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English literature as a factor of development of students' interest to the culture of Great Britain

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INTRODUCTION

Working at our research work we set **the aim**: to determine the role of reading English books in the development of students' interest to the culture of Great Britain.

The tasks of the project are:

- 1) to study the literature on the topic that is available on the internet and in the libraries and summarize the valuable information;
- 2) to learn what teens are reading today;
- 3) to conduct a survey and to discuss the results of our research paper at the conference.

The object of the project is the development of the students.

The subject of the project is English literature as a factor of development of students' interest to the culture of Great Britain.

Working on the research work we used **the following methods**: analysis, interviewing, comparison.

The hypothesis: the students who read English books develop their minds, improve their language skills, expand knowledge of English history and culture.

1. RUSSIAN-BRITISH CULTURAL RELATIONS: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE.

The history of interactions of Russian and British culture can be added to the limits of basic events, which characterize cultural relations between Russia and Western Europe as a whole. The active relations among Russian princedoms and European states at the epoch of Kievskaya Rus changed into the calm period of their development. The strengthening of the Moscow State at the end of the 15th and at the beginning of the 16th centuries resulted in adjusting a new kind of links with western states. [1] Very successful efforts of the Russian diplomacy made it possible for foreign masters to appear in Moscow and it also led to broadening of people's outlook and to renovating well-known methods of Russian medieval art. During the 16th century Russian painters learnt how to master new techniques in art, at the same time there was an increase in the number of the Europeans who worked for the Russian sovereign. The 17th century was the period of active absorption of cultural influence; besides, the number of foreigners working in the Russian state enlarged because of wars, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, due to the great amount of people, who were seeking for earnings and adventures and working for the Russian sovereign. The majority of the foreigners living and working in Russia in the 17th century were sellers, hired workers, military engineers, diplomats; some representatives of so called "high" culture - philosophers, literary men, artists - formed the minority. However, the European influence during the 17th century left traces on Russian culture – the westernism during Aleksey Mikhailovich and Fedor Alekseevich's governing paved the way for radicalism of Peter's reign. In the first half of the 18th century quick learning of European cultural rules of the New Time took place and by the time of Ekaterina's governing Russia had become the integral part of the West-European culture. [1]

Up-To-Date Russian-British Links

Russian Winter Festival 2005, London

The first Russian Winter Festival took place in London in January, 2005. This event was organized by the Russian-British Cultural Association and sponsored mainly by Russian businesses in the UK. There is a rapidly growing community of Russians in Britain. Many of them live in London and nearby. It is one of the reasons why business and cultural relations between Britain and Russia are strengthening. The main event took place in Trafalgar Square. For one day it became London's equivalent of Moscow's famous Red Square. Russian food and crafts stalls filled the square and Russian music and dance was performed vividly. The square was packed with people of all ages and nationalities, and a few other participants - the Mayor of London Ken Livingstone, the Deputy Mayor of Moscow Ludmila Shvetsova and a delegation of Russian officials - were seen in the crowd. Russia and the UK fought together as allies during the Second World War. 60 years after the war ended in 1945, British and Russian veterans came together to watch the Russian Winter Festival. There was a special entertaining programme on the stage in the afternoon and early evening, including both traditional and modern styles of Russian dancing, singing and music. The Russian Winter Festival took place soon after the date of the traditional Russian New Year. To celebrate this, at 6pm an acrobatic dance was performed in the center of Trafalgar Square. A recording of the Kremlin bells was broadcast, artificial snow filled the square and dry ice emerged from the fountains, creating a winter wonderland in the heart of London. [1]

International Project "Russia - Great Britain"

State Historical and Cultural Museum-Preserve "Moscow Kremlin"

In the period from December 17, 2003 till March 10, 2004 the Federal State Institution "State Historical-Cultural Museum" announced the project "The Moscow Kremlin". The exhibition "Russia - Great Britain" was opened to honour the 450th anniversary of trading and diplomatic connections between Russia and Great Britain. It was a big cultural event in modern international relations between Great Britain and Russia and the whole history of Russian-

British cultural relations and since then it has become a good tradition to celebrate the anniversary by means of such exhibitions.

The Russian-British Cultural Association was set up in Great Britain and its presentation took place on the 13th of January, 2003 in London. The executive director of the Association Julian Gallant said that this non-commercial organization was set up for developing cultural relations between Russia and Great Britain as well as for coordinating activities in this sphere and fulfilling an extensive charity programme. According to Gallant, a well-known pianist and conductor, ten years ago a Russian man was considered to be a rare phenomenon in the streets of British cities and towns. Nowadays in the United Kingdom there are at least 250 thousand of those who are Russians by birth. This fact predetermines the necessity of rendering help to the Russians who live in Britain and, besides, the necessity of a more extended cultural exchange for the British society in the interests of friendship between the two nations. The presentation of the Association, which took place in the biggest centre of London - Elisabeth Hall turned into a real festival of art timed to the celebration of the tercentenary of St.Petersburg which was being held in Great Britain at that time. That evening a few thousands of spectators could see the performance of the Russian stars of classical music and dance from the Mariinski and the Bolshoi Theatres as well as London-Russian chamber orchestra.

In June, 2003 President Vladimir Putin's official visit took place in Great Britain. Also in 2003 we celebrated 450 years since the establishment of diplomatic connections between Russia and Great Britain. The importance of joining business and Russian culture and art was noted by a famous Russian pianist Olga Balakaetz. According to her that was the reason why she was among those who supported the idea of setting up the Association because culture and cultural relationships between peoples cannot develop without any support from businessmen.

Moscow Kremlin Museums Tour Scotland's Cultural Institutions

In April, 2011 the British Council in Scotland welcomed a senior delegation from the world-leading Russian museum to enhance cultural links between Scotland and Russia. Curators and the staff from the prestigious Moscow Kremlin Museums toured Scotland for two weeks in April as a part of the professional development programme. The group experienced some of Scotland's finest museums, galleries, castles and historic properties and discussed future partnerships. The group visited over 30 institutions across Scotland including Glasgow School of Art, Iona Abbey, Dunvegan Castle, Stirling Castle, Scone Palace, Urquhart Castle, Jedburgh Abbey, National Museum of Scotland and the Scottish Parliament.

British Council Scotland hosted a highlight reception for the delegation and invited guests to the Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh on 26, April which included a performance by Liz Lochhead, Scotland's national poet. The visit was arranged in partnership with the British Council in Moscow to facilitate and strengthen cultural relations between Scotland and Russia. International collaboration is extremely important to us, allowing sharing knowledge, learning from others and promoting Scotland abroad. We enjoy close and rewarding relationships with many worldwide institutions and hope that the links we establish during this visit will develop into opportunities for future initiatives."

Pushkin House, London's Russian Cultural Centre

Pushkin House was established to serve as a home for Russian culture in London, a focus for Anglo-Russian cultural exchange, a provider of education and information on the Russian language and culture. In pursuit of these aims, Pushkin House has a various cultural programme on Russian literature, art, film, music, theatre and dance, as well as history, philosophy and politics. Events include lectures and talks, seminars, conferences, exhibitions, films, concerts and readings. (Appendix 1)

The total result of centuries-old history of Russian - British relations can be represented like that: cultural ties are strengthening, more cultural events such as festivals, exhibitions and concerts are being held in both countries.

Russian newspapers are published in London. A variety of non-governmental organizations are operated in both countries and even Russian bread is baked in England. British and Russian artists and performers enjoy new freedom that brought some change. The cooperation between the British and Russian mass media is booming. Centers that distribute training manuals in English have opened in Moscow and St. Petersburg. We would like to quote the words of the Russian Ambassador in London. Alexander Yakovenko claimed that the dynamics of relations between Russia and Britain over the last year has achieved a positive level and allows us to look optimistically into the future. "The most important goal is to consolidate the achieved level of cooperation and mutually respectful dialogue and expand the scope of the conjugation of efforts significantly. The programme of joint actions is assumed for conducting a large scale Russian-British Year of Space that adds special symbolism, The opening of the monument to Yuri Gagarin in London in honour of the 50th anniversary of his trip to England has become the culmination of it," - continued the Russian ambassador. Alexander Yakovenko also said: "Undoubtedly, the trends in Russian-British relations are multidirectional but there is a positive trend. The way Russian people think about the UK is largely shaped by the images formed at a young age - ranging from the Beatles to Hamlet to Sherlock Holmes. Russian culture has also become part of everyday life for ordinary Britons, and it is loved much by them. A recent survey of British actors showed that they rate Anton Chekhov as the best playwright after William Shakespeare. I am sure that in Russia no one would argue with the fairness of this judgment.

Tours of Russian theatre companies in the UK are met with invariable success, and the names of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Tchaikovsky are dear to every educated person. Russian contemporary art also attracts an audience here, and we along with our British partners are working hard to encourage that. Every year more than 200,000 Britons visit Russia and about the same number of Russian citizens make trips to the UK. They are quite impressive figures, but we would like them to be higher. Personal impressions are much stronger than

crude stereotypes, and every direct contact will help to dispel mutual prejudices which were inherited from the previous era.

2014: Bi-lateral UK - Russia year of culture



UK-Russia
Year of Culture 2014

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergey Lavrov and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, William Hague signed a Joint Statement designating 2014 as the bi-lateral UK/Russia Year of Culture.

While the Russian Embassy in London will be primarily responsible for Russian events in the UK, the British Council will be presenting a comprehensive programme of events and projects in Russia drawn from all four countries of the United Kingdom and representing all art forms, the creative industries, education, science and language.

Celebrating the long cultural tradition of engagement between the two countries the UK/Russia Year of Culture in 2014 will delight and surprise Russian and UK audiences and illustrate the way in which the relationship continues to develop new, creative and contemporary narratives in both countries.

2. LITERATURE AS A PART OF CULTURE.

Literature (from Latin litterae (plural); letter) is the art of written work. The word literature literally means: "things made from letters". Literature is commonly classified as having two major forms - fiction and non-fiction - and two major techniques - poetry and prose.

Literature seems to be an important part of culture, from whatever point of view one may define the latter. Culture may be seen from the humanistic point of view as "a goal or ideal, ... closely connected with the distinctively humanistic activities of man whereby man attempts to transcend the situation of his particular society and grasp the meaning of human existence itself." In his classic definition of culture which we may adopt without necessarily restricting ourselves to his specifically Hellenistic bias, Matthew Arnold sees this goal as "total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world." [2] The importance of literature as the written record of the best that has been thought and said in the world is obvious. Even more important perhaps is the claim, substantiated by our own experience, that literature, along with the other humanistic activities of man, is a means of rising above our particular cultural limitations, to discover and create values that are distinctively and universally human.

