

ФЕДЕРАЛЬНЫЕ УЧЕБНО-МЕТОДИЧЕСКИЕ КОМПЛЕКТЫ

Introduction to “Millie–2”

S. Azarova, E. Druzhinina, E. Ermolaeva, E. Zotkina, L. Karpova, E. Korenkova, E. Kostyuk, I. Krayneva, N. Petrova, N. Ponomareva, R. Popova, N. Slavshik, L. Sokolova, L. Strukova, N. Shulgina, authors of “Millie” series

The book and the authors

This is the first book of the *Millie* series for primary grades. It's part of the *New Millennium English* textbook series, which has been designed specifically for secondary schools in Russia. *Millie–2* is intended for the second class (first year of study of English), for pupils aged 7–8.

These three books have been written by a team of experienced teachers of English working in schools in different regions of Russia (Moscow, Nizhni Novgorod, Omsk, Sochi, St Petersburg and Tula).

Our credo

The book represents an innovative approach to language learning, which is truly child-centred. Our emphasis is on fostering positive attitudes to language learning. This means that the units have been created for children to enjoy English and have fun in the classroom, while participating in a variety of activities and games that engage their imagination and curiosity.

This new approach is success-oriented and caters for all learners of all abilities.

Structure and syllabus

The syllabus is topic-based and allows for a natural introduction of new language arising from topics that have been carefully selected to reflect children's interests at this age.

The book contains ten units. Each unit covers six lessons.

The first five lessons aim at developing children's ability to communicate effectively, by using modern English and developing language skills. The last lesson in every unit is devoted to revision of the unit material, together with an episode of a special story, “The Upside-Down World”.

All the units have been developed with careful attention to systematic revision and recycling of key language. An additional lesson after every second unit is devoted to a progress check, where children are encouraged to evaluate their own progress.

Components of the set

1 The Pupil's Book: contains a variety of activities, together with a record of the language for production (both on the lesson page and in the wordlist at the back of the book). It also contains a page for parents, with useful tips to help children at home, and keys for progress check activities. There's also a transliteration table which provides Ps with support for writing their names.

2 The Activity Book: contains practice activities following every lesson. These are done individually as homework. The book may also be used by a teacher to provide extra practice in class. The activity book contains special pages to use for crafts. The instructions are in Russian to help parents and children who work on their own.

3 The Audio Cassette: contains native speaker (and where relevant native children's) recordings of a variety of listening texts such as songs, rhymes, chants, dialogues, cartoon stories and action stories.

4 The Teacher's Book: contains an introduction and methodology guide, a glossary of terminology, and a description of the procedures in every lesson. It also contains useful tips and cultural notes, information boxes, and some photocopiable materials. There are lists of classroom language for teachers and pupils, and a bank of ideas for extra class activities in the book. There's a list of tips on individual sound pronunciation. There's also a story, for extensive listening or reading (“Millie's story”) in every unit except unit five.

5 The set of Picture and Word Cards: can be used as both visual aids and as support for games in the teaching of initial reading.

Aims and objectives

The book has been designed to meet Federal requirements.

There are *five sets of global aims* that apply to the whole course:

- to develop children's ability to communicate effectively, using English relevant to their age;
- to contribute to the development of thinking skills such as problem solving, memorising, organising and categorising information;
- to contribute to the development of the child's personality, creativity and imagination, to promote positive attitudes in pupils towards their own and other cultures, and to increase motivation for further FL learning;
- to contribute to the development of pupils' monitoring skills, such as learning to evaluate their own progress and other learning-to-learn skills;
- to develop the children's social and interpersonal skills.

*Some background:**How do children learn languages?*

Children acquire new language without much effort *when they are having fun and when there are many opportunities for them to hear the language in familiar contexts.* If

When children listen to the teacher or the tape, it's not important for them to understand every word, because children have a natural ability to focus on meaning. They can get clues from the teacher's repetition or re-phrasing of messages. Another efficient tool is miming. The Teacher's

Book suggests tips for that. For listening to the tape, illustrations in the book and contextual background noises also help to make meanings clear.

