

RUSSIAN

Paper 9782/01

Speaking

Key Messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, consider the issue raised in their chosen article and their own reaction(s) to it
- in Part II, choose a subject which genuinely interests them and which clearly relates to a country where the target language is spoken
- in Parts I and II, be prepared to take the lead in the conversation
- in Parts I and II, be ready to engage in natural and spontaneous discussion.

General Comments

On the whole, the Examination Series for June 2011 was very successful. The candidates demonstrated an impressive range of skills, and the specification enabled them to get full credit for the skills they demonstrated. Candidates seemed very well prepared and were well aware of the requirements of the exam.

Comments on specific Parts

Part I Discussion of an article and related themes

This was generally well done, and candidates used the preparation time effectively. They were able to offer a wide range of views and opinions on the issues raised by the texts. The issues offered by the cards did not enjoy equal popularity. Card 2 (Contemporary aspect of Russia: social issues) was the least popular, while Card 4 (Employment and unemployment) was by far the most popular choice. All candidates demonstrated an impressive level of language skills and preparation.

Part II Prepared oral topic

In this part of the exam the candidates impressed with excellent choices of topics for discussion. The range of topics and the thorough research that was demonstrated were extremely pleasing. One of the main impressions from this series is the fact that the candidates made excellent use of having a free choice to move away from the traditional subjects that might be expected at this level to ones which were clearly of personal interest. They demonstrated impressive depth of knowledge and analysis in topics as varied as the martial arts of 'Sistema', the history of the Russian Circus; and the nihilism of Turgenev's novel 'Fathers and Sons'. The interest and the enthusiasm of the candidates showed in the way they spoke about their chosen topics. On the whole, the level of language (both range of lexis and accuracy) was higher than in Part I.

As in 2010, it was very pleasing to see practically all candidates demonstrating an impressive command of spoken Russian and use of varied and appropriate lexis and grammar. However, this was sometimes marred by basic errors in agreement, case and verb endings. Some candidates, for example, found it difficult to cope with numerals and expressions like *Можно/надо/нужно*, and *есть | нет* («у него есть нет...»). Other candidates made mistakes using lexis, which could have been lifted from the speaking cards. For example, quite a few candidates speaking on the topic of Unemployment referred to it as «безработница», while a typical mistake for those who had chosen the topic of Religion was calling it «религион». Both mistakes could have been avoided as these words are key words for the topic and are mentioned several times in the cards. Candidates are advised to check the vocabulary they intend to use in this section against the vocabulary given on the card.

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<p>Paper 9782/02 Reading and Listening</p>
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Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- focus only on the required information and communicate it precisely in their answers
- pay particular attention to conveying the required information to the examiner in unambiguous language.

General comments

Part I: Reading

Candidates are advised to spend about 1 hour 15 minutes on this section.

Text 1. The candidate needs to be able to respond to target language questions set on a Russian text. In order to gain credit some degree of manipulation of the language of the text is required in a candidate's answers. Complete sentences are not required.

Text 2. The candidate needs to respond in English to questions set in English on another Russian text. Complete sentences are not required.

Text 3. The candidate has to translate into Russian a short English passage which contains lexis taken from the previous reading passages. This lexis will generally need to be manipulated in order to be used in the translation passage.

Part II: Listening

Candidates are advised to spend about 1 hour on this section. In order to make the best possible use of the time, candidates should be familiar with and proficient at using their individual listening equipment.

Text 1. The candidate needs to be able to respond to target language questions set on a recorded Russian text. The test is marked positively and the objective is to communicate only the correct information, so that candidates should focus on the question and generate a logical, sufficient response, rather than reproducing large chunks of the original text word for word. Full sentences are not required in the answers but the correct information must be conveyed successfully.

Text 2. The candidate needs to respond in English to questions set in English on a recorded Russian text. Complete sentences are not required.

Text 3. The candidate has to summarise a recorded Russian text in no more than 100 words of English with reference to a number of bullet points. It is important to focus on the bullet points and avoid including any irrelevant material. Continuous English is not required.