The study of literature seems thus less interested in the specifics of a particular culture than in a universal human culture, more interested in what have been called "cultural universals," basic patterns of thinking and feeling that are not bound to any particular place or even time, but are true of human beings the world over and at all times. Thus, the literary artist's success is measured not so much by the extent to which he gives us a vivid understanding of the particular cultural conditions under which he writes (although he may do this, too, and indeed often does) but by the extent to which he succeeds in transcending his particular cultural milieu and illuminating the human condition

for all who read his works. In contrast to this, knowledge of a culture depends upon our knowing the peculiar history and ecology of a specific group of people, rather than their general characteristics as human beings or their shared natures with other men. For the most part, therefore, the emphasis in culture learning would seem to be on particulars rather than universals, on differences rather than similarities. [2]

Literature should be studied for a richer life. Without it, we miss out on so much. Think of all the places we get to go, people we get to meet, situations we get to experience without ever leaving our living rooms! Without reading about these people, places, events, we quite possibly would never experience similar situations. By reading about them, discussing them with others, thinking about how we would react in similar situations, we are learning. We are gathering information and tools for our life toolbox. Every book you read changes you... even if only slightly. You are a different person on the other side of it whether you recognize it or not. You are learning, collecting material, developing personality, discovering likes and dislikes about yourself. You are studying the human condition, and this is important because you are part of the world itself.

Reading provides for a richer, more fulfilling life.

Literature is part of our cultural heritage which is freely available to everyone, and which can enrich our lives in all kinds of ways. Once we have broken the barriers that make studying literature seem daunting, we find that literary works can be entertaining, beautiful, funny, or tragic. They can convey profundity of thought, richness of emotion, and insight into character. They take us beyond our limited experience of life to show us the lives of other people at other times. They stir us intellectually and emotionally, and deepen our understanding of our history, our society, and our own individual lives.

In great writing from the past we find the England of our ancestors, and we not only see the country and the people as they were, but we also soak up the climate of the times through the language itself, its vocabulary, grammar, and

tone. We would only have to consider the writing of William Shakespeare, Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, and Agatha Christie side by side to see how the way writers use language embodies the cultural atmosphere of their time.

Literature can enrich our experience in other ways too. London, for example, is all the more interesting a city when behind what we see today we see the London known to Dickens, Boswell and Johnson, or Shakespeare. And our feeling for nature can be deepened when a landscape calls to mind images from, say, Wordsworth, or Thomas Hardy. The world of English literature consists, apart from anything else, of an astonishing array of characters, from the noble to the despicable - representations of people from all walks of life engaged in all kinds of activities. Through their characters great authors convey their insights into human nature, and we might find that we can better understand people we know if we recognize in them characteristics we have encountered in literature. [2]

Good works of literature are not museum pieces, preserved and studied only for historical interest. They last because they remain fresh, transcending as well as embodying the era in which they were written. Each reader reading each work is a new and unique event and the works speak to us now, telling us truths about human life which are relevant to all times. Whether we choose to study it or read it for pleasure, when we look back over our literature we are looking back over incredible richness. Not just museum pieces, but living works which we can buy in bookshops, borrow from the library, or download from the internet and read today, right now.

Literature unlocks the culture of the time period, and in a way can give wisdom to the modern society about life. Literature allows us to interpret our own life and emotions and find ways to relate to the story so we in turn can reflect. It is also a form of entertainment and allows people to use their imagination to visualize the story within their own mind. We find the real point

of literature is the story of life, and all people want to do is to connect to other human beings so they find meaning in their own life.

Literature is one of the most honest forms of art. While movies and music are subject to censorship, and often only support one interpretation, literature is a living, breathing manifestation of life. Each time we read, we gain something we didn't have before. Even reading the same text at a different point in your life offers secrets you didn't discover the first time.

3. FAMOUS ENGLISH WRITERS.

History of English literature rises in the Middle Ages and begins from the period of Anglo-Saxon England (V-XI centuries). This time is marked by Aldhelm, Beda Venerabilis and Alcuin. As it's accepted in religious States, the first writers were priests. No doubt, they left their indelible mark in art, but their names are forgotten by mass. To replace this period comes period of Anglo-Norman literature (XI-XIII cent.). [3] Later appears literature of social protest, which involves the religion and morality and at the same time has revolution character. Here we should note William Langland's poem dream-vision Piers Plowman and also Celtic legend of King Arthur which were used by Layamon in his poem Brut. A new English language begins to form. Universally recognized English writer of Middle Ages is Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400, author of the Canterbury Tales. Chaucer finished period of Anglo-Norman literature and starts history of New English Literature, confirm London dialect John Wycliffe (1320-1384) helped him. And directly from them starts history of literature, aimed at searching human personality, they hand literature down to people.

Then, period of English Renaissance begins. There are two literature monuments on the base of it. Thomas More's "Utopia" and Francis Bacon's "Novum Organum". But, first of all, the most significant Renaissance author was William Shakespeare. William Shakespeare (1564-1616) - English dramatist, poet, actor, assuredly, he is the most famous and important writer, who influenced on development of dramatic art. Shakespeare's stage works of literature don't stop be shown all over the world even nowadays. The dramatist was the first who explained the human feelings and personality with such deep psychologism and measurement. [4]

After Renaissance, which was full of entertainment, begins period of Cromwell and Restoration, where appear political ideals on literature. The most important and popular writers of that period were Daniel Defoe (1660-1731)

with his famous novel "Robinson Crusoe" and Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) with "Gulliver's Travels", which caustically ridiculed modern English society.

In XVIII-XIX centuries new literary school begins to develop - Romanticism. Revolutionary attitude of mind, zeal for French revolution, political radicalism play a great part in English poetry of romantic period. Robert Burns (1759-1796) was a poet of the country, republican and adherent of French revolution and another poet of Romanticism was Byron (1788-1824), who was representative of revolutionary-aristocratic romanticism. Nonetheless, I decided to mark out one litterateur in this literary school, and his name is Walter Scott. [3]

The Light romanticism was replied by the hard realism. The most famous author of this period is Charles Dickens (1812-1870). His aim was to touch peoples' hearts with sight of suffering, but he didn't want to awaken hatred or call for popular uprising. Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), judge of beauty and humour, applies to this period also. Besides, we mustn't forget, that Conan Doyle (1859-1930) worked in the same years; he is an author of Sherlock Holmes.