There is a variety of listening texts (such as songs, action stories, rhymes and dialogues). Some of these are original English texts for children of this age. Others have been created by the writers and approved by native speaker specialists. The number of authentic texts will grow in the next books in the series. (E. g. PB: U10, L1, p. 113.)

In every unit we try to develop children's ability to predict, listen for general understanding and specific details.

Of course, children need to hear the new language patterns first. But very quickly they are ready to practise these in teacher-controlled games. After some whole-class practice, the children will start using the language in pairs or in groups. They'll do this purposefully, to express personally relevant ideas. Often this will be in a game or a dialogue. The Teacher's Book provides some *sample language* which describes the expected level of pupils' speaking in these activities.

For example, a survey in Unit 5 Lesson 5 is used to incorporate new language about Christmas decorations into it. The children go around and ask each other about what they have got in their stockings.

Phonology

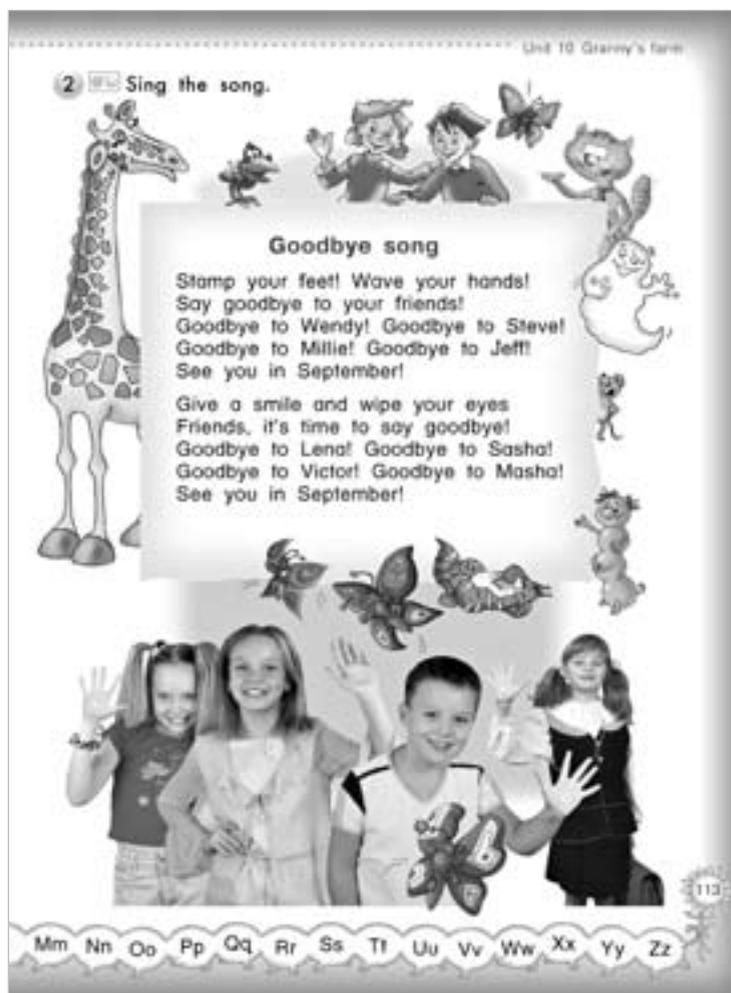
Children at this age are very sensitive to the sound system of the new language. They enjoy repetition, clapping the rhythm and experimenting with intonation patterns in chants and songs. The songs and rhymes offer an excellent opportunity to work on individual sounds and sound combinations.

For example, the rhyme from Unit 8 Lesson 4.

The suggested *Tips On Sounds* will help develop pupils' awareness that words are made of discrete sounds. It will prepare the children for instruction in *phonics* – knowledge about the relations between specific letters of the alphabet and letter combinations, and specific spoken sounds.

Error correction

When children repeat new phrases after you at the beginning of the lesson, it is important to make sure that they say them correctly, with good pronunciation. However, when they are engaged in a meaningful activity – such as a game or a short conversation in pairs or groups – it is important to listen and take note of any problems, rather than interrupt and interrupt the flow of the activity.



