

# ДОПОЛНИТЕЛЬНОЕ ЧТЕНИЕ

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## GREAT BRITAIN

[The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#) is situated on the British Isles. The British Isles consist of two large islands, Great Britain and Ireland, and about five thousand small islands. Their total area is over 244,000 square kilometres.

The United Kingdom is made up of four countries: England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast respectively. Great Britain consists of England, Scotland and Wales and does not include Northern Ireland. But in everyday speech 'Great Britain' is used to mean the United Kingdom. The capital of the UK is London.

*The British Isles are separated from the European continent by the North Sea and the English Channel. The western coast of Great Britain is washed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea.*

*The surface of the British Isles varies very much. The north of Scotland is mountainous and is called the Highlands, while the south, which has beautiful valleys and plains, is called the Lowlands. The north and west of England are mountainous, but all the rest — east, centre and south-east — is a vast plain. Mountains are not very high. Ben Nevis in Scotland is the highest mountain (1343m).*

*There are a lot of rivers in Great Britain, but they are not very long. The Severn is the longest river, while the Thames is the deepest and the most important one.*

*The mountains, the Atlantic Ocean and the warm waters of Gulf Stream influence the climate of the British Isles. It is mild the whole year round.*

*The UK is one of the world's smaller countries. Its population is over 57 million. About 80% of the population is urban.*

*The UK is a highly developed industrial country. It is known as one of the world's largest producers and exporters of machinery, electronics, textile, aircraft and navigation equipment. One of the chief industries of the country is shipbuilding.*

*The UK is a constitutional monarchy. In law, the Head of State is the Queen. In practice, the Queen reigns, but does not rule. The country is ruled by the elected government with the Prime Minister at the head. The British Parliament consists of two chambers: the House of Lords and the House of Commons.*

*There are three main political parties in Great Britain: the Labour, the Conservative and the Liberal parties. The Conservative party is the ruling party nowadays. The Prime Minister is John Major.*

# The USA

[The United States of America](#) is the fourth largest country in the world (after Russia, Canada and China), It occupies the southern part of North America and stretches from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean. It also includes Alaska in the north and Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean. The total area of the country is about nine and a half million square kilometres. The USA borders on Canada in the north and on Mexico in the south. It also has a sea-boarder with Russia.

The USA is made up of 50 states and the District of Columbia, a special federal area where the capital of the country, Washington, is situated. The population of the country is about 250 million.

If we look at the map of the USA, we can see lowlands and mountains. The highest mountains are the Rocky Mountains, the Cordillera and the Sierra Nevada. The highest peak is Mount McKinley which is located in Alaska.

America's largest rivers are the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Rio Grande and the Columbia. The Great Lakes on the border with Canada are the largest and deepest in the USA.

The climate of the country varies greatly. The coldest regions are in the north. The climate of Alaska is arctic. The climate of the central part is continental. The south has a subtropical climate. Hot winds blowing from the Gulf of Mexico often bring typhoons. The climate along the Pacific coast is much warmer than that of the Atlantic coast.

The USA is a highly developed industrial country. It is the world's leading producer of copper and oil and the world's second producer of iron ore and coal. Among the most important manufacturing industries are aircraft, cars, textiles, radio and television sets, armaments, furniture and paper.

Though mainly European and African in origin, Americans are made up from nearly all races and nations, including Chinese and native Americans.

The largest cities are: New York, Las Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, San-Francisco, Washington and others.

The United States is a federal union of 50 states, each of which has its own government. The seat of the central (federal) government is Washington, DC. According to the US Constitution the powers of the government are divided into 3 branches: the executive, headed by the President, the legislative, exercised by the Congress, and the judicial. The Congress consists of the Senate and the House of Representa-



tives. There are two main political parties in the USA: the Republican and the Democratic.

