

## ***Школа 2 серия***

### *Introduction*

**Школа** opens a window on the life of the Russian teenagers, specifically, high-schoolers' relationships with each other, their teachers, and parents in Moscow in 2010. When this sixty-nine-part TV series was released on the Russian Channel 1 in January of 2010, it triggered a controversy. Critics castigated the hopelessly bleak depiction of the new generation of старшекласники ("upperclassmen," approximately juniors in the US high-schools). Cynical, selfish, violent, even sadistic, the students struck the audience as only a bit less experienced in concealing their vices than their teachers, who are shown to be just as cruel and egotistic as their pupils but also venal. A few members of the Russian Дума called for taking the show off the air and punishing its twenty-six-year-old director, Valeriya Gai Germanika. But the series enjoyed a strong following of prominent fans who argued that this was the only show on Russian TV which depicted life as it was (Troitskii), and that it was worth watching only because it threw light on the real issues we deal with in our schools (Astakhov).

In addition to the unadorned picture of the Russian life, the series is a treasure trove for the Russian learner—the characters speak the idiomatic language of today's young Russians.

The instructional activities start with the second episode. Here's what you need to know in order to follow the story: Episode 1 (you may wish to watch it on your own) introduced the viewers to a typical Moscow school, in particular the students and teachers of class 9A\*.

**\*Historical-Cultural Note (HCN):** Russia guarantees compulsory public education to all its citizens from the age of 6 to 17. Most Russians attend the same school for the entire span of eleven years. In the academic context, the word **класс** translates into English as "a school grade," as in "She is already studying in the ninth grade?" **Она уже учится в девятом классе.** The other, more frequent meaning of **класс**, which does not however translate into the English "class," is a group of 30 to 40 students who are assembled in the first grade and continue with few additions or subtractions until graduation. **Одноклассники** (students of the same **класс**) take all subjects together throughout the eleven years of Russian school. On average, they spend about 35 hours per week with the same group of classmates. In this film, 9 signifies that this group of students is in their ninth year of secondary education; letter A serves to distinguish this group, **класс**, from other groups of school students who are also in their ninth year. An average school will have up to three groups of each level, e.g.,: Класс 9А, класс 9Б, and класс 9В.

In the TV series **Школа**, 9А is the best *klass* in school; it is led by a nationally-recognized lead teacher, **классный руководитель** (faculty member responsible

for a particular *klass*), who is also the author of a popular history textbook, **Анатолий Германович Носов**. It's his 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which is celebrated by the faculty and students. At the school auditorium, students put on a folk dance and recite poetry. Sitting on a stage next to the performers and apparently enjoying the show, Nosov suddenly falls off his chair unconscious. He suffers a stroke when in the heap of congratulatory cards, he discovers pictures of his naked granddaughter Ania. Earlier in the same episode, we learn that Ania lives with her grandparents and is homeschooled because she suffers from acute asthma. She meets the new boy in 9A, Ilya Epifanov, and likes him. They talk about her grandfather and how difficult it is for her to live with him. Ilya jokes about killing Nosov in order to make Ania happy. It so happens that her grandfather collapses at the moment when Ilya is reciting a poem at Nosov's anniversary celebration.

*(View the last minute of the first episode.)*

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### **Activities**

*(questions, comments, new vocabulary, discussions)*

#### Intro (40 seconds)

1. *Comment on the format, font and color of the first words on the screen.*
2. *What season is it?*
3. *Comment on the use of camera.*
4. *What are the ages, approximately, of the **школьники, ученики** (students in the secondary school) you see in the school?*
5. *Every episode begins with this intro. Discuss why director chose these particular images?*

#### Сцена 1: Мать и сын (mother and son) (40)

1. *What's the name of the son? What are the different forms of his name used in the scene?*
2. *Why is the mother worried? Write down two English cognates the mother used in her first sentence.*
3. *Mother: Is it true that you caused your teacher to have a stroke **инсульт**? What is the English cognate of the Russian term?*
4. *What's the son's response?*