Multi-sensory approach

All children are different and learn in different ways. This is why it's important to engage all the senses and use a variety of techniques. We encourage teachers to use sounds, music, pictures and other visual aids (including real objects that the children can touch and smell). It's also important to make use of the children's natural need to move around and incorporate physical movements and mime into any language work. The more opportunities a teacher has to combine the different senses, the better.

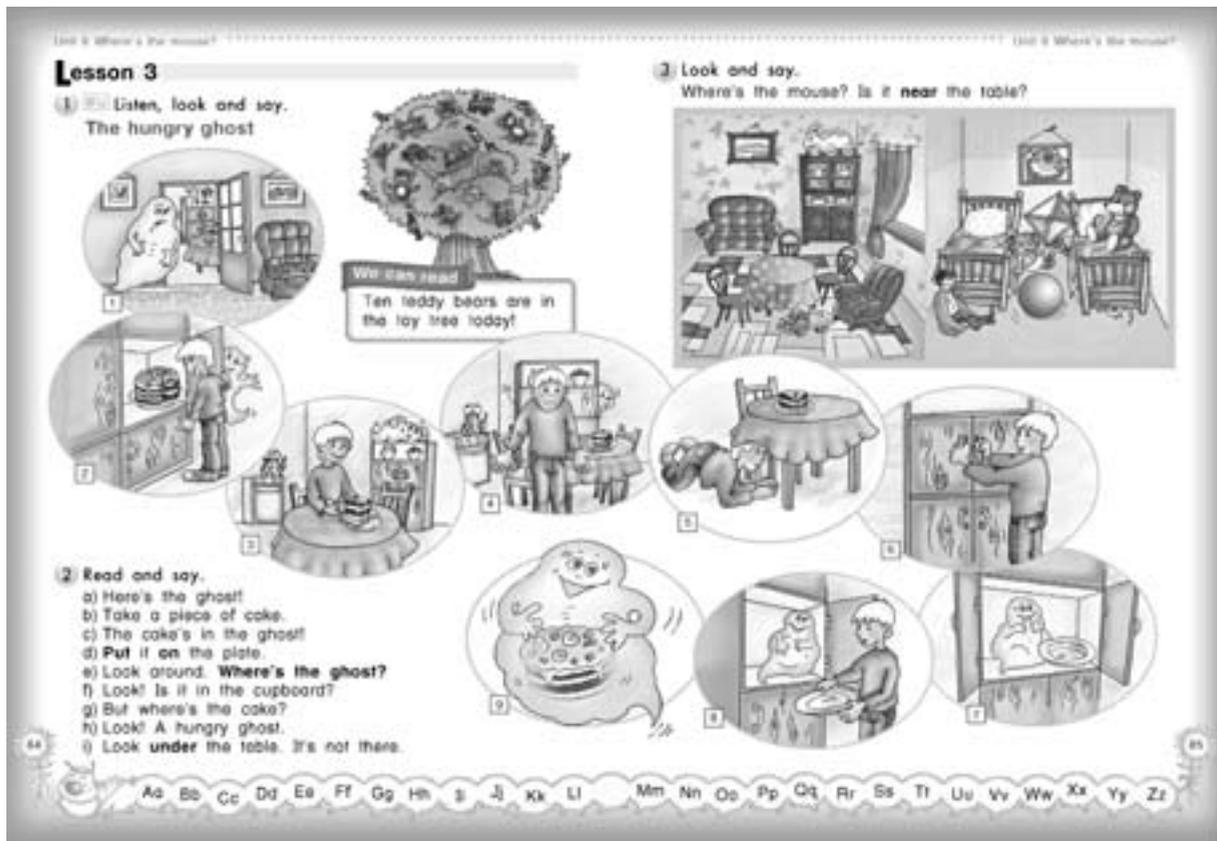
Making this important link between listening, speaking and movement, we regularly introduce "action stories". Here the language which children hear is supported with actions to aid memorisation and to make the activity more enjoyable. The teacher introduces the movements and the children join in. (E.g. PB: U8, L3, pp. 84–85.)

colour the wings. I like red, green and yellow. Let's fold the wing like this. I take two wings and join them with the paper clip like this. We can make our butterfly fly. Do it like this. The butterfly can fly now.

