

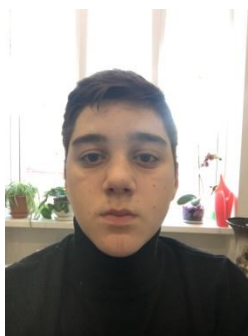
ЧУ ДО «Лингвистический центр Татьяны Манукянц»

Командный конкурс эссе

**“Unity in Diversity: Russia and the English-Speaking World.
Time for Equal Opportunities”**

Исследовательская работа (эссе)

«Страхи, табу, стремления и мечты российских и британских подростков»



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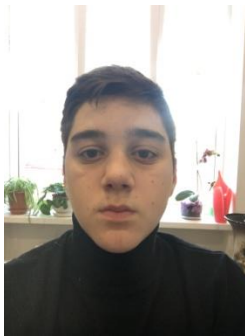
Group essay contest

“Unity in diversity: Russia and the English-Speaking World.

Time for Equal Opportunities”

Research work (essay)

“Fears, taboos, ambitions and dreams of Russian and British teenagers”



Farniev Alexander



Adamidi Stilian



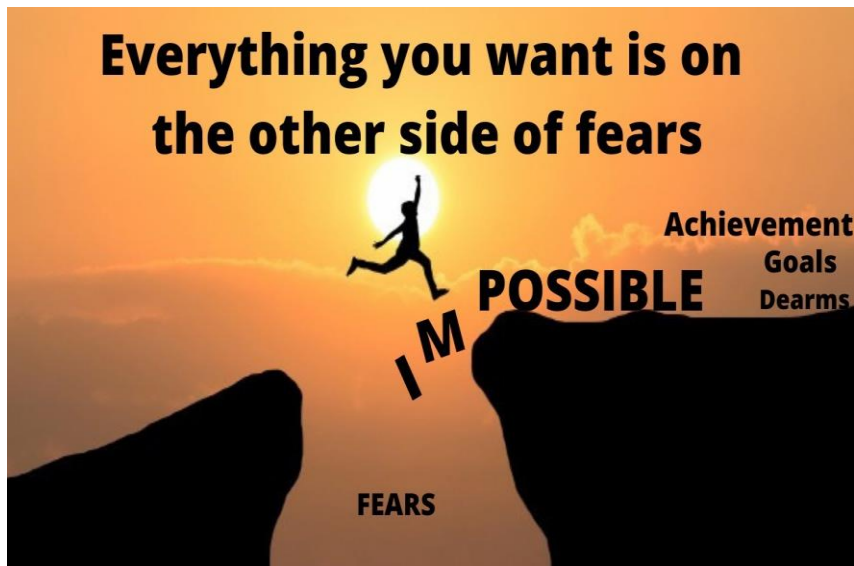
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Theses:

1. Since ancient times, the humanity has been fighting with its fears trying to achieve what it wants.
2. The digital age offers a wide choice of opportunities for ambitious generation Z.
3. The dreams and ambitions of the current generation of Russian and British teenagers largely coincide.
4. Teens are often subjected to different fears and complexes.
5. Global problems worrying teens are universal.
6. Covid-19 is considered to be one of the main fears of teens of the last two years.
7. The origin and diversities of taboos.
8. British and Russian taboos: is there any difference?
9. Teens' fears can be a booster for achieving their dreams.

A head full of fears has no space for dreams.



What makes most teens move forward, overcome different obstacles and hardships?

May be dreams? May be ambitions?

What prevents them from achieving what they want? Can it be taboos and fears?

Adolescents are exactly the people who are mercilessly torn apart by various feelings and emotions.