A wide range of ability in reading and listening skills was shown by candidates. Candidates generally took care to follow the rubric and read the questions carefully. It should be borne in mind that correct answers cannot generally be credited where incorrect or irrelevant material is included. Therefore, candidates should ensure their answers are as concise as possible.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Reading

Question 1

Most candidates gained both marks. Some, however, lost a mark by referring to street noise rather than that emanating from neighbours.

Question 2

Most candidates gained this mark.

Question 3

Most candidates gained this mark. Others omitted the essential reference to *ночное время*.

Question 4

Most answers were correct, but some misread *нельзя* in the question and answered *в рабочие дни*.

Question 5

This question posed few problems.

Question 6

Generally speaking, this question posed no problems.

Question 7

Most candidates included both elements in their answer, gaining full marks. A few missed a mark by lifting *одному* from the text.

Question 8

Candidates produced a wide range of language structures to gain this mark.

Question 9

The majority of candidates gained this mark, but a substantial number omitted *более* (more).

Question 10

Most candidates gained both marks.

Question 11

The preferred answer was 'practically every day'. Those who omitted 'practically' were still awarded the mark.

Question 12

Most answers given were correct, showing that candidates understood the reference to *пожилых людей*

Question 13

Most answers were correct, with candidates expressing in various ways the key idea that the increase in home libraries is contrary to the general trend of people reading less.

Question 14

Сельские жители needed to be understood in order to gain this mark. Candidates should analyse adjectives carefully, as they may be formed from a more commonly known noun – in this case *село*.

Question 15

Most candidates correctly identified *современные* and *дореволюционной* to gain the mark.

Question 16

This question generally posed no problems. A full answer: 'borrow from a friend/acquaintance' was required.

Question 17

This question needed to be read very carefully, as the inclusion of '2% buy books online' invalidated the correct answer that only 7% download books from the Internet.

Question 18

A wide range of acceptable renderings for 'city dwellers' (for example: *горожан, жителей города*) were produced by candidates. The same is the case for 'a growing concern'. Whereas *растёт* would suffice in the context, other successful renderings such as *становится всё более озабочивающей* were produced. A few candidates confused *запрещает* with its opposite *разрешает*. Some candidates would do well to remember that a time of day requires the genitive after a time: *после семи часов вечера*.

A wide range of renderings were possible for 'outdoors' and most of these were produced by candidates.

Many successfully used an active construction for 'their work can be stopped': *их работу можно остановить*.

Candidates need to remember that much of the vocabulary for the translation is in the previous texts: *замечать* appeared in a reading text as *замечаю*.

The main verbs used for 'I'm trying' were *я пытаюсь* and *стараюсь*.

Candidates performed well in translating 'prevents' (*мешает*), which is a high-level verb. Many candidates knew this verb, and others used acceptable alternatives such as *не даёт мне* or *поэтому я не могу*.

Most candidates knew, or were able to retrieve *малообеспечен* from text 2, but some found other creditable ways of expressing the idea.

Candidates need to be aware of the distinction between 'so' the intensifier (*так*) and 'so' the conjunction (*так что*). Many used effective alternatives such as *поэтому* or *следовательно*.

Part II: Listening

Question 19

Most candidates retrieved both *автоматом* and *доверие*, though only one of these was required for the mark.

Question 20

Most answers were correct and the key word *связь* was transcribed with sufficient accuracy by the majority.

Question 21

Virtually all candidates gained this mark.

Question 22

There were many possible approaches to answering this question provided there was reference to children and/or school. Most candidates gave a full answer by answering that the children needed to attend a school nearby.

Question 23

Again, there were many possible ways of expressing the idea that the bus shelter was uncovered (открытая/не закрытая) and the lack of protection from the weather. Most candidates gained both marks.

Question 24

This question posed few problems.

Question 25

Most candidates retrieved at least two of the three other areas in which the village elder helped thereby gaining both marks.

Question 26

Most answers were correct.

Question 27

Virtually all candidates understood that the standard of English football was high. Several candidates believed Diniyar simply wanted to move to the West rather than 'test himself'.

Question 28

Here again, two out of three points had to be retrieved in order to gain both marks. The most commonly understood idea was that he did not want his former club to suffer (*не пострадала*) and that everyone should gain (*чтобы все выиграли*). Stronger candidates gained both marks.

Question 29

This question proved accessible to almost all candidates who were able to gain both marks.

