected.

5. Is it an advantage to be famous?

It is widely believed that famous people have a wonderful life with no worries or problems. But is being famous so easy?

The greatest advantage of being famous is that celebrities are usually very rich so they have easier life than other people. They live in beautiful houses maintained by housekeepers, gardeners, cooks and other servants. They do not have to worry about paying bills, can afford the best clothes and drive the latest models of fast cars. What is more, they spend their holidays in expensive resorts, get the best hotel rooms and the most efficient service.

Secondly, when you are famous, your name is known by everyone. Then, you are invited to the best parties and meet other celebrities. Your fans send you letters to tell you how much they admire you.

However, being recognized by everyone in the street can be annoying. Famous people have no privacy, paparazzi try to photograph them all the time, people stop them in the street, asking for an autograph.

Fame also carries worry about your own safety and the safety of your family. There is always a danger that a crazy fan may try to kidnap or kill you or your children, so it is necessary to employ bodyguards.

All in all, fame may be nice but not an easy thing to live with. You have money but you do not feel safe, you have friends and fans but you can never be sure if they like you for who you are or for your money.

CARD № 16

Let's talk about tourism.

1. Let's talk about travelling. Why do people travel?

I must admit that nowadays tourism has become very popular and turned into a prosperous business. More and more people travel every year though the motivation for this is different. If you want to experience a whole new environment, to see new places and meet new people, travelling is the right way. Travelling on business allows people to get more information about achievements of other companies and helps them make their own business

more successful. Some people travel for educational purposes, or they visit their distant relatives and friends.

Today more and more people would prefer to spend their holidays travelling. Rich or poor, old or young they strive to leave the place where they live or work and move to another spot of our planet at least for a week.

As far as reasons for travelling are concerned, people travel to see other countries and continents, modern cities and the ruins of ancient towns, to enjoy picturesque places. It is always interesting to discover new thing and other ways of life, to meet different people, taste different food, examine various architectural styles, visit museums and art galleries. Travelling is a remarkable key to understanding other cultures, a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the world we live in.

2. What means of transport do you prefer and why?

Nowadays people can travel in different ways. People usually travel by air, by rail, by sea or by road. All means of travel have their advantages and disadvantages. And people choose one according to their likes and financial possibilities. Of course, travelling by air is the fastest and the most convenient way, but it is the most expensive too. Travelling by train is much slower, but it has its advantages. Not only have modern trains very comfortable seats, but also you can see much more interesting places of the country you are travelling through. Speed, comfort and safety are the main advantages of trains and planes. That is why many people prefer them to all other means. Travelling by sea is popular mostly for pleasure trips.

As for me I prefer travelling by car. I think it's very convenient. You don't need to reserve your tickets. You don't need to carry heavy suitcases. You don't depend on the timetable. You are free to stop and change the direction whenever you want. You can admire the landscapes you are passing by and you can take a break for a picnic if you feel hungry.

3. What questions would you ask a tour guide on a tour of London?

- *Do I need a passport or visa?*
- *What are the emergency numbers I can call?*
- *What is the best time of the year to travel there?*
- *How long will it take me to get to the destination?*
- *What excursions are included into the tour?*

4. You have visited some foreign countries. Which of them did you like most and would you recommend your friend to visit?

If I were you, I would travel around my own country first and then travel abroad. There are a lot of places to visit in Belarus such as Mir castle, a

UNESCO World Heritage site in Belarus, Brest fortress, which is a must for those who are interested in our history, Belovezhskaya pushcha, a beautiful national park with rare species of animals and birds, and others.

5. What difficulties can you have when visiting a foreign country? Is it possible to avoid them?

Visiting a foreign country, people usually come in touch with culture, traditions and ways different from their own. To avoid possible difficulties one should get acquainted with this or that country beforehand and then follow the proverb "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

It means that visitors should show respect for the other culture and its traditions. In this way it will be possible to avoid difficulties.

CARD № 17

Let's talk about accommodation.

1. Tell me about the place you live in.

I live in Minsk, the capital of the Republic of Belarus and it's my native city. I'm proud to be its citizen. It's an ancient city with a rich history. Minsk is 950 years old. It's the country's major industrial and cultural centre and one of its most beautiful places. The city has acquired its peculiar look and coloring thanks to the well-planned avenues and squares, to the green parks and gardens stretching along the Svisloch river, to the historical monuments and newly built underground stations.

The Upper Town, a vast area of the old Minsk with the centre in Cathedral Square, which was the most important part of the city, was built in the 16th century, the City Hall, the men's and women's St Bernard and St Basil monasteries, the 17th—18th centuries Catholic Church are also situated there.

The recently restored mansion in Internationalnaya Street that once belonged to the artist V.Vankovich now is a part of the National Fine Arts Museum.

The city's second largest avenue Prospect Masherova with its numerous public buildings and dwelling blocks rising along the water-and-park Svisloch river artery appeared in the 70s—80s. In 1985, the Minsk-Hero City monument was erected in the Victory Park.

