

## History Competition

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All the tasks are for schoolchildren of all ages: everyone can choose what he/she likes; it is sufficient to do well (not necessarily completely) two tasks out of the first ten or to point out correctly at least ten errors in tasks 11 or 12 (one has to make a list of erroneous statements and indicate the correct time, place and participants of these events — or why they could not have happened at all.

Tasks marked by the asterisk (\*) are harder; they will be marked by higher scores.

1. Form a chain of at most 7 people joining you with Yuri Gagarin such that each person in the chain should be acquainted with the next one. Try to make the chain as short as possible.
2. Memoirs of Soviet pilot Marc Gally have the title “We won the first battle”. When and where did this battle take place and what were its consequences? What role did Gally play in the life of Yuri Gagarin?
- 3\*. In September 1941 the Red Army fended off the first German offensive on Leningrad. Which of Soviet military leaders played the chief role in this battle? Name at least three persons. Which non-trivial decisions did they make? Who of them did not receive his due reward?
4. Aurelian, Hadrian, Alexios, Anastasios, Anushirvan, Nabukadnezzar, Theodosius. All these rulers erected great walls? Where and when were they built? Against what intruders were they meant to stand? Where can one see what remains of these walls today, if any?
5. Aljubarrota, Lisboa, Malaga, Munda, las Navas de Tolosa, Ronceval, Toledo, Jerez de la Frontiera: all these are historical places in the Pyrenean peninsula. All these places are famous for battles that played important role in the history of the Pyrenean peninsula. When did these battles take place and who fought them?
6. Father in law, brother in law, son in law, cousin, personal enemy. Such were the 5 first successors of famous medieval ruler. Who was this ruler? Who were his successors? Where did they rule? What consequences of their deeds are still felt?
7. Describe banners and coats of arms that bore the main participants of the third crusade.
- 8\*. In 1761, Lomonosov observed the transit of Venus across the Sun. What other astronomers observed this phenomenon simultaneously with Lomonosov? Why were these observations important for geographers? Which astronomer was sent for an expedition to perform this observation?
9. During 20 years following the death of Lomonosov in 1765, important discoveries were made in the branches of science where Lomonosov had been

doing his research. What were these discoveries? Who were its authors? Who of them can be named direct successors of Lomonosov and was aware of his work?

10\*. Once the Roman plebs broke the house of the Senate into pieces — to build the funeral pyre of one of their leaders. Who was this person? What made him popular? Who were his friends and foes in Roman politics — now known even better than this leader?

11. The following text contains many errors. List as many errors as you can: explain which event mentioned in the text must have happened elsewhere, or in another time, or with other participants, or could not have happened at all?

## Metropolitan Alexi

On March 5, 6900 the long-awaited news reached Moscow from Crimea: the ferengs had killed the khan Mamai. The malignant enemy of Saint Rus, who despoiled Ryazan but was broken by Great Duke Dmitry Andreevich three years ago on Kulikovo Field was no more! The Horde warriors enraged by this loss exiled the losing khan and summoned his rival Tokhtamysh of the Persian Chingizids, Khubilai’s offsprings, to rule them.

The young prince arrived in Sarai-Batu with a small troop and the blessing of his uncle, Timur the Limp, the vicar of Bukhara and Nishapur. This is a good chance for the Moscovites! They need to make peace with the new master of the Horde, paying him a moderate tribute rather than the huge amount of money that the brazen impostor Mamai did want. Metropolitan Alexi acted quickly: his envoy Fyodor Koshka rushed to Sarai with valuable gifts, and soon Begich-murza and his trail came to Moscow with a return visit. But happened such a trouble: in these very days the hot-tempered Great Duke Dmitry was enraged by the old tsysyatski of Moscow — Protasi Veliaminov! The old man became a monk, and his elder son Ivan fled to Tver to Great Duke Михайло, who had not supported Dmitry against Mamai.

The cunning Begich, hearing of the unexpected quarrel among the Moscovites, made an exorbitant demand: pay us the same tribute you have paid to khan Batyi, before Mamai! Great Duke Dmitry the Proud did not yield and the talks fell through, so a war is looming. How much blood will it cost to Rus! What should we do now?