When the butterflies are ready, the children will describe their products to each other, using the relevant language from the unit. All the butterflies are displayed on the wall and the children will match each description with the picture.

Reading and writing

While we've placed the emphasis on listening and speaking, we recognise that the majority of children at this age can already read in their first language quite well. And they are interested in reading and writing in English, too. The difficulty is that the sound and letter correspondence in English



Our book also contains *craft activities* which allow children to create and manipulate simple "products" that they can take home and enjoy. These products are always used to support some kind of speaking practice.

For example, in Unit 3 Lesson 4 colours are introduced. Towards the end of the unit the children make a colourful butterfly. The teacher demonstrates the steps of the craft activity and the children do it while watching the teacher and listening to her instructions:

Sample language:

T: Cut out the wing of the butterfly like this. Now I can

is irregular. We believe that only one teaching technique (using phonics, for example) is not sufficient.

Therefore, our approach to teaching reading combines several techniques. First of all we use the *whole word method* to encourage word recognition. For example, after some new words have been introduced orally, the teacher will play various card games with the children to match the picture cards with the words.

We also teach the whole alphabet at the very beginning of the course. Then, in every lesson of the first 3 units of the book, we focus on a set of letters in some detail. Moreover, we suggest a variety of activities to practise spelling,

through word games, crossword puzzles and word snakes. These are included in the activity book.

From Unit 4 onwards *phonics* is introduced through *We can read* (in PB) and *We can read and write* (in AB). (E.g. PB: U4, L4, p. 41.) We also attract the children's attention to letter-sound correspondence through the

aspects of their learning. Taking responsibility for every aspect of the learning process is not a realistic goal, even for adults. With this age group we only need to take small steps. One small step forward in our book is that children can begin to make choices. For this reason we have included open-ended tasks.



meaningful contexts of songs, chants and rhymes, by asking pupils, for example, to find rhyming words.

As for writing, in the first units we've put the emphasis on teaching the techniques of writing, so that later on we can start developing the skill. Such techniques include letter tracing, copying and matching words and phrases. When possible, this is done through some kind of a game or puzzle. There are writing tasks for more able pupils, which require them to complete their own messages and offer examples and support, such as a "skeleton letter" to fill in. Here is an example of the letter to Santa Claus/Father Frost in Unit 5 Lesson 6 (Activity Book):

Learning to learn

We believe that it's our job as English teachers to help children learn the language as effectively as possible. In our English lessons children should also learn skills which they can use in other learning situations. For example, we should teach them that, when they are trying to understand the overall message of the text, they should pay attention to the key words in the texts, rather than to every single word. Or they can guess the meaning of some words by relying on their knowledge of international words. In our book we give advice to teachers, so they can make the most of these opportunities to make the learning process as effective and enjoyable as possible.

Children also need to be able to learn to reflect on their own performance and to take responsibility for some

For example, in Unit 4 Lesson 2 the teacher should teach the names of pets that the children in the class actually have, rather than a pre-determined list. This is an open-ended approach which takes children's choices into account. Allowing them to do this, and to listen to their own initiatives and ideas, will motivate them to learn better.

Assessment

We don't recommend formal testing at this age. Instead, we strongly believe that competitive testing would demotivate many learners. However, there is a need for teachers to follow their learners' progress. So teachers are encouraged to use a systematic observation sheet for each learner in the class.

In line with our approach to learning to learn, we've included a Progress Page after every second unit. This should be filled in by individual pupils to give them a chance to check their own progress. Of course, the teacher should be there to monitor and help too.

The Progress Page contains activities to check the children's achievement through familiar exercises. While the pupils have an opportunity to check their own progress, the page is also used to highlight problems, so the teacher can make a decision to revisit something in the previous unit if several children are having the same problem. The children should be encouraged to try again until they are satisfied with their scores. *The emphasis is on all children succeeding.*

Pupils add up their scores. Four categories of achievement are possible:

Super!
Well done!
OK!
Try again!

Within the Progress Page, we also encourage children to reflect on what they can do in English on a regular basis. We suggest that teachers ask children what they enjoyed and why. Teachers can use this information to begin to reflect on their present practice and consider changes to their usual practice.

