

FIRST LANGUAGE RUSSIAN

Paper 0516/01
Reading

Key message

To do well in this paper:

In Part 1 candidates should take care to read the question carefully, taking into account the number of marks available, in order to produce a relevant and full response. Candidates should use their own words as far as possible.

In Part 2, candidates should produce a structured response, making each point briefly, rather than expanding on each point.

General comments

Paper 1, the Reading paper, consists of two extended passages. In **Question 1** candidates answer comprehension questions based on one passage and then both passages are summarised in **Question 2**.

Candidates who had been trained to read passages thoroughly and methodically completed this paper successfully. This year the general neatness of answers and the quality of the handwriting were high, and many candidates seemed to have prepared well for the examination.

Well written responses for **Question 1** require straightforward answers using, as far as possible, candidates' own words, while the answer to **Question 2** needs to contain expressions and focus with assured use of own words, good summary style with orderly grouping of ideas and linking of them and sense of purpose. Candidates are reminded that success in this question is dependent on how carefully they read the two passages and assimilate the detail.

In **Question 2** candidates need to write about 250 words. Very short answers due to lack of time or skill had an effect on their overall result for the paper; careful, logical argument focusing on the main points, can achieve an excellent answer without excessive length.

The best responses for **Questions 1(g), 1(h), 1(i)** followed the instruction to read particular lines and then gave answers, addressed to the specific question asked.

Advice for those taking the examination in future sessions would be to ensure that in questions such as **Question 1(l)** where explanation of phrases is required, they should concentrate on explaining the meaning rather than just paraphrasing it.

Comments on specific questions

Content

Question 1

- (a) This question asked the name of the hero of the story. He has several names: Dmitry, Mitka, Mitry, Motka, Motya, Monya.
- (b) Here candidates were asked: why is he called that? Because it's simple, the name suits him, picks him out from all the others.
- (c) Here candidates were asked: how old is he? Candidates needed to understand that in his 26th year means he is 25 years old.

- (d) This question asked candidates where he studied. This question did not ask about Monya's occupation. The full answer is that Monya finished the usual seven years at the village school and studied for a year and half at the agricultural-tech school.
- (e) Here candidates were asked: where did he work and what was his occupation? The answer is he was a driver in the village.
- (f) This question asked what he looked like. Candidates should give at least two details from the following: he was a man with two-coloured hair, prominent cheek-bones and deep, small eyes; his big jaw protudes forward, therefore his look was arrogant and stubborn.
- (g) For this question, candidates needed to say, how he got the idea to create the perpetual-motion machine. To reply successfully to this question candidates should read the lines first and then give the precise answer: Monya read about the perpetual-motion machine, and inspected the diagrams of those machines that had, at various times, been proposed. He ignored friction and the laws of mechanics, which argued the impossibility of this type of machine and decided to create his own.
- (h) This question required candidates to read the dialogue and find which words and expressions the author uses to obtain the humorous effect. Many excellent responses contained as least three (3 marks) suitable words and phrases from the dialogue, for example:

«Переживешь,-подумал Моня.-Молодой еще»
«Зашел сказать свое «фэ»
«Как ученые думают насчет вечного двигателя?»
«...всадил в его дипломированную головушку...Как палку в муравейник воткнул»
«...возвратил Моне палку - тоже отчетливо, не без ехидства сказал...»
«Ну, ты поздравил...А дальше?»

Candidates need to know that here it is not necessary to give a wide explanation of terms, such as metaphor, simile, alliteration. This is writing to inform, not writing to comment. The answer should have consisted only of relevant facts.

- (i) For this question, candidates should read the lines and then answer the question: why was the character ashamed? Candidates need to write not their opinion, but find answers from the paragraph: he was malicious because he had been scolded; besides that, he had some doubt whether he was correct; he was also ashamed of his cockiness, complacency and self-satisfaction, was ashamed that he had not tested everything through and through.
- (j) Here candidates were asked: how did the character convince himself that he had made a mistake? The best candidates gave the right full answer: he made it, he set the wheel in motion, the wheel spun and stopped; he decided to improve the wheel, to balance the chute and the weight, but once again the wheel stopped. To achieve the maximum two marks candidates should give at least two answers.
- (k) This question required candidates to answer: what words and expressions are used in the text to describe the character? The best candidates carefully read the passage, assimilated all details and gave a full description:

Fidgety Mitka; obstinate character; threw himself headfirst into inventing; when he was confronted with all kinds of sober ideas, he'd just brush them aside; What do they mean?, It's impossible; Monya always had an arrogant and stubborn look about him; devoted himself completely to this great venture in invention; he was also ashamed of his cockiness that morning, his complacency and self-satisfaction; he wanted to smash it into bits.

Candidates should avoid common statements about the theoretical aspects of the characters and give at least three phrases (3 marks).

- (l) (i) For this question, candidates needed to explain in their own words, in this context, what the following phrases mean:

«Моня перестал видеть и понимать все вокруг, весь отдался великой изобретательской задаче». The right answer is: all his thoughts were about the perpetual-motion machine.

- (ii) «Сказать свое «фэ»» means that Monya found the way to show that it is possible to make a perpetual-motion machine; he wants to say 'to get your two bits in', that is to give his idea to people, who say over and over again that it is impossible.

Candidates should be aware that they need to explain these phrases in context, not rephrase them.

Language

This year there was an improved quality of language. Most candidates were able to express themselves with fluency and confidence. Candidates should pay careful attention to punctuation.

Question 2

Content

Candidates were asked to compare the attitude of both characters to scientific knowledge and practical experience.

For this question 15 marks are available for Reading; each relevant point extracted by the candidate from the text gained one mark up to a maximum 15 marks. 10 additional marks are available for Writing: up to 5 marks for style and organisation, and up to 5 for accuracy of language.

The best responses were distinguished by thoughtful treatment of the text. Many excellent essays demonstrated good summary style with orderly grouping of ideas, good linkage, excellent expression and focus and clear, appropriate, accurate language using varied, precise vocabulary. Candidates should avoid copying sentences and phrases from the original passages, writing a very long introduction and conclusion, commentary, and giving an opinion or personal reflections on the issue. The answer should have consisted only of relevant facts and a little explanation to make answers clear.

The main points from first passage are the following:

The character read, that nobody before had ever invented a perpetual-motion machine
He skipped the part about friction and the laws of mechanics
He decided to invent that machine
He just brushed aside the information that this is impossible
He constantly thought about it
Finally, he devised how to do it
He did not test it, in his carelessness and self-satisfaction he decided to share this idea with an engineer
The young specialist, an engineer Golubev, was skeptical about this idea
He advised him to test it or not to waste his time
Now, with doubt in his machine he decided to test it
The test was entirely unsuccessful

The main points from second passage are following:

The theoretical and natural science subjects gave him knowledge and clear understanding about the world
Every day brought new discoveries
Every step was controlled by experience
After receiving the Diploma the character recognized that he did not have enough practical skills
That was because the candidates, while studying, observed and listened rather than using their knowledge in practice
He was afraid of the life of the practising doctor
and so on.

Most candidates wrote about 250 words. Candidates should be aware that very short answers or over-long essays affected their overall result for the paper.

Language

This year there was a distinct improvement in accuracy of language. Most candidates were able to write a summary of the two texts using appropriate vocabulary from the original passages as well as their own, used suitable words and appropriate sentences to make a comparison. Punctuation still remains a problem.

FIRST LANGUAGE RUSSIAN

Paper 0516/02

Writing

Key message

To do well on this paper, essays should be accurate, use a wide range of vocabulary and structures, be well organised and coherent, with well-developed ideas.

General comments

Paper 2, the Writing paper, consists of two sections: **Section 1: Discussion and Argument** and **Section 2: Description and Narrative**. Candidates are required to write two compositions, one from each section. In the first section four argumentative/discursive titles will be set, from which candidates choose one. In the second section four titles will be set (two descriptive and two narrative) from which candidates choose one.

In order to write papers successfully, candidates should read all the titles carefully before choosing the ones on which they wish to write. Underlining key words will help candidates focus on the question being asked and avoid writing irrelevant material. Before writing the essay candidates should spend time planning their essay to avoid repetition.

Candidates should aim to write between 350-500 words for each of composition. Very short answers due to lack of time or skill affected their overall result for the paper; careful, logical argument focusing on the main points, can achieve an excellent answer without excessive length. The compositions should be divided up into paragraphs.

This year the general neatness of answers and the quality of the handwriting were high, and many candidates had prepared well for the examination.

This year there was an improved quality of language. Most candidates were able to express themselves with fluency and confidence. Candidates should pay careful attention to punctuation.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1: Discussion and Argument

Many excellent responses contained detailed arguments on either side of the debate. Other candidates need to develop more detailed and balanced arguments in order to achieve high marks.

Question 1

- (a) «Реклама – это мощнейший рычаг управления людским сознанием». Согласны ли вы с этим утверждением?

This question asked candidates: do they agree with the assertion, that advertising is the most powerful lever to control people's consciousness?