The pride of the city is its parks: the Gorki Park, the Cheluskinty Park, the Central Botanical Garden and the water-and-park Svisloch reserve.

There are 6 professional theatres and many museums in Minsk.

Also I can't help mentioning our National Library with its modern design and nice architectural structure. The Library lights up at night thus making

this whole structure look amazing. There is also a nice scenic café where you can dine enjoying the picturesque parts of the city and getting the panoramic view from above.

Minsk today is growing and prospering. Embassies, banks, business centers, offices and other public and private institutions have been springing up in the city. Minsk is so romantic and magic and so attractive in every season of the year.

2. Would you like to live in a city or in the country? Why?

Well, I would like to have a big house in the suburbs of the city with lots of fresh air, with a big play ground for my kids and with some place to practice my gardening skills. If I had a chance to choose I would choose quieter green suburbs rather than crowded multi blocks of flats. Though each way of living has advantages, to my mind, a private house has more pluses for getting a pleasure.

3. Your family is going to move. What questions will you ask your parents about the new place?

- *What will our new house be like and where will I be going to school, all the little things like what kind of bedroom will I have?*
- *What does our new neighbourhood look like?*
- *What is there to do in the area after school or at weekends?*
- *Are there good places we can visit as a family in our first few weeks?*
- *What's my new school like? What clubs does it run? What's the uniform like?*

4. Your friend wants to move in a big city for work. Give him/her some practical advice how to live in a city.

Moving to a big city can be a shock, especially when coming from a really small town or even a rural lifestyle. It's not just the sheer size that you have to deal with when you relocate to a larger city. There are things like the increased cost of living, integrating with different cultures and staying sane in unfamiliar surroundings. But there are small tips:

- *buy a map.* You can buy a paper map booklet, or if you have a smartphone, make use of the built in mapping software;
- *take a tour.* If you're in a city that has any kind of tourism industry, book yourself on a city tour;
- *talk with family or friends* living in your new city. If you know people in your new city, *talk and meet with them* to ask questions and get used to your new home. Ask for advice on getting around, areas to stay away from, nice places to shop, where to eat, etc.

The cost of living will be higher in a big city, so *keep your finances in check* if you want to survive.

- *socialize, network, and make friends.*

City life can be extremely hectic, leaving you working, sleeping or traveling throughout most of the week. This type of lifestyle can leave you feeling drained, isolated and, in some extreme cases, can lead to depression, so it's especially important to make friends to spend time with on your weekends or downtime.

5. How do you see an ideal place to live in?

I like the saying: "The grass is always greener on the other side." It means we tend to believe life in places different from our residence is for some reason better. Considering this I must say that I'm content with living here, in a big city, where most of my family members live.

Among advantages we can find *employment opportunities, education establishments, healthcare facilities, food options with a great variety of shops and mall centers, public transport options and a great choice of leisure activities and places to have fun.*

Dreaming of having a small flat on the sea coast is natural for people but we realize that it doesn't matter where we live; the thing that matters is our feeling happy with everything around us. For me it is much easier to cope with life having my family nearby.

CARD № 18

Let's talk about your family.

1. Let's talk about family traditions. How often does your entire family gather together?

Every summer we go to the seaside together, where we relax, and have fun. But to put our entire family together is hard enough just because one of my grannies lives far away and we can't meet as often as we want. As for the rest of my family, my uncles and aunts, they are also involved into their own family life routine but we try to arrange our big meetings at least once or twice a year, mostly in summer, at my grandparents' dacha to have barbeque and to enjoy the time all together.

2. Is it hard to maintain good family relations?

In my opinion if you want to have a tight-knit family you should respect and support your partner, you should be understanding, friendly, tolerant, polite, sympathetic. Both parents should be involved in childcare. The members of the family should always communicate with each other. If they don't see eye to eye on some things they should talk it over. Moreover, the members of the family should share joys and sorrows as well as domestic chores. It goes without saying they should help each other in a difficult

situation and try to spend a lot of time together. If you form and keep your family traditions it will do your family a lot of good. The members of the family should appreciate what they do for each other and be grateful to each other.

3. What questions will you ask your friend about eating habits in his/her family?

- *Do you cook national dishes at home?*
- *What is your favourite dish?*
- *Do you eat a lot of junk food?*
- *What dish do you always cook for a family gathering?*
- *What does your usual breakfast consist of?*

4. Give some tips on how to prepare a big family gathering.

Well, I can't say I'm an expert, moreover, to my mind, it is a very stressful process for the organizer but I guess there are some survival tips to manage everything:

- *think about the event itself to arrange a place for it;*
- *make the list of your guests* and don't forget to send them the invitations to your party, to make sure all of them can come;
- *make up the menu*, try to remember all the details and preferences of your relatives and the aim of your gathering. For example, if it's a birthday, you must order a birthday cake. If it's a barbeque party you must keep in mind all the stuff you have to buy and take to the place of destination;
- *don't forget about your children's spending time* at your gathering, think over the games they can play or organize some kind of animation not to make them bored;
- and last but not least, *don't forget to take your happy mood with you* and I'm sure your family gathering will be a success.

