

WELCOME TO THE TEA PARTY!

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учитель английского языка*So many countries, so many
customs...*

Today there are about 248 countries. And each of them has its own individuality. Every nation has its own traditions and customs, concerning various spheres of life – from harvest and weddings to national features of cuisine and use of certain products. Tea is one of the most popular drinks around the world, also became a part of various national traditions.

People from different countries like tea. They follow their own traditions of tea drinking and try to keep them.

Personal motives of choosing the topic.

The topic was chosen because I would like to know more about English traditions and customs especially about tea drinking.

The object of the research: tea traditions

The subject of the research: Tea culture in Russia and in Great Britain

The aim of my research: studying tea drinking traditions in Great Britain and in Russia

The general objectives of my work were the following:

- to select literature and generalize the material on the topic
- to conduct a survey of students, parents and teachers about their habits of tea drinking
- to compare the culture of different countries
- to organize an exhibition of drawings illustrating tea drinking in Russia and in Great Britain

Methods of research:

1. Study of the literature
2. Capture of data
3. Interviewing

Practical implications: the subject of this research is of great interest to the students who learn English. Also, this material can be used at the English lessons to widen the knowledge about Great Britain and to further discussion about the topic.

The hypothesis: Culture of people is revealed through their traditions. Tradition of tea drinking is important for both countries.

1. History of tea

It is indeed known that tea came from China. Tea was first mentioned in Chinese writing in 2 500 B.C.

There are several legends about history of tea.

One of them says that tea has appeared thanks to the Chinese Emperor Shen Nong, 4700 years ago. One day a few tea leaves fell into the water, creating a fragrant aroma. After tasting the drink, the emperor was struck by the taste of this drink and then he commanded to plant tea bushes in his garden.

Another legend. Long ago the shepherds noticed that their sheep began climbing up the hill easier after having nibbled leaves of an evergreen bush which grew high in the mountains. The shepherds decided to test the magic power of that miraculous plant. They dried the leaves, poured boiling water and began to drink fragrant herbal potion feeling instantaneous burst of strength. This is a legend but maybe it is true.

In old times tea was valued very much. The emperors rewarded their people with tea for particular services. Later, leaves of tea were pressed into cakes which were used for money and the population paid a special tax called “a tip”.

Much later, tea appeared in other countries of Asia and Europe. There are different tea ceremonies in different countries. For example, in China it is a solemn and very quiet ceremony, in Iran and in the Persian culture it is “the first thing you will be offered as a guest at an Iranian household – is tea”, in Japan – silence is very important during tea party, in Russia – hot tea after being in the bath-house, in England – a high society talk with a cup of tea from a thin porcelain cup at 5 o'clock p.m. [6].

2. Tea in England – more than tea

Tea was brought to England in the XVII century by Princess of Portugal, the wife of King Charles II. At that time a pound of the cheapest tea cost about one-third of a skilled worker's weekly wages. It was kept in special containers, often with a lock and carefully doled out by the teaspoon. By 1750 tea had become the main drink of all classes in Britain. Since tea has become popular in this country. Later, tea-drinking turned into a fashionable social ceremony[9].

The British drink 86 per cent of all consumed tea at home. They have tea in special tea rooms. The table is served in such a way that person can enjoy the process of tea drinking. It usually stands by the fireplace, covered by the white blue tablecloth. As a rule, there is milk,

sugar and a lemon and a separate kettle with a boiling water to dilute the drink up to necessary concentration. Baked cakes are offered as a dessert but not very sweet to feel the taste of tea. They may be ginger cakes, oat biscuits and fruit baskets. Snacks for the tea party are sandwiches with cucumber or salmon, cakes and scones with cream, butter and strawberry jam [10].

Traditionally they have tea six or seven times a day:

1. The earliest cup of tea – early morning cuppa (about 6 o'clock a.m.)
2. English breakfast – about 8 o'clock a.m.
3. Lunch – a nice cup of tea (12 o'clock)
4. Tea break – «low tea»
5. English Afternoon Tea – «five – o'clock tea»
6. High tea – after work (7–8 o'clock p.m.)

