

AUDIO SCRIPT

Listening

Task 1

For items **1-10**, listen to a talk about Russia's national anthem. Decide which of the statements (**1-10**) are **True** according to the text you hear (**A**) and which are **False** (**B**). You will hear the text **TWICE**. You have **20 seconds** to look through the items.

(pause 20 seconds)

Now we begin.

What is a national anthem? It is a song that officially symbolizes a country or nation and reflects its past, people and national pride. Most national anthems are marches accompanied by fanfares. The Russian anthem can be easily recognized by its powerful, memorable music and Russian lyrics. Many people, even not knowing the Russian language, think it sounds very majestic.

Russia has undergone many political changes throughout its history and changed national anthems numerous times. Let's take a look at a brief history of its national song. The first official anthem, entitled "The Prayer of the Russians," was chosen in 1816 by Emperor Alexander I. It featured Russian lyrics glorifying the tsar and was set to the melody of Britain's "God, Save The King." Nicholas I, who succeeded Alexander and was famous for his Russian patriotism and harsh temper, is reported to have said, "The British music that we've been listening to for so long bores me." A new anthem to a new tune was written immediately in 1833. It was called "God, Save The Tsar!" and had lyrics such as "strong, sovereign, reign for glory, for our glory!"

After the February Revolution of 1917, Russia's new leaders wanted new songs for the people. These songs were closely tied to revolutionary symbolism — the Russian version of the French anthem "La Marseillaise" served as the anthem from 1917 to 1918. The lyrics were written by Russian philosopher Petr Lavrov. In 1922 the Soviet Union adopted "The Internationale" as its national song. "The Internationale" as a national song is a unique phenomenon. There is nothing national or Russian in the lyrics nor in music, there is not a single word associated with a specific country, let alone Russia. The song calls for "all the world's starving and enslaved" to rise up and overthrow capitalism.

In 1943, Joseph Stalin changed the Soviet Union's main song to something entirely new. Sergey Mikhalkov and Gabriel El-Registan wrote the lyrics, and the music was written by Alexander Alexandrov. El-Registan recalled in his memoirs that Stalin told the authors to add one more verse, a bellicose one about the Red Army, about how the Soviets are beating the fascists and will continue to do so. This was reflected in the verse "We grew our army in battles, we will sweep the vile invaders out of the way!" Stalin's motivations for the change of the song were also political. During World War II, Stalin wanted to signal to the Western allies that the Soviet Union was not going to overthrow capitalist governments anymore and was ready to cooperate. Switching to a new anthem and away from "The Internationale" was an important symbolic part of this message.

In 1991, the USSR ceased to exist, and the modern Russian Federation started to look for a new anthem. From 1991 until 2000, the unofficial anthem of Russia was "The Patriotic Song," a little-known composition without text that was written by Mikhail Glinka.

Soon after Vladimir Putin was elected for his first presidential term in 2000, he proposed a compromise: return the old anthem but change the lyrics so that they praise Russia rather than the Soviet Union and Communism. Some people strongly opposed the idea, but a majority in the parliament approved the bill and since 2000 Alexandrov's well-known melody has been played at all official events. Responding to criticism for bringing back Soviet symbolism, Putin said back in

2000 “If we agree that we shouldn’t use...the symbols of the Soviet era, we should also agree that an entire generation of our citizens – our mothers and fathers who lived in the USSR – lived their lives senselessly. And I cannot agree with that.”

You have 20 seconds to check your answers.

(pause 20 seconds)

Now listen to the text again.

(text repeated)

You have 20 seconds to check your answers.

(pause 20 seconds)

For items **11-15** listen to a conversation between two friends standing in the line to buy concert tickets and answer the questions. Choose the correct answer (**A, B or C**) to answer questions **11-15**. You will hear the text only **ONCE**.

You now have 25 seconds to study the questions.

(pause 25 seconds)

Now we begin.

Alice: Gerard, this queue goes on for miles. We’re never going to get in at this rate. I can’t believe we’ve driven all this way only to spend three hours standing in line. Thanks a lot, Gerard.

Gerard: Me! What did I do? This whole thing was your idea, Alice! I’d have been quite happy staying at home. Anyway, don’t be so defeatist. There’s still a chance we could make it.

Alice: Yeah, a fat chance! My legs’ll give out before we get within a hundred metres of the stadium. I’m exhausted!