5. What can you advise a boy whose elder brother is constantly teasing him?

Well, I can't be an expert because I don't have any brothers or sisters but anyway I'll try to make up my mind. Teasing is just one of those things that happens between siblings. And it is completely normal. Annoying, sometimes heartbreaking, but normal. May be in such a specific way they try to show their feelings. So if you don't like that, you can tell your elder brother that his teasing hurts your feelings. To my mind teasing will never end. It is just the case of your attitude to it. The more you pay attention to it, the more you'll be teased. At least it will be good to learn to protect yourself. Something should be ignored, something should be revenged. As soon as you both get older the way of your communication will change for the better, I hope.

Let's talk about your future career.

1. Managers are in demand nowadays. What is the role of a manager in a company?

A person who performs the unique work of management is called a manager. That is, a manager plans, organizes, directs, and controls a company's business. An important characteristic of managers is that they do their jobs by working with and through other people.

There is a statement: "Management is getting work done through people." Most of achievements in any society take place because groups of people get involved in joint effort. Almost everyone is, was, or someday will be a manager, i.e. the person who coordinates human, information, physical, and financial resources of an organization. In order to perform their functions adequately, managers need interpersonal, organizational, and technical skills.

Regardless of the specific job, most managers perform five basic functions.

The first one is planning, which involves determining overall company goals and deciding how these goals can best be achieved. Planning is listed the first management function because the others depend on it.

Organizing, the second management function, is putting the plan into action. *Staffing*, i.e. choosing the right person for the right job, is also a part of the organizing function.

Directing is the day-to-day direction and supervision of employees. In *directing*, managers guide, teach, and motivate people so that they reach their potential abilities, and at the same time achieve the goals set in the planning stage.

Controlling involves evaluating how well overall company objectives are being met.

Effective managers achieve the goals of the company through a successful combination of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling.

2. How can you describe an ideal company?

First of all, an ideal company gives equal pay to men and women. It has a gym and sports facilities, a good quality canteen. It awards regular bonuses and gives fringe benefits to the employees, such as a laptop computer and a mobile phone for business and personal use. It provides opportunities for promotion and personal development, including regular trainings. It has a generous company pension scheme.

3. You want to get a loan to start your own business. What questions do you think the bank manager will ask you?

- *What are the aims of your business?*

- *How much money do you need?*
- *Have you made a business plan?*
- *When are you going to pay the money back?*
- *How often have you applied for any loans before?*

4. Which do you think is more important: following the dreams your parents want for you or following your own dreams? Why?

Mentally strong people don't let others determine their career paths. Instead, they take charge of their own lives and go wherever they want to go. But if you are not that strong you should listen to your own feelings and talk to your parents. Because what is the point of just making money if you feel miserable doing something?

You know it will sound great if our parents' expectations are similar to our own dreams.

5. They say it's important for a person to speak English nowadays to get a good job. What is your opinion?

I believe that English is the language of the modern world. All people around the world know the importance of the English language in our life, because we need it in our work and sometimes when we meet other people from other cultures, the only way to communicate with them is to use English. We need it for traveling to other countries on business trips as well. That does not mean our language is not important. I believe all people love their languages, but the first language now in the world is English.

CARD № 20

Let's talk about Belarus.

1. What celebrations in Belarus are your favourite?

The life of each of us is full of "high days:" exciting days which we look forward to like school trips, visits to the circus or theatre and "holidays" which are printed red in the calendar.

I'd like to tell you about my most favourite holidays. First comes New Year. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that New Year is the greatest holiday in Belarus and no other holiday is celebrated as wholeheartedly as New Year.

Throughout our country the preparations for greeting New Year start long before the 31st of December. People send and get thousands of New Year cards, prepare presents for their families and friends and decorate their houses and a New Year tree with shining bells, colorful balls and bright lights. The tradition of decorating a New Year tree is by the way most

popular with any Belarusian family. On New Year's Eve the homes are full of great atmosphere of expectation. Air is filled with fresh smell of New Year tree and delicious smells of great variety of dishes prepared for the holiday meal. People carry on the celebration with their friends dancing, singing and making fireworks.

Then comes Christmas. Somehow it is the continuation of New Year's mood. I enjoy Christmas holiday mood all around with its Christmas tree, decorated homes and trees, illuminations, organizing a special meal and a lot of festive foods. We exchange gifts with our relatives and friends.

Then Easter comes with its colorful eggs and very beautiful pies. There is a great ceremony at church with lit candles and songs. Churches are filled with flowers on Easter Day. Everything represents new life.