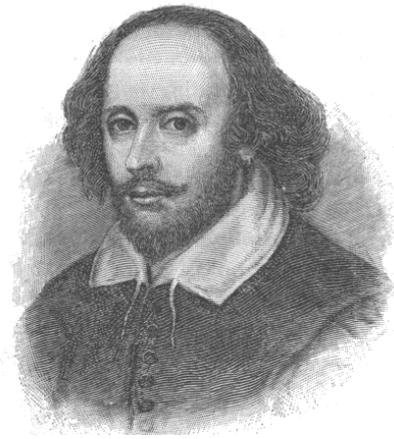
The next period is The Second World War and period of the latest literature. Here we can meet with Agatha Christie's (1890-1976) works. Christie is an English authoress, who belongs to one of the most famous writers of detective genre and one of the most published writers of the all history of humanity (after the Bible and Shakespeare). [4]

Joanne Rowling, English writer, author of novels about Harry Potter, which were translated into 65 languages and sold in number of 400 million copies. It is not known, if her works stays in history equally the greatest writers, but she has already left her trace in history, and it's undoubtedly.

Thus, we can retrace how epoch made creators and in the same way they influenced on the progress of humanity. Everything has changed: language, genre, writers, needs of the society, however, literature has being developed from its appearance to our time as follow from the concrete examples. [4]

Some words about English writers who are well-known and very popular among our schoolmates. (Appendix 3)

William Shakespeare - the man of the Millennium



"He was not of an age, but for all time."
Ben Jonson, Shakespeare's contemporary

Shakespeare made an enormous contribution to the world literature, theater, art and culture in whole. He is really unique and excellent writer. His surviving works consist of about 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and several other poems. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright. Thus, in 2000 British citizens voted him the Man of the Millennium – the most important earthling since 1000 A.D.

William Shakespeare (26 April 1564– 23 April 1616) was an English poet and playwright, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's preeminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon". His extant works, including some collaborations, consist of about 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and a few other verses, the authorship of some of which is uncertain. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright.

Shakespeare was born and brought up in Stratford-upon-Avon. At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children: Susanna, and twins Hamnet and Judith. Between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful

career in London as an actor, writer, and part-owner of a playing company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later known as the King's Men. He appears to have retired to Stratford around 1613 at age 49, where he died three years later. Few records of Shakespeare's private life survive, and there has been considerable speculation about such matters as his physical appearance, sexuality, religious beliefs, and whether the works attributed to him were written by others.

It is generally agreed that most of the Shakespearean Sonnets were written in the 1590s, some printed at this time as well. Others were written or revised right before being printed. 154 sonnets and "A Lover's Complaint" were published by Thomas Thorpe as Shakespeare's Sonnets in 1609. The order, dates, and authorship of the Sonnets have been much debated with no conclusive findings. Many have claimed autobiographical details from them, including sonnet number 145 in reference to Anne. The dedication to "Mr. W.H." is said to possibly represent the initials of the third earl of Pembroke William Herbert, or perhaps being a reversal of Henry Wriothesly's initials. Regardless, there have been some unfortunate projections and interpretations of modern concepts onto centuries old works that, while a grasp of contextual historical information can certainly lend to their depth and meaning, can also be enjoyed as valuable poetical works that have transcended time and been surpassed by no other.

Shakespeare produced most of his known work between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies and histories, genres he raised to the peak of sophistication and artistry by the end of the 16th century. He then wrote mainly tragedies until about 1608, including Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, and Macbeth, considered some of the finest works in the English language. In his last phase, he wrote tragicomedies, also known as romances, and collaborated with other playwrights.

Many of his plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy during his lifetime. In 1623, John Heminges and Henry Condell, two friends and fellow actors of Shakespeare, published the First Folio, a collected

edition of his dramatic works that included all but two of the plays now recognised as Shakespeare's. It was prefaced with a poem by Ben Jonson, in which Shakespeare is hailed, presciently, as "not of an age, but for all time."

Shakespeare was a respected poet and playwright in his own day, but his reputation did not rise to its present heights until the 19th century. The Romantics, in particular, acclaimed Shakespeare's genius, and the Victorians worshipped Shakespeare with a reverence that George Bernard Shaw called "bardolatry". In the 20th century, his work was repeatedly adopted and rediscovered by new movements in scholarship and performance. His plays remain highly popular today and are constantly studied, performed, and reinterpreted in diverse cultural and political contexts throughout the world.

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Evoking Petrarch's style and lyrically writing of beauty, mortality, and love with its moral anguish and worshipful adoration of a usually unattainable love, the first 126 sonnets are addressed to a young man, sonnets 127-152 to a dark lady. Ever the dramatist Shakespeare created a profound intrigue to scholars and novices alike as to the identities of these people.

We read a lot of Shakespeare's poems and tragedies. My favorite poem is Sonnet 130 "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun". Enjoy it:

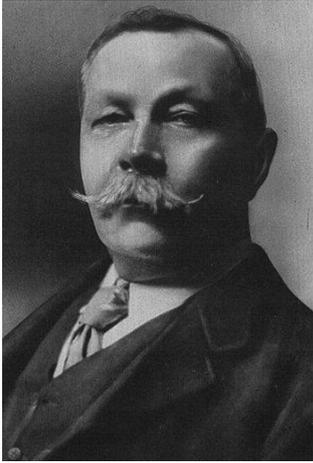
My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

Quotes from Shakespeare's works are known all over the world. We use them not only to express our thoughts in special, beautiful form but even chatting with friends in our usual life. There are some of them:

- To be, or not to be: that is the question!
- A sea of troubles.
- What's in name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.
- Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
- Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?

