



# Русская программа Russian Program

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August 27, 2007

Dear Parent or Guardian:

*Добро пожаловать на курсы русского языка в МНС и в ВВСТА!*

Welcome to the Russian courses at Mansfield High School and Ben Barber Career Technical Academy!

I am very excited to have your son/daughter in one of my Russian classes this year! As you may have heard, Mansfield is the only public school district in North Texas to have Russian as part of its high school -level Languages Other Than English (LOTE) course offerings. It is important to me that your son/daughter is successful in my class and I know that working together as a team, we can help him/her grow and develop to full potential. You can help your son/daughter be successful in Russian even though you probably don't know any Russian yourself (if you do, I would like to know!). Below are general course descriptions, as well as some suggestions for you to read and review with your son/daughter. After doing so, please sign the bottom of the last page and return it to me by Friday, August 31 (this will be counted as a homework grade).

Additionally, I would suggest that your son/daughter regularly visit the Russian course page on our school website at <http://mhsrussian.shorturl.com>. This site will have textbook audio/video links and I plan to make updated course information, class "coupons," and even extra credit assignments\*available here during the semester.

## **GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

In **1<sup>st</sup> year Russian**, your son/daughter will learn: to greet people and introduce him-/herself and others, talk about languages and ethnic and national backgrounds, talk about what and where people study, talk about daily schedules, make and respond to invitations, talk on the telephone, master the basics of Russian pronunciation and intonation, understand some elements of Russian culture and the transition from Soviet-era cultural norms. One of the most important facets of 1<sup>st</sup> year Russian is mastery of the writing system as quickly as possible (including how to use a phonetic Russian keyboard to complete occasional and/or extra credit assignments online or by email\*).

In **2<sup>nd</sup> year Russian**, your son/daughter will learn: to talk about his/her home and the homes of Russians, families and family members (including ages, professions, where people were born and raised), buying things, asking for advice, going to a restaurant, and talking about his/her hometown. In addition, your son/daughter will read about the changes in Russian commerce in the post-Soviet era. Your son/daughter should have a baseline knowledge of the objectives taught in 1<sup>st</sup> year Russian.

In **3<sup>rd</sup> year Russian**, your son/daughter will improve his/her understanding of telephone etiquette and learn: how to order overseas calls, to ask for and understand directions for getting around town, to describe the weather and talk about traveling, to talk about television and movies, to express likes and dislikes and agreement and disagreement, to talk about books and authors and about his/her free time and hobbies (including sports and music). your son/daughter will also learn to talk about health and illness (including talking with doctors), holidays and holiday

greetings, and deal with common problems that occur when traveling abroad. Your son/daughter should have a baseline knowledge of the objectives taught in 2<sup>nd</sup> year Russian.

**\*Note about student-teacher e-mail/online interaction:** *In all 3 course levels it will be necessary for me to interact via email (or, possibly, by online chat) with your son or daughter. If you have any questions or concerns about this, PLEASE contact me as soon as possible!*

## **ENCOURAGEMENT**

You will help your son/daughter most by maintaining a positive attitude about his/her ability to learn Russian. Please encourage your son/daughter to keep up with written work when it is assigned! Most students who perform poorly do so because they don't consistently study or finish homework.

## **SUPPLIES**

Each day your son/daughter must come to class prepared! He/she will need a black or blue pen and a notebook (1" binder with notebook paper and dividers) for Russian class only. Your son/daughter will be assigned a textbook from a limited supply on hand and must pay for a missing/damaged book (approx. \$70) before a final grade will be issued.

## **GRADES**

Students will receive grades based on classroom performance and tested proficiency in five language skills areas: **Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Culture**; however, the most important skills are Listening and Speaking. Your son/daughter's participation in class is very important!! Grade point average will be determined according to the following formula:

Class Participation\*\* 20%

Homework\*\*\* 15%

Compositions 10%

Quizzes, Dictations, etc. 10%

Unit Tests & Culture Presentation (see note below) 15%

Final Examination 15%

Oral Examinations 15%

**\*\*Class Participation** will be graded on a daily basis according to the following formula:

5 points Present and Completely Prepared

4 points Present and Partially Prepared

3 points Present but Completely Unprepared

0 points Absent

**Completely Prepared** does not mean that the student can answer every question correctly: it merely means that the student is prepared to attempt to answer every question based on the previous evening's homework assignment.

**Partially Prepared** means that the student has demonstrated that she/he has not completed the given day's assignment completely, although some of the assignment was completed.

The lowest 3 grades for class participation will be eliminated in the grading process.

**\*\*\*Homework Exercises** will be graded according to the following scale:

5 points Submitted on time and completed with good effort, at least 80% correct

4 points Submitted on time, less than 80% correct, more than 50% correct

3 point Submitted on time, but less than 50% correct

0 points Not submitted

**No late homework will be accepted** without a legitimate excuse. If you know that you will have to miss class on a particular date, submit your homework assignment in advance and you will still receive the homework points for that day.

The lowest 3 grades for homework will be eliminated in the grading process. The semester grade for homework will be the percentage of total homework points earned (of the total homework points possible).

### **CULTURE ASSIGNMENT**

Students will prepare a brief presentation (in English) on one of the following topics:

1) **Current Events:** Read about current political, business/economic or social events and/or developments in Russia in The New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Time, or Newsweek and pick one issue (for example, the development of constitutional law in Russia, the rise of new Russian rock groups, conflicts concerning the development of natural resources vs. the protection of the environment, ethnic conflicts and tensions, nature of the new parliament, new urban planning, post-communist investment or any other topic cleared the teacher) and trace it through articles published over the course of the semester. Prepare a presentation describing the developments related to this issue, citing what was read in the periodicals examined. Photocopy all articles read and cited and submit them with the presentation. In this presentation, the student will explain (not read) what he/she learned about today's Russia.

2) **Film:** Watch two Russian films (excluding films shown in class) and prepare an analysis of what was learned about Russian culture. How does Russian culture differ from American culture, as demonstrated in the two films? In this presentation, the student will explain (not read) what was learned about Russia from the films; student may show one 2-minute excerpt as part of the presentation.

3) **Literature:** Read a short work of literature by a Russian author: check with teacher for suggestions. Prepare an analysis of what elements of Russian culture were illustrated in the text. In this presentation, the student will explain (not read) what he/she learned about today's Russia.

4) **Famous Figures in Russian Arts and Sciences:** Pick a major Russian composer, artist, writer, architect or scientist and read a biography of this person. Write up a summary of this person's most significant contribution to the arts or to science. In this presentation, the student will explain (not read) what was learned about Russian arts and sciences; student may show photographs or play musical excerpts as part of the presentation.

5) **History:** Student will read a biography of any major political figure in Russian history (for example, any tsar or general secretary), and prepare an explanation of that person's significance for Russian history. In this presentation, the student will explain (not read) what was learned about Russian history; student may show photographs as part of the presentation.

6) **Other:** Student may pick another topic and clear it with your instructor. This presentation must be based on the reading (or viewing or listening) of a text written by or about Russians or Russian culture and civilization.

### **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Success in my classes (and your son/daughter's lifelong success, as well) depends upon the development of self-discipline. I have therefore adopted the following Classroom Discipline Plan in order to provide your son/daughter with the most positive, stimulating academic atmosphere possible in order to help insure his/her success in Russian. This plan will be in effect at all times.

#### **RULES**

1. Follow directions the first time given.
2. Talk ONLY when given permission.
3. Bring ONLY designated materials to class.

4. Stay on task.

CONSEQUENCES

1. Verbal warning.
2. Last to leave class at the bell.
3. Call parent.
4. Send to Associate Principal.

REWARDS

A positive classroom environment depends upon encouragement from the teacher. I reward my students for good behavior with, among other things, free homework passes.

Let me assure you that I will always have my students' best interest at heart. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at [holsed@mansfieldisd.org](mailto:holsed@mansfieldisd.org) (or you can call the MHS office at 817-473-5750 and leave me a message).

*С уважением,*

E.B. Holschuh

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**STUDENT NAME (Please print!):** \_\_\_\_\_

**We have read and discussed this plan for success in Russian.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ [This portion is due to Mr. Holschuh NO LATER than Friday, August 31, 2007!]

**Parent's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Parent's Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student's Email\*:** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Note about student-teacher e-mail/online interaction: During this course it will be necessary for me to interact via email (or, possibly, by online chat) with your son or daughter. If you have any questions or concerns about this, PLEASE contact me as soon as possible!*