## **HOLIDAYS IN GREAT BRITAIN**

*There are fewer public holidays in Great Britain than in other European countries. They are: [Christmas Day](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Boxing Day](#)<sup>2</sup>, [New Year's Day](#)<sup>3</sup>, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday and Summer Bank Holiday. Public holidays in Britain are called bank holidays, because the banks as well as most of the offices and shops are closed.*

*The most popular holiday is [Christmas](#). Every year the people of Norway give the city of London a present. It's a big Christmas tree and it stands in Trafalgar Square. Central streets are beautifully decorated.*

*Before Christmas, groups of singers go from house to house. They collect money for charity and sing carols, traditional Christmas songs. Many churches hold a carol service on the Sunday before Christmas.*

*The fun starts the night before, on the 24th of December. Traditionally this is the day when people decorate their trees. Children hang stockings at the end of their beds, hoping that Father Christmas will come down the chimney during the night and fill them with toys and sweets.*

*Christmas is a family holiday. Relatives usually meet for the big Christmas dinner of turkey and Christmas pudding. And everyone gives and receives presents. The 26th of December, Boxing Day, is an extra holiday after Christmas Day. This is the time to visit friends and relatives or perhaps sit at home and watch football.*

*New Year's Day is less popular in Britain than Christmas. But in Scotland, Hogmanay is the biggest festival of the year.*

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<sup>1</sup> Christmas ['krɪsməs] Day — Рождество (25 декабря).

<sup>2</sup> Boxing ['bɒksɪŋ] Day — второй день Рождества, день рождественских подарков (в этот день принято дарить подарки).

<sup>3</sup> New Year's Day — Новый год.

Besides public holidays there are some special festivals in Great Britain. One of them takes place on the 5th of November. On that day, in 1605, Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament and kill King James I. He didn't succeed. The King's men found the bomb, took Guy Fawkes to the Tower and cut off his head.

Since that day the British celebrate the 5th of November. They burn a dummy, made of straw and old clothes, on a bonfire and let off fireworks. This dummy is called a "guy" (like Guy Fawkes) and children can often be seen in the streets before the 5th of November saying, "Penny for the guy." If they collect enough money they can buy some fireworks.

There are also smaller, local festivals in Britain.

## SPORTS IN GREAT BRITAIN

The British are known to be great sports-lovers, so when they are neither playing, nor watching games, they like to talk about them. Many of the games we play now have come from Britain.

One of the most British games is cricket. It is often played in schools, colleges, universities and by club teams all over the country. Summer isn't summer without cricket. To many Englishmen cricket is both a game and a standard of behaviour. When they consider anything unfair, they sometimes say "That isn't cricket".

But as almost everywhere else in the world, the game which attracts the greatest attention is Association football, or soccer. Every Saturday from late August till the beginning of May, large crowds of people support their favourite sides in football grounds. True fans will travel from one end of the country to the other to see their team play. There are plenty of professional and amateur soccer clubs all over Britain. International football matches and the Cup Finals take place at [Wimble](#)<sup>4</sup>. Rugby football is also very popular, but it is played mainly by amateurs.

Next to football, the chief spectator sport in British life is horse-racing. A lot of people are interested in the races and risk money on the horse which they think will win. The [Derby](#)<sup>5</sup> is perhaps the most famous single sporting event in the whole world.

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<sup>4</sup> Wimble [wimbli] — знаменитый стадион Уэмбли в Лондоне.

<sup>5</sup> the Derby ['da.bi] — Дерби (ежегодные скачки лошадей-трехлеток на ипподроме Epsom Downs близ Лондона; по имени графа Дерби).

*Britain is also famous for motor-car racing, dog-racing, boat-racing, and even races for donkeys. The famous boat-race between the teams of Oxford and Cambridge attracts large crowds of people.*

*A great number of people play and watch tennis. Tennis tournaments at [Wimbledon](#)<sup>6</sup> are known all over the world. The innumerable tennis courts of Britain are occupied by people between the ages of 16 and 60 who show every degree of skill — from practically helpless to the extremely able.*

*The British also like to play golf, baseball, hockey, grass-hockey. Various forms of, athletics, such as running, jumping, swimming, boxing are also popular. You can sometimes hear that there are no winter sports in England. Of course the English weather is not always cold enough to ski, skate, or toboggan, but winter is a good season for hunting and fishing.*

## **THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

*[The Russian Federation](#) is the largest country in the world. It occupies about one-seventh of the earth's surface. It covers the eastern part of Europe and the northern part of Asia. Its total area is about 17 million square kilometres. The country is washed by 12 seas of 3 oceans: the Pacific, the Arctic and the Atlantic. In the south Russia borders on China, Mongolia, Korea, Kazakhstan, Georgia and Azerbaijan. In the west it borders on Norway, Finland, the Baltic States, Belorussia, the Ukraine. It also has a sea-border with the USA.*