2. What can you tell me about Belarusian national cuisine?

Belarusian cuisine is known for a bid choice of potato dishes and rich soups, often dressed with sour cream, as well as cold soups refreshing for the hot summer periods. Geographical position and weather conditions in Belarus resulted in a wide use of such products as forest mushrooms and berries, herbs, apples, pears, river fish and crab, milk products. It is still traditional for Belarusian families to make marinated mushrooms and vegetables based on home recipes. Cooking methods characteristic for the old traditional Belarusian cuisine are stewing and boiling.

The first meal of the day in the morning is breakfast. Some Belarusian people eat toast with butter and jam or marmalade and nothing else. Others eat a bowl of cereals or muesli with milk or porridge. Belarusian breakfast may also contain sausages, bacon, scrambled or fried egg, beans, etc. Melon, grapefruit or fruit cocktails are popular, but the most common drinks at this time of the day are orange juice or a cup of tea or coffee.

The second meal of the day in Belarus is lunch. We usually eat a bowl of soup with some slices of bread, and also a cup of tea.

Dinner is the last meal Belarusian people have. It's a cooked meal of meat or fish and some veg. It's common to eat desert after the main dish.

Many people in Belarus like eating draniki or pancakes with machanka, Belarusian traditional souse. It may be different in different regions. Most often it is made with pork, sausage, sliced onion, sour cream and flour.

3. Ask me if I participated in any traditional celebrations.

- *Did you take part in any traditional celebrations?*
- *What did you do?*
- *Did you make any special things or clothes for the holiday?*
- *What holidays were your favourite?*
- *Did you have any family traditions?*

4. Which festival in Belarus will you recommend your British friend to visit?

I would recommend to see "Kupalle" because it is the most romantic and mysterious holiday. I think my British friend would be excited to jump over the fire and look for a magic fern-flower.

Kupala is the old pagan Belarusian god of the sun whose feast is at Midsummer, after the Soltice day. It is one of the most mysterious holidays in Belarus. There are a lot of legends and customs connected with this magic holiday. According to one of them there is a constant struggle between good and evil in our soul. People try to help the forces of light to defeat the evil witches. They light bonfires, dance and sing folk songs around them and young girls and boys jump over the fire, holding their hands together. Fire is believed to have a purifying effect, cleaning off sins. Another attribute of the Kupala feast is girls making wreaths of wild flowers and wear them on heads and then, at dawn, throwing them into the river or lake and letting them float. And one of the main moments of celebration is the search for a magic fern-flower which blossoms only one night a year and is believed to bring happiness.

5. Are you proud of your national holidays and traditions?

Yes, I am proud of our national traditions; they are unique and make us feel a little bit different from other nationalities. For example, the celebration of "Kupalle" is romantic and mysterious. When we celebrate Victory Day I feel proud of our people who went through great difficulties and showed courage and heroism.

CARD № 21

Let's talk about any English-speaking country.

1. What English-speaking countries do you know? Tell me about any of them.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are English speaking countries. They are situated in different parts of the world and differ in many ways. The nature of these countries, their weather and climate and way of life of their people differ. Each country has its own history, customs, traditions, its own national holidays. But they all share a common language. English is the language of the people who left England to make their names in new countries. But I would like to tell you about The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

To understand fully any country's political system, one needs to understand something of its history. This is especially true of the United Kingdom because

its history has been very different from most other nations and, as a result, its political system is very different from most other nations too.

We probably need to start with the year of 1066, when William the Conqueror from Normandy invaded what we now call England, defeated the Anglo-Saxon King Harold and established a Norman dynasty. The Normans were not satisfied with conquering England and, over the next few centuries, tried to conquer Ireland, Wales and Scotland. They succeeded with the first two and failed with the last despite several wars over the centuries.

The UK is a parliamentary monarchy and the Queen is the head of the state. But in practice it is ruled by the elected government with the Prime Minister at the head. The UK Parliament in London is at the heart of the political system in Britain and is the legislative body for the UK and British overseas territories. Parliament has two legislative parliamentary bodies, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The Prime Minister now is *Theresa May*, the leader of the Conservative Party. The Prime Minister's Office is at Downing Street, 10.

The House of Commons is the lower chamber but the one with the most authority. The Commons is chaired by the Speaker. Each of the 650 members in the House of Commons represents a geographical constituency.

The House of Lords is the upper chamber but the one with less authority. Its members are not elected and appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister. The House of Commons consists of democratically elected Members of Parliament from various different political parties. Elections are held every five years. There is no fixed number of members in the House of Lords, but currently there are 826 members.

Today there are four major political parties in the British parliamentary system, the Conservative Party, the Labour Party, the Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democrat Party.

Great Britain is a highly developed industrial country. It is known as one of the world's largest producers and exporters of iron and steel products, machinery and electronics, chemicals and textile. One of the industries is shipbuilding.

Great Britain is a country with old cultural traditions and customs. The most famous educational centres are Oxford and Cambridge universities. They are considered to be the intellectual centres of Europe. The education is not free, it is very expensive.