Afternoon tea became popular about 150 years ago, when rich ladies invited friends to their houses for an afternoon cup of tea. They offered their visitors some sandwiches and cakes. Soon everybody was fond of Afternoon tea. This is not only a perfect combination of tablecloths, napkins, vases, flowers and tea set, this is a special behavior at the table, and the topic of conversation.

High tea is a meal taken between 7 and 8 o'clock after work. Traditionally it is a substantial meal which combined delicious sweet food, such as cakes, scones, buns with cheese on toast, cold meat or poached eggs on toast [5].

As we know, the English have tea with milk. First they pour some milk into the cup and then tea. It is difficult to say where this English tradition came from. Maybe it came from the 17th century, when the English poured tea into cups made of fragile Chinese china which was very expensive. And in order not to break the cups they poured warm milk into them and only then hot tea. Now we call tea with milk «English tea».

Tea occupies approximately 40 per cent of all drinks drunk by the English. According to the information from the Internet, 59 million inhabitants live in Britain and they drink 165 millions cups of tea daily [11].

Main types of tea

The most popular types of tea in Great Britain are:

- English Breakfast
- Irish Breakfast
- Earl Grey
- Oolong
- White tea
- Green tea
- Yellow tea
- Red tea
- Black tea
- Darjeeling tea

- Herbal tea
- Flavored tea

The recipe of English tea

The English know how to make tea and what it does for them. They joke, «The test of good tea is simple if the spoon stands up in it, then it is strong enough; if the spoon starts to wobble, it is a weak beverage» [4].

To enjoy the distinctive taste of fresh tea you should:

- Rinse teapot with warm water
 - Add one spoonful of tea per person and one extra for the pot
 - Bring fresh water to the boil and pour onto the tea by taking pot to kettle
 - Allow brewing time of 4 to 5 minutes before serving
 - For taste add milk and sugar
- The fragrant tea is ready!

Tea can be served with stewed fruit, jam, cakes and many other snacks.

3. Russian tea ceremony

Since then, as tea is firmly included in Russian life, the tea party has become an integral, very important part of public life. For three centuries without tea there is no family celebration, no friendly meeting in Russia. The Russians have tea six or seven times a day. They invite each other «for a cup of tea». In our country people don't drink tea only when they sleep. The atmosphere of relaxation, fun, peace and joy, the ability to drink tea in a pleasant company are very important in Russian tea drinking. Silence is a sign of disrespect to the owners and guests. A light conversation is very important for the tea party. People have a good opportunity to socialize, to spend time with close friends or relatives.

Tea table is usually covered with a tablecloth: elegant and festive one for special occasions, and more simple – for everyday tea. What's more? The first and essential attribute of Russian tea-table is ...of course the samovar. Abroad this Russian invention is called as a Russian tea machine. The most famous samovars were made in Tula. One of the most important qualities of samovar was the fact that it allowed to catch the moment of such a temperature which is suitable for brewing tea. The samovar is a symbol of comfort, home warmth, it is a living creature. There are cups with saucers, sugar bowl on the table. Next go treats: plates of thinly sliced lemon, bowls of candies, some jam, homemade cakes, crackers, pancakes and other confectionery. In the middle of the table you can also find a freshly baked pie with cabbage, mushrooms or a cake. A wide table is also a symbol of the famous Russian hospitality [2, 3].

By the way, thanks to tea a well known genre of music appeared – “romance”. It is not surprising that during these long meetings, people talked about lyrical poetry, later set to music. Romances were very convenient to perform because only one simple musical instrument was enough to accompany them.

For the last 150 years there were quite a lot of changes in the life of Russian people. Nevertheless, tradition remains tradition. In addition, in recent years, more and more people are showing interest to national culture: cafés and restaurants are made in traditional Russian style, with embroidered tablecloths, samovars, traditional food. This is love of people to their past, their culture.