At the very beginning the teacher uses Russian when asking children to brainstorm which rhymes, songs, chants and games the children like, enjoy and can reproduce. Later she encourages pupils to some English usage as well. They can use: *I like/love, My favourite ... is, I can...*

We should try to emphasise what the children can do instead of what they cannot! This approach will have a positive effect on their motivation and confidence.

Story

The book incorporates one episode of a separate story, in the 6th lesson of every unit. The story represents an "Upside-Down World", engaging the children's fantasy and imagination. The aim of the story is to give extra listening practice in an enjoyable way. We suggest ideas to elicit children's feelings about the story, using L1. As a unique feature, the story is printed upside down in the book. This makes handling the book more interesting and adds a physical reality to the upside-down idea. (E.g. PB: U6, L6, p. 67.)

Information boxes

In our book we encourage children to use the foreign language as a wonderful tool for acquiring new ideas and information about the world, and to amuse themselves. For these reasons, the Pupil's and Teacher's Books contain special boxes: *Do you know?* and *Did your pupils know that ...?*

For example, in Unit 4 ("My Pet") the teacher can tell the children, using L1, which animals can be kept as pets at home and which can't. In Unit 9 ("Lunch-box") children can get to know where and when the biggest hamburger in the world was made.

Cross-cultural awareness and "Russianness"

We think it's very important to raise pupils' awareness of cultural differences, in particular with regard to the lives of children around the world.

The book is not limited to the traditional dialogues in the mother tongue and the foreign language cultures, but a really global context.

For example, in Unit 5 children can find the information about the name for Santa Claus not only in the UK and Russia but also in France, Italy and China.

Some materials have got a really Russian flavour. Cross-cultural links help learners to appreciate Russian culture and its place in the world. At the same time, these links help to develop respect for other countries and their people.

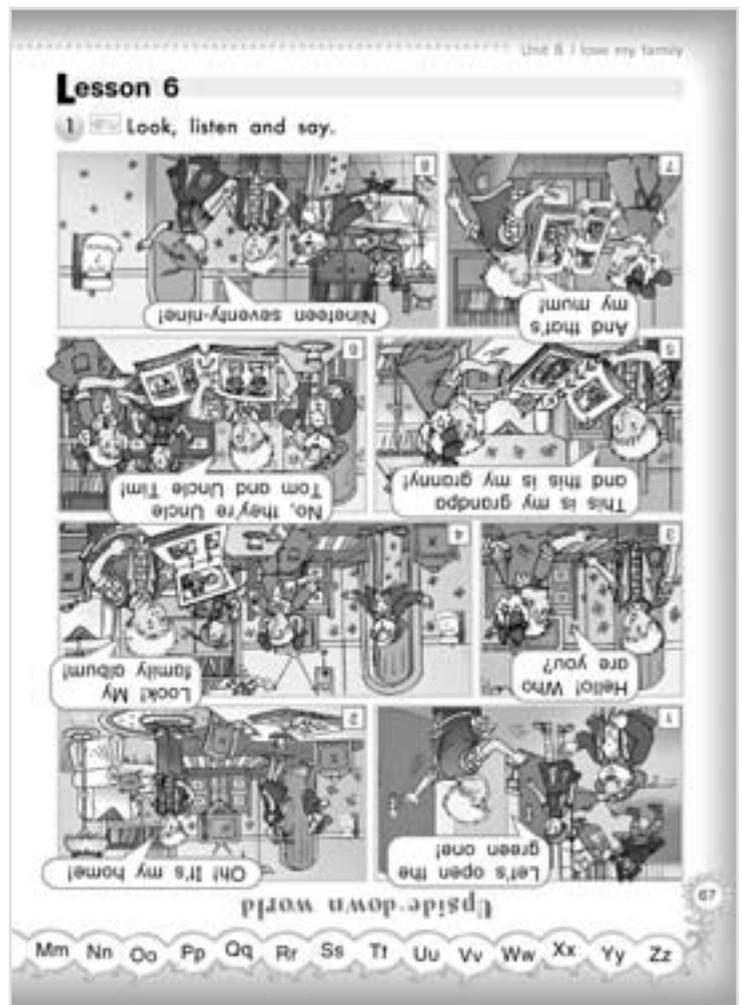
Cross-curricular links

The book includes some elements of other subjects in the primary school curriculum (Maths, Science, Art, Crafts and Music). This helps pupils get a more "holistic" picture of the world around them. The cross-curricular links will become deeper in the next books and will include other subjects, such as History and Geography.