London is the capital of the UK, the greatest town and port on the British Isles. It's a political, economic and commercial centre. London is one of the largest cities in the world. Its population is more than 8 million people. It's more than 2 thousand years old. London is worth sightseeing. The West End is famous for its beautiful monuments and palaces, fine parks, fashionable shops and big hotels. The East End is quite different from the West End. It's the district of factories, plants and docks. The narrow streets and poor houses present contrast to the homes of the rich people in the West End.

Sightseeing tours in London usually start in Trafalgar Square. There is the Nelson's Column in the centre of the square. From Trafalgar Square you can go along down Whitehall and see the Houses of Parliament with Big Ben. Behind there is the Thames and Westminster Bridge. Buckingham Palace attracts attention, as well. It's the royal residence. Westminster Abbey is famous for the memorials of many great people of Britain. The Tower of London was a fortress, a royal residence, a prison and now it is a museum. London is famous for its green parks. The greatest is Hyde Park (with the famous Poet's Corner there). London is the centre of the country's cultural life. There are many picture galleries and museums there. The National Gallery houses a priceless collection of paintings. The British Museum is the most famous in the world. In London we can meet the past and the present, the old and the modern. It's a city of contrasts and no doubts it's amazing to see and enjoy every masterpiece in architecture and art.

2. Let's talk about customs and traditions of Great Britain. What famous festivals and celebrations do you know?

To begin with I'd like to point out that British customs and traditions are famous all over the world. When people think of Britain, they often think of people drinking tea, eating fish and chips, colorful royal ceremonies, soldiers in strange uniforms. In Britain customs and traditions play a more important part in the life of people than in other countries. The British are proud of their traditions and carefully keep them up.

The British celebrate such public holidays as Christmas, Easter Monday, May Day, the Spring Bank Holiday, and The Summer Bank Holiday.

Besides public holidays there are other festivals, such as Pancake Day, April Fool's day, Halloween, Guy Fawkes night, St Valentine's Day and others. I'd like to describe some of them.

3. What questions can you ask a British teenager about his best holiday celebration?

- *Which holiday do you enjoy celebrating?*
- *Is it a family holiday or a national one?*
- *What traditions are connected with it?*
- *How do you participate in celebrating?*
- *What part of the holiday do you like most?*

4. What can you tell me about national cuisine of Great Britain?

Foreigners often say that food in Britain is uninteresting and plain, noting fancy, it lacks originality and excellence. But British food is not as bad as some people think. There are many enjoyable dishes which can please even a demanding eater. Fish and chips is a popular and relatively inexpensive

British dish. Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding is a traditional English family lunch on Sunday. Apple pie is a favourite sweet in England.

A special place in the life of the British is occupied by tea. They are the world's greatest tea drinkers. They drink a quarter of all the tea grown in the world each year.

5. Which festival in Britain will you recommend your friend to visit?

I guess it will be exciting to visit any of the British holidays to see the culture with your own eyes. But, to my mind, it will be interesting to see Halloween. It is a holiday annually celebrated on 31 October. People often dress up as skeletons, ghosts or other scary figures. Common symbols of Halloween include pumpkins, bats and spiders. Some children go trick-or-treating. This means that they dress up and go to other peoples' houses, knocking on the door for treat of sweets or a snack. Those who do not give out a treat may be tricked with a joke instead.

CARD № 22

Let's talk about national character and stereotypes.

1. Let's talk about national characters. They say every nation has got its national traits. What about Belarusians? What are our national traits?

Belarusian traditions and features of the national character were formed in the course of complex history. The country was engulfed by many military conflicts, World Wars, national liberation revolts, revolutions and repressions. So our extraordinary history cultivated special character traits of our people, the main of them are tolerance and diligence.

Different from anyone else, Belarusians are able to adapt to any circumstances — not to change the circumstances but to change themselves, to accept these circumstances, to live them naturally, in harmony and even with pleasure.

The second aspect of the Belarusian character is that a Belarusian holds tight to what he has gained. He regards the external world with little trust.

At the same time, in the view of Belarusians themselves, they are loved and respected by everyone. People turn to Belarusians for help and support, because they know that a Belarusian will always be responsive and helpful. Belarusian people always enjoy receiving guests and are perfect at this. This tradition is alive today.

To sum up, Belarusian features of character are tolerance and a lack of temper. Belarusians are kind, soft, soulful, hard-working and hospitable. But at the same time they are they are reserved, not very jolly and rather pessimistic.

New Belarusians are rather inclined to intellectual jobs. They earn their living by using brains rather than by digging the soil. The young generation has more Belarusian identity than the Soviet generation. New Belarusians express more interest in their roots and history. Many Belarusians, both young and old, are fond of gardening very much.

2. Are Belarusians similar to Americans? Tell me about American values and beliefs.

The United States has often been called a melting pot. This term refers to the idea that the country is a place where people from many lands have come together and formed a unified culture. Americans have many things in common. For example, the vast majority of them speak English, and people throughout the country dress similarly and eat many of the same kinds of foods.

