

Российский коммивояжёр - The Russian Commercial Traveller

This is a simulation for a group, to practise future tenses and to revise the use of the prepositional (locative) case. It practises the language associated with making arrangements to meet.

Preparation

You will need a blank calendar for each member of the group with the twelve months of the year and three or more cities. See the example opposite for London, Paris and New York. You could of course just as well use Moscow, Saint Petersburg and Novosibirsk, for example.

You may need to revise the future constructions:

- Где вы будете в январе?
- Где мы встретимся?

as well as the variable stress on the prepositional (locative) endings of the months of the year:

- в январé / в апрéле.

Ask learners to plan for this activity in advance. It is easy to find suitable city websites in Russian.

The activity

Tell the learners that they are all Russian commercial travellers. To help set the scene, ask them to give themselves Russian names and decide what they are selling. Give suggestions if necessary. Talk about how boring and miserable the life of a travelling salesman can be. The whole year is spent in different cities, where you have to live in hotels and probably have no friends. Hand out the calendars. Tell learners that they have to spend four months in each of Paris, London and New York. Ask them to decide where they will be for each month and to fill in the towns in their calendar. Ask them to think of two or three things they would really like to do or see in each city.

Now explain that today is the annual conference of Russian commercial travellers. It is their opportunity to meet all their colleagues and to try to make arrangements to meet again during the year ahead. Ask them to talk to each other about where they will be when, and to try to arrange one rendezvous for each month of the year.

They must, of course, not look at each other's calendars.

Sample conversation

- Здравствуйте.
 - Здравствуйте.
 - Как вас зовут?
 - Я – Сергей Николаевич Петров. А вы?
 - Я – Ольга Тимофеевна Смирнова.
 - А что вы продаёте?
 - Российские сувениры, матрёшки. А вы?
 - Я продаю автомашины.
 - Где вы будете в январе?
 - В январе я буду в Париже.
 - Как жаль! Я буду в Нью-Йорке. А где вы будете в мае?
 - В мае я буду в Лондоне.
 - Отлично! Я тоже буду в Лондоне в мае.
Давайте встретимся!
 - С удовольствием! Я буду жить в гостинице «Хильтон». Можно встретиться там в фойе.
 - Хорошо. А что мы будем делать? Давайте поужинаем в китайском ресторане, а потом посмотрим спектакль.
 - Я согласен. Запишите мой номер телефона ...
- и т.д.

It is a good idea to stop the activity before everyone has filled in all the months in their calendar. You can then ask one learner to say who he/she will be meeting in different months. You may of course need to teach or revise:

- Я ни с кем не встречаюсь.
- У меня нет свиданий.

When the learner comes to a month with no planned meeting, then another learner may say, for example:

- А я свободен в июне.

and you can then ask them to make arrangements in front of the whole group.

Follow up

You could also possibly give a homework for learners to complete any gaps in their calendars by talking to each other before the next lesson!

For a written homework you can of course ask the group to write a summary of the meetings that they have arranged.

январь	
февраль	
март	
апрель	
май	
июнь	
июль	
август	
сентябрь	
октябрь	
ноябрь	
декабрь	

Лондон / Париж / Нью-Йорк