Classroom management

The learning activities require a combination of several patterns of interaction. In addition to whole class activities, teachers will have to organise both group work and pair work, to give children the opportunity to practise language. Children enjoy talking to their friends and this gives them a real sense of achievement. Talking in pairs and groups also lowers anxiety levels and takes the pressure away from individuals.

Our materials can be used with either small or large classes. For some activities the teacher will need to divide



the class into several groups. Special notes on how to manage bigger classes appear in the Teacher's Book.

Teacher's roles

The teacher in the primary English classroom is a very important source of input for the children. This is why it's crucial to use L2 whenever possible. The teacher should pay special attention to praising and encouraging everybody in the class. Teachers should display the children's work on the wall. This is a way of showing appreciation of their work. Such work can also be used as useful visual support.

We also recommend that teachers and parents work together. We think it's a good idea to initiate communication with parents so that they can support their children at home if they choose to (see parents' page in PB p. 124).

Good luck note

We hope that you'll enjoy working with our series, *Millie*, as much as we've enjoyed writing it! And enjoy trying out all the ideas in your classrooms!

Have fun!
Authors

Parent's page

Дорогие родители, бабушки, дедушки, дяди, тети и другие взрослые!

Поздравляем вас и ваших детей с началом увлекательного путешествия в мир английского языка! Мы надеемся, что замечательные персонажи Millie и другие герои учебника не оставят ваших детей равнодушными и вызовут их интерес и любовь к английскому языку. Мы включили в книгу много веселых песен, историй, стихов, рифмовок и игр, которые не только замечательны, но и познавательны. К концу первого года обучения дети освоят не только простые формы общения на английском языке, но и начнут знакомиться с культурой других народов.

Но в начале этого нового большого пути детям никак не обойтись без помощи взрослых — нас, учителей, и вас, уважаемые родители. Мы как учителя знаем, что родители очень хотят помочь своим детям, но часто не знают как. Поэтому мы решили прямо в учебнике отметить на некоторые вопросы, которые чаще других волнуют родителей.

Надеемся, что наши советы пригодятся вам и вашим детям и помогут сделать изучение английского языка легким и увлекательным!

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|---|--|---|
| 1 | Станет ли так рано начинать? <i>Бабушка, 56 лет, пенсионерка</i> | Конечно — стоит! Дети этого возраста более восприимчивы к языку, легко и с удовольствием копируют взрослых, не боятся сказать глупую |
| 2 | Что делать, если ребенок не хочет заниматься английским? <i>Мама, 30 лет, домохозяйка</i> | Поговорите с ребенком и выясните, чем именно его нежелание: ему неинтересно или трудно? Постарайтесь заинтересовать его с помощью компьютерных игр, обучающих программ и видео. Если у Вашего ребенка возникли трудности, посоветуйтесь с учителем. Учитель подскажет Вам, как помочь ребенку запоминать новые слова, выполнять домашние задания и т.д. Ведь есть множество маленьких секретов успешной учебы, которых ребенок пока еще не знает! |
| 3 | Должны ли ребенок знать все слова и фразы из учебника? <i>Папа, 39 лет, экономист</i> | Вовсе не обязательно! В конце учебника мы приведем перечень слов и фраз, которые ребенок должен научиться употреблять к концу года. Предполагается, что в значении остальных слов из песен, стихов, рифмовок и небольших текстов ребенок будет догадываться. Если же Ваш ребенок уверенным языком, это даст ему возможность узнать больше. |
| 4 | Как с ребенком учить слова? <i>Папа, 34 года, программист</i> | Вот несколько советов, которыми Вы можете воспользоваться: • попросите ребенка назвать словом кого-нибудь из членов семьи; • вместе с ребенком создайте коллекцию слов, в которую помещайте карточки с пройденными словами; • развесьте карточки со словами, картинки с |

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Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll



"Millie" authors with Steve Ansell, one of the project consultants in the College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth