

## Lesson 6.1

### Что это ? Это книга.

Lesson 6 : The interrogative pronoun что / The verb « to be » / Articles in Russian / Noun genders / The vowel E (pronunciation)

- I. The interrogative pronoun что
- II. The verb « to be » in Russian
- III. Articles in Russian
- IV. The grammatical gender of Russian nouns
- V. How to pronounce the vowel E if it is not stressed

### The interrogative pronoun что

**Что** is an interrogative pronoun meaning « what ? ». Here the letter **ч** is pronounced « sh ».

Example :

**Что это ?**

**Это** can be translated as « It (is) », « This (is) » or « That (is) ».

**Что это ?** (What – it ?) – What is it ? / What is this/that ?

### The verb « to be » in Russian

In Russian, the verb « to be » is omitted in the present tense.

Example :

**Это (-) книга.** (It – verb « to be » omitted – book) – It is a book. / This is a book.

### Articles in Russian

In Russian, there are :

-no definite articles : the

-no indefinite articles : a, an

-and no partitive articles : some, any.

Therefore, « **книга** » can be translated as « a book » or « the book » in English, depending on the context.

## The grammatical gender of Russian nouns

In English, nouns have no gender : for example, « book » is neither a feminine noun nor a masculine noun. In contrast, Russian nouns have genders : there are masculine nouns, feminine nouns and neuter nouns . Most of the time, the ending of a word can help you determine the gender of a noun. For now, remember the following :

- A. The vast majority of feminine nouns end in **-а**. Example : **книга** (kniga) – book.
- B. Nouns that end in a consonant are masculine. Example : **стол** (stol) – table.
- C. If a noun ends in **-о**, it is neuter.

Examples :

**Пальто** (pal'to) – coat

**Окно** (okno) – window

**Вино** (vino) – wine

## How to pronounce the vowel E if it is not stressed

If the vowel **e** is not stressed, and if it is neither the first nor the last letter of the word, it is pronounced “**и**”.

Examples :

**Адрес** (adris) – address

**Метро** (mitro) – metro /underground / subway