Question 30

The key point that in England there are no training Centres in the Russian sense was grasped by only a few. Many gained the mark by stating that in England training takes place on football pitches.

Question 31

Most candidates gained this mark.

Question 32

Many acceptable renderings of *всякую ерунду* were produced by candidates such as rubbish, nonsense, lies.

Question 33

Most answers to this summary question were within 100 words. Candidates should be aware, however, that any material more than a few words beyond this limit cannot be credited. Candidates who have difficulty in keeping within the word limit should remember that continuous prose is not a requirement for this question. As each bullet carries up to 3 marks there are many routes to gaining the maximum mark of 10.

- How unemployment has affected graduates in Nizhegorodskaya oblast

This bullet proved quite testing for most candidates. Many mentioned that about 2000 graduates in the region remained without work. Metallurgy was understandably not as often recognised as car manufacturing (*автомобилестроение*). Only one specialist field had to be retrieved to gain a mark.

Many candidates missed the significance of *высококвалифицированных* and simply wrote 'qualified'. Quite a few grasped the fact that unemployment in the region was lower than average for Russia and some cited the detail: two thirds to half as many (*в полтора-два раза ниже*).

- The role of employment agencies

переобучение and to a lesser extent *стажировку* caused comprehension difficulties for many who tended to guess that jobs were being offered. Better understood were the facts that 870 candidates have already been given this opportunity and that it was hoped to arrange the same for the rest by the end of the year.

- What is said about students' expectations

In order to gain the first mark it was essential to state that expectations of candidates or their demands (*требования*) were too high. Similarly, it was insufficient to state that graduates wished to become company directors or their deputies without adding that they wanted to achieve this immediately.

A small number of candidates gained a mark for mentioning the point that graduates are not satisfied with the starting salaries offered by employers. Most candidates gained at least 2 marks for this section.

- Popular and less-favoured areas of study

Unless they had exceeded the word limit most candidates gained 2 marks for this section. *Экономико-управленческие* led to a few problems, but many gave acceptable renderings such as economic management. Most understood *юридические* as law. *Естественным наукам* and *сельскому хозяйству* were generally interpreted correctly as natural sciences and agriculture. Many confused *машиностроению* with car manufacture (*автомобилестроение*), which appeared earlier in the interview.

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Paper 9782/03
Writing and Usage

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, choose a title on which they have something to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and lexis
- in Part I, plan their essay to produce well-structured and persuasive arguments
- in Part I, write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- in Part II, read each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence(s)
- in Parts I and II, carefully proofread their responses.

General comments

On the whole, candidates were clearly well prepared for this paper. The paper is in two parts and lasts for 2 hours and 15 minutes in total. Candidates are advised to spend about 1 hour 30 minutes on Part I (writing) and about 45 minutes on Part II (usage). 40 marks are available for Part I, in which candidates write one discursive essay of 250-350 words in Russian, and 20 marks for Part II in which candidates complete exercises which test their knowledge of Russian vocabulary and structure.

All the candidates completed all sections of the paper, and all followed the instruction to write in dark blue or black pen.

Comments on specific questions

Part I

Candidates write one essay from a choice of 5 titles. It is suggested that candidates write between 250-350 words in Russian. It is unlikely that an essay shorter than 250 words will include sufficient content and range of vocabulary and structure to be able to access the entire range of marks available. A maximum of 24 marks out of 40 are awarded for the accuracy and linguistic range of the essay, and a maximum of 16 marks out of 40 for the development and organisation of ideas.

The majority of candidates wrote a plan for the essay. As mentioned above, an essay plan is, it goes without saying, of great help, if not essential, in writing a well-organised and coherently argued essay. In addition, a plan allows the candidate to note down examples, vocabulary and structures which s/he may wish to include in the essay. The essay plan is not assessed. Many candidates wrote the essay on alternate lines of the page, allowing them to make corrections or additions to the essay neatly. In a surprisingly large number of cases the presentation of the work was rather messy and the standard of handwriting poor. Particular difficulty came with the handwritten versions of the letters л, д, б, м and в.

