

Н н Н н

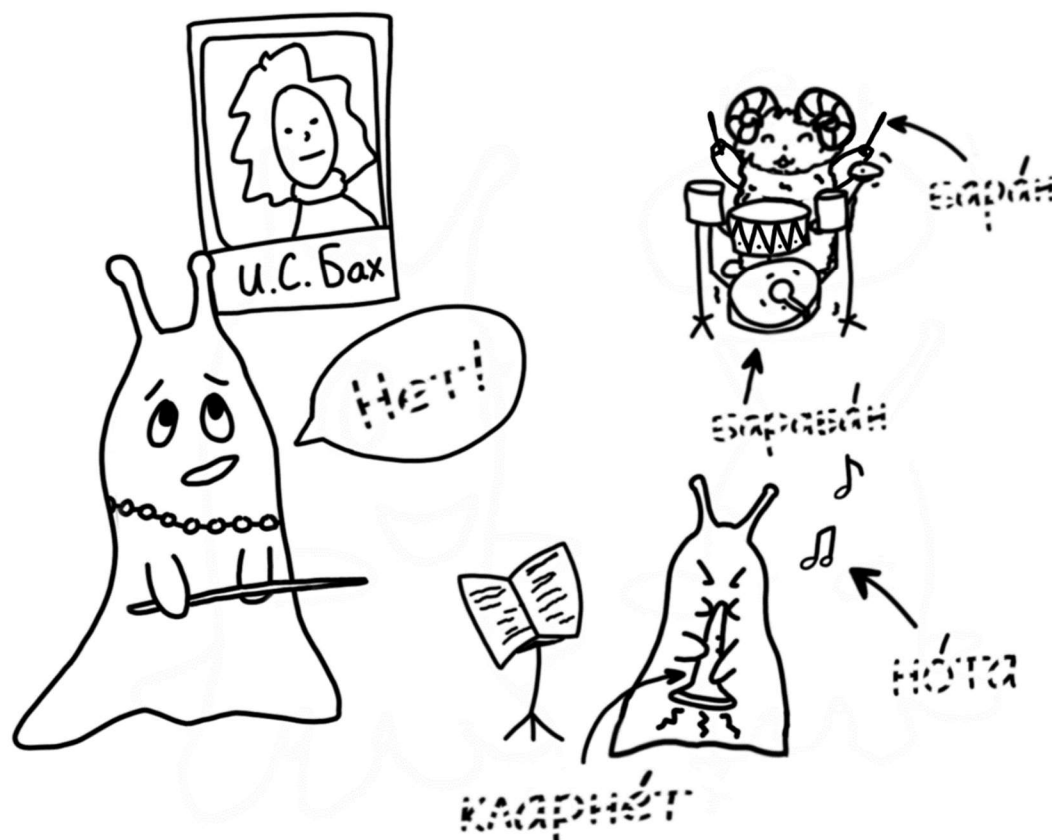
[n] like in no.

Е е Е е

[ye] like in yes.

Б б Б б

[b] like in bad.



Listen and repeat:

Это – кларнет? Is this a clarinet? Да. Yes. Это – та нота? Is this the note? Нет. No.
 Это – баран и барабан?! Are these a ram and a drum?! О, да! Oh, yes!

The Russian letter **Н н** is another trickster: although it looks like the English capital letter *H*, it sounds differently. The Russian letter **Н н** makes the sound [n] as in *no* or *nose*.

The letter **Б б** is the second letter in the Russian alphabet (just like the English letter *B* is the second letter in the English alphabet). You can think of these two letters as big friends because they both make the same sound – [b] as in *boy*, *big*, or *bad*.

Let's take a look at the letter **Е е**. Although it looks like the English letter *E*, its main sound (when it's stressed) is [ye] like in *yes* or *yellow*. Remember the letter **Я я**? Its main sound is [ya]. **Я** and **Е** have something in common: when they are placed after a consonant, they palatalize it, making it sound softer. For example, listen and compare: **ма – мя, мэ – ме, ла – ля, лэ – ле, да – дя, дэ – де, на – ня, нэ – не, са – ся, сэ – се**. There are only 5 vowels in the English alphabet but twice as many in Russian. Why? Because every vowel sound in Russian comes in pairs. Say or sing the letters **А** and **Я**. What do they have in common? What makes them different? How about the letters **Э** and **Е**? We will learn more about it later.