5. Son: As I came on stage to recite the poem, he [Nosov] became sick—it's just a coincidence. He's very old **старый**.
6. *The son asks mother not to come to the school when they call her, and then refers to the school as **террариум**, why?*
7. *His last sentence is about **таблетки**. Any ideas what it is?*
8. *Discuss the relationship between the mother and the son.*

Сцена 2: В больнице (At the hospital) (2:15)

1. *How does Ania refer to her grandmother?*
2. *What is the word Ania uses to reassure her grandmother in the first sentence?*
3. Grandmother: Doctor said the surgery was complicated, and that a stroke at his age may lead to unspecified consequences.
4. *Fill in the first word and translate Ania request: \_\_\_\_\_, **можно я домой пойду**. Each of these words is high-frequency. Memorize this sentence!*
5. Ania's reason for her request: she left her **ингалятор**, which she needs for her **астма**.
6. *How do they say Bye to each other?*

Сцена 3: В автобусе (On a bus) (2:15)

1. *Comment on what you see in the bus.*
2. Two students from 9A, **Ирина Шишкова (Ира)** and **Горяев**, are on their way to school. They discuss what's going to happen now that their lead teacher, Anatoly Germanovich Nosov, is in the hospital.

Горяев: **Интересно, сегодня отмена будет, или чего-то поставят вместо истории?** *Translate the first and the last words in that sentence. Can you now understand the gist of his question?*

3. Горяев: It's awesome **круто** that the Midget (reference to Nosov) landed in the hospital **в больницу загремел**. He was going to invite my parents to school, and now he himself [choking sounds]. (**Круто**, "cool, awesome," is a popular word among the young crowd.)

Ира: What would you choose: that he die, or that your parents are called to school?

Горяев: **Конечно, чтобы он умер.** *Translate the first and the last word in that line and try to make sense of this exchange. Note Ira's facial expression.*

Горяев: I'm just joking.

Ира: **Я не знаю** (*translate*). I feel sorry for him. Had a dream about him last night—he was in school, looking sad, not talking to anyone.

Горяев: **Кто?**

Ира: Nosov! Who else?!

Горяев: Yuck, yuck! (*Notice how Russians express repulsion.*) Do you have dreams about the Ugly Face (reference to teacher of Russian literature, **Валентина Харитоновна Мурзенко**), too?

4. Горяев changes the topic: a guy he knows—he characterizes him as **очень серьезный человек**—has fallen for Ira. Ira wants Goryaev to tell her (**скажи, колись**) who the guy is. Goryaev refuses, but Ira guesses and describes his appearance: **светловолосый, крепкий, с сережкой в ухе** (fair-haired, solid, with an earring). Ira asks: **Да или нет? [...]**. *Translate and fill in Goryaev's response.* \_\_\_\_

5. *When they get off the bus, Ira keeps repeating a question. What is it? How many times does she repeat it?*

#### Сцена 4 : В учительской (At the Faculty Office) (4:59)

1. The office secretary **секретарь Светлана Викторовна**: All this food and drink left from yesterday's party! What should we do with ....

**Наталья Николаевна** (Physics teacher): **Светлана Викторовна**, can you talk about something else?! After all, our colleague is on a deathbed now.

Secretary: I read that strokes and cancer happen to people with bad personalities; nice people almost never have these diseases.

Another teacher: Look who is talking?!

2. Epifanov is mentioned. Some teachers believe that it was the poem he read at Nosov's anniversary that caused his stroke.

(CHN\*: In that scene at the end of Episode 1, Epifanov promises the Physics teacher to recite "To Chaadaev," a famous poem by Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837); instead, he recites a poem by a controversial living poet Alina Vitukhnovskaya (b. 1973):

**Я не осуществлялся. Отказывался. Не стал.  
Был. И мне сказали: Свобода – насилие.  
Автобус меня не задавил.  
Я не был пьян  
И не лежал  
На дороге, с которой не уносили  
Труп. [...]**

(I didn't self-realize. I refused. Didn't become.  
I was. And they told me: Freedom is violence.  
I wasn't run over by bus.  
I wasn't drunk  
I wasn't flat down on the road,  
From which they never removed a corpse [...])

