

Lesson 12: School & Studying

School System (Система школьного образования)

Let's start with an overview of the school system in Russia.

There are twelve years of basic school. Each year is called grade (**класс**): first grade (**первый класс**), second grade (**второй класс**), third grade (**третий класс**) etc.

Elementary school (**Начальная школа**):

- from the 1st grade to the 5th grade (**пятый класс**), with **нулевой класс** – technically, preschool education for six-years-old. As children go to school when they are 7, it is skipped most of the time. And very often the 4th grade (**четвёртый класс**) is also skipped.

Middle school (**Средняя школа**):

- from the 6th grade (**шестой класс**) to the 8th grade (**восьмой класс**).

High School (**Высшая школа** or **старшие классы**):

- from the 9th grade (**девятый класс**) to 11th grade (**одиннадцатый класс**).

When you finish school, you 'graduate' (**закончить школу**).

After school young people can go to university (**университет**) or institute (**институт**) – they are usually referred as **ВУЗ (высшее учебное заведение)**, the highest educational institutions. Usually it takes 4-6 years to graduate, but some speciality (like medicine) takes longer to study (up to 7-8 years). A year of study in university is not called 'grade', it is called '**курс**'. When you graduate after four-year, you get bachelor's degree (**степень бакалавра**). The document that provides the



evidence of your degree is called diploma (**диплóм**).

After the bachelor's degree you can try more advanced studies that are:

- a master's degree (**магíстерская стéпень**), usually takes an extra 2-3 years;

- a doctorate or Ph.D. (**стéпень кандидáта нау́к** and in 10 years – **стéпень дóкто-ра нау́к**).

Classroom (**Клáссная кóмната** or **класс**)

Let's take a look at the classroom (**клáссная кóмната** or simply **класс**).

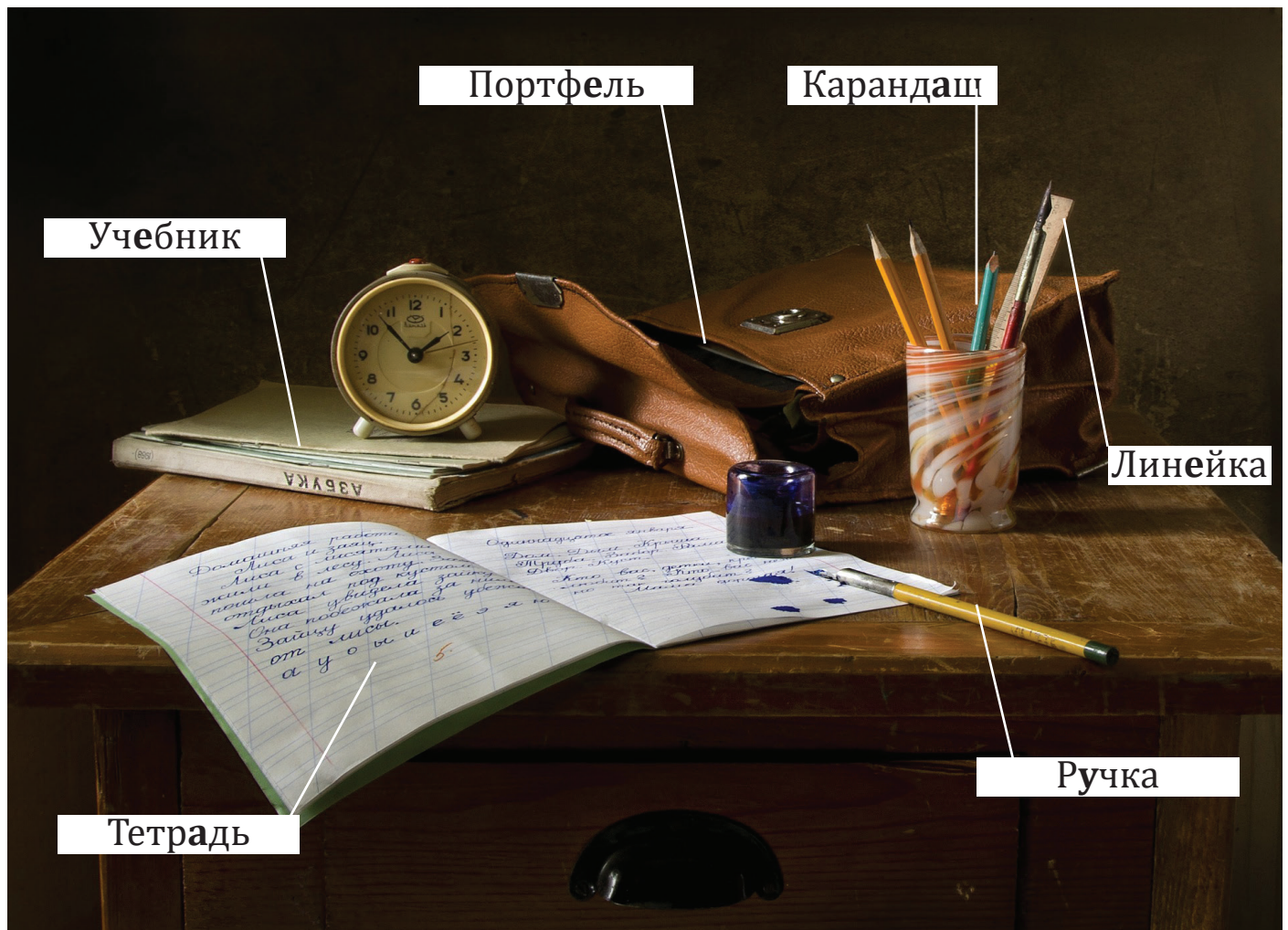
A desk in school is called '**пáрта**'. A pupil (**уче́ник**) usually goes to a black board (**доскá**) to present a lesson (**уро́к**). A lecturer or lector (**ле́ктор**) in a university, and more rarely a teacher (**учитель**) in school reads the lesson from a rostrum (**ка́фе-дра**).

