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Тексты для чтения по английскому языку,
приуроченные к юбилею

Закон РФ „Об образовании“ провозглашает сферу образования приоритетной в системе общественных отношений, в которой существуют и развиваются различные формы общего среднего и профессионального образования, обеспечивающие реализацию возможностей и потребностей ребенка. В процессе образования обучаемая личность осваивает многовековой социальный опыт как родной, так и общечеловеческой культуры. Общение представителей различных языков и культур реализуется с наибольшей полнотой и эффективностью в том случае, когда в процессе преподавания иностранного языка отводится место родной национальной культуре. Обращение к региональному компоненту при изучении иностранного языка открывает перед учителем широкие перспективы, в значительной степени расширяя воспитательный потенциал учебного предмета, помогает более эффективному усвоению его учащимися. Ведь еще У. Черчилль в свое время сказал, что „школьные учителя обладают властью, о которой премьер-министрам остается только мечтать“. На уроках иностранного языка наши ученики могут провести любую экскурсию (виртуальную, например) по странам изучаемого языка. А если спросить у них о своем крае? Я думаю, что возникнут некоторые трудности. Поэтому на уроках иностранного языка необходимо уделять достаточное внимание родному краю. Как говорится „East or West home is best“.

Краеведческий материал приближает иноязычную коммуникацию к личному опыту учащихся, позволяет оперировать в учебной беседе фактами и сведениями, с которыми они сталкиваются в повседневной жизни.

25 сентября 2013 года город-герой Смоленск праздновал свой 1150-летний юбилей. За свою многовековую историю Смоленск пережил немало бед, нашествий, войн, разорений. Но пройдя через все трудности и испытания, Смоленск остался самобытным и одним из красивейших городов России.

Смоленск — это западный форпост России, где практически каждая пядь земли претендует на право быть зачисленной в список объектов культурного наследия ЮНЕСКО. Смоленская крепостная стена самая длинная в Европе. В городе есть один из самых крупных и древних соборов на европейской территории России. Смоленск — единственный город в нашей стране, где сохранились сразу три памятника домонгольской эпохи — это церкви XII века.

Тысячи туристов ежегодно посещают наш город. И нам есть что рассказать им, в том числе иностранным гостям на их родном языке...



The Coat of Arms of Smolensk



Smolensk flag



The Uspensky Cathedral

Если крикнет рать святая:
„Кинь ты Русь, живи в раю!“ —
Я скажу: „Не надо рая,
Дайте родину мою“.

С. Есенин

Smolensk is a city in the west of Russia. It's one of the oldest Russian cities. Smolensk was a key stronghold on the Dnieper River in the 9th century and a commercial centre on the trade route between the Baltic Sea and the Byzantine Empire. Sacked by the Tatars in 1240, it subsequently fell to Lithuania. Sieges led to its capture by Moscow in 1340 and recapture by Lithuania in 1408. It was fought over several times, then was finally taken by Russia in 1654. It was burned during Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812. During World War II Smolensk was a scene of heavy fighting and remained occupied by the Germans from 1941 to 1943.

Smolensk is the capital of Smolensk Region, West-European Russia, a port on the Dnieper River. It is an important rail junction and a distribution point for the region's agricultural products. It is a commercial, light-industry, cultural and an educational centre. Smolensk is the head of navigation on the Dnieper. The city, a major linen producer, has one of Russia's largest flax-processing mills. Other industries include metalworking, machine building, flour milling, food processing, and the manufacture of textiles.

The name of the city is derived from the name of the Smolnya River. The origin of the river's name is less clear. One possibility is the old Slavic word „смель“ (smol) for black soil, which might have colored the waters of the long-derelict Smolnya. An alternative origin could be the Russian word „смола“ (smola), which means resin, tar, or pitch. Pine trees grow in the area, and the city was once a centre of resin processing and trade. The Byzantine emperor Constantine VII recorded its name as Μιλινισκα.