At the center of all that Americans value is freedom. Americans commonly regard their society as the freest and best in the world. Americans' understanding of freedom is shaped by the Founding Fathers' belief that all people are equal and that the role of government is to protect each person's basic rights.

Americans' notion of freedom focuses on the individual. Individualism, understood not only as self-reliance but also as economic self-sufficiency, has been a central theme in American history.

Volunteerism is the soul of American community and political life. Volunteerism means people helping people through privately-initiated, rather than government-sponsored, agencies. Volunteers, usually unpaid, are highly motivated workers who organize themselves and others to solve a particular community problem or meet an immediate social need, rather than waiting for someone else to do it. The willingness to participate in such groups is so widespread that six out of ten Americans are members of a volunteer organization. Volunteerism reflects Americans' optimistic pride in their ability to work out practical solutions themselves.

As a nation of immigrants, Americans have from the beginning shared the assumption that the practical solution to a problem is to move elsewhere and make a fresh start. Mobility in America is not a sign of aimlessness but optimism. Americans move from place to place with the sense of optimism, hoping to secure a better job or enjoy climate.

Moving about from place to place is such a common and accepted practice that most Americans take it for granted that they may live in four or five cities during their lifetime, perhaps buying a house and then reselling it each time they move. The American habit of mobility has been important in contributing a degree of homogeneity to a society of such extreme cultural diversity and spaciousness. Cultural differences still exist from region to region, but they are becoming increasingly less distinct as mutual exchange occurs.

3. What questions would you ask your American friend going to live and work in his/her country?

- *What are the main national characteristics of Americans?*
- *What are the specific qualities of the American national character?*
- *Do Americans feel patriotic?*
- *What is their favourite sport?*
- *What stereotypes connected with Americans do you know?*

4. Your friend is going to study in America. Advise him/her how to communicate with Americans.

First of all, learn sport jargon

Americans love using idioms, especially sport phrases like "home run" or "slam dunk" when something goes really well. Another popular phrase is "taking a rain check," which comes from baseball when it rains and the game has to be postponed. These phrases are used a lot in business and in casual conversations.

Get comfortable with informality

Things are much less formal in America. Americans like being comfortable and relaxed, but that does not mean they are being disrespectful.

It is very common to call people you work for or your colleagues by their first name. One of the exceptions is teachers in school usually use Mr. or Mrs.

Avoid confrontation

Americans do not like confrontation. They do not want to hurt anybody's feelings, so they are very careful about how they say things. Americans avoid directly criticizing or opposing anyone. It would be considered very rude if someone just said, "you're wrong" to someone else.

If you want someone to do something, you would always be very polite about it and avoid commands.

Get comfortable with interruptions

Although Americans believe being polite is very important, it is very normal for Americans to interrupt each other when they have something to contribute. It's usually not that rude in American conversation especially with a good friend.

Give lots of compliments

Americans give a lot of compliments — all the time. It's a popular way of building relationships with other people or just being nice. Even with strangers or people you don't know very well, it is common to give a compliment.

5. Have you heard the expression "American dream?" How do you understand its meaning?

The term "American Dream," used in widely different contexts from political speeches to Broadway musicals, eludes precise definition.

J. T. Adams in *The Epic of America* (1931) expressed it as "the dream of a land in which life should be better, richer, and fuller for every man with opportunities for each according to his abilities and achievement." The "American Dream" is popularized in countless rags-to-riches stories and in the portrayal of the good life in advertising and on TV shows. It teaches Americans to believe that contentment can be reached through the virtues of thrift, hard work, family loyalty, and faith in the free enterprise system.

However, throughout America's history, reality has also taught her citizens, particularly minorities, that the "American Dream" is not open to all. Segregation and discrimination are effective tools which have barred minorities from equal opportunities in all spheres.

CARD № 23

Let's talk about youth and society.

1. Is it easy to be young?

It's about time somebody exploded that old myth about childhood being the happiest period of your life. Childhood may certainly be fairly happy, but even the greatest moments can't be compared with the sheer joy of being an adult. Mostly adults choose the clothes their children wear, the books to read, the friends to have. Mother and father are kindly but dictators. This is an adult world and though children may be deeply loved, they have to be manipulated so as not to interfere too seriously with the lives of their elders. The essential difference between manhood and childhood is the same as the difference between independence and subjection.

Think of the years at school: the years spent living in constant fear of exams and school reports. Every movement you make, every thought you think is observed by some critical adult who may draw unflattering conclusions about your character. Think of the times you have to go to bed early, do as you are told, eat the stuff that is supposed to be good for you. Remember how "gentle" pressure is applied with remarks like "if you don't do as I say, I'll ..." and a dire warning will follow.