Well, laugh reading his comedies, cry reading his tragedies, dream reading his poetry. Shakespeare's works have helped millions of people all over the world to make some sense of their lives.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle



Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle was born on 22 May 1859 at 11 Picardy Place, Edinburgh, Scotland. His father, Charles Altamont Doyle, was born in England but of Irish descent, and his mother, born Mary Foley, was Irish. Supported by wealthy uncles, Doyle was sent to the Roman Catholic Jesuit preparatory school Hodder Place, Stonyhurst, at the age of nine (1868–70).

From 1876 to 1881 he studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, including a period working in the town of Aston (now a district of Birmingham) and in Sheffield, as well as in Shropshire at Ruyton-XI-Towns. While studying, Doyle began writing short stories. His earliest extant fiction, "The Haunted Grange of Goresthorpe", was unsuccessfully submitted to *Blackwood's Magazine*. His first published piece "The Mystery of Sasassa Valley", a story set in South Africa, was printed in Chambers's Edinburgh Journal on 6 September 1879. In 1882 Doyle set up an independent medical practice in Portsmouth. The practice was initially not very successful. While waiting for patients, Doyle again began writing stories and composed his first novels, "The Mystery of Cloomber", not published until 1888, and the unfinished "Narrative of John Smith", which would go unpublished until 2011. He amassed a portfolio of short stories including "The Captain of the Pole-Star" and "J. Habakuk Jephson's Statement", both inspired by Doyle's time at sea, the latter of which popularised the mystery of the Mary Celeste and added fictional details such as the perfect condition of the ship (which had actually taken on water by the time it was discovered) and its boats remaining on board (the one boat was in fact missing) that have come to dominate popular accounts of the incident.

Doyle struggled to find a publisher for his work. His first significant piece, A "Study in Scarlet", was taken by Ward Lock & Co on 20 November 1886 and later that year appeared in "the Beeton's Christmas Annual" and

received good reviews in "The Scotsman and the Glasgow Herald". The story featured the first appearance of Watson and Sherlock Holmes, partially modeled after his former university teacher Joseph Bell. A sequel to "A Study in Scarlet" was commissioned and "The Sign of the Four" appeared in Lippincott's Magazine in February 1890, under agreement with the Ward Lock company. Doyle felt grievously exploited by Ward Lock as an author new to the publishing world and he left them. Short stories featuring Sherlock Holmes were published in the Strand Magazine. Doyle first began to write for the "Strand" from his home at 2 Upper Wimpole Street, now marked by a memorial plaque.

In 1890 Doyle moved to London. He set up a practice as an ophthalmologist at No.2 Devonshire Place. He wrote in his autobiography that not a single patient crossed his door. This gave him more time for writing, and in November 1891 he wrote to his mother: "I think of slaying Holmes ... and winding him up for good and all. He takes my mind from better things." His mother responded, "You won't! You can't! You mustn't!"

In December 1893 in order to dedicate more of his time to what he considered his more important works (his historical novels), Doyle had Holmes and Professor Moriarty apparently plunge to their deaths together down the Reichenbach Falls in the story "The Final Problem". Public outcry, however, led him to bring the character back in 1901, in "The Hound of the Baskervilles", though this was set at a time before the Reichenbach incident.

In 1903, Doyle published his first Holmes short story in ten years, "The Adventure of the Empty House", in which it was explained that only Moriarty had fallen; but since Holmes had other dangerous enemies - especially Colonel Sebastian Moran - he had arranged



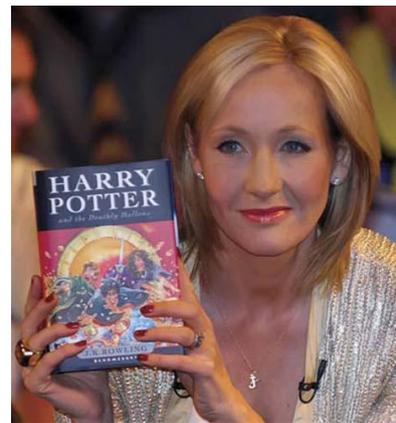
to also be perceived as dead.

Holmes ultimately was featured in 56 short stories and four Doyle's novels, and has since appeared in many novels and stories by other authors.

Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes is one of the most interesting characters I have ever read about. The books about him are my favourite ones. Sherlock Holmes solves riddles and mysteries with a great enthusiasm and eagerness! We see he lives to do that! This is the purpose of his life. Reading books about Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson we learn the main features of the British: restraint, sense of humor, insistence, strong will, erudition, politeness, punctuality, etc.

Joanne Katheline Rowling

Joanne Rowling - English writer, author of novels about Harry Potter, which were translated into 65 languages and sold in number of 400 million copies. It is not known, if her works stays in history equally the greatest writers, but she has already left her trace in history and it's undoubtedly.



The history of Harry Potter begins from the 1995 year, when Rowling finished her manuscript for "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" on an old manual typewriter. Now there are 7 books about this little wizard, the last was published in 2007.

Rowling has a lot of awards and honours for her books and among them are: three Nestlé Smarties Book Prizes, National Book Awards Children's Book of the Year, Hugo Award for Best Novel, two British Book Awards, British Academy Film Awards, Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award and many others. She is the richest person in the UK and in October 2010, J. K. Rowling was named "Most Influential Woman in Britain" by leading magazine editors.

4. INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROBLEM.

We held a survey (Appendix 2) of the students (9-11grades). 32 pupils took part in the survey.

Questionnaire

1) Have you ever read books of English writers?

1 - Yes

2 - No

2) What books of English writers have you read?

3) What books did you like?

4) Did you find out anything new about life, customs or traditions of the British? What exactly?

5) Is there anything special about British that you liked?

6) Have you read English books in original?

1 - Yes

2 - No

7) Did these books help you to understand Great Britain and its people?

1 - Yes

2 - No

3 - It's difficult to answer

According to the results of the survey

The most popular English writers for our schoolmates are the following: William Shakespeare, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Joanne Katherine Rowling, Daniel Defoe, Sisters Bronte, Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Agatha Christie, Lewis Carroll, Jonathan Swift.

The basic English characteristics are:

- restraint
- conservatism
- sense of humor
- tolerance
- calm
- insistence
- strong will
- pride
- patriotism
- hospitality
- erudition
- politeness
- punctuality

Pupils' thoughts of the British:

- The British are judicious. They refer to life philosophically.
- Family and friendship are the most important things for British are patriots, they love their country.
- The British always have a good breakfast.
- There are a lot of books in their houses.
- They love sports - tennis, football, billiards, horse racing, golf, etc.
- They have a rich inner world.
- I learned a lot about English history and the English people from Shakespeare's books.
- There are many interesting places in Britain: ancient castles, monuments,

museums.

- The British are conservators, they don't like changes.
- They are pets' lovers.
- They are brilliant gardeners.
- They have a very subtle sense of humor that sometimes can be hard to understand to other people.

88% of respondents think that reading English literature helps them to understand Britain and its people better and develops their interest to the culture of Great Britain. (Appendix 4)

Most of our schoolmates mentioned that reading is of great educational importance, as reading is a means of communication, people get information they need from books, magazines, newspaper, the Internet, etc. Through reading in a foreign language learners enrich their knowledge of the world around them. They get acquainted with the countries where the target language is spoken.

Reading develops pupils' intelligence. It helps to develop their memory, will, imagination. Reading is an important mean of mastering grammar because in reading pupils memorize grammatical structures. Reading also is a way of speaking development. They learn to form statements, and descriptions.

Learners become accustomed to working with books, which in its turn facilitates unaided practice in further reading. Reading ability is, therefore, not only of great practical, but educational and social importance, too.

Reading is not only an aim in itself, it is also a means of learning a foreign language. When reading a text the learner reviews sounds and letters, vocabulary and grammar, memorizes the spelling of words and word combinations. He also reviews grammar and, in this way, he perfects his command of the target language.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the project is achieved. The hypothesis is confirmed.

According to results of the investigation the students who read English books develop their minds, improve their language skills, expand knowledge of English history and culture.

The tasks of the project are completed:

- 1) We studied the literature on the topic that was available on the internet and in the libraries and summarized the valuable information.
- 2) We learnt what English books were the most popular among the students.
- 3) We conducted the survey and discussed the results of our research paper at the conference. We made the booklet "What English books teenagers read today" (Appendix 4).

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Pushkin House, London's Russian Cultural Centre

Pushkin House was established to serve as a home for Russian culture in London, a focus for Anglo-Russian cultural exchange, a provider of education and information on the Russian language and culture.

In pursuit of these aims, Pushkin House has a various cultural programme on Russian literature, art, film, music, theatre and dance, as well as history, philosophy and politics. Events include lectures and talks, seminars, conferences, exhibitions, films, concerts and readings.



Pushkin House

The House also has its own reference library of Russian culture. Besides its own events, Pushkin House welcomes and encourages collaboration with other institutions and groups dedicated to Russian culture. The House currently hosts lectures run by Pushkin Club and the GB-Russia Society. Regular Russian language courses are provided by the Russian Language Centre. Creative partnerships being established with major museums and libraries in the mission of Pushkin House are to serve as a home for Russian culture.

The principal objectives of the Centre are:

- to initiate programmes of events, both independently and in collaboration with other organizations;
- to provide a lively, informal meeting-place for those interested in Russia and its culture;
- to promote teaching of the Russian language and culture;
- to provide support, and, where appropriate, facilities for Anglo-Russian cultural organization;
- to provide information about Russia through web-sites and databases;
- to facilitate, coordinate and disseminate information about Russian cultural events in London and elsewhere in the UK;
- to maintain and develop active contacts and collaboration with the widest possible range of cultural institutions and organizations in Russia.



Plaque with a portrait of Pushkin (left), Maria Kullmann (right)

History of the house

Pushkin House owes its foundation to the energy and vision of Maria Kullmann, daughter of the famous Moscow surgeon Mikhail Zernov and wife of Gustav Kullmann, a renowned Swiss lawyer who worked for many years in the top echelons of the League of Nations. In 1950s, there was a great need for a politically neutral Russian cultural centre in London. Maria Kullmann and a small group of her friends rented a house in West London, where she created a unique centre. There were performances of such representatives of the old Russian culture as Tamara Korsavina, Mstislav Dobuzhinski, Sergei Lifar, Alexander Meinford and many others and by the first Soviet writers and artists who were allowed to travel abroad. After August 1991, representatives of post-Soviet Russian culture, including poets and writers who had moved to the West, started appearing at Pushkin House. At the same time, however, chronic problems were becoming obvious. Most of the rooms in the Ladbroke Grove house had been let out as flats for years, and the cultural facilities were limited to just one room. The need for radical change was clear. Therefore Pushkin House Trust decided to sell the building on Ladbroke Grove, in order to acquire a more suitable property which could be totally dedicated to supporting Russian culture in London. There were to be lectures, concerts, exhibitions, seminars and films.