Accuracy and linguistic range is assessed out of 24 marks and the essay does not have to be grammatically without fault to be awarded full marks in this category. In order to access the highest marks here, candidates should aim to include a very wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the title they have chosen in addition to demonstrating the ability to use complex sentence patterns and structures appropriately and accurately. Up to 16 marks are awarded for the development and organisation of the ideas in the essay. Here, in order to access the highest marks, candidates must present an answer to the title which demonstrates that they have understood the question, considered its implications and prepared a well-planned and thoughtful response illustrated with appropriate examples. Examples from anywhere in the world may be used.

In order to be able to access the full range of marks available for this essay, candidates would be well advised to choose a title about which they have clear ideas and views. They need to consider the question

from different angles and to draw a clear conclusion. Examples should be incorporated into the essay and used to support strands of the argument. It is very possible that the candidate will have, at the initial planning stage, more material than can be used in an essay of this length. The skill, of course, comes in selecting the arguments and examples to be used to address the question and the most successful answers reflected the candidates' ability to do just this. Less successful were those essays in which candidates appeared to write everything they knew about the topic, thus losing sight of the question.

Question 1

- (a) This was a popular question which was chosen by nearly half of the candidates. Most candidates gave a considered response to the question, debating the effects (positive and negative) of various forms of the media. A minority concentrated only on the Internet, and occasionally had difficulty distinguishing between media and the Internet. Some material on the Internet is of course part of the media, but not all Internet content can come under this heading and some confusion arose here. Many candidates made effective use of appropriate examples from the press, television or radio in support of their argument and such examples usually added weight to the essay. The majority of candidates who answered this question used a very good range of relevant and specific vocabulary.
- (b) This was a popular question which was answered by nearly half of the candidates. Many candidates were able to write at a relatively sophisticated level on the merits and disadvantages of life in the town or countryside and to write a well-balanced, convincing essay. On occasion essays were somewhat unbalanced and also on occasion the arguments offered were a little simplistic. Many candidates used examples from personal experience and used these to good effect. The best essays tended to draw on a range of features, including those on a global scale, of life in the town or countryside and some looked at differing attitudes in different cultures and countries about where it is better to live.
- (c) There were not enough responses to this question to make a comment here.
- (d) A small number of candidates answered this question. The responses generally drew on a pleasing range of examples from history and contemporary society and were generally considered and thoughtful. Candidates often compared attitudes in different cultures and did so to good effect. The level of language used in answering this question was on the whole quite sophisticated and demonstrated a good grasp of appropriate vocabulary and structure.
- (e) There were not enough responses to this question to make a comment here.

Part II

Exercise 1

The five questions in this section tested the candidates' knowledge of verb conjugations. Any acceptable correct version of the infinitive given in brackets in the context of the given sentence was allowed. Versions of alternative infinitives of the same verb were not accepted (e.g. conjugations of *приглашать* in **Question 6** where the infinitive given was *пригласить*). Verb conjugations were generally well known, with many candidates scoring full marks on this section. The most difficult question proved to be **Question 5**, where a number of candidates struggled to form the imperative.

Exercise 2

Candidates should be aware that in order to be awarded the mark for this question the sense of the original sentences must be preserved. For example, in **Question 8** it was necessary to convey the time sequence (i.e. the client signed the document after the lawyer had read it) to gain the mark.

There were many candidates who were able to manipulate the language as required in this section and this exercise proved to be a good test of knowledge of the structure of Russian. Candidates were usually able to use "который" successfully. The dative needed to answer **Question 9** often caused difficulty, as did the use of reported speech in **Question 10**.

On the whole, though, this exercise was completed successfully and a good number of candidates scored at least 4 marks out of 5.

Exercise 3

As for the previous two exercises in Part II, many candidates did well in Exercise 3, and very few scored less than half marks. The answers which were most often not known were numbers 16, 20 and 25. In preparing for this type of test, candidates should revise thoroughly both the declensions of nouns and adjectives, and the cases which follow different prepositions in Russian.

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Paper 9782/04
Topics and Texts

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read the question with care and think about what they are asked to do
- plan their answer and organise their material with close attention to the question
- take care to include analysis and argument, and avoid simply retelling the story.

General comments

Paper 4 is divided into two sections carrying equal marks. Part I requires an answer of between 250 and 400 words in Russian to one question. 20 marks are available for content while 10 are available for language. Part II requires an answer of between 450 and 600 words in English to one question. 25 marks are available for content while 5 are available for structure.

