



# VIVAT, GYMNASIUM!

April - May 2021

## 30 YEARS-30 Steps to Success

This year our gymnasium has celebrated its anniversary: it has turned 30! For three decades, our gymnasium has been taking little but persistent steps towards success and self-improvement. 30 years ago it was a typical educational establishment-School № 30. Nowadays it's Gymnasium №1- one of the best schools in Belarus. The idea of creating a school of new type belongs to Regina Ivanovna Mo-dzher, the first Headmistress. She dreamt of organizing such a school where pupils could feel at home, where they could develop all their talents and skills. It was Regina Ivanov-

na who managed to find the like-minded people and persuade the Local Authorities of the vital necessity of such establishment. So in September 1990 Gymnasium № 1 opened its doors to the first students. Valentina Stepanovna Makarova, the second Headmistress of the Gymnasium, took the school over from Regina Ivanovna and developed and realized all her ideas and plans.

We, today's students, can confirm that Gymnasium is our second home. This is the place where we make friends and fall in love, rejoice at our success and get upset while being a failure. The gymnasium is the place where we want to return, the place which we will definitely start missing a week after the beginning of our holidays or after finishing the 11th form.

The friendly atmosphere in our gymnasium has been created for more than a year. It has a positive effect on our studies, spirits and wishes. Our school gives us a lot of opportunities to develop ourselves in different spheres and fields. If you have a good command of school subjects, you can take part in the Olympiads. If you are a creative person, you have a chance to attend dance classes, learn to sing and draw in our school. Those who wish to try themselves in charity and voluntary work, join the

UNESCO club (the supervisor G. Sotnikova). We are proud of our theatres in the English (the supervisors O.Konetskaya and V. Zhylynskaya) and the French languages (the supervisor G. Gulpa). Our speaking club "Debates" (the supervisor M. Fridman) always welcome new participants. School is not only studies but also humour and jokes. So the members of the club of quick-wits "Tak Nado" (the supervisor O. Konetskaya) help us to feel happy and be in a good mood while obtaining new knowledge. We can boast of high achievements in different spheres: Olympiads, sport, music, art. All our athletes, singers, dancers and smart pupils annually win a lot of awards, diplomas and prizes. It goes without saying that we owe our success to our experienced teachers. Boris Alexandrovich Sebrovsky, the current Headmaster of our school, and all the teachers are interested not only in our good academic performance, but also desire to help us find our place in the future life.

They want us to discover and develop new talents and skills. Our teachers are our real friends, whom we can trust and ask for useful advice. I'd like to say that despite our numerous achievements and victories, we're not going to rest on laurels. We promise to work hard and take the thirty-first, thirty-second and many more steps towards new discoveries and success.

Happy birthday, Gymnasium № 1!

*Olga Khatsuck*

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## Life Experience From “Debates”

The club “Debates” was set up in our school in 1998. Mikhail Fridman has been its permanent supervisor and coach since then. It is he who has always convinced the senior students to join the club. Mikhail Fridman does his best to broaden the students’ outlook, he teaches them to think critically, to examine every phenomenon from different sides. Our debate club has been the prize winner and the winner of the National Debating Contest several times. Our club members have made the Top 10 Speakers of the contest multiple times. Today some club speakers share their impressions and opinions on the role of “Debates” in their lives.



*Alexandra Yarosh  
Form X “Z”*

Monday, September 1st  
“Guys, there will be a debate club meeting on Wednesday at 8 am. Come who wants!” - shouted out one of my classmates.

That was the first time I’ve heard about debates. I didn’t hesitate a second.

Wednesday, September 3rd  
7.55 a.m.

I was in front of the classroom door, my hands shaking and my heart pounding. I took a deep breath, knocked and opened the door. All the faces turned towards me with that little expression of surprise because nobody knew me. There was the teacher and five or six seniors; none of my peers showed up. I introduced myself and sat down. During the whole class I was just listening. The topic of the conversation was plastics: plastic bags, recycling systems, ecological problems and so on (later I found out that the out that the debate resolution

they were discussing was “Plastic packaging should be banned”).

When the bell rang I stood up and was about to leave, when the teacher stopped me and said: “Thanks for coming; see you next Wednesday”.

The whole day I was under the impression of what I’d just heard: I realized how much was going on outside of my life’s scope. I was recalling some parts of it, and looking forward to the next Wednesday.

Next time I opened that door with more confidence as I had spent my whole week-end reading about plastics.

Wednesday after Wednesday. I kept attending debate classes, though sometimes not wholly understanding the meaning of the words as I wasn’t as proficient in English back then. I kept rising every Wednesday at 6 a.m., and opening that door, every time anticipating to learn something new. And my coach never failed me.



*Daria Dorosh  
Form X “Z”*

Debate is a competition in which teams of people, mostly students, argue on a subject, and the team that

brings the best arguments wins. At least, that is how the dictionary explains it. However, as any definition, it can’t encompass the full concept that lies behind this word. Maybe because it has a unique meaning for each of us.

So what is debate for me?

From the academic point of view, debates give me a precious opportunity to develop not only my English language skills, but also critical thinking, speech writing and analyzing skills. It teaches me how to observe the situation from different, sometimes opposing points of view. That will





## Life Experience From “Debates”

help me to make the right decisions in the future. Debate teaches me how to stand my ground and advocate my beliefs and convictions. It also teaches me how to find the right argumentation in order to persuade people to agree with my point of view. Debating, better than any other activity, shows how useful “half a minute” can be and how important good time management skills are. It is during the debate round that you will realize how crucial it is to have your teammates at your side to share their ideas with you, or by just smiling at times when you need a relief. I could go on and on, but academic benefits are not the only thing I’m grateful for.

What may be even more important, is the atmosphere and positive emotions that I get during each debate practice. That is certainly thanks for our coach’s efforts. It doesn’t matter in what mood you enter the class, you certainly won’t be able to stay sad and gloomy for more than 5 minutes. Each practice begins with singing songs accompanied by our teacher’s guitar playing. With those songs and smiles on your friends’ faces your gloom won’t stand a chance. These are the reasons why I’m so happy to be part of our debate family.



*Konstantin Brushko  
Form X “Z”*

I originally joined the debate club with the intent to simply make it easier for myself to adapt, blend in with the other students, since it was my first year at this Gymnasium. I knew for a fact I would form a lot of close friendships with the other kids at the club, since even before joining I would often hear how this sort of activity brings people together. I never fully grasped the extent of that, though, until I actually started practising.

During the debate round you and your two team-mates basically share the same

mind, you are like one whole. You have to make critical decisions, conjure up refutations and speeches out of thin air in a matter of less than a minute.

Most importantly, the debate club has taught me to think outside the box, made it easier to leave my personal opinions, beliefs and emotions out of the way when needed, and leave nothing but neutral, unbiased logic. Or, on the contrary, to be open and polite towards hundreds of different opinions all at once, even if in real life, I disagree with most of them entirely.



*Polina Besedina  
Form XI “F”*

I am not the only person in my family who does debate. My elder sister was the one who opened this world to me and my family. Debate took a great chunk of her school life and it was she who persuaded me it is something worth learning. She achieved great results herself: she made the Nationals #1 Top Speaker in her time. And her debating experience was a great incentive for me to start.

In the beginning, debates were something incomprehensible for me. The first time my team went to the championship was a tremendous and thrilling occasion. We were prepared on the paper, but we were inexperienced and had a very vague idea how to do it in practice. The first round - and the first win. We were praised for the argumentation and our strong scientific base, but we saw that our opponents, even without being thoroughly prepared, were able to refute our arguments. That seemed such a hard thing for us to accomplish: to master the ability to debate. For me to explain things in a simple language has been much more difficult, and therefore more valuable in debates. Proving your side with logic and well-known truths that are familiar to all is the key factor that





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drives the judges to a verdict in your team’s favour.

This spring, the long-awaited tournament was my last one in grade school. And I’m glad I was playing with my new team. This time, after a year’s break due to Covid, was a great update for all of us. We have all definitely gained more confidence and the skills we had lacked before, delved deeper into the essence of the game. We were a closely-knit unit with strong support for each other. Confident though we were, we assessed our opponents fairly with an equal respect to their case. What was the most delightful bonus for all of us is the pleasure we drew from working together.

And I’m grateful to our coach for that. It was his enthusiasm and the way he motivated us all that kept us from splitting up in the very beginning. He convinced us to keep going with debates. And today, when I am about to finish grade school, I believe we will still be seeing each other after graduation, and, for sure, further debate tournaments will be the strongest reason for that.



*Yana Kirina  
Form X “Z”*

For me debating is not just a competition, it is more about life. It teaches me to concentrate, to process great amounts of information in a limited time, and make logical conclusions.

Debating has opened my eyes and showed me that our world is much more than what I thought it was: family, friends, school. It helped me remove my pink glasses and gave me the ability to understand what is going on in the real world while I am at school, and what problems are relevant today locally and globally.

Another very important and useful thing debates teach me is what it means to be a member of a team, to work together, to listen to others, to take responsibility. It doesn’t matter what happens between you outside of the debate but during the game you become one synchronized whole, and each member has its own responsibilities and significance.

Debating is not just another extra-curricular activity, it has become an essential part of my life. Communicating with new people, exploring the new, much richer vocabulary, singing great songs before each practice – this is all about debate.

I’m very happy that two years ago my English teacher invited me to attend debate practice and I accepted. Thanks to Mikhail Fridman, I’ve become a member of Gymnasium’s debate community. This has brought the most intense and the most controversial emotions into my life. This thrill at the beginning of each round is indescribable. But when it’s your turn to speak for your team, all this panic disappears. Facts and logic is all that matters.

I’ve changed since that time. Not only have I developed my English speaking and analysing skills, but also become more self-confident. I have struck friendships with new people, who are now my closest ones. I’ve grown and still am growing more experienced and mature. All these changes would have not been possible without debate.

Today I’m proud to be a member of our debate community.



## An Unforgettable Tour

When I think about my gymnasium I imagine “a small country” where about 1600 students live and get knowledge of different school subjects, take part in social life. These things make their life more exciting and meaningful. Of course, it’s wonderful that students are engaged in different activities and observe school traditions, it helps them to feel part of this “country” and have a chance of discovering something new and interesting. So, the motto of my life is “Variety is the spice of life”.

On April 17 I had an opportunity to participate in the annual team contest “The Tour Around Belarus” for six-formers. There were 5 teams who represented 5 regions of our country. In the beginning we were asked some questions about Belarus. We had to explain why our country has different names: “a country under white wings”, “a blue-eyed country” and “the lungs of Europe”. It was easy to answer because we learnt it at the lessons. Then there came time for our homework. Every team made a presentation of one region of Belarus, informed the audience about interesting facts and famous people of the region. I think my group was able to show team spirits and prove that we were the most organized ones.



After that, there was a contest where we were able to demonstrate our knowledge of Belarusian history and its official and non-official symbols. All the students were active trying to get more points for their teams. Then there was captains’ turn to compete. They were to guess some riddles about Belarusian flora and fauna. At that time, all the team members were given “True or False” statements on natural and architectural monuments, famous sights of Belarus. I’m sure we were excellent because the motto of our team is “Knowledge is power”.

But the most amazing contests were to make up as many words as possible using some given letters for one minute and to translate 28 English words into Russian. It’s hard to be quick if you don’t remember the words “ribbon”, “flat” or “wreath”.

Frankly speaking, the easiest contest was to match the names of holidays with their dates. Who doesn’t know when we can have a rest and lots of fun? Everyone!

At the end of the contest we watched an interesting video “20 exciting facts about Belarus”. I’m proud of my classmates who worked hard and became the winner. “Vitebsk Region” was the best. I think that this game was useful for me and I’ll be glad to participate again. Positive emotions, new knowledge and friends are the main treasures for everybody. Great thanks to the teachers for arranging this unforgettable tour!