The very best essays were extremely well argued and logically organised. These answers pointed out that nowadays advertising is omnipotent, ubiquitous (TV, radio, metro, roads, streets, Internet), universal; it appeals to human curiosity; in advertising some people see the solution to all their problems; advertising operates on the subconscious. One excellent script examined advertising and age: children do not have strong life principles, and they are influenced more than adults; the advertising is powerful, but not the most powerful lever to control people's consciousness; in future advertising without doubt will set up total control on society.

Candidates should avoid long description of their personal issues.

(b) Какой быть России? Порассуждайте на эту тему.

Here candidates were asked to give reasons for their opinion, what will Russia be like in the future?

Many excellent essays were well developed, logical, gave strong complex arguments, demonstrated sequence and good linkage, used fluent and accurate language with a wide, consistently effective, range of vocabulary. This question involves complex abstract thoughts. The best answers noted that despite the fact that Russia is now a corrupt, economically unstable, not completely democratic country, they believed it can change: Russia is a country of great possibilities, with great history and culture, rich natural resources and powerful people. One excellent script gave the answer: Russia opens the door for new ideas; in Russia you will find a skyscraper situated in the vicinity of small ancient church; its people are full of life and power; when Russians unite, Russia again will be great.

Candidates should carefully read the question and answer not in the past or present, but in the future tense.

(c) Человек должен жить до ста лет, и это возможно. Насколько вы согласны с этим утверждением?

This question required candidates to answer: how much do they agree with the assertion: "A person can live for 100 years"?

The best answers demonstrated good summary style with orderly grouping of ideas, good linkage, well focused, excellent expression and clear, appropriate, accurate language using varied, precise vocabulary. These answers start from the thesis that the human wants to live longer, even to be immortal, this is their dream; from a scientific point of view it is possible. Then candidates give the negative view of long life: in the new, developed world life is difficult enough, to live longer for old people is difficult squared. Candidates ensured that they had plenty of ideas and they developed their thoughts: people can and must live for 100 years if they have a healthy lifestyle, sport, healthy food and good medicine. One excellent essay notes that the biological limit is 120 years and in some countries (Caucasus, Japan) people live for 100 or more years, because of lifestyle, climate, food; and even genetics predetermines everything; progress in medicine makes it possible to stretch life for 100 years.

Candidates need to understand, that in this type of question they should focus more on the ideas (is it possible/not possible, can/can not, why, on what conditions, etc.), not only describe their personal issues.

(d) «Существуют три святыя профессии: учитель, врач, защитник отечества». По-вашему, это верно?

Here candidates were asked: do they agree with the assertion that three holy occupations: a teacher, a doctor, a soldier?

There were responses that showed consistent analysis, a clear and sometimes sophisticated style, logic, relevant, complex arguments, linkage between the paragraphs and sequenced sentences within paragraphs. The best responses said that teachers open the door to the future for their students, help to develop them in ethical and spiritual ways, hand on their experience and knowledge; people keep the memory of their first teacher all their life. A responsible doctor saves people's lives, which is invaluable. Soldiers are courageous, ready to self-sacrifice, to give their life for their homeland. Some responses show, on the other hand, that the salary of these three occupations so small, and they are now not prestigious, and have even lost respect; very prestigious occupations in Russia now are lawyer, banker, businessman. The very best responses noticed that there are many different occupations, which are not less prestigious, than those three. Then followed the conclusion: the main point is not the occupation, but the person in occupation; we can respect these three occupations.

Candidates should avoid very long descriptions of these three occupations and general conversation about occupations.

Section 2: Description and Narrative

Question 2

- (a) Прочитайте следующие строки и опишите чувства и мысли, которые они у вас вызывают.

Гонимы вешними лучами,
С окрестных гор уже снега
Сбежали мутными ручьями
На потопленные луга.
С улыбкой ясною природа
Сквозь сон встречает утро года.

Read the following lines and describe the feeling and thoughts, which they evoke.

Driven by spring sunbeams,
From the surrounding mountains' snow
Ran muddy streams
To the sunken meadows.
Nature with clear smiles
In his dream, meets the morning of the year.

This question required candidates to read these lines and describe the feelings and thoughts, which they evoke.

There were many responses that showed well developed ideas and images, described feelings and thoughts, included appropriate sophisticated complex sentences, used to achieve particular effect; written with accurate language and an effective range of vocabulary. The best answers noticed the beginning of new life, how fascinating to observe nature and life itself. One candidate came back to his magnificent childhood, when in spring he launched a small ship on the stream, and the conclusion was: after reading this poem everybody would have their own special reminiscences, and that is why the spring poem is very special.

The most common mistakes were repetition, lack of clarity, grammar and spelling, punctuation.

- (b) Вы выбрались на мелкое место, закинули удочку. И ловля пошла. Как вы реагировали, когда вытаскивали из воды сверкнувшую на солнце рыбу? Когда потом снимали с огня котелок с кипящей ухой? Опишите атмосферу рыбалки.