No matter how kind and loving adults may be, children often suffer from terrible, illogical fears which are the result of ignorance and an inability to understand the world around them. Teenagers may rebel violently against parental authority, but this causes them great unhappiness. There is a complete lack of self-confidence during this time. Adolescents are over-conscious of their appearance and the impression they make on others. They feel shy, awkward and clumsy. They look at the world with fresh eyes; everything is new and unspoilt for them. Feelings are intense and hearts are easily broken. Teenagers experience moments of tremendous elation or black despair. And through this turmoil, adults seem to be more hostile than ever.

What a relief is to grow up! Suddenly you regain your balance; the world opens up before you. You are free to choose; you have your own place to live in and your own money to spend. You don't have to seek constant approval for everything you do. You are no longer teased, punished or ridiculed by heartless adults because you failed to come up to some theoretical standard. And if on occasion you are teased, you know how to deal with it.

2. What are the roots of generation gap?

Youth is a very important period in the life of man. This is the time when a person discovers the world and tries to determine the place in the universe. Young people face lots of problems which are very important for them and do not differ much from those that once their parents had to deal with. At the same time every generation is unique. It differs from the one that preceded it in its experience, ideals and a system of values.

The adults always complain that the young are not what they were. These words are repeated from generation to generation. To some extent they are true, because every new generation grows up quicker, enjoys more freedom. It is better educated and benefits from the results of the technological progress of the time.

Moreover, the young look forward and the old people look backward. The adult always teach the young how to live. They apply old standards to the new way of life. The past is hanging over them preventing them from appreciating the things around them anew. The young think that the adults have lost touch with everything that is important in life.

Young people of today do not directly accept the standards of their parents who believe that they are right because they are older. The adults don't want their values to be questioned. The young on the other hand cannot accept the values of their "fathers." All these differences generate a generation gap when the young and adult do not understand one another. Generation gap means difference in attitude, or lack of understanding between younger and older generation.

3. Your British friend is interested in the social life of the Belarusian youth. What questions would he/she ask you?

- *Are there many youth organizations in Belarus?*
- *What should you do to become a member of any of them?*
- *Does everyone have a chance to participate in their activities?*
- *What are the benefits of being a member of youth organizations?*
- *What famous people of your country are active members of youth organizations?*

4. Why are different subcultures attractive for youth?

The life of the young is frequently determined by the adults. It seems that parents will never understand their children. And children, in their turn,

shock their parents with their dress, language, behaviour. The existence of subculture which is specific for every generation is a form of protest of the young people against the values of the adults. Belonging to a subculture is often about exploring who you are and what you stand for. All young people need to feel validated and valued. Though it can be challenging for parents, but it isn't unusual and can be a passing phase.

5. What is the best way to promote a healthy way of life among young people? Why is it important to stay healthy?

As a parent, you need to *encourage healthy habits* — including exercise — in your youngsters. Physical activity should become as a routine, a part of their lives, as eating and sleeping.

Educate others. Be a health advocate for people. Help them start doing sports.

Stop saying, start doing. Get involved and stay involved in the process. Do sports yourself.

Lead by an example. Participate in any sports events. Sports such as cycling, swimming, basketball, jogging, walking briskly, cross country skiing, dancing, aerobics, and soccer, played regularly, are not only fun but can promote health.

Support scientific medical research to find out different diseases and treatment for them.

Having a healthy lifestyle is important because it helps a person to control weight, boost energy, improve his mood, combat disease and live long, staying healthy means thinking positively and focusing on gratitude. Having happy people around is the basis of any community.

CARD № 24

Let's talk about education.

1. What can you tell about the system of education in Belarus?

Education is the main people's wealth and lots of them consider it the sense of living. They get education from early childhood and learn until their hair is grey. To my mind, education plays an important role in people's lives, that's why a great attention is paid to it.

Education in Belarus is free and compulsory from age 6 to 15 and the system is well administered. The *academic year* begins on the 1st of September and lasts till the end of May. It is divided into *4 terms and has 4 vacation periods*: autumn, winter, spring and summer ones. There are *two official languages* within the education system in Belarus: Russian and Belarusian.

From age 6 to 10 children attend primary school where they receive a basic grounding in literacy and numeracy.

When students enter senior secondary school level they may remain in the academic stream for 2 years at schools or *gymnasiums* or they may attend vocational classes at *lyceums* for 2 years. Also they may train at a strictly practical level at *colleges* and obtain a trade.

Belarusian higher education is ranked among the best ones, and the Belarusian specialists are much in demand in the world. Therefore, both our citizens and foreign students wish to study in the higher educational establishments (Universities) of the Republic. University graduates can obtain Bachelor's degree of Science.

After university graduation young specialists have an opportunity to continue postgraduate education with different Master's programs. Also training of the scientific personnel with highest qualifications is conducted with granting scientific degrees of Candidate and Doctor of Science.

2. Can computers be used in education? Why (not)?

Computers have changed the way we work, it occurs in any profession you can obtain.