*Maria Popelushko,  
Form VI “Z”*







### Le saviez- vous? L'histoire de la fête du muguet du 1-er mai

Pas une année ne passe sans que le 1er mai on n'achète quelques branches de muguet, cette petite fleur blanche qui a une odeur très douce et une forme de clochette. Fêtes de l'amour, fête du bonheur, fête du travail... les théories sur la tradition du muguet sont nombreuses, il a fallu faire un tri!



#### LES PREMIÈRES RACINES DU MUGUET REMONTENT À L'ANTIQUITÉ:

En effet, dans la Rome antique, la coutume était de célébrer la floraison, autour de la fin du mois d'avril et début du mois de mai, période pendant laquelle le muguet pointe le bout de son nez, et marque le passage à la saison estivale.

D'autres anecdotes historiques font remonter la tradition du muguet à l'époque de Charles IX. Celui-ci s'était fait offrir des brins de muguet le 1er mai 1560 lors de sa visite dans le Dauphiné. Ce geste l'aurait ému au point d'offrir à son tour, aux dames de la cour, des brins de muguet à chaque printemps. La fête du muguet symboliserait ainsi la "fête de l'amour".

A la révolution, le muguet n'est plus associé au 1er mai, mais au "jour républicain" qui correspond au 27 avril. En revanche, la place du 1er mai a été comblée par l'églantine rouge (une autre fleur de la saison), symbole du sang versé suite aux répressions ouvrières.

En 1889, pour célébrer le centenaire de la Révolution, le congrès de la 33e internationale socialiste se réunit pour faire du 1er mai une "journée internationale des travailleurs" et impose une journée de huit heures, en mémoire à la grève sans précédent, de 400 000 salariés à Chicago le 1er mai, paralysant ainsi de nombreuses usines. On y trouve donc l'origine de la fameuse "fête du travail" le 1er mai.

#### D'AUTRES THÉORIES SE

#### CONFRONTENT:

Plusieurs théories se confrontent telles que celle du chansonnier Félix Mayol qui prétend dans ses mémoires avoir lancé la coutume en arborant une branche de muguet que lui avait offert une amie, lors de sa première prestation sur scène, connaissant un grand succès; ou celle des grands couturiers dont Christian Dior, offrant chaque année au 1er mai à leurs clientes et employées, un brin.

En 1941, sous le régime de Vichy, le Maréchal Pétain, associe officiellement le muguet à "la fête du travail et de la concorde sociale" et remplace l'églantine rouge, jugée trop révolutionnaire et communiste.

Vous l'auriez compris, au cours de l'histoire, nombreux sont ceux qui se battent la "palme" d'être le précurseur de la tradition du muguet.

#### UNE AUTRE TRADITION ANCESTRALE:

Autrefois, des "bals du muguet" étaient organisés le 1er mai. Les jeunes filles étaient entièrement vêtues de blanc et les jeunes garçons posaient un brin de muguet sur leur boutonnière. Les adultes n'étaient pas conviés et les jeunes pouvaient enfin se libérer du joug parental, en buvant du vin de Moselle mélangé à des fleurs de muguet, la fameuse "boisson de mai".

Des branches de muguet étaient offertes aux familles et amis, et symbolisaient également l'amour porté à sa ou son fiancé. Le 1er mai, pourrait donc être l'ancêtre de la Saint-Valentin, et du trèfle à quatre feuilles.

Cette dernière tradition, est celle que je préfère et que je garde en mémoire en ce jour du 1er mai, arborant fièrement ma branche de clochettes blanches dans les cheveux.

*EKATHERINA DOUNAI*

*11-ième «Y»*





### School “Smart kids”

My dream school is located on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean. It is called “Smart kids”. Children from the fifth form study in this school. The school “Smart kids” is a day school.

In my dream school there are six terms. The first and the sixth terms last for five weeks. The second, third, fourth and fifth terms last six weeks. After each term students have holidays which last one week. Summer holidays are three months.

The school “Smart kids” has one hundred and twenty classrooms. There are two dining rooms, a library, four well-equipped computer rooms, five gyms, two swimming pools, a huge water park, a beautiful greenhouse with tropical plants and a living corner in it. There is a football pitch, tennis court and a golf course near the school. You can see a large garden with fruit trees such as pomegranates, oranges and tangerines behind the school.

Students in my dream school have four lessons (forty minutes each) every day. During the break which lasts thirty minutes, they can go to the ocean to swim or sunbathe. Lunch is held in a big canteen after the second lesson. After lessons students relax, swim and do sports, because they are not given any homework.

At school “Smart kids” students must wear a uniform: boys wear shorts and a T-shirt, girls wear sundresses. Students who get poor marks are not allowed to swim in the water park and ocean for three days. Teachers should not scold students for speaking out during the lesson.

*Kirill Zhegalo  
Form 6 “Y”*



### The School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

Let me tell you about my dream school. My school is called “The school of witchcraft and wizardry”. It is located in an enchanted picturesque forest near mysterious Loch Ness in Scotland. My school is one thousand years old. It is a huge castle that has been built for centuries. My school is a dark-brick building with numerous towers, columns and statues of great wizards. There is a huge library, classrooms for spell training, rooms for potion jars, a dance hall and many other magical rooms. My dream school also has a stadium where students train to fly broomsticks and a garden with magic plants for potions and spells. Our canteen is fascinating. As soon as students think about their favourite dish, it immediately appears in front of them.

Students of the school of witchcraft love to attend lesson. They go to school six days a week and have three lessons on their timetable every day. Each lesson lasts three hours and the breaks last forty minutes. After the second lesson pupils go to the canteen to have lunch.

After lessons pupils can join different clubs. Pupils can learn how to grow plants, how to protect themselves from dark magic, to read books in magical languages as well as to prepare for the competition in flying on broomsticks. There are three terms in a school year and holidays are really very long. The school of magic has a school uniform. It is very beautiful and unique. Students love this uniform and are happy to wear it. In my dream school pupils study ten subjects and the one I would like to learn is Potions. I enjoy trying to do something new, and it's also exciting to watch how the reactions occur. I'm really fond of it.

*Olga Yankovskaya  
Form 6 “X”*







## Kulich – Belarusian Easter Bread

### Ingredients:

- 450g of strong white bread flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 1/2 tsp mixed spice
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 50g of butter
- 50g of caster sugar
- 14g of fast-action dried yeast, (2 packets)
- 210ml of milk, tepid
- 1 egg, beaten
- 100g of mixed dried fruits
- 25g of citrus peel, mixed



### Icing

- 100g of icing sugar
- 1/2 lemon, juice only

1. Begin by washing and drying 6 tin cans. Butter the tins well and line each with some buttered baking paper into each one
2. Sieve the flour, salt, ground mixed spice and cinnamon into a large mixing bowl and rub in the butter using your fingertips. Make a well in the centre of the mixture and add the sugar and yeast
3. Add the beaten egg and tepid milk to the flour and mix together to form a soft, pliable dough
4. Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface. Carefully work the mixed dried fruit and mixed peel into the dough until well combined. Knead lightly for 5 minutes, or until smooth and elastic
5. Shape the dough into a ball and place it into a buttered mixing bowl, then cover with a clean tea towel and set aside in a warm place for 1 hour to prove
6. Turn out the proved dough onto a lightly floured work surface and knock back the dough. Shape it into a ball again and return it to the bowl, then cover again with the tea towel and set aside for a further 30 minutes to prove
7. Place the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and divide it into 6 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, then roll them into a long cylinder shape and put them into the buttered and paper lined tins. Cover the tins with a tea towel and set aside to rise for 25–30 minutes
8. Preheat an oven to 240°C/gas mark 8
9. Once the buns have risen in the tins to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way up, place them on a baking sheet and bake for 25–35 minutes, or until pale golden-brown and sound hollow when turned over and tapped on
10. Turn the Kulich out of the tins onto a wire cooling rack and allow to cool completely before icing
11. To make the icing, add the lemon juice to the icing sugar, spoon by spoon, until you have a thick but runny icing that will cover the kulich buns and dribble a little down the sides.

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