Gerard: Well, why don’t you take a seat on that bench over there? I don’t mind standing in line while you have a rest. Then, when you feel better, you can come back and rejoin the queue.

Alice: So I’m supposed to sit around all on my own with nobody to talk to? And then hold your place while you go and take a break? Not likely! You know, we wouldn’t be in this mess if it weren’t for the fact...

Gerard: If it weren’t for the fact that I’d driven us down here, we wouldn’t even be standing in this queue! When you asked if I wanted to come to this concert, I rather assumed that you’d have done something in the way of buying tickets!

Alice: So it’s all my fault now is it? As usual, it seems like it’s up to me to do everything. Well, I’m terribly sorry if I’m not perfect. Perhaps it’d be better if we just forgot the whole thing? You obviously don’t really want to see the band.

Gerard: Look, I don’t mind what we do. I’m just as happy to stay or go, have dinner or catch a movie. Whatever you prefer. But what I really, really don’t want to do is stand in a queue and have a row. So can we please...

Alice: Who’s having a row? You’re the one who keeps arguing. If I’d known you were going to behave like this, then I’d never have invited you tonight. Honestly! You try to do a nice, sociable thing and you get your head bitten off! All I said was...

Gerard: You can stay here if you want to, Alice. But I've had about as much "fun" as I can take for one night. I'm jumping in the car and heading home. And I want to say that next time you invite me to... Oh, hang on a minute. The queue's moving! Well, not such a waste of time after all!

This is the end of the listening comprehension part. You have 1 minute to complete your answer.

(pause 1 minute)

Integrated listening and reading

Task 3

Read an excerpt from the essay by James Marriott, a writer at The Times, then listen to an interview with him. You will notice that some ideas coincide and some differ in the text and the interview. Answer questions **16-25** by choosing **A** if the idea is expressed in both materials, **B** if it can be found in the **reading** text only, **C** – if it can be found in the **audio recording** only, **D** – if **neither** of the materials expresses the idea.

Now you have 10 minutes to read the text below.

(pause 10 minutes)

Now **listen** to an interview with James Marriott and then do the tasks (**16-25**), comparing the text above and the interview. You will hear the interview **TWICE**.

Jane: James Marriott, thank you for joining me.

James: Thanks very much for having me.

Jane: You and I are both really concerned about whatever this thing is that we call the 'literacy crisis.' I have a lot of complicated thoughts about this. So, what is it?

James: I guess the best way to explain what I think I'm getting at is in statistics, which show pretty consistently—in the UK, in America, and virtually everywhere—that reading is in quite severe decline. There was a survey recently in the UK that found that a third of UK adults have given up reading for pleasure. The National Literacy Trust here in the UK reports shocking and dispiriting falls in children reading for pleasure. Researchers from University College London and the University of Florida found a 40% drop in reading for pleasure in the last 20 years in America. Another remarkable thing is that there's an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report at the end of last year that found that rates of literacy were falling in the developed world.

Jane: It seems like the literacy crisis is not just one thing. We call it the literacy crisis, but there's at least a couple of different things going on. We have problems with childhood education. We have another problem with screens and attention spans, too. Then we have the decline of reading for pleasure, which might be a distinct thing. I find that the current discussion throws them all together. And you wrote this essay on Substack platform. I think you called it your magnum opus.

James: Ironically, I should add! I don't know if that came across.

Jane: You didn't say that these were all the same thing, but you treated them all as aspects of one singular problem.

James: I guess I do bundle them together in that essay into one factor. And I think that is because I basically do think there is one problem. And I think it is the transformative effect of smartphones

on our culture and society. I think we're living through the crisis of addictive screens and the dawn of the screen age.

Jane: Tell everybody about your relationship with your phone.

James: I have a dumb phone. It's halfway between a Nokia brick and a smartphone, so it does things like Spotify and Google Maps. It's also intolerably tricky to use. And therefore, I find it basically un-addictive. I think smartphones are designed to be addictive because technology companies want us on our screens as much as possible. But I think we now live in a world of ubiquitous screens that goes beyond just phones.

Jane: James, I think this is going to be a conversation that you and I will have many times in the future. I'm sure we're going to be writing about this. Thank you for joining us.

James: Thanks a lot.

You'll hear the talk again in 30 seconds.

(pause 30 seconds)

Now listen to the talk again.

(Text repeated)

Now you have five minutes to finish the task and transfer your answers to the answer sheet.

(pause 5 minutes)

This is the end of the integrated task. Now you can start working on your reading task.