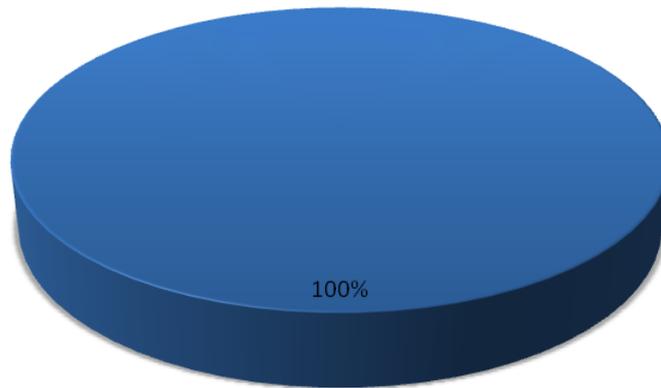
The new cultural centre - Pushkin House - officially opened in November, 2006. Its cultural programme today includes concerts, lectures on all aspects of Russian culture, exhibitions of Russian art and screenings of Russian films and opera.

Pushkin House has established links with distinguished cultural organizations in Russia and plans to greatly expand these links in the near future. It also has an expanded event programme.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

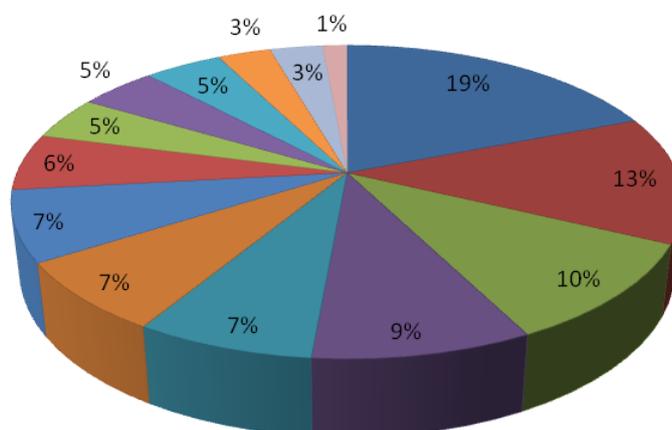
Have you ever read books of English writers?

■ Yes ■ No



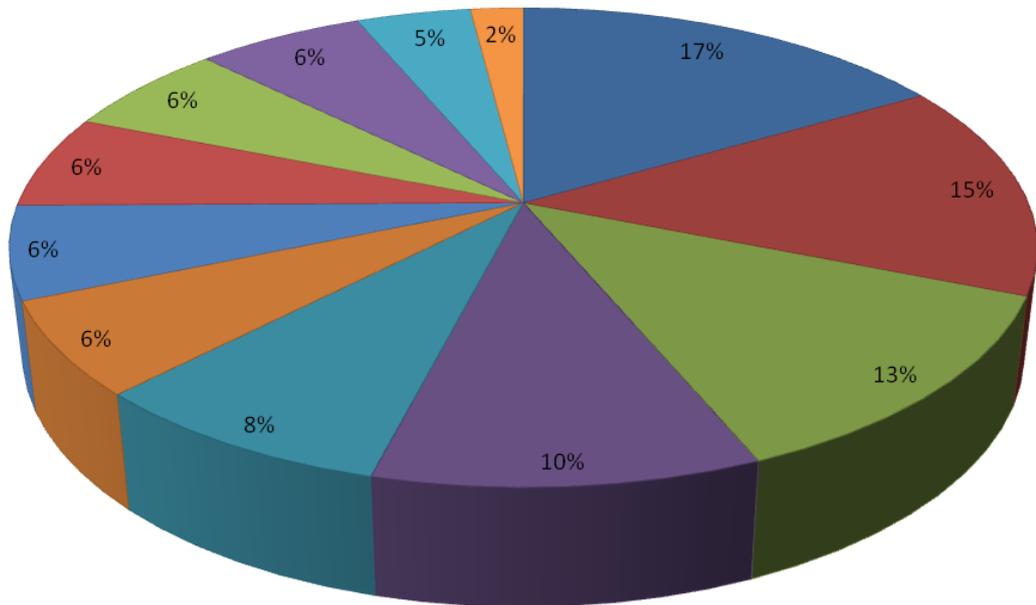
What books of English writers have you read?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ■ William Shakespeare "Romeo and Juliet" | ■ Arthur Conan Doyle "Sherlock Holmes" |
| ■ Daniel Dafoe "The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe" | ■ Joan Rolling "Harry Potter" |
| ■ Oscar Wilde "The Picture of Dorian Gray" | ■ William Shakespeare "Hamlet" |
| ■ Robert Stevenson "Treasure Island" | ■ William Shakespeare "Sonnets" |
| ■ Jane Austen "Pride and Prejudice" | ■ Charlotte Bronte "Jane Eyre" |
| ■ William Shakespeare "Twelfth Night" | ■ Agatha Christie "The Thirteen Problems" |
| ■ William Shakespeare "Lion king" | ■ Others |