Наталья Николаевна: (*Fill in the first two words.*) \_\_\_\_\_! \_\_\_\_\_! Do you really think that he [Nosov] collapsed over some kind of a poem?!

Валентина Харитоновна: A fine poem! In the past, people were punished for such poems by being sent away—and it served them right!

Наталья Николаевна: I think **мне кажется** that a man who has worked in school all his life **всю жизнь** has heard much tougher things—he's unbreakable.

Another teacher: **Значит, пробили.** It means, that they [students] broke him down now.

3. Conversation shifts to the problem of finding a new lead teacher for 9A. Some make disparaging remarks about that group: **Достанется кому-то!** Someone will have to take it (and suffer for it)!

Наталья Николаевна: **Слушайте, прекратите!** Listen, stop! What's with you?! [turning to the Chemistry teacher] **Арсений Иванович**, tell them, please. [This is an] **отличный класс, прекрасный класс!** After 9B, I go to them like to a holiday **как на праздник.** (*Translate her description of this "klass."*)

Another teacher: That's because Nosov had a tight hold on them. Now they will fight whoever is appointed in his place.

Валентина Харитоновна: I will refuse if they appoint me. [...] I don't like **не люблю** that age group—puberty, **гормоны!** (*Translate.*)

Наталья Николаевна: You won't have any choice in the matter, Валентина Харитоновна!

The Literature teacher insists that she will refuse to take on 9A. The Physics teacher ends the conversation by questioning if they will ever see Nosov again.

*Discuss the differences in conduct and conversation between the Russian and American teachers in a similar situation.*

Сцена 5: Аня на прогулке (Ania on a walk) (6:26)

**Школьник** from 9A: Snot!

Аня: **Ты придурок что-ли совсем?** Are you a total idiot?

Ученик: You idiot yourself. **Слышь [слышишь], как там твой дед?** Hey [literal: listen], how's your grandfather?

Ania: **Плохо.**

Ученик: I didn't like him from the start.

Ania: **Кто?**

Ученик: The one who made your grandpa sick. The new one, **идиот.**

*Can you make sense of this quick exchange? On the semantic level? On the level of motives? Can you reconstruct these character's thoughts?*

Сцены 6, 7, 8: Мать и дочь. Оля. Мальчики. (Mother and daughter. Olya. Boys) (7:06 – 8:24)

1. **HCN\*** Scenes 6, 7 and 8 are notable for their succinct depiction of the type characters instantly recognizable to the Russian audience: a doting mother, an embarrassed daughter, a high-school diva, and hyper-sexual males in their late teens. The types are captured through the situation (mother walking daughter to school; the splash of a popular girl's entry; the exaggerated "manliness" of the teenage boys) but especially through their speech patterns: mother's use of diminutives and lists of the items Sonia should not forget; Sonia's repetitive requests for the mother to go home; Olya's fake cheer, and the boys' primitive vulgarisms. This scene poses particular challenge in that the characters, true to life, often speak simultaneously.

Сцена 6:

Соня: **Всё, давай, короче, иди домой.** Alright, so, you should go home now. ("**Короче**" is a filler word, literally meaning "shorter," as in "shorter way of saying something" but functions as a way to emphasize the next word or phrase. Note the form of the noun for "home/house." Offer ideas why it's not **дом**?)

Мама: **Всё, Сонечка, ну я ухожу. Ты бутерброды все взяла?** Alright, Sonechka, I'm leaving. You got the sandwiches? (*бутерброд is a loan word from German. Find out the original meaning.*)

Соня: **Мам, ты же всё положила.** Mom, you packed everything.

Мама: **Хорошо. Напиточек только сама выпей, ладно?** Be sure you drink that [health] beverage. **Светлане не давай.** Don't share it with Svetlana.  
**Ну, все, пожалуйста. Платочки взяла для носа?** Did you bring the tissues for your nose? **Перчаточки? Перчатки не потеряй, ладно?** Don't lose the gloves, ok?