Though there were natural differences in the level to which candidates had prepared for this paper, generally speaking, the standard of content knowledge in the answers was high. Almost all candidates appeared to have studied their chosen works in great detail. A number of answers showed evidence of extensive background reading, though some candidates spent too long discussing biographical details rather than focusing on the works themselves. The degree to which candidates were able to select appropriate material from their stock of knowledge and adapt this to the question they had chosen to answer varied. The best answers showed the ability to exclude irrelevant information which, though interesting and accurate, did not add weight to the argument. Many essays contained numerous quotations which supported the points being made. Some candidates would have gained higher marks had they been able to quote accurately and integrate the quotations selected into their own discourse. A minority of answers displayed a lack of originality. The language of the answers in both English and Russian varied from outstanding to satisfactory. There were fewer short answers this year, though it should be noted that in order to access the higher range of marks, candidates should aim to write to the upper recommended word limit. Not all candidates appeared to have written a plan. Those who did, generally wrote in a more organised manner, producing answers which were awarded higher marks as a result.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Cultural Topics

Question 1

- A** While all candidates successfully described a relevant scene from each of their chosen works, not all answers contained enough information relating to the second part of the question. Some answers were also unbalanced in that they discussed one work in greater detail than the other. Some answers contained perceptive detail and appropriate quotation.
- B** Answers to this question were largely interesting and original. More attention was paid to the first part of the question than to the second by some candidates. Appropriate quotation was rewarded.

Question 2

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

Question 3

- A** Those who answered this question tended to describe more scenes than the required one from each work. Though the scenes chosen were often appropriate, the descriptions of them were sometimes rather superficial, and no real comparisons were made between them. Candidates could have improved their performances by referring to the second part of the question early on in their answers and assessing what they were describing in the scenes they had selected in terms of the unforgettable qualities they should mention.
- B** This question was fairly popular and produced a range of achievement. Some candidates described clearly how the writers and director successfully defended the aims of the Revolution in terms of the content of their works, but few mentioned, let alone analysed, their methods alluded to in the second part of the question. Some answers reflected confusion about the content of the works as well as the circumstances and dates of their creation in relation to the events of 1917.

Question 4

- A** Most candidates succeeded in making at least a reasonable attempt at discussing the depiction of the lives and fates of the main characters in the texts and film. The second part of the question was sometimes not addressed to the same successful degree. The best answers focused equally on both parts.
- B** This question produced some very strong answers in which both parts of the question were addressed in an appropriate manner. Although some candidates were less successful in discussing the helplessness of the individual during the time of Stalin, almost all provided a wealth of detail from their chosen works in relation to the inequalities between State and citizen and the injustices which often resulted because of this.

Question 5

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

Part II: Literary Texts

Question 6

- A** This question attracted few answers. These were of good quality, though they tended not to address all parts of the question. The best answers had much to say about the use of language and poetic techniques employed as well as the relevance of the passage to the rest of the work. Writing a commentary under exam conditions is a particularly challenging task which requires much practice. Only those who feel confident about the exercise are likely to score highly.
- B** This question also attracted few answers. These were impressive, discussing in detail a limited number of poetic techniques and their effectiveness. The answers displayed a high degree of technical knowledge and understanding and the ability to illustrate this through the use of appropriate quotation. The strategy of limiting the areas for discussion is a sensible one, though it might be sensible to mention in passing the presence of other poetic devices and techniques in the text in order to fully validate the greatness of the poet and his work.
- C** This was by far the most popular question on the paper. The answers reflected the entire range of ability and achievement, though most were good or better. A number were exceptionally well written and displayed a profound knowledge of the themes and the vacillating stance of the narrator to them as well as to characters and events. While some argued that it is indeed the ambiguous nature of the text which makes it especially memorable, others made a case that the main attraction of the poem is the poetic skill and craftsmanship of its writer. A minority of answers were confused, repetitive or disorganised or did not make a convincing argument by overusing words such as “perhaps” and “arguably”.

Question 7

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

Question 8

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

Question 9

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

Question 10

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

Question 11

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

Question 12

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

Question 13

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