Some classes have screens (**экра́н**) to project on them some computer graphics or text, and maps (**ка́рта**) in case the lesson needs to show something on it.



The lesson starts and ends with a bell call (**звонóк**). And if a pupil wants to ask something or to answer teacher's questions, he or she should raise a hand (**поднять рúку**).

In the old times, pupils used to write with a pen (**рúчка**), a pencil (**карандáш**) and a ruler (**лине́йка**) for drawing straight lines only. Of course there were no electronic

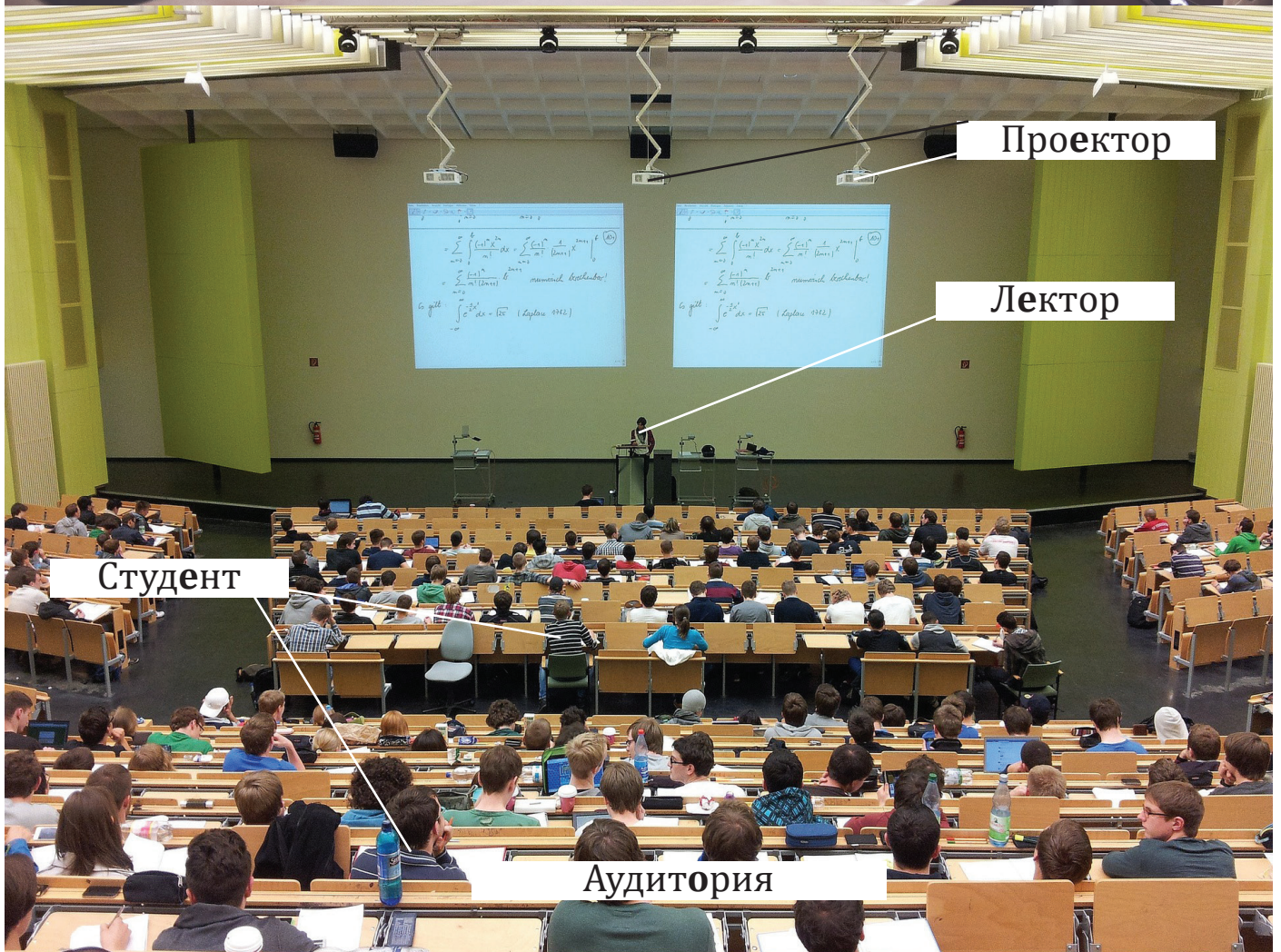
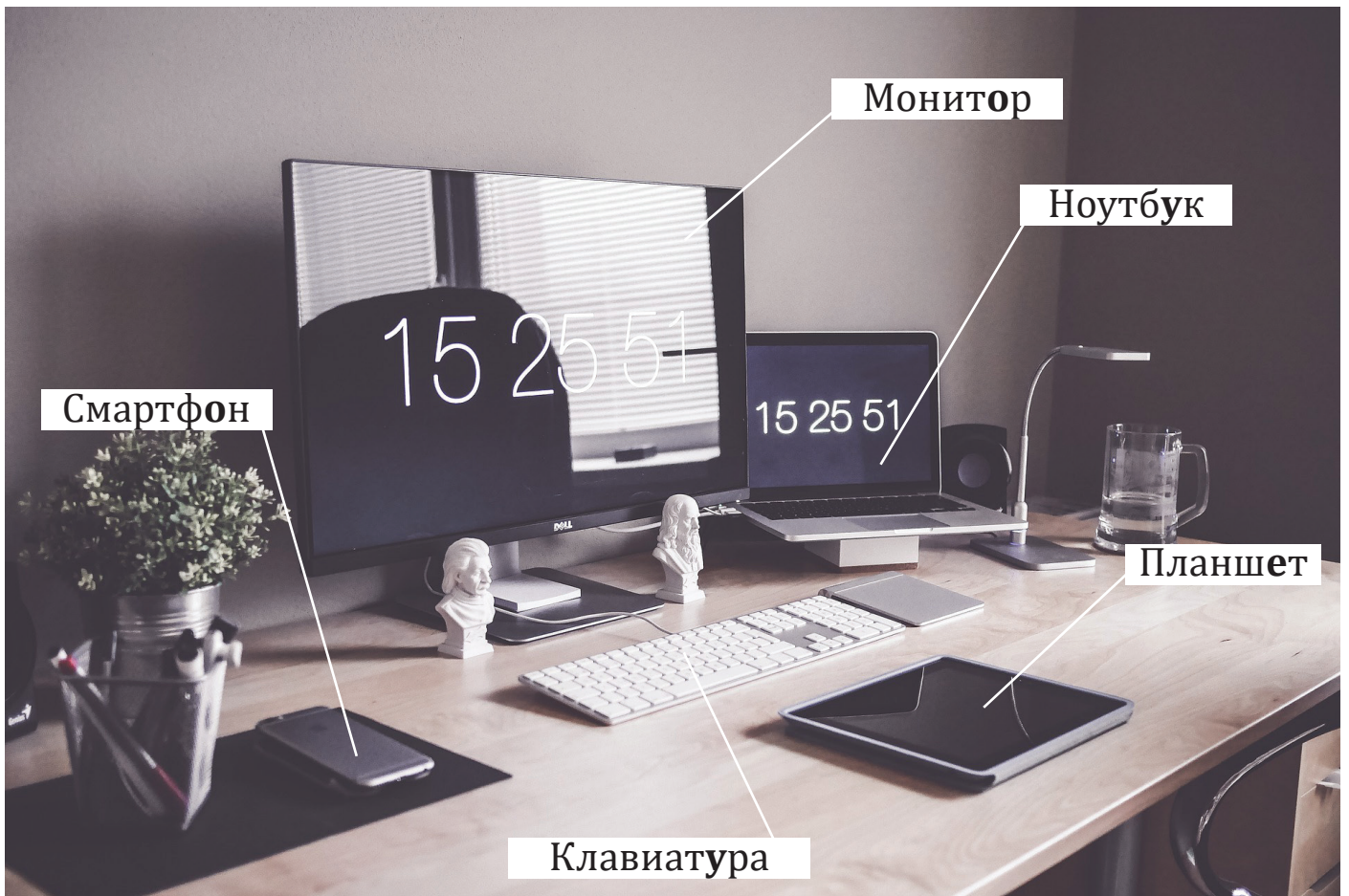


