

School-leaving examination's topic:

PUBLIC SERVICES, INFORMATION, SIGNS

Post office

→ is a place where mail is handled and where postage stamps, other postal materials, and services are sold. In some countries telecommunications are part of post office business.

In many countries, the government runs the post office. We can find that kind of system in Slovenia, United Kingdom and other countries.

A lot of people asked themselves that happens with mail, when it's sent...

First the postmen collect the mail from postboxes and take them to sorting office where it is sorted. The second step is sorting. People or machines can sort the mail by the zip codes or postcodes. Delivery is the third step. Many delivery workers walk their route, though some drive vans, or ride a bicycle.

Post office services

- Stamps and other postal materials – stamps are placed on packages and letters as proof that the sender has paid for posting them.
- Speedier delivery – several special services enable customers to send mail faster than normal. The sender must pay an extra fee for these services, which include special delivery.
- Extra protection – some mail services enable postal customers to obtain special protection for the items they send through the post.
- Specialist services
- Other services

At various times during the year, post office issues special stamps called commemorative stamps. Some commemoratives pay tribute to historic events, places, of scenic beauty, important industries, or outstanding organizations. Liechtenstein is well-known as a state of stamps.

History

Many ancient civilizations, including the Chinese, Egyptians and Persians had well-organized postal systems. There was little demand for public postal service because few people could read or write. Public postal system began in the 1300's when international commerce led merchants and trading companies to establish their own courier service. However, service was slow, expensive and unreliable.

Telephone

→ is an instrument that sends and receives voice messages, usually by means of electric current. It is one of the most valuable means of communications. A telephone enables people to talk with one another at distances beyond the range of the human voice.

The word TELEPHONE comes from Greek words meaning far and sound.

The telephone network includes telephones, large computers, copper wire or tremendous lengths, hair-thin strands of glass, radio systems and other resources. Most telephones connect with the telephone network by wires that run through the wall of homes and other buildings.

A telephone has three main parts: a dialling mechanism, a transmitter and a receiver. A person can make: local, long-distance and overseas calls

History

Alexander Graham Bell, a Scotsman, invented a telephone. On March 10, 1876 Bell was about to test a new transmitter over. In another room Bell's assistant Thomas Watson waited for the test message. Suddenly, Bell spilled some acid from a battery on his clothes. He cried out: «Mr. Watson, come here. I want you!» Watson rushed into the room, shouting: «Mr. Bell, I heard every word you said—distinctly!» Bell had invented the first telephone.

The differences between Slovene and English conversation on a telephone:

- the beginning is not so formal
- we don't tell a phone number
-

Bank

→ is a business establishment that safeguards people's money and uses it to make loans and investments.

Banking is nearly as old as civilization. An ancient Romans developed an advanced banking system to serve their vast trade network, which extended throughout Europe, Asia, and much of Africa. Modern banking began to develop between the 1200's and the 1600's in Italy.

Bank services are:

- Safeguarding deposits – Money in bank is safe. Banks keep cash in fireproof vaults and are insured against the loss of money in a robbery. In many countries, the government also insures bank deposits. This insurance protects people from losing their money if the bank is unable to repay the funds.
- Providing a means of payment – people who have money in a bank current can pay bills by simply writing a cheque and posting it. Many bank also offer credit cards as a means of payment. People can pay for their purchases at stores and other establishments by using the card to charge sums up to an amount determined by the bank.
- Making loans – Banks receive money from people who do not need it at the moment and lend it to those who do. Banks do so by borrowing money from their deposits at one rate of interest and lending the funds at a higher rate. They use some of their income from loans to pay salaries, other operating expenses, and interest on deposits.
- Electronic banking – many banks have modernized their cheque-handling facilities with computers and other electric equipment.

Kinds of banks:

Banks differ in the services they provide and in how they are owned.

- Commercial banks are the most numerous banks. They offer a full range of services, including current and saving accounts, loans, and trust services. It is owned by shareholders, who buy shares in it.
- Building societies, or saving and loan associations were established to help people buy homes.
- Saving banks invest chiefly in mortgages and government bonds.
- Credit unions are usually formed by people with a common bond (they are important in the USA and Canada).
- Investment banks, or merchants banks, provide long-term loans and capital to industry.
- International banks and banking
- Central banks in every country are the first and foremost banker to the government. They do not lend the money to the general public. They ensure that their government has the money to pay all the bills (in Slovenia Centralna banka Republike Slovenije).

Bank holidays are public holidays in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland on which banks, government offices, and shops are closed. These days are: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, the first Monday in May, the last Monday in May, the last Monday in August, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day and others.

Customs

On a custom are working policemen and customs officers. They examine the people who want to come across the border.

On a custom you have to pay duty or tariff. Some countries have a duty-free shops, where you can bring alcohol, cigarets etc into a country without paying tax on them.

Police

→ are public employees who enforce the law and maintain order. They work to prevent crime and to protect lives and property of the people of a community. Policemen and policewomen serve their communities in many ways.

Every nation in the world has a police system. Most countries have a number of separate police organizations, each responsible for policing a particular area, or a particular type of crime.

Police activities

- Uniformed patrols are the major areas of police work. Uniformed officers are assigned beats (areas or routes) to cover on foot, in squad cars, or on motorcycles. In some cities, they patrol on horseback, and in many river and harbour areas, police patrol in boats.
- Traffic patrols – traffic officers promote safety on streets and main roads. They normally wear uniforms, and patrol in cars or on motorcycle. Some police forces use helicopters to survey traffic. They protect pedestrians, aid motorists, and enforce parking, and other traffic laws. They investigate major traffic accidents and help ensure safety for their vehicles.
- Investigating crime is the main work of detectives, who are sometimes called plainclothes officers because they do not wear uniforms. Detectives try to discover who committed a crime, and to find the evidence necessary to convict the criminal in court.
- Juvenile and social work – they work with young people in clubs or other community activities.
- Records and communications – they keep files on all reported crimes, investigations, and arrests, and on various police activities.
- Specialist activities – large police forces have various specialized units, which may include search and rescue teams, dog handlers, bomb squads and special weapons units.

Interpol is an international organization of police forces from 160 countries. Its official name is the International Criminal Police Organization. Members of Interpol exchange information about international criminals and cooperate in fighting such international crimes as counterfeiting, smuggling, and illegal buying and selling of weapons.

Police laboratory is a laboratory where experts analyse, identify, and interpret evidence connected with a crime. Forensic science includes such specialities as forensic psychiatry, forensic toxicology, and forensic pathology.

How the policeman or policewomen are called?

- In Britain- coppers, Peelers(after Sir Peel,who found teh Metropolitan Police), bobbies, the bill, the law, the fuzz
- In the USA – cops (form Constable On Patrol)

Traffic signs

- There is no clear record who invented of first used traffic control devices. Traffic contols are increasingly necessary for regulating, warning, and guiding motor vehicle and pedestrian traffic.
- Some traffis lights are arranged so that the trafic itself will cause them to change. This is done by placing switches or magnets on the roadway. These are called detectors.
- Many warning and guide signs are covered with luminous paint, or glass or metal beads or button, wich reflect beams from headlights.

Literature:

Encyklopedy;

letter T – 334 and 335

letter B – from 90 to 94

letter P - from 638 to 645 and from 710 to 717

Internet: www.yahoo.com