*There is hardly a country in the world where such a variety of scenery and vegetation can be found. We have steppes in the south, plains and forests in the midland, tundra and taiga in the north, highlands and deserts in the east.*

*There are two great plains in Russia: the Great Russian Plain and the West Siberian Lowland. There are several mountain chains on the territory of the country: the Urals, the Caucasus, the Altai and others. The largest mountain chain, the Urals, separates Europe from Asia.*

*There are over two million rivers in Russia. Europe's biggest river, the Volga, flows into the Caspian Sea. The main Siberian rivers — the Ob, the Yenisei and the Lena — flow from the south to the north. The Amur in the Far East flows into the Pacific Ocean.*

*Russia is rich in beautiful lakes. The world's deepest lake (1,600 metres) is Lake Baikal. It is much smaller than the Baltic Sea, but there is much more water in it than in the Baltic Sea. The water in*

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<sup>6</sup> Wimbledon [wimbldən] — Уимблдон (предмесье Лондона, в котором находится теннисный и крикетный клуб.



*the lake is so clear that if you look down you can count the stones on the bottom.*

*Russia has one-sixth of the world's forests. They are concentrated in the European north of the country, in Siberia and in the Far East.*

*On the vast territory of the country there are various types of climate, from arctic in the north to subtropical in the south. In the middle of the country the climate is temperate and continental.*

*Russia is very rich in oil, coal, iron ore, natural gas, copper, nickel and other, mineral resources.*

*Russia is a parliamentary republic. The Head of State is the President. The legislative powers are exercised by the Duma.*

*The capital of Russia is Moscow. It is its largest political, scientific, cultural and industrial centre. It is one of the oldest Russian cities.*

*At present, the political and economic situation in the country is rather complicated. There are a lot of problems in the national economy of the Russian Federation. The industrial production is decreasing. The prices are constantly rising; the rate of inflation is very high. People are losing their jobs because many factories and plants are going bankrupt.*

# THE CINEMA

*This year we are celebrating the hundredth anniversary of cinematography. A century ago the Lumiere brothers made their first three-minute films which were demonstrated to the public on the 28th of December, 1895.*

*Since then a new era has begun — the era of cinematography. It rapidly spread all over the world and very soon turned into one of the most popular arts and entertainments. The twentieth century may rightfully be called the century of cinematography.*

*For a long time there have been disputes whether the cinema is an art or just an entertainment. Nowadays the cinema is considered one of the main contemporary arts.*

*The cinema combines such arts as painting, literature, theatre, architecture, music. That's why a lot of people of different professions are involved in film production: scriptwriters, directors, cameramen, costume designers, composers, actors and actresses and many others.*

*Pioneers of the Russian cinema are Protazanov, Gardin, Bauer and later Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko. The first films in the West were mainly melodramas or comedies, in Russia they very often were historical films or screen versions of the best novels.*

*At the time when films were silent and black-and-white the world was crazy about Charlie. He was created and performed by the famous English actor and film director Charles Spencer Chaplin. His Charlie, small and clumsy yet kind-hearted, generous and brave, has attracted the hearts of simple people in different countries. Sometimes they would stand in long queues to see a film with their favourite actor. Later sound and colour were introduced into films.*

*The cinema was of great importance during the two World Wars. The best cameramen went to the fronts to make documentary films about heroism of the soldiers. Feature films of that time helped people to survive the hardships of war.*

*Films are demonstrated in cinemas. There are a lot of them in Moscow. Each district has at least one cinema. In the programme there is a feature film preceded by either a newsreel, a documentary or an animated cartoon. There are intervals between programmes and each programme begins at a definite time. In most cinemas in Western countries there are no intervals between programmes and people can stay in the cinema as long as they like.*

*Not so long ago people went to cinemas frequently but now we prefer to stay at home and watch video films and TV.*



*Maybe cinemas are no longer as popular as they used to be but films will always be one of the best entertainments for people all over the world.*

## London

London is the capital of Great Britain. It is situated on the Thames. It is a large industrial and cultural centre. It is one of the largest cities in the world. Its population is about 9 million people.

The Thames divides London into the following parts: the West End and the East End.

