



Bridges to Russia: Culture and Social Studies *Harvard University, July 10-28, 2017*

Elective Projects

Project “Newsroom”

This project introduces participants to some Russian-language periodicals (newspapers), published in Russia and abroad. Students have an opportunity to present their final work in the form of an issue of their own newspaper. They can choose to contribute as journalists, newspaper photographers, or editors. In the “Newsroom,” students devote a lot of time to reading (diverse texts from various sections of selected newspapers), writing (blog entries about the program’s news and newspaper articles), speaking and listening (discussing what the students have read and written as well as interviewing fellow participants and guest speakers). The program ends with a press conference, where students share their experiences, present the issue of the newspaper dedicated to the STARTALK Summer program “Bridges to Russia” (Harvard, July 10-28, 2017), take questions.

Theater Project

In this project, students are engaged in the production of a play based on the story “May I speak to Nina”, by Kir Bulychev. All events in the story happen simultaneously both, in the present and in the past. The main character who lives during the Soviet Perestroika, is talking on the phone to a girl, who also lives in Moscow in 1942 (during the time of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945). As part of the production, students get to expand their knowledge about the culture of the USSR in 1940s-1980s, discuss and compare life in the USSR before and after World War II and Perestroika, follow events and changes that take place in the country, watch fragments of best known cult Soviet movies of that time, listen to songs and recite poetry. In the end of the summer program, students present the production of the play in Russian to their peers, parents, and guests.

Digital Storytelling Project: My Chagall

Students who choose to participate in the project:

- Visit Harvard Art Museum;
- See the original paintings by Marc Chagall;
- Choose the topic based on their personal interest;
- Research Chagall's life, work, and the key elements in his paintings;
- Come to know the basics of photography and painting (color, light, space, setting, perspective);
- Independently take pictures to be used in the multi-media digital story.

At the closing ceremony, students create and present their Digital story project which includes a written story, pictures, graphics, audio and video materials. All these elements help to better present the life story of a man, Marc Chagall, who despite of all the hardships of being an immigrant, managed to reach the heights of his success and became a world known, and well loved artist. This world reknown artist spent most of his life in France, lived and worked in different cities and countries: Latvia, Germany, Russia and USA, and always dreamed of gaining love and recognition not only by Europe but by Russia as well.



STARTALK: Russian in the Sky and Outer Space
University of Washington, July 11 –August 5, 2016

Elective Projects

Linguistic Project “The Life of Words in Another Language”

Do you know how many words have been borrowed from Russian into English and from English into Russian? When does a language “give” words, and when does it “borrow” them? When did the Russian word “sputnik” enter into other world languages? What is the difference between the Russian word “troika” and the English equivalent? What “wild animals” live in Russian computer slang?

For whom is this project? For anyone who wants to know why words travel from one language into another, why they change and get borrowed by other languages. For those who speak and think in two languages: Russian and English. **What are we going to do?** The main thing is research. The way linguists do it: They find an interesting problem, collect examples, look at dictionaries, read articles, discuss and draw conclusions. Moreover, we are going to be solving linguistic problems, working with Russian electronic resources, such as Russian National Corpus and doing computer presentations about our findings. You will be learning to do real presentations in Russian! **How are we going to present our findings?** At the end of the program we will show our presentations to an audience and experts on the UW Russian Startalk Student Conference.

Project in Math/Robotics “Mars Investigation with LEGO Robotics”

The STARTALK program provides a unique chance to join our project “Mars Investigation with LEGO Robotics.” It is a team project in which you’ll have a chance to work for a period of time as a programmer, engineer, designer, and scientist. As part of our project work, each team will build its own robots, which will move, use sensors, and navigate by computer using specially programmed software to complete simple actions. Our robots are going to “visit” Mars and tell us about this amazing planet.

This project is for those who want to learn more about the world in which they live, who are not afraid of unexpected results and complex tasks, and who have a vivid imagination and love to do research. We will read, think, and construct. We will work with real scientific databases and make small scientific discoveries. We will build our own robots and “bring them to life” using specially programmed software. We are going to conduct genuine scientific research. We will find out how to attract and keep the attention of an audience at a conference. We will create electronic presentations and describe our discoveries. The presentations will all be posted on the STARTALK project website, and the best ones will be published in the newspaper “The Russian World”.

Historical Project: Russia in the 20th Century”

In the last century, Russia witnessed many dramatic events, including revolutions, wars, purges, and radical transformations that influenced lives of millions around the world. By studying history we learn not only of the past, but we also analyze it to better understand current affairs and avoid mistakes. The historical project “Russia in the 20th century” is aimed at students interested in wide range of disciplines, including political science, economy, and literature. This project is for young scholars who would like to learn more about Russia and its place in the world. We will discuss the most important events of the 20th century. Students will work with authentic Russian materials, including texts, audio, and video sources. They will learn how to write a scholarly paper and how to deliver it effectively. At the end of the project, students will present their papers at the conference.

Elective Projects in Startalk Summer Russian Heritage Programs *Svetlana Abramova,*
Heritage Language Symposium, University of Washington, Seattle, February 10, 2018