Smolensk is among the oldest Russian cities. The first recorded mention of the city was in 863 AD, two years after the founding of ancient Rus'. According to Russian Primary Chronicle, Smolensk (probably located slightly downstream, at the archaeological site of Gnezdovo) was located in the area settled by the West Slavic Radimichs tribe in 882 when Oleg of Novgorod captured it in passing from Novgorod to Kiev. The town was first attested two decades earlier, when the Varangian chieftains Askold and Dir, while on their way to Kiev, decided against challenging Smolensk because of its large size and population. The city was already a commercial centre in the late 9th century, when it became the capital of the Krivichi tribe and a fortress and a settlement for traders and artisans. It then fell under Kiev's rule. Its control of the key portages between the Dnieper and Western Dvina rivers gave Smolensk its early strategic importance. It also lay astride the trade route from the Baltic to Constantinople; Smolensk was connected with the Black Sea by the Dnieper and with the Hanseatic cities of the Baltic Sea and with Moscow and Novgorod by some of the most important medieval trade links. The city declined in the 11th century but revived in the 12th century to become the capital of an independent Belarusian principality. Smolensk was sacked by the Mongols in 1238–1240.

The bloom days of Smolensk principality were during the 12–13th centuries. According to the number of architectural monuments of pre-Mongolian period the town took the 3rd place after Kiev and Novgorod. At the same period Smolensk became one of the outstanding centers of Orthodoxy in Ancient Russia. The most important Orthodox treasure was the Uspensky Cathedral, started in brick by Vladimir Monomach in 1101.



Stone fortress



The monument to Kutuzov in Smolensk



Duchess Maria Tenisheva

At the beginning of the 17th century, the greatest stone fortress of the country was built to strengthen Russian frontiers. It symbolized the greatness and power of Russia. Contemporaries called it “The stone necklace of All Russia”.

The time of Troubles became a very hard period for the Russian state. Unity and civil patriotism of Russian society for the first time saved Russian nationhood and independence. It is no mere chance that a new holiday, Unity Day, was established in modern Russia. It is celebrated on November 4 as a symbol of unity of state and civil feelings in the life of our country. Smolensk had a crucial importance during the hardest days of the Time of Troubles.

At the beginning of the 18th century Smolensk was one of the headquarters of Peter the Great where he led the construction of fortifications on the South — western borders of Russia during the Great Northern War with Sweden.

The role of Smolensk governorate in the Patriotic War of 1812 cannot be overestimated. A war with Napoleon became the 1st Patriotic War for Russia on the territory of the region. The Smolensk nobles initiated the creation of the Volunteers’ Army to resist the enemy and Smolensk Region was a place of mass partisan movement.

After the Patriotic War of 1812 Smolensk was ruined again. The recovery lasted for several decades. In the middle of the 19th century the first railroad that influenced the development of industry ran through Smolensk. Between the 19th and the 20th centuries Smolensk Region was famous all over the country for its cultural centre due to the work of a philanthropist, Duchess Maria Tenisheva.

At the beginning of World War I, the 56th Smolensk Infantry Division was first assigned to the First Army of the Imperial Russian Army. They fought at the Battle of Tannenberg. It was subsequently transferred to the 10th Army and fought at the Second Battle of the Masurian Lakes. On 25 March 1918 Belarus declared independence under German occupation, forming the Belarusian People’s Republic and declared Smolensk part of it. In February — December 1918, Smolensk was a home to the headquarters of the Western Front, North-West Oblast Bolshevik Committee and Western Oblast Executive Committee. On January 1st, 1919, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed in Smolensk, but its government moved to Minsk as soon as the German forces had been driven out of Minsk.

The next painful event for our country was the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945.

Смоленск — о нем я с детства знаю.
 Через смоленские снега
 Гнала страна моя родная
 Полки разбитого врага.
 Так было встарь, во время оно,
 Теперь опять враги бегут.
 То — не закат Наполеона,
 А просто — Гитлеру капут.

*С. Я. Маршак
 “Смоленск 1812–1943”*

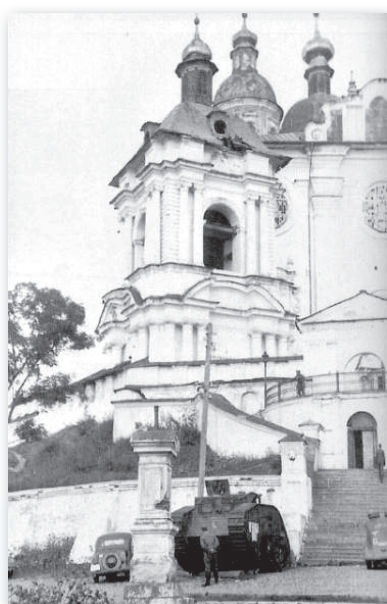
Smolensk, as in previous epochs, showed the exploit of self-sacrifice, courage and patriotism. During the battles on the territory of Smolensk Region German army had great casualties and was stopped in order to have enough time to prepare for the defense of Moscow.