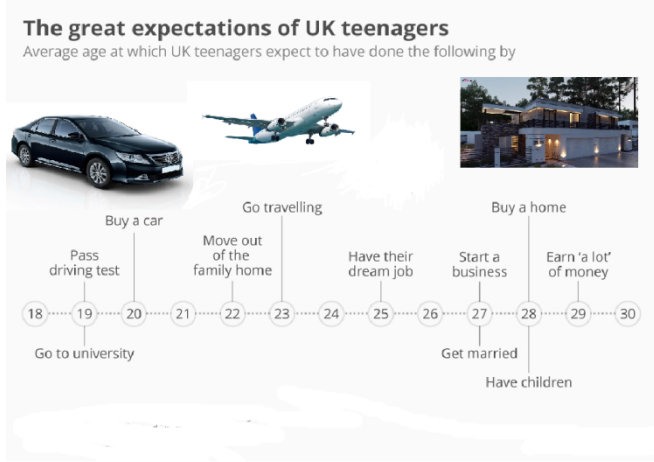
The myth of Icarus vividly demonstrates people's desire to achieve their aims even at the cost of life. Forgetting all taboos and fears of his father Daedalus that courageous youth went high into the sky trying to fulfill his dreams but...he was doomed.

A lot of time has passed since then, but if you have a look at our modern society, you will see plenty of young people who are quite ambitious and full of dreams about their future. Modern teenagers, to be more precise, generation Z, differ from the other generations due to the digital age. It is the development of cutting-edge technology and, of course, incredible expansion of the Internet that influence greatly teenagers who start thinking in some other way. They perceive information and the whole world as a limitless information field. Sometimes they live in a virtual space and their clip thinking deprives them from visualizing

hidden threats of our reality. That is why, with such a wide choice of opportunities offered by this virtuality it is quite difficult to focus on their future aims.

Apparently, this phenomenon may be the cause of the uniformity as well as diversity in teens' fears, ambitions and dreams. The desire to get a good education that paves the way to a promising career, which, in its turn, enables to earn money, is a common one for Russian and British adolescents. Today's teens are found to be the most entrepreneurial of all the generations with almost one in ten aspiring to start their own business, compared to only 4% of generation X. Moreover, it is very important that they hope to use their aspirations to make a difference to others and society. Thus, we, generation Z, should be equipped with the right tools and they are excellent education and opportunities to fulfill these ambitions.

Undoubtedly, comfortable and decent lifestyle is number two in the list of teen's priorities. It comprises such notions like accessible healthcare, the opportunity to travel, to buy different things. So, in other words, they wish not to be pressed with the lack of money. Besides, modern teens wish to bring up their offspring in eco-friendly environment, in peace and stability and give them an essential education. By the way, speaking about their dreams and ambitions British teenagers of generation Z mention that with the introduction of the welfare state, free secondary education and health care they do not have to worry about going hungry or being unable to afford to see a doctor, or not having enough money to further their education as it was with war generation. To sum up, we may say that Russian and British teens are for a safe home, a loving family, a wide choice of opportunities for a bright future. It is what every young person wherever they live really deserves.



Nevertheless for someone, life has only brought difficult challenges. It is well-known that each coin has a reverse side. Sometimes teens' fears and set taboos can hinder the fulfillment of their dreams and ambitions. Recent surveys confirm that adolescents are subjected to various complexes, phobias and anxieties. Mostly, they coincide, to some extent, with both British and Russian teens: they typically feel extremely depressed about their physical appearance, bullying at school, their health and social status. (Diagram I, App. I) For example, girls are in a constant fear of putting on weight. Therefore, they resort to various weight reducing methods. Some of these methods are very susceptible to their health, and may even be the cause of psychologically effected diseases such as anorexia. Moreover, such fears can lead to a low self-esteem and even affect mental health. It is the way to failure which is also in the list of teens' fears. Some scientists claim that fear being one of the basic human emotions is quite natural and may be even helpful in some situations as it can be perceived as a sign of alert, a signal that warns us to be careful. But we should not let this fear grow into a phobia. Film industry of many countries reflects teens' problems in blockbusters where the main characters try to overcome their hardships thus paving the way and giving examples to follow for the teens that have some fears.