Соня: **Я не потеряю их. Ну всё, мамуль.** I won't lose them. Alright mommy, that's it. (*Всё is used to signify "everything" and to signal that an activity is completed, or is about to be completed.*)

Мама: **Хорошо. Хорошо, доченька.** Ok, ok, sweetie/daughter.

Соня: **Ну, всё, давай.** Alright, that's all, go. **Пока, мамуля.** Bye, mommy. **Ох, блин!** Oh, shoot! **Это Оля! Приехала.** Arrived. **Ну всё, мамуль, давай.** Alright, dear mommy, go. **Мамулечка, всё, иди!**

*List the diminutives used by the mother. Count the times Sonia asks mother to leave.*

(Сцена 7)

Мама: **Оленька, здравствуй!**

Оля: **Здравствуйте, Марья Давидовна!** (*Note the change of the form of "Hello"—why?*)

Мама: **Какая красавица стала, да!** What a beauty [you've] become!

Оля: **Вы тоже ничего!** And you are not so bad looking yourself!

Мама: **Сонечка. Оленька, тебе Сонечка привет от меня передаёт? Я часто передаю.** Olya, does Sonia tell you when I say Hi? I often do.

Оля: **О, да. Спасибо! Каждый день передаёт.** Everyday she passes it [to me].

Мама: **Ну, вы же за одной партой всё-таки до третьего класса сидели, да?**  
Well, you did sit together at the same desk until third grade, right? (*Russians frequently use "же" to emphasize a point. Find an example of this usage above in scene 6 and explain it.*)

Соня: **Давай, всё мамуль. Всё.** Ok, go mommy. That's it.

Оля: **До свидания! Слушай-ка, Штерцкая, ты только со мной не ходи, ладно?** Goodbye! Listen, Shtertskaya, please do not walk with me, ok?

Соня: Да.

Оля: **Будь человеком, не ходи со мной. Я быстрее пойду.** Be a sport [literally, “a human being”]—do not walk with me. I’ll walk faster. (*Note the comparative form of **быстро.***)

*In a few sentences, describe the dynamics between the mother, Sonya, and Olya in this scene.*

### 3. (Сцена 8)

Boys and Лёха: **Кто тебя на тачке довозил, а?** Whose wheels got you here, eh?

Оля: **А чё (что) ревнуешь?** What are you jealous?

Лёха: **Ну, ревную, да.** (*Translate his response.*)

Оля: **А чего так?** How so? (*Note frequent use of “А”—this is to signal a question.*)

Лёха: **Да вот так вот.** It just the way it is.

Оля: **Да ладно.** Yeah, right! (*Compare with another meaning of **ладно** above.*)

Лёха: Да.

Школьник: **Слышь (слышишь), крутая тёлка!** Hey, awesome broad [literally “a heifer”]!

Лёха: **Да, я вот думаю.** (*Translate.*)

Школьник: **Да чё ты думаешь? Крутая она!** (*Translate.*)

Лёха: **Ну да.**

*Discuss if there are similar type characters in the American culture? How are they different?*

### Сцена 9 Ирина и подружка. (Irina and a friend). (8:25)

1. Irina’s desk partner is informing her that yesterday she and her mother went shopping. *Can you catch what item they bought?* The girl also tells Irina that she saw cardigan/sweater **кофточка** just like Olga Budilova has. “It cost only \_\_\_\_\_”?

2. “Can you imagine (**прикинь**),” she continues, “you get exactly the same top and come to school in it! That will get her!” Irina is not impressed. She doesn’t want to



discuss Budilova but wants to go for a stroll instead **Пойдем, пройдемся**. Irina turns to another girl with the same suggestion. But she is busy: «**Я рисую**». *Translate.*

Her desk partner finally agrees when the bell rings signaling the start of the next class.

