

All tasks except those 1 and 2 are addressed to students of all levels. You should not try to answer each question; it will be much better if you do thoroughly and in detail at least one task or only answer the easiest questions in each task.

**Task 1. (4-9)** Here are extracts from two stories by Russian authors. Write the titles and the names of the authors. Give your reasons and explain in detail what the extracts have in common and what the principal differences are.

1. The kitchen lamp hangs on the wall, and a shaggy shadow of my head covers the notebook, the ink bottle and my hand, which, helplessly creaking with a pen, moves on paper. I sit at the table, trying to stick my tongue at my cheek, and write out my strokes - one, another, third, hundredth, thousandth. I have brought out at least a million strokes, because my teacher insists that I can't move on until they are "popindicular".

He sits next to me teaching me, and looks condescendingly at my mother now and then. He teaches me not only how to write but also how to live and these endless stupid arguments make me feel dizzy while my strokes go out pot-bellied, tailed, anything but not direct, not "popindicular". Stroke, stroke, stroke, fifth, twentieth, hundredth...

... Stroke, stroke, thick, thin, crooked, pot-bellied, fifth, twentieth, hundredth... , stroke, stroke... the pen creaks, stroke, blot...

... The teacher is looking at me. I'm only ten, and I start restlessly fidgeting on the stool. With a premonition of some kind of trouble, I look up at my mother's pale face, at her dark hair with a parting in the middle, at her thin hands — and return to my strokes.

... I'd like to draw at least one long line across the row, and a beautiful fence would come out, but... not allowed! Strokes should be "popindicular".

2. When my dad was young, he learned to read very quickly. They only said to him: this is "a", this is "b". And he learned all the letters. It was very interesting. He began to read books, look at pictures. But he didn't want to draw strokes.

Little dad did not want to hold the pen correctly. He didn't want to hold it wrongly either.

Actually, he wanted to read, not write. It was interesting to read, and boring to write.

But the parents of little dad told him like this:

— You will not write — you don't not read!

And added: Write strokes.

All day, from morning to night, these words rang in the ears of little dad. And every day he wrote strokes loathingly.

Those strokes were terrible. They were crooked and hunchbacked. They looked like some hideous cripples. Little dad could not look at them without disgust himself.

No, he didn't get sticks. But the blots turned out just wonderful. Nobody has

made such large and beautiful blots. Everyone agreed. And if they learned to write in blots, little dad would write best of all. Not a single stroke stood straight. And on each page sat large, beautiful blots.

Little dad was ashamed, scolded, punished. He was forced to rewrite lesson twice and three times. But the more he wrote, the worse the strokes, and the better the blots. And he did not understand why they tortured him.

**Task 2. (4-9)** You can see two poems. One is written by John Keats (1795-1821), the other is anonymous. Can you guess which is which? Give your arguments, compare the poems. What do they have in common? How different are they?

1

All the months go past,  
Each is like a guest,  
December is the last,  
December is the best.  
Each has lovely things,  
Each has a friend,  
But December brings  
Christmas at the end.

2

I

In drear-nighted December,  
Too happy, happy tree,  
Thy branches ne'er remember  
Their green felicity—  
The north cannot undo them  
With a sleety whistle through them  
Nor frozen thawings glue them  
From budding at the prime.

II

In drear-nighted December,  
Too happy, happy brook,  
Thy bubblings ne'er remember  
Apollo's summer look;

But with a sweet forgetting,  
They stay their crystal fretting,  
Never, never petting  
About the frozen time.

III

Ah! would 'twere so with many  
A gentle girl and boy!  
But were there ever any  
Writh'd not of passed joy?  
The feel of not to feel it,  
When there is none to heal it,  
No numbed sense to steel it,  
Was never said in rhyme.

Which of these poems, in your opinion, is a separate one, and which is a part of a cycle? What would you call such a cycle? Compose a poem of your own to add it to the cycle.

**Task 3. (4-11)** Read the beginning of a well-known novel written in 20th century.

ONE cloudy but luminous day, towards four in the afternoon on April the first, 192— (a foreign critic once remarked that while many novels, most German ones for example, begin with a date, it is only Russian authors who, in keeping with the honesty peculiar to our literature, omit the final digit) a moving van, very long and very yellow, hitched to a tractor that was also yellow, with hypertrophied rear wheels and a shamelessly exposed anatomy.

Name, if you can, the author and the novel. Will you suppose why the author tells readers at once the date and month but not the year? Do you know any other works from Russian and world fiction that start with a date and an exact time of the action? Why do you think a writer may need this device? (Remember a few examples.) In what cases is such indication not necessary and even impossible?

**Task 4. (4-11)** The author of these poems – A. Akhmatova (1889-1966) and M. Tsvetaeva (1892- 1941) responded to the occupation of Czechoslovakia and bombing of London by Nazi Germany. Write which poem belongs to this or that poet and give your arguments. What do these poems have in common and what are the differences? Pay attention to the content and form, Give as many details as possible.

1

Oh, tears in my eyes! Love, anger, all in vain! For Czechia that cries, For wounded bleeding Spain,	Since I refuse to live Among these wolves of th' street. 'Tis time, 'tis time to leave, And I am ready for it.
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And for this mountain black That shadows whole world, 'Tis time now to give back My ticket to my Lord.	Among these sharks of th' plain I do refuse to swim Again, again, again, Down this bloody stream.
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I'm choosing not to be. From this asylum I Am going to flee, To disappear, to die,	I don't need eyes, or ears, Or any further trial. To all what's happening here My answer is denial.
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15 March – 11 May 1939

2. To Londoners

And made war with the heavens.  
Apocalypse.

With implacable hand, time is writing  
Shakespeare's twenty-fourth drama.  
We who share the formidable feast  
Would gladly read Hamlet, Caesar, Lear  
As we cross over the leaden river;  
Gladly accompany Juliet's sweet bier,  
Today, with singing and torches,  
Gladly peek through the window at Macbeth  
Trembling among the hired murderers —  
Only not this, not this, not this,  
This we have no strength to read!

1940

**Task 5. (4-11)** S. Coleridge (1772-1834), a poet, wrote about certain poetic form (there are dots instead its name) like this:

What is an . . . . .? a dwarfish whole,  
Its body brevity, and wit its soul.

Name the form. Explain its peculiarities. You can see below a number of other poems in this form. Fill in the blanks and write the names of the poets. Give your arguments.

1. Here lies my \_\_\_\_\_ : here let her lie!  
Now she's at rest — and so am I.
2. I am His Highness' dog at Kew;  
Pray tell me, sir, whose \_\_\_\_\_ are you?
3. I'm tired of Love: I'm still more tired of Rhyme.  
But \_\_\_\_\_ gives me pleasure all the time.

Try to write a poem in this form.

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Don't forget to **sign** your work (please, write the card number, your last name, school and grade) before **submitting** the work. You do not have to submit the sheet with the tasks. The tasks, their solutions and the results of the competition will be published at <http://turlom.olimpiada.ru> after November 20. **Attention!** Results will only be available by your card's number.