The West End is the district of the rich. In the West End there are many famous museums and theatres, palaces and parks. Also there are very many places of interest which you know through photographs, pictures and films, e.g. the Houses of Parliament, the Tower, St. Paul Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, the British Museum. Piccadilly is a fashionable shopping centre. Whitehall is the political centre. These places of interest attract tourists' attention.

The East End is full of factories and plants. The City, where nobody lives, is the commercial and the financial centre of London. There are a lot of offices and banks there. London is not only a large city but it is also famous as a seaport.

## My family

I am Steve Jones. Steve is my first name and Jones is my surname. I am seventeen years old. My family is large. We are four in our family: a father, a mother, a sister, a brother and me.

My parents are fine people. My mother's name is Emma. She is forty-two. She's tall and slim. My father's name is Ben. He's forty-five. He's often very busy. My sister's name is Dolly. She is twenty-three. She is married. Her husband's name is Ted. Dolly and Ted's son Den is my nephew. Their daughter Ann is my niece. My father is Ted's father-in-law. My mother is Ted's mother-in-law. Ted is my parents' son-in-law. And I am Ted's brother-in-law. We are close friends. My little brother's name is John. Johnny is only six. He's very noisy. His life is easy. My father's sister Bess is my aunt. My mother's brother Nick is my uncle. My aunt and uncle's children are my cousins. My cousins' names are Mike and Jane. My grandparents, my parents' parents are not very old. My two grandfathers are about seventy. My two grandmothers are sixty-five. I am a student. My hobby is music. We are all very happy together.

## The March sisters

Margaret or Meg is the eldest of the four girls. She is sixteen. Meg is very pretty, plump and fair with large dark eyes and soft brown hair. She has a sweet mouth and beautiful white hands. Meg likes fine clothes, she is sometimes vain and proud, but her nature is sweet and her heart is kind. Meg is very intelligent.

Fifteen-year-old Josephine or Jo is very tall, thin, with dark complexion. She has a decided mouth, a comical nose, sharp grey eyes, long thick dark chestnut hair and big feet. Jo loves sport and she is very active and courageous, her friends are all boys. She also loves reading very much, she is a real bookworm. Her imagination is great, she even writes plays. Jo's dream is to go to college.

*Elizabeth or Beth for short is a girl of 13 with rosy cheeks, smooth light brown hair, bright eyes and a peaceful expression on her face. She is very shy and her voice is timid. Her sisters call her Mouse because she likes to be at home. Beth even does her lessons at home. She loves her sisters very much, she is a peacemaker in her family. Elizabeth is very talented too, she plays the piano very well.*

*Amy, the youngest sister, is 11. She looks like a snow princess with her large blue eyes, curly golden shoulder-length hair, pale face and small hands. She is slender and tall for her age. Amy is funny when she tries to be a young lady and speaks long difficult words. She is ambitious too, her dream is to become famous. Amy thinks her nose is too flat. She is everyone's pet because of her good temper, beauty, refined manners and a talent for painting.*



# THE GREATEST CITIES OF RUSSIA

## Moscow.

*Moscow* is the capital of Russia. It was founded eight centuries ago by Prince Yuri Dolgoruky. Historians have accepted the year of 1147 as the start of Moscow's history. Gradually the city became more and more powerful.

In the 16th century under Ivan the Terrible Moscow became the capital of the new united state. Though Peter the Great moved the capital to St. Petersburg in 1712. Moscow remained the heart of Russia. Three quarters of the city was destroyed by fire during Napoleon's occupation, but by the mid-19th century Moscow had been completely restored.

Now Moscow is one of the largest cities in Europe. The population of the city is over 8 mln people.

Moscow is the seat of our Government. President of Russia lives and works there. The Moscow Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral are the most beautiful masterpieces of Russian architecture.

For those who are fond of art, the best place to visit is the Tretyakov Gallery or the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts.

Moscow is famous for its theatres. The best-known of them are the Bolshoi, Maly and An Theatres.

Moscow is a scientific centre. The Academy of Sciences of Russia, the oldest university, many schools of higher education and colleges are located there.

Traffic in Moscow is very heavy. There are the underground, busses, trolley-busses, trams and taxis in Moscow.

Moscow is the port of five seas. Four main airports connect Moscow with other parts of our country and many other countries. There are nine railway stations in Moscow.