Still, we cannot but mention that teens have some concern about various global problems like peace on the Earth, environmental pollution. These fears are universal. Greta Thunberg, Swedish eco-activist, quite emotionally pleaded the worries of teenagers from all over the world to the World Economic Forum. Recent surveys show that in the UK and Russia teens are afraid of inevitable changes of climate which may ruin their dreams and aspirations. Moreover, British adolescents fear this problem as much as they do terrorism. Really, humans consider themselves masters of our nature, causing damage with detrimental effect. Thus, teens have every reason to fear these consequences. Nevertheless, we hope that all people will come to understand that the earth is our common home and that we are all obliged to take care of nature, which provides us with everything for existence. One more important thing for Russian teens is peace all over the world. Russians who have survived all the horrors of the Second World War have a genetic rejection of this monstrous product of humanity. Russia has never started wars of conquest or attacked other countries. It always had and still has to defend itself from all sorts of aggressors. Today's teenagers want peace!



The last stroke of all these fears, which we have been facing for more than two years, is a notorious Covid-19. It, to some extent, has smashed the ambitions and dreams of a great number of teens all over the world and has brought some chaos into their minds. According to research by the Mental Health Foundation and Swansea University the vast majority of British teenagers (68 per cent) fear the pandemic will make the future worse for people their age and even more: it will affect their mental health. Though, according to our survey, Russian teenagers seem to be less depressed than British ones. (Diagram 2, App.I I)

Is there anything else that scares or worries teens? Maybe it is this strange word “taboo”? Captain James Cook borrowed it during his exploratory trips through the Pacific and brought the term back to England. Now this word is widely spread. It means a prohibition of some actions, something which is frowned upon and considered inappropriate. Taboos can be linked with culture, religion and food. While some taboos are legally enforceable others are simply believed to be poor taste. Sometimes taboos are subtle social signals that demonstrate disapproval. British and Russian adolescents may have different kinds of taboos. It is a subtle yet discernible discrepancy. The distinction lies in family upbringing, the ideology of the state and in other aspects. Obviously, we should start with common taboos such as swearing (cursing), photographing strangers, telling racist jokes, taking drugs and a lot of others. Such things are prohibited worldwide as they can be very harmful, hurt people feelings or violate their privacy. Still, not everybody and teens in particular, adheres to these taboos.

Some taboos are considered to be pure British, for example, it is not appropriate to discuss somebody’s wealth or income, or violate personal space. While, in Russia polygamy and public nudity are unacceptable. Besides, there are some restrictions in different Russian regions where the majority of inhabitants are Muslims. There are taboos on displaying your hair, wearing shorts and some other religious prohibitions including not eating pork, for instance. Men and women should sit separately while having a feast. We cannot but mention that taboos in these areas are mostly observed by everybody. The republic we live in

is located in the South of Russia and it can be called “the melting pot” as people of more than 100 nationalities and of various religions live there as one family trying to be tolerant to each other. Mixed marriages are no longer uncommon and children from such marriages are more than anyone else aware of the importance of observing various traditions, customs and taboos.