Computers aid industrial processes; they find applications in medicine; they are the heart of the software industry; they play a vital role in education. The computer facilitates education, making it much easier for the student to learn, for the teacher to teach, and to organize the administrative part of the education process. Computer education forms a part of the school and college curriculum, as it is important for every individual today, to have the basic knowledge of computers. The advantages of computers in education include an efficient storage and performance of information, quick information processing and the saving of paper usage.

Online education has revolutionized the education industry. The computer technology has made the dream of distant learning a reality. So, as you can see, I'm more pro computer usage. To my mind, it has more advantages and moreover it is absolutely necessary nowadays.

3. Ask me what kind of pupil I was at school.

- *What problems did you have when you were a pupil?*
- *Were you lazy or hardworking?*
- *Did you have any favourite subjects?*
- *Did you get bad marks? How did you feel?*
- *Did you miss your classes without any serious reason?*

4. What would you advise your friend to do to pass his exams successfully?

It is easier to advise than to follow when you feel nervous, but anyway *try not to panic*, try to stay calm so that you could concentrate on learning.

Find a suitable place to work. Your desk, the kitchen table, the library, a cafe, but wherever works for you and be prepared to stay there. Stay away from your bed, however as it will increase the likelihood of accidental napping.

Get rid of fun distractions. Do what you have to make yourself concentrate. Put your phone in another room. Turn off the Wi-Fi. Work on paper. If you need to fact check something online, start a list to look up later.

Harder than it seems, this. Really *MAKE yourself work*.

If you get stuck, don't stress. Make a note and you can come back to it later.

Snacks and food: your brain needs food to LIVE and LEARN! If you're staying up all night have something substantial and quick.

Have a little study break listening to some music or stroking your cat. Don't start feeling like the walls are closing in around you.

Sleep is for the weak, right? WRONG. You will perform much the next day if you brain has a chance to rest.

Look over your notes on the bus and staying calm as much as you can, walk to the exam hall.

5. Nowadays some young people complain that they have lots of problems at school. Do you agree with them?

I don't think that it is true. We experience some problems at school, but our parents had the same problems as well. The problems are the same: low marks, bad behaviour, much homework. There is nothing new. We shouldn't complain to everyone about them. We had better learn how to cope with them on our own.

CARD № 25

Let's talk about tourism.

1. What are positive and negative effects of tourism? How to reduce the negative ones?

On the positive side, tourism provides employment for local inhabitants. What is more, the extra income means that local councils have more money to spend on expanding and improving their facilities, thus making them better for both visitors and residents. On the other hand, tourism can do a great deal of harm. For example, pollution is caused both by the increase in traffic and the litter that visitors leave behind.

Fortunately, there is one form of tourism which is completely environmentally friendly. It's called ecotourism. Ecotourism is a form of tourism involving visiting fragile, pristine and relatively undisturbed natural areas intended as a low-impact alternative to standard commercial mass tourism. In other words, it is organized holidays that are designed so that the tourists damage the environment as little as possible, especially when some of the money they pay is used to protect local natural wealth.

2. What is the difference between travellers and tourists?

Being a traveller is more than just being a holidaymaker. A holiday is just a short time away, and it normally involves relaxation. Tourists stay in

holiday resorts, not travellers. Travellers go for the experience and their journeys are usually much longer and more challenging. Travellers tend to avoid tourist traps and like to go off the beaten track to discover new places. Travel is an age-old phenomenon, but tourism is a relatively recent invention.

3. You friend is fond of travelling. Ask him about his experience

- *How often do you travel?*
- *What countries have you visited?*
- *What's your favourite means of travelling?*
- *What are the advantages of package holidays?*
- *What places would you like to be back to?*

4. What can you recommend a person who wants to go on a hike for a week?

Find a Group or Club to Hike With (The fastest way to become a good hiker is to hike with other people because it's fun and motivating.)

Find Comfortable Hiking Footwear

Buy a Local Guidebook and a Waterproof Map

Hike a Short Distance

Camp at an Established Campsite

Camp Near Other People

Plan Simple Meals

Practice Pitching Your Tent at Home before Your Trip

Postpone your Trip if it's Going to Rain (additional troubles: pitching a tent in the rain and packing it up wet, cooking food in the rain, and drying your wet gear).

Minimize the Amount of Gear You Bring (bring some comfort items and a first aid kit along on your first trips).

Look up Backcountry Regulations Before You Go (Do you need to filter your water? Do you have to pay a fee for using a tent site? Is there a privy at the tent site or will you need to dig a cat hole? Are campfires or open flames permitted? Are there restrictions on where you can camp?)

Take good mood with you on a hike!

5. What can you advise a person who doesn't know how to spend his/her holidays?

The most interesting way of spending holidays is travelling. First of all it is necessary to choose your destination. Then you may plan your route and a type of transport. Nowadays there are a lot of travel agencies which will help you to arrange everything in no time. Package holidays are very popular among holidaymakers because it's very convenient. You don't have to worry about such things as where to sleep, what to eat and what sights to see.

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