You reached a shallow place, threw out the fishing-rod. You started fishing. How did you react, when you lifted the fish glittering in the sun? How did you feel when you took the pot with the boiling fish-soup from the fire? Describe your emotions and feelings.

This was a popular essay. There were many well-structured essays with a good selection of interesting ideas and images, a range of details, lively writing, formed into a clear picture, wide, effective range of vocabulary, accurate grammar. The best answers observed that the most sugary feeling is a pleasurable anticipation; to rise at the crack of dawn; the atmosphere of peaceful composure and morning drowsiness; it is a paradise; the clouds float, smell of new grass; a sharp happiness of fishing; unique, simple, sincere atmosphere; memory of happy childhood with grandfather and sensation of protection and warmth; smell of fresh fish; eating surrounded by close friends or relatives; sleeping under the star-spangled heaven.

Candidates should be aware that this essay can focus on description, not storytelling; candidates should avoid repetition.

- (c) В газете в рубрике «Житейские истории» опубликована статья, которая начиналась так: «Школьник Михаил Столяров из сибирского поселка Коченево нашел свое решение экономического кризиса. Недавно он стал победителем конкурса юных предпринимателей. Миша, которому только что исполнилось 16 лет, покорила жюри тем, что рассказал не о своих бизнес-идеях, а о реальном деле». Напишите эту статью.

In the newspaper, under the heading "Living Stories", was published the article which began as follows: "The schoolboy, Michael Stolyarov, from the Siberian village Kochenevo had found his own answer to the crisis. Recently he had become the winner of a young entrepreneurs competition. Mike, who just now is 16 years old, won over the jury not with his report about his business ideas, but about his real business". Write the article, which follows from this.

For narrative, it is important to think about content that has some originality, creates tension, produces effects that will engage a reader's attention, and provide necessary and appropriate details. The best responses were balanced. They needed to use language appropriate to a newspaper article.

There were very interesting responses: creation of a new theory of the exit from the economic crisis; opening a new site, where users should not only talk, but see each other, etc. One essay describes how Michael gathered the team and issued a new computer game, counted on consumer market CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States); he believed that the reason the world crisis happened was the common fear and absence of the new ideas; he created a new computer game, which helps to get over these problems. This example shows how the candidate was able to invent details and build-up character and event.

Candidates needed to write an article for a newspaper about Michael Stolyarov, which should be in the third person and the language of newspapers.

- (d) Вы пишете классический криминальный роман, действие которого разворачивается на борту трансконтинентального лайнера, недавно спущенного со стапелей и отправившегося в свой первый рейс по Атлантическому океану. Среди пассажиров были люди, причастные к пропаже золотого Будды из древнего храма. Здесь же был и вездесущий инспектор Фос.

Напишите **НАЧАЛО** романа. Начните с того момента, как в салоне собрались на обед все те, кто, как полагал инспектор, причастны к пропаже бесценной статуэтки. Первыми вошли молодой ученый-индолог, российский подданный Павел Шубин, и капитан, который был посвящен в некоторые детали дела.

You are writing a classical criminal story, where the action began on board a transcontinental liner, recently down from the stocks and making its first voyage. Among the passengers were the people connected with the missing Gold Buddha and the ubiquitous inspector Foss.

Write the **beginning** of the story. Start the description by describing the saloon, situated on the top deck, right on the prow of the ship. The captain knew the details of the business and in every way assisted the investigation. Here in the saloon were gathered, on the captain's orders, all who, as the inspector thought, were involved in the loss of the priceless statuette. First came in the young scientist, an expert on India, Pavel Shubin.

The responses varied from simple tales to balanced, tense stories, with a carefully managed climax, well developed characters and appropriate details.

The excellent responses started from the description of the smooth surface of the water, sky-blue, posh saloons and halls of the transcontinental liner. Then followed representation of the characters with a lot of details, for example: ubiquitous inspector Foss, with thick black moustaches, who wants to be incognito; the young scientist, poised, attractive or fox-coloured hair and cheerful freckles, who feels an aversion for authority or looks at authority with great interest; the captain, who does not know how to organize the inquiry. In the dialogue candidates showed the attitudes of all persons to the loss of the priceless statuette of the Gold Buddha from the ancient temple. The sequencing of sentences provided clarity and engaged the reader in events and atmosphere. There were a lot of excellent unexpected endings in these essays, for example: the inspector found himself under the bed in the captain's cabin; he received a note with threats, he started to laugh and suddenly...end of essay; even an appearance of a new person, blonde girl in red dress, covered in sapphires, etc.

These examples show how candidates were able to invent details and happenings that could arrest a reader's attention.