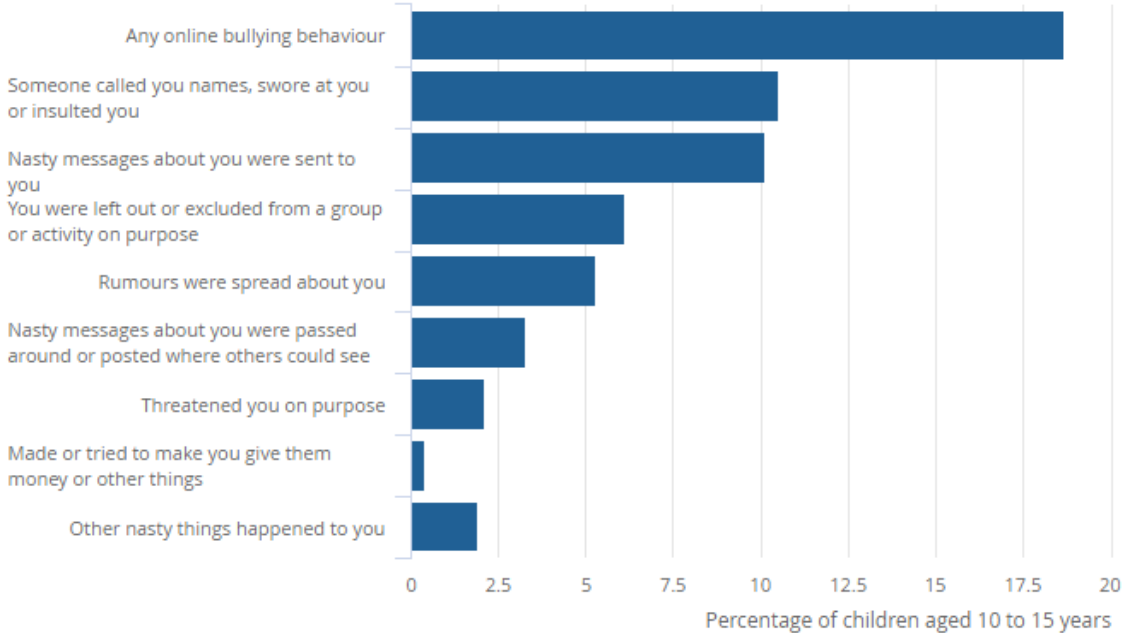
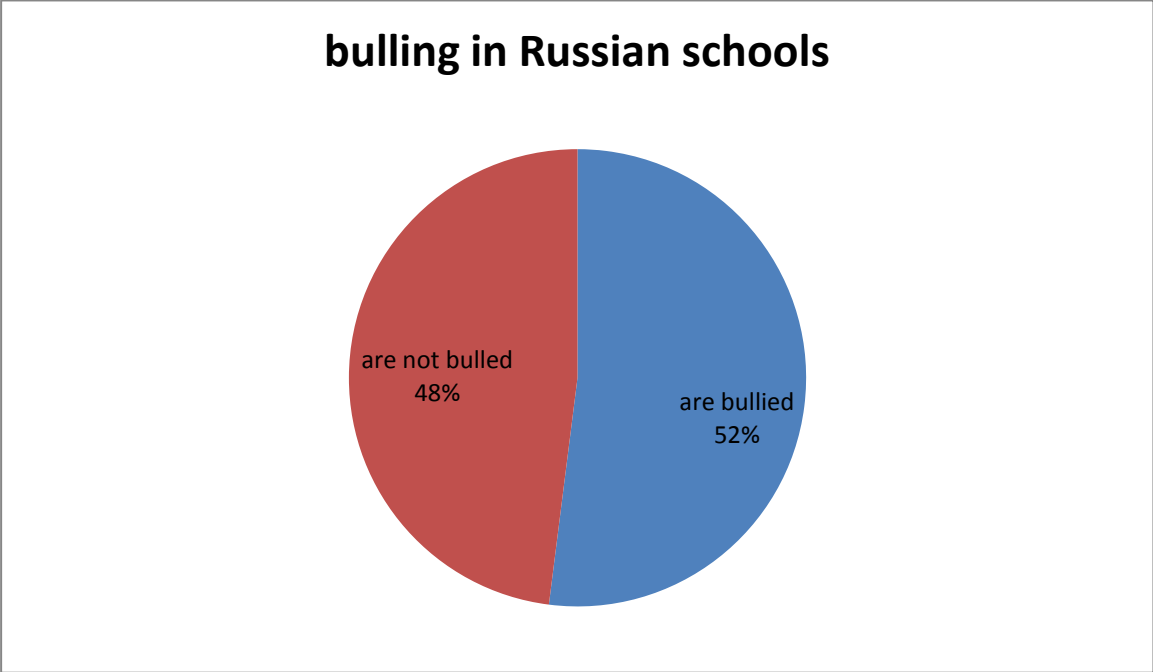
In conclusion, we would like to state that in spite of all fears and taboos teenagers in the whole world do not stop dreaming and cherishing their ambitions. As Winston Churchill once said, “Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm”. Be sure, there are a lot of optimists among Russian and British teens. We are supposed to be the engine of progress on our planet and adults should help us with their knowledge and experience. Otherwise, it will be a really long way. Nevertheless, we must stay strong and be ready to overcome any obstacle on the way to our bright future. As one popular celebrity said, “I guess if you don’t jump, you’ll never know if you can fly”.

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Appendix I

Diagram I



Appendix II

Covid-19



Diagram 2