devices, and they used a textbook (**уче́бник**) to study and an exercise book (**тетра́дь**) to do their homework (**домáшнее задáние**) and excercises (**упражне́ния**). Pupils carry their stuff to school in a schoolbag (**портфе́ль**).

Though schools can be rather conservative, it is more common nowadays for pupils to use electronic devices like computers (**компыúтер**), tablets (**планше́т**), laptops (**ноутбу́к**). Still smartphones (**смартфо́н**) are mostly not allowed, especially during the tests (**контрòльная**) or exams (**экза́мен**).

Of course, students (**студе́нт**) (students in college, not pupils) can use any devices during lectures (still, no mobiles (**моби́льный телефо́н** or simply **моби́льный**) or smartphones during the exams).

A computer has a monitor (**монито́р**), a keyboard (**клавиату́ра**) and a mouse



(мышь). Tablets often have a stylus (сти́лус) so you can use it as a pen on a tablet's screen.

Some auditoriums (аудито́рия) – the name of a classroom in university – have projectors (прое́ктор) to project computer information on the screen.

School Subjects (Шко́льные предме́ты).

The different areas of study like math or physics are called 'subjects' (предме́т).

There are obligatory subjects that must be included in any school program:

- Chemistry (Хи́мия);
- Physics (Фи́зика);
- Biology (Биоло́гия);
- History (Исто́рия);
- Geography (Геогра́фия);
- Math (Матема́тика), separated in high grades to algebra (а́лгебра) and geometry (геоме́трия);
- Literature (Литерату́ра);
- Russian language (Ру́сский язы́к);
- English language (Англи́йский язы́к);
- Music (Му́зыка) - mostly in elementary school;
- Gym class (Физи́ческая культу́ра or физра́).

People in School (Лю́ди в шко́ле)

As we mentioned earlier, a pupil (ученик) studies at school while a student (студент) studies in college. And a teacher (учитель) is at a school while a lector (лектор) or a professor (профе́ссор) is in a university. Respectively classmates are 'однокла́ссник' and fellow students are 'соку́рсник'.

Also at school there are some teachers who help the principal (дире́ктор) with the studying process, and they are called 'заве́дующий учёбой' or 'завуч'.

In a university, each subject has its group of professors and is called 'кафе́дра'. The main professor on the cathedra is 'заве́дующий кафе́дрой' or 'завкафе́дры'. All organizational and disciplinary issues are solved in 'деканат' by 'дека́н' – the deputy of a rector (ре́ктор) – the highest official in a university.

Study habits (Образовательные традиции)

In Russia, the school year is divided into four quarters (**чѐтверть**), separated by breaks (**каникулы**). The longest break is **лѐтние каникулы**, which lasts the whole summer.

Students' educational year is separated into two parts called 'semesters' (**семѐстр**).

The evaluation of pupils' or students' work is made in numbers. The worst grade (**оцѐнка**) is 1 (**кол**) and the highest one is 5 (**пять** or **пятѐрка**). 1 is extremely rare and most of the time 2 (**два** or **двѐйка**) is the lowest grade possible. So a bad pupil is called '**двѐчник**'. The rest of the grades are 3 (**три** or **трѐйка**) and 4 (**четыре** or **четвѐрка**).

Good and dedicated students are called '**отлѐчник**'. A pupil who has mainly 'fours' is '**хорошист**', while the one with the 'threes' is called '**трѐчник**'. There is also a nickname for a pupil who learns by heart a lot and studies too much – a nerd (**ботаник**).

Students don't have grades at all until the exams at the end of the semester – the session (**сѐссия**). There, they have exams with the same grades as at school, and '**зачѐт**' with just two grades: passed (**зачѐт**) and failed (**незачѐт**).