Сцена 10. Урок правоведения. (Lesson in Law). (9:26)

1. Note the Russian school ritual of greeting a teacher. The first thing he says is **Садитесь!** *Meaning?*
2. The teacher goes on to make an announcement. *What is it?*
3. The topic **тема** of today's class is "**Человек и его права**". *Translate.*

The teacher begins to talk about legal consequences of everyday actions when Epifanov interrupts with the question. Observe his body language as he asks the question: "I see that our population is not crazy about the \_\_\_\_\_ for our **классный руководитель** [reference to Валентина Харитоновна, Russian literature teacher, nicknamed **Харя**]. Since the topic of our class is "**Человек и его права**", then maybe it'd make sense to heed the voice of people?"

4. The gist of the teacher's response is: **Население у нас дикое** (our population is wild/primitive), **поэтому, что нравится, что не нравится буду решать я**. *Can you figure out if the teacher agrees or disagrees with Epifanov? What is your evidence?*
5. Епифанов: **Я так и понял**. *Translate.*

Сцена 11: Аня на чате (Ania's chatting). (10:50)

1. Ania's text: yesterday I met a guy. don't know what is it about him but I fell for him for real. he's not exactly handsome. our meeting was not long, but I felt that he's really interested in me. And today I found out that he almost killed a man for me. I'm in shock. what should I do?

Anonymous correspondent: you really lucked out, marla. I'd like to have a fling with [a guy] like that too. *Examine the Russian original text of the chat and find as many words as you can to match the English translation above.*

2. *Write down at least two words from the song that is playing in the scene.*

Сцена 12, Физкультура (Gym). (11:33)

1. Епифанов doesn't get it why the students of 9A are so compliant. Nobody likes the lead teacher who was nominated to replace Nosov. Why do they keep silent like sheep (**молчите как бараны**)?

When Епифанов asks: Who would you want [to become your class leader]? Who do you need? (**Вы кого хотите? Вам кого надо?**), they all answer: **Физичка**.  
*Who are they referring to? Write down the full name of that person.*

Епифанов: If we had a similar situation in my former school, then ...

Another student: Why were you thrown out (**выперли**) from your school?

Epifanov: One broad got knocked up by me.  
*Discuss the reaction of the students to this bit of information.*

2. The Gym teacher arrives. She wants students to stop what they are doing now and start running. *How many circles around the gym does she require?*

*What is the teacher's name?*

3. Epifanov claims that he had a surgery on his toe and that's why he should be excused. In response, the teacher demands that Epifanov brings a \_\_\_\_\_.

4. The teacher keeps repeating the same command. *What is it?*

Сцена 13, В раздевалке (In the locker room). (13:22-14.30)

1. Епифанов: **А ты чё [чего = почему] тут сидишь?** *Translate.*  
2. Школьник: **А у меня освобождение (excuse) по зрению (eyesight)?** *Translate.*

Epifanov teases that because of his eyesight now all girls appear pretty to him.

3. Epifanov proceeds to share his advice on what's the most important thing in sex. It's not your body or your muscles (**ни фигу не тело ... накаченный** [literally "pumped"]). *What is it?*  
4. In response to Epifanov's question if he likes anyone, he says that he used to like Ania Nosova. Epifanov promises to hook them up (**сведу вас**). He then explains that he left class because \_\_\_\_\_? *Fill in the blank.*

Sergei enters and calls the gym teacher **бездарь** [дар = талант]. In response to Epifanov's repeated question [*What is the question?*], he offers: **размер**.

Сцена 14, В столовой (In the cafeteria). (14.29 – 16.00)

Ирина: **Чё [чего] то я не выспалась сегодня** [compare this expression “не выспалась/выспался with устал in the previous scene. Russians distinguish between being tired from exertion—устал/а—and being tired from lack of sleep, не выспалась].

1. Her friend asks her about **обед**. *What is Irina’s response?*
2. Alyokha (**Алёха**) approaches Irina to let her know he likes her (**Слышь, малая, а ты ничего**). What is Irina’s response?
3. Ольга Будилова interrupts—*What does she write on his arm?*

Сцена 15, У киоска (At the kiosk). (16.00)

1. *How many items can you recognize is on the kiosk’s menu?*
2. *What does Sasha ask for?*
3. Epifanov asks Sasha to meet “tomorrow after school”—*write down these words in Russian.*

They decide to move faster because “it’s so f...ing cold!” **Какой дубак, жопа просто!**

Сцена 16, Аня и учитель химии (Ania and the chemistry teacher). (17.27)

Арсений Иванович tutors Ania at home. Ania interrupts him with inappropriate questions:

1. **А правда, что любовь это - \_\_\_\_\_?** *Fill in the blank.*
2. Is it true that in modern school there’s lots of **насилия** (violence), \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_?