Moscow is not ready for a new war with the Horde: too many Russian heroes fell on the Kulikovo Field. But Tokhtamysh is not ready for battle either: he has little forces of his own and his uncle Timur is planning to march on China, so there will be no support for Horde from Persia. If we could also bind Tokhtamysh by a war against Turks — the eternal enemies of the Horde lords! Now sultan Bayazet has left Tsargrad alone and is warring with ferengs for sea trade via Bosphorus. The sultan needs Crimea, but Tokhtamysh will not cede Crimea lest he should lose face before his warriors. If we could also sow discord between the two uluses of the Horde: the Volga one and the Crimean one!

Perhaps the cunning Greeks can help Rus with that? At least Kiprian Shishman, a born Bulgarian, and now jobless metropolitan of Lithuania. Because the cunning heathen Algidras did not want to accept a metropolitan from the

weakened Tsargrad. Kiprian came to Moscow as a supplicant, but Great Duke Dmitry took a disliking to him as a rival of old Alexi. Perhaps we should send Kiprian to Tsargrad now: he will look out for the interests of Moscow, while old Alexi is alive! And then he will come here again to take the master's seat in Moscow. . .

Alas, this plan was tardy. Tokhtamysh's raid on Moscow happened before the khan got muddled in his struggle against the sultan. Kiprian became the Rus metropolitan only after the death of Great Duke Dmitry — when Lithuania had already accepted Catholicism and Tsargrad had already lost any influence on Europe.

**12.** The following text contains many errors. List as many errors as you can: explain which event mentioned in the text must have happened elsewhere, or in another time, or with other participants, or could not have happened at all?

## The Heritage of Tutmes

On the first day of the new moon, when the rise of the waters of Khapi reached ten elbows, the Master of Both Lands, the son of the god Apis — Ak Heper Ra Dzhhuti-mesu gathered a priest council to discuss the coming transfer of the throne of the Black Land.

Because the liver of the sacred crocodile was wizened: this means that before the next overflow of Khapi the master of Khet-Ka-Ptah will ascend to the celestial gods. Who shall be his successor over the Black Land? The elder son of the Great House is weak in mind and will: he can hold the reins of the war chariot neither in the depths of Asia nor in the country of Ta Nuter. To the contrary, the grandson and namesake of the Great House is a strong little boy, but he has just learnt to speak. Who is to be regent before the boy matures?

Will the current chati Imhotep agree to take this position? Or will the bellicose Nehsi, born in the country of Punt, fit better? Or Horemkheb, the wise builder of the Dzheser-Dzheseru pyramid? Will these rival priests manage to keep the two Lands — Black and Red — united until the prince's coming of age? The old lord Ak Kheper Ra is not sure of that. Perhaps father Apis could offer his son an unexpected way out of these difficulties?

The Father of Gods did interfere in the quarrel of unreasonable people: he sent a prophetic dream to Senmut, a priest of Anubis and nomarch of the White Antelope.

The god said just one sentence: "The cub is always equal to the lion, be it male or female!" It immediately became clear to everyone: the tsar of Khemet has a daughter, princess Hatshepsut Nefr-et, lacking neither cleverness, nor beauty, nor will! She can handle the duties of the Mistress of Both Lands till her nephew matures. And when the younger lion cub becomes adult, he can bring order into the Asian country Rechennu, whose chiefs have gone completely out of control.

The Hittites who had captured Babylon are to blame for everything! Its last tsar Nabu-naid asked the Egyptians for a military intervention, but he asked too late and unsuccessfully; the young prince Hammurapi found a refuge in the Black Land. It is time to teach the youth Egyptian culture and then give him

back his throne on the bank of rapid Tigre flowing to the south — opposite the sacred Khapi. So a victory over the arrogant Hittites is needed. Let it be achieved by the chosen of Horus and Shamash, the future tsar Men Kheper Ra Dzhhuti-mesu, when he takes power from the hands of his aunt Maat Ka Ra! Then the two Black Lands — Khemet and Ki En Gee shall live in harmony again, as it was in the times of the tsars Hufu and Gilgamesh, whose hands had embraced all the God's world!

All these hopes came to fruition in time. Thus tell us the reliefs of pharaoh Tutmos 3 on the walls of the Anubis temple in Luxor, and the inscriptions of tsar Hammurapi on the Black Obelisk, which was later taken by the Persians from Babylon to Ekbatana. Alexander's warriors took this relic to Olympia, and Napoleon's soldiers moved it to Paris, where the wise Champolion deciphered the ancient cuneiform as a lesson for all the future generations.