

Examiners' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
in Russian (5RU03/01)  
Paper 3: Reading and Understanding  
in Russian

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**GCSE Russian**  
**Unit 3 Reading and Understanding in Russian**  
**Examiner Report**

The vast majority of candidates appeared to have been well prepared and so responded well to the questions. Very few candidates left questions unanswered. There is still a minority of candidates who answer in Russian instead of English, gaining no marks. For some candidates the importance of clear and legible handwriting in English needs to be stressed.

**Question 1**

This question required candidates to match pictures to single words and was accessible to all.

**Question 2**

This question required candidates to match longer sentences in Russian to phrases in English and proved to be no problem except for the very weakest.

**Question 3**

This question required candidates to match phrases to pictures and again proved to be accessible to all.

**Question 4**

This question required candidates to answer multiple choice questions in English on a Russian text. The best candidates answered well showing an ability to identify the main points accurately, which was pleasing to see.

**Question 5**

This question was a testing question, which demanded understanding of a longer text containing possibly unfamiliar language. Candidates had to answer in English, identifying main points, recognising emotions and drawing simple conclusions. As such it was important that candidates expressed themselves clearly and accurately in good English.

- (a) This was quite a straightforward question, but many candidates misunderstood and answered '*journalist*'.
- (b) There were few errors in answers to this question. There was some confusion for weaker candidates between the weather in England and Russia with several writing '*there is no winter in Russia*'. To gain both marks, candidates had to mention *snow or cold or the temperature in March of -12*.
- (c) Most candidates had little difficulty with this question. '*Funny*' was not accepted instead of '*fun*' as it has a different meaning. This was probably a mistranslation by native speakers of '*весёлый*'. It is important to use accurate English.
- (d) This question was again accessible to most candidates. Either *blini(s)* or *pancakes* was accepted.

- (e) Again the majority of the better candidates had no problem with this question although there were instances of not reading the question properly. Some did not read 'Why?' and wrote a wrong answer.
- (f) There was some confusion here as some candidates answered '*freely*', when the correct answer should have been *fluently/excellently/very well*. In this context '*speak freely*' has a different meaning and was possibly another mistranslation by Russian speakers of '*свободно*'. Again at this level care needs to be taken with accurate English.
- (g) This proved to be a testing question. There was some confusion with 13. Many candidates answered correctly, but some guessed '*since 2013*,' *for 13 days*,' *for 13 years*,' *13 years ago*', which was rather surprising. Candidates also gained the mark if they explained that Russian was *their second **foreign** language* or that *French was their first **foreign** language*. Many candidates missed out '*foreign*' which changed the meaning, so was not accepted. *International* was accepted. Some candidates put '*because Russian is very hard*', which may or may not be true, but is not in the text.
- (h) The majority of candidates had few problems with either part of the question. The first part posed very little difficulty, but the second was harder. Surprisingly several candidates did not know *плакаты* and guessed *plaques* or *wallpaper*. There was also confusion with presents. Some candidates were not clear whether Mr Smith *bought, received or gave presents*. There were some wild guesses such as *Mr Smith found beautiful places; improved his teaching; learnt where Russia was on the map; broadened his mind; the visitors had a better understanding of Russian which is a strange language*.

### **Question 6**

This question required candidates to match phrases in English to information in a text in Russian. This task posed few problems for any but the very weakest.

### **Question 7**

This question required candidates to select 5 correct statements from a list of 10 referring to a text in Russian. This kind of question is testing, but most candidates coped well. Again close reading is necessary. Many candidates marked *E* as correct, whereas in fact it is incorrect as *they eat breakfast on the balcony*.

### **Question 8**

This question required candidates to match Russian phrases to pictures and posed no problems.

### **Question 9**

This question required candidates to read a longer text in Russian containing some unfamiliar language and answer multiple choice questions in Russian. It was pleasing that despite the difficulty of the text, this was answered well, with many of the best candidates gaining full marks.

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