Pupils' progress in their courses can be evaluated through:

- homework (**домашнее задание**) – school task that pupils are to do at home;
- test (**контрѐльная рабѐта**) – a test assignment in the class, it can be a surprise or not, depends on a teacher;
- essay (**сочинѐние**) – this type of test is mainly for the Literature subjects – an essay about some topic;
- exam (**экзамен**) – final test in the end of the school year or sometimes in the end of the quarter;
- **курсовая рабѐта** is the academic project made by students during the whole semester;
- dissertation (**диссертация**) is a large and long academic project done as a part of an advanced university degree.

Упражнения по произношению (Pronunciation practice)

Система школьного образования, класс, первый класс, второй класс, третий класс, начальная школа, пятый класс, нулевой класс, четвертый класс, средняя школа, шестой класс, восьмой класс, высшая школа, старшие классы, девятый класс, одиннадцатый класс, закончить школу, университет, институт, ВУЗ, высшее учебное заведение, курс, степень бакалавра, диплом, магистерская степень, степень кандидата наук, степень доктора наук, классная комната, парты, ученик, доска, урок, лектор, учитель, кафедра, экран, карта, звонок, поднять руку, ручка, карандаш, линейка, учебник, тетрадь, домашнее задание, упражнения, портфель, компьютер, планшет, ноутбук, смартфон, контрольная, экзамен, студент, мобильный телефон, мобильный, монитор, клавиатура, мышь, стилус, аудитория, проектор, школьные предметы, предмет, химия, физика, биология, история, география, математика, алгебра, геометрия, литература, русский язык, английский язык, музыка, физическая культура, физра, люди в школе, профессор, одноклассник, сокурсник, директор, заведующий учёбой, завуч, заведующий кафедрой, завкафедры, деканат, декан, ректор, образовательные традиции, четверть, каникулы, летние каникулы, семестр, оценка, кол, пять, пятёрка, два, двойка, двёчник, три, тройка, четыре, четвёрка, отличник, хорошист, трёчник, ботаник, сессия, зачёт, незачёт, контрольная работа, сочинение, курсовая работа, диссертация.

Quiz 1. Subjects

Write the correct subject that each student is talking about.

"I can't memorize all the rivers in South America!"

1. Г _____

"We are studying about atoms, molecules, and reactions"

2. Х _____

"We're studying the creatures of Africa"

3. Б _____

"We're studying the American Civil War"

4. И _____

"We're learning how to solve complex equations"

5. М _____

"We're learning how to conjugate verbs"

6. Р _____ я _____

"We're studying English tenses"

7. А _____ я _____

"We're studying poets of the Silver Age"

8. Л _____

"We're playing basketball"

9. Ф _____

"We are singing in a chorus"

10. М _____

Quiz 2. Fill in the blanks

Хорошист, семестр, доска, декан, клавиатура, каникулы, ручка, сессия, лектор, одноклассник, компьютер, университет.

1. After school I will go to _____.

2. I was never the best, but I was _____.

3. This is Egor, he was my _____ back in school!

4. Why do we need to write with _____? It is _____ all around!

5. I loved our _____ in university, he was so good, I never got bored .

6. He didn't attend lectures the whole _____, he will be in trouble during _____.

7. Where are you gonna spend your _____?

8. I spilled coffee on my _____, and I cannot type until I replace it.

9. Petrov, go to _____ and tell us about your homework.

10. I don't know what he did, but he had a hard conversation with _____.

Quiz 3. Fill in the blanks



Keys to the Quiz 1. Hospital Story

"I can't memorize all the rivers in South America!"

1. География

"We are learning about atoms, molecules, and reactions"

2. Химия

"We're studying the creatures of Africa"

3. Биология

"We're studying the American Civil War"

4. История

"We're learning how to solve complex equations"

5. Математика

"We're learning how to conjugate verbs"

6. Русский язык

"We're studying English tenses"

7. Английский язык

"We're studying poets of the Silver Age"

8. Литература

"We're playing basketball"

9. Физкультура

"We are singing in a chorus"

10. Музыка

Keys to the Quiz 2. Fill in the blanks

1. After school I will go to университет.

2. I was never the best, but I was хорошист.

3. This is Egor, he was my одноклассник back in school!

4. Why do we need to write with ручка? It is компьютер all around!

5. I loved our лектор in university, he was so good, I never got bored .

6. He didn't attend lectures the whole семестр, he will be in trouble during сессия.

7. Where are you gonna spend your каникулы?

8. I spilled coffee on my клавиатура, and I cannot type until I replace it.

9. Petrov, go to доска and tell us about your homework.

10. I don't know what he did, but he had a hard conversation with декан.

Keys to the Quiz 3. Fill in the blanks