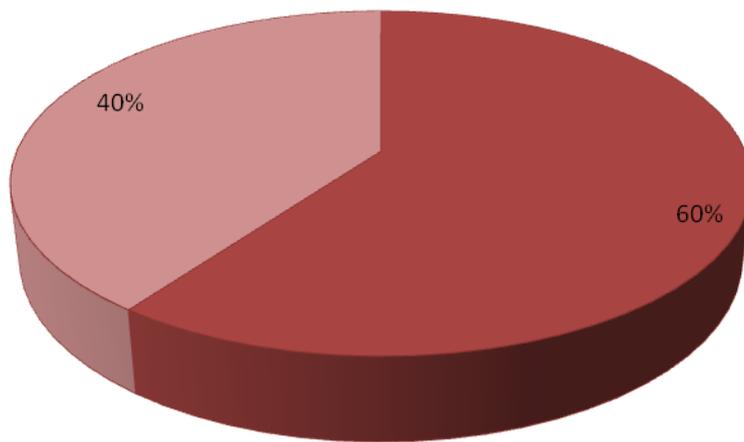
What books did you like?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ Arthur Conan Doyle "Sherlock Holmes" | ■ William Shakespeare "Romeo and Juliet" |
| ■ Joan Rolling "Harry Potter" | ■ Daniel Dafoe "The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe" |
| ■ Oscar Wilde "The Picture of Dorian Gray" | ■ Jane Austen "Pride and Prejudice" |
| ■ Charlotte Bronte "Jane Eyre" | ■ William Shakespeare "Hamlet" |
| ■ Robert Stevenson "Treasure Island" | ■ William Shakespeare "Sonnets" |
| ■ William Shakespeare "Twelfth Night" | ■ Others |



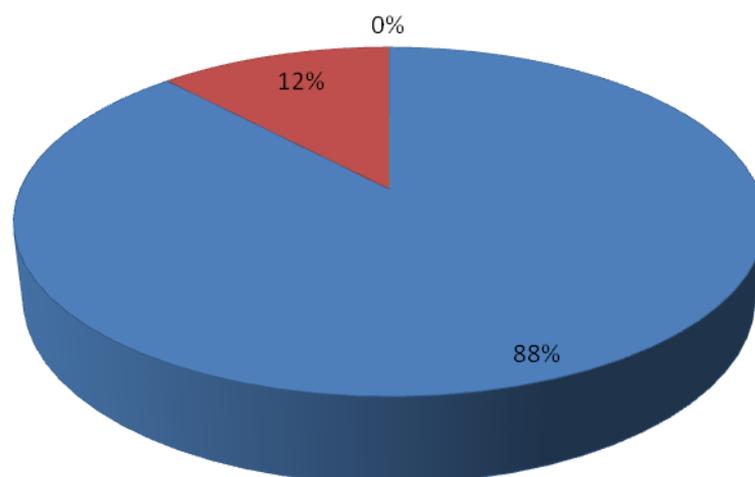
Have you read English books in original?

■ Yes ■ No



Did these books help you to understand Great Britain and its people?

■ Yes ■ It's difficult to answer ■ No



Popular English writers

Oscar Wilde



"Wilde is the greatest force for evil that has appeared in Europe during the last three hundred and fifty years."

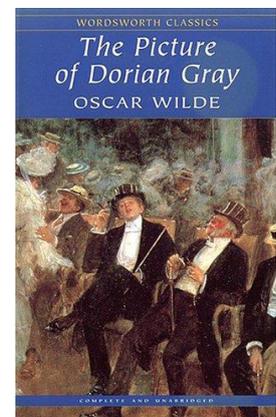
Lord Alfred Douglas, the lover of Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), judge of beauty and humor, was an Irish writer and poet. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. Today he is remembered for his epigrams, plays and the circumstances of his imprisonment, followed by his early death.

Wilde's name is much in the air these days. There are stage plays about his life, a recent feature film starring Stephen Fry and Jude Law, and articles in the national press. The centenary of his premature death in 1900 at age 46 was widely celebrated in the literary and gay communities with moving testimonies to Oscar Wilde, the persecuted genius and gay man, victim of a repressive and judgmental social order.

He is known as an author of plays, especially comedies like "Lady Windermere's Fan", "A Woman of No Importance", and "An Ideal Husband" and serious "Salome". The only published novel by Oscar Wilde is "The picture of Dorian Gray" and it brought him world-wide fame.

No doubt, Wilde is one of the most quoted authors in the world because all of his quotes are neat and laconic. There are some of them:



- If you want to tell people the truth, make them laugh, otherwise they'll kill you.
- Between men and women there is no friendship possible. There is passion, enmity, worship, love, but no friendship.
- It is better to be beautiful than to be good, but it is better to be good than to be ugly.
- My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the earth. One or the other of us has to go.

Agatha Christie

The Queen of Crime



"It lasted so long because it is a bloody good play. Agatha Christy is very, very clever indeed."

Sir Richard Attenborough

Agatha Christie (1890-1976) was a British crime writer of novels, short stories, and plays. She also wrote romances under the name Mary Westmacott, but she is best remembered for her 66 detective novels and 14 short story collections, especially those featuring Hercule Poirot or Miss Jane Marple, who were her the most popular heroes. To the end of 30th years Christie became tired of the Poirot, but Miss Marple had always been her favourite personage.

Christie can be named as writer-phenomenon because of her literary records:

- The most famous detective writer.
- The most published writers of the all history of humanity (after the Bible and Shakespeare).
- The best-selling novelist of all time.

- Her play “The Mousetrap” was opened on 25 November 1952 and as of 2012 is still running after more than 24,600 performances.
- Her books have been translated into at least 103 languages.

Moreover, Christie was a really great woman, clever and wise, with brilliant sense of humour, and there are some her thoughts:

"An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have. The older she gets the more interested he is in her."

"Any woman can fool a man if she wants to and if he's in love with her."

"Never do anything yourself that others can do for you."

"Every murderer is probably somebody's old friend."

The booklet "What English books teenagers read today"