Smolensk in ruins



Smolensk Battle.
The headquarters of the 16th Army



The occupied Smolensk
(The Uspensky Cathedral)



The eternal Flame in Smolensk

The Great Patriotic War “left its mark” on the walls of the ancient fortress. During the first months of the Great Patriotic War the fortress wall became a witness of the grand Smolensk defense battle. The town was defended by the 16th army of General M. F. Lukin, the 19th of I. S. Konev and the 20th of P. A. Kurochkin.

Smolensk was released by our troops on the 25th of September, 1943.

...Я видел все, что видеть мне пришлось,
Что враг терзал без всяких сожалений...
Но ни на миг ему не удалось
Тебя, Смоленск, поставить на колени.

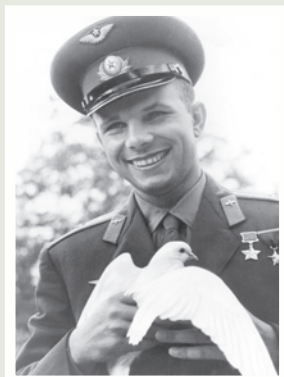
М. В. Исаковский

Nowadays near the walls of Smolensk fortress there are tombs of Soviet soldiers and the Eternal Flame is burning there.

Smolensk land has given a lot of talented people to Russia and to the world. Among them:

- Alexander Belyayev, science fiction writer
- Mikhail Glinka, composer
- Natalia Ishchenko, swimmer
- Eduard Khil, singer
- Sergey Kononov, sculptor
- Semyon Lavochkin, aircraft designer
- Maria Itkina, runner
- Anatoly Lukyanov, politician
- Gregori Maximoff, politician
- Grigory Potyomkin, statesman
- Aleksander Tvardovsky, writer
- Anatoly Papanov, actor
- Yuri Nikulin, circus and film actor
- Ludmila Kasatkina, actress
- Pavel Stepanovich Nakhimov, Russian admiral
- Elizaveta Golovanova, Miss Russia 2012

The most famous resident of Smolensk is Yuri Gagarin.



Yuri Gagarin

YURI GAGARIN

Yuri Gagarin was born on the 9th of March, 1934, in Klushino, a small village near Gzahtsk, Smolensk Region (now Gagarin). His parents worked on a collective farm. Yuri was the third of four children, and his elder sister helped to raise him while his parents worked. During the war, the Nazis threw his family out of their house and took two of his sisters away. Yuri helped his parents to dig a dugout where they lived until the end of the occupation. In 1946, the family moved to Gzahtsk.

In his youth, Gagarin got interested in space and planets. When he was in his fourth year of a technical school in Saratov, he joined a flying club and soon became a wonderful pilot. In August 1960 when Gagarin was one of 20 possible candidates for the space programme, an Air Force doctor wrote about him: "Modest, very intelligent, has fantastic memory, a very good imagination, quick reactions, understands life better than his friends, can defend his point of view". After his historic flight into space, Gagarin became famous all over the world. Sadly, he died on 27th of March, 1968, in a plane crash. Fifty years ago on April 12, 1961, Yuri Gagarin, a 27-year-old Russian pilot, crawled into a small capsule called Vostok 1 and called

"ПОУЕХАЛИ! — LET'S GO!"

He became the first human to travel into space. The flight lasted 108 minutes and took Yuri around the planet at 28,000 kilometres an hour. He later wrote of the beauty he had seen from the spaceship: "Rays were blazing through the atmosphere of the Earth, the horizon became bright orange, gradually passing into all the colours of the rainbow... What an indescribable gamut of colours!" Gagarin's historic journey took humankind closer to the stars and captured the imaginations of people from all over the planet.

Smolensk will celebrate its 1150th anniversary in November 2013.

All residents of Smolensk are proud of their town, its hard history and its destiny.



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