Ania explains her questions by referring to her sheltered life and homeschooling (**на домашнем обучении**) for the past two years, but she needs to learn about life.

I’ve never even smoked grass (**травку никогда не курила**), and don’t know how to kiss (**целоваться не умею**).

3. - **Поцелуйте меня, Арсений Иванович!**  
- **Аня, что у тебя в голове?** *Translate this exchange.*
4. Why does Arseni refer to Ania’s grandfather?
5. What does grandmother offer to eat?

Сцена 17. В курилке (In the smoking hideaway) (19.15)

Lyokha shares his worries with Goryaev (“I’ve never had problems with breads”). Goryaev suggests that it would be best that he hooks up with Butilova (**с Бутиловой замутил**). Lyokha responds that it’s all too simple (**просто**) with her.

1. Goryaev recommends that Lyokha send a text to Irina. *What is the text he sends? You can check your answer in the next scene [ща = сейчас].*

### Сцена 18. Классный руководитель и в курилке (Lead teacher and back at the kurilka) (19.55)

1. Ученики 9А discuss the situation with классный руководитель; they express their **мнение «за» или «против»** (for or against) Kharya. There are two positions: girls are in favor of \_\_\_\_\_. Boys insist on \_\_\_\_\_. *Fill in the blanks.*

2. What’s Irina’s **мнение**?

Ania

3. Budilova: **Не помешаю? Блин, Лёх, ну что это такое, тебе это не идёт, это ИШ.** (I’m not disturbing, am I? [...] These [initials] ИШ don’t suit you.)

4. Can you explain in Russian why Lyokha’s plan does not work out?

Goryaev: Ir [short for Irina], wait up. Lyokha asked me to tell you ...

### Сцена 19. Епифанов, Аня и бабушка (21.35)

1. Fill in the blanks, then revise this literal translation of Epifanov’s text to Ania into idiomatic English: \_\_\_\_\_ to you confess that we \_\_\_\_\_ ; you to me wildly appeal. \_\_\_\_\_ ?

2. Ania’s grandmother misses her husband Tolya **очень не хватает** (Anatoly Nosov who is in the hospital). He used to read the newspaper to his wife **на кухне** while she cooked. Grandmother asks Ania to visit Anatoly tomorrow in the afternoon **подежурить полдня**, while she (grandmother) takes his CT scan to a neuroscience institute. But Ania can’t do that. *Why? How does she express her disagreement?*

### Сцена 19. 9А и Наталья Николаевна (22.50)

1. 9А is begging Natalya, the physics teacher, to become their **классный руководитель**. Their two main arguments: “We love you!” and “Kharya is a fright!” Natalya’s counterargument is that she already has a class, 9V, that she leads, and she cannot lead two classes at the same time. *Write down the words you recognize.*

2. Наталья: **Сережа, если ты вообще меня так ценишь как учителя, пожалуйста, лучше бы помог мне с сумкой.** *Translate.*

Сцена 20. В учительской (23.40)

School secretary offers Arseny tea, then champagne that was left over from Nosov's celebration. Arseny declines champagne—**ещё уроки** (*translate*) but then agrees when the secretary warns him that Natalya will soon come and drink it all anyway.

1. How does Natalya thank Seryozha for carrying her bags? *Write down Natalya's words in Russian.*

Сцена 21. Новый классный руководитель (24.37)

1. Валентина Харитоновна: **Садитесь. Ну что 9А? Сегодня я назначена (appointed) вашим классным руководителем. Временно, конечно, надеюсь.** *Translate.*
2. Budilova has the final words in this episode: **А сегодня первое апреля, Вы знаете?** *What's her point?*