I have found a lot of popular proverbs, expressions and sayings on the subject of tea in Russian language[1]. For example:

Besides, it's a good way to gather the family around the table together and a good chance for parents and children to have a talk. There is a similar tea tradition in my family. We have tea at the same time every day:

10.30 – tea with milk and sandwiches

17.30 – tea with milk and sweets

20.30 – tea with lemon

Usually we have a cup of tea with sweets, jam and honey. It helps us to create friendly and warm atmosphere in our family. I always look forward to this time. I'm proud of having such English tradition in my Russian family.

In summer we have a tea party outdoors at a large table in the garden. I like to decorate the table with a bouquet of wild and garden flowers. During cold winter evenings it is nice to brew dried herbs, to remember summer. Floral, herbal scents have a beneficial effect on the

Russian expressions	What do they mean?
«Гонять чай»	unhurried tea party in a small company for a pleasant conversation or a way to pass the time when there is nothing else to do
«Побаловаться чайком»	it is more expressive synonym of the expression “cup of tea”
«Чай да сахар»	polite phrase that is pronounced by guests who come at inopportune time, that is not conditioned in advance and find the hosts having tea
«В Тулу со своим самоваром»	it is about items for the journey, which are in abundance there, where you go
«Даже чаю не попьете?»	a phrase addressed to someone, who is going to leave immediately
«Даже чаю не предложили»	the characteristic of extremely cold, unfriendly reception
«Чай несусь – не подумайте, что выгоняю!»	a hostess, applying tea makes it clear to the guests that is not counting on compliance with the principle of etiquette: “The end of tea – the end of the visit”

Bashkortostan

Tea drinking tradition, rooted in Bashkortostan, suggests the possibility to drink tea in a nice company for a sincere conversation. Tea party lasts a few hours, guests are unhurried casual conversation. Honey is served as sweet, which is famous for its taste and useful properties. Honey for the Bashkirs can replace all other sweets except Chuck-Chuck.

Each country has its own particular tradition of tea drinking. But we can say one thing – tea is one of the most popular drinks in the world!

My family

A family meal is another tradition that we should try to keep up in our everyday life. In my opinion, a family meal's tradition reflects the culture of the country and its traditions.

nervous system. As my grandma likes to say, «You will get pleasure and benefit from tea, if it is properly stored and brewed» (Appendix 1).

4. Tea is a healthy drink

We invited our school medical assistant to the class hour and she told us about the benefit of tea.(Appendix 1)

Tea:

- cheers up
- improves memory
- strengthens the nerves, relieves stress
- eliminates headaches
- protects from caries
- it is useful in diseases of the skin
- it is recommended in diabetes
- prevents cancer
- normalizes cholesterol level
- improves eyesight
- normalizes blood pressure

- improves the immune system
- prevents chronic diseases

5. Are you a tea lover?

Within our practical work we have questioned students of the 5th form in our school No.2, Kandry, their parents and teachers about their habits of tea drinking. The questions the respondents were asked are the following (Appendix 2):

1. What country did tea come from?
2. How many times a day do the English have tea?
3. What is the symbol of Russian tea party?
4. Are you a tea lover?
5. Which supplements to tea do you prefer?
6. What types of tea do you know?

We asked 20 students, 20 parents and 15 teachers.

The first question showed that the majority of students (70%), parents (70%) and all teachers know the history of tea. As English traditions of tea party our students know better than their parents because they learn about it at the English lessons. Unfortunately, only 35% know about Russian traditions. As the symbol of Russian tea some respondents named "treat" or "conversation" though more truthful answer is "samovar".

All the students love tea and like to have it several times a day. 34% of my classmates prefer tea with milk, 28% – with sugar, 12% with lemon and 26% – with sweets, honey and jam. They have different types of tea every day (Appendix 3).

It was curious for me to find out what the children know about tea traditions in Russia and in Great Britain, whether they know about the differences between them. As a result we have created a thematic calendar, where my classmates tried to represent the culture of different countries. You can see the tea party table, refreshments there. I hope these wonderful, talented illustrations will help children and adults learn more about Russian, Bashkir and English tea traditions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I can say that I have reached the aim of my research. I found the similarities and differences between tea traditions of different countries. My hypothesis has been proved, because the results of our research show that tea has been an integral part of national culture for centuries for both nations. People understand that tea is good for health. The culture of people has been revealing through their tradition. Indeed, nowadays when education plays an important role, the additional knowledge about cultural traditions of English-speaking

countries will help us understand better this language.

English tea ceremony is different from Russian one. In our country tea appeared earlier than in England. It is one of the most favourite and popular drinks in both countries. Today the British are considered to be the biggest tea lovers in Europe. The atmosphere of relaxation, fun, peace and joy, the ability to have tea in a pleasant company are very important at the Russian tea party. Style and home furnishings are very important in England. The main thing for them is to make a good impression, to show that the house is respectable and decent. The famous five o'clock tea is sacred to the British – from the Queen to petty officials.

So, tea tradition in Russia and in England have their own history and unique features.

In the course of our work we have found a lot of interesting facts from the history of tea in Britain and in Russia. We learned how to make English tea. Practical implications: the material of our research can be used at the English lessons, during class hours. I'm sure the study will help children and adults to expand their knowledge of Russian and English tea ceremony. In addition, the collected material can be used at the Geography lessons at school, and can also be interesting and useful for everybody who often travels. While travelling enjoy your tea!

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Appendix

Appendix 1

*Kandry, supermarket**We are all together!**Herbal tea is very useful!**I'm a tea lover! Let's have tea together!**I like tea with lemon!**Interviewing our school medical assistant*



At the library



Would you like to know more about tea?



The samovar is ready! Welcome to the tea party!

Appendix 2

The questionnaire

1. What country did tea come from?

2. How many times a day do the English have tea?
3. What is the symbol of Russian tea party?
4. Are you a tea lover?
5. Which supplements to tea do you prefer?
6. What types of tea do you know?

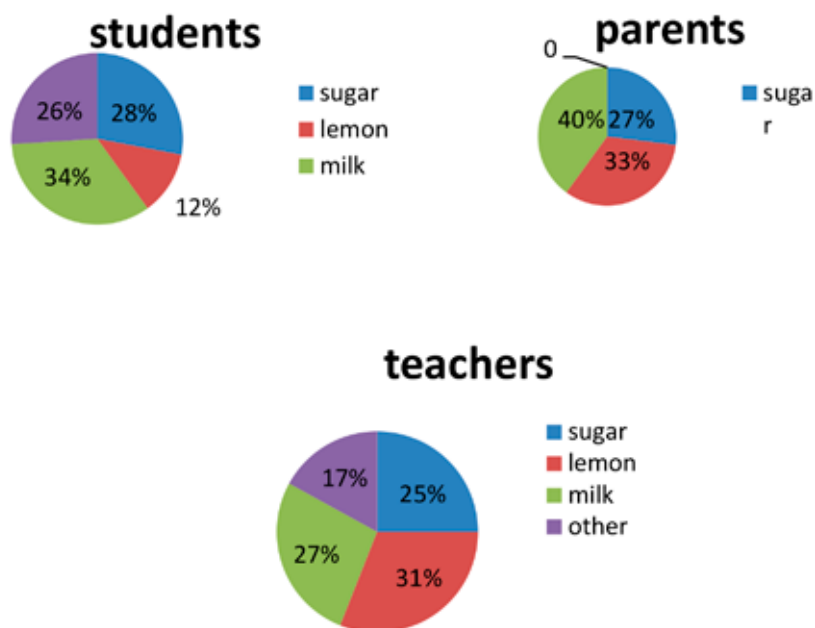
Appendix 3

Survey results

Correct answers:

Questions	Students	Parents	Teachers
What country did tea come from?	70 %	70 %	100 %
How many times a day do the English have tea?	80 %	18 %	60 %
What's the symbol of Russian tea?	35 %	18 %	70 %

Which supplements to tea do you prefer?



Everyone loves tea, but every person prefers particular additive. Some of them like herbal tea.

For each season – specific colour of tea

winter	red tea
spring	floral tea
summer	green tea
autumn	oolong

