

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a VII-a**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 2 ore.

**SUBIECTUL I – USE OF ENGLISH (25 points)**

**I.1. Read the following text and fill in the blanks with the correct verb forms. 10 points**

Sarah, Tom and Emily were on a journey along the scenic trails of the Scottish West Highland Way. As they (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (hike) into the sunset, a sudden gust of wind (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (sweep) across the path. Sarah shivered: "It (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (get) cold. Maybe we should stop for the night."

Emily, gazing at the towering peaks ahead, sighed: "I hoped we (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (reach) the summit before sunset." Tom reassured her: "If we (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (keep up) this pace, we will definitely make it." So they continued their ascent.

When Sarah stumbled on a loose rock, Tom quickly grabbed her hand to steady her, saying: "(6) \_\_\_\_\_ (I/not/tell) you repeatedly to pay more attention to the trail? Be careful, or you (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (hurt) yourself!"

After a while, they reached a fork in the path. Emily suggested (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (take) the left trail but admitted to having no clue, only a hunch. Tom insisted they should follow the trail markers, which pointed to the right. Sarah, who was watching them calmly, intervened: "You (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (argue) about the trail map for the past half hour but still (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (reach) a conclusion."

**I.2. Read the text below and look carefully at each line. If the line is correct, write a tick (✓). If it has a word that should not be there, write the word. 10 points**

00. Last Saturday it was my sister's birthday. She went to the market early to do the shopping .....✓.....  
0. for the party. "Would you be so kind as that to help me carry these heavy bags?" she asked ....that....  
1. when she returned. I gladly helped her, knowing how much she has had on her plate on that .....  
2. day. The cosy restaurant where we ate at last month had closed down so we decided to have .....  
3. the party at home. As we were unpacking the groceries, she made me promise that I would .....  
4. make her birthday cake. "I don't mind to being asked to lend a hand," I joked, knowing how .....  
5. much she would loved my baking. Later, when the guests started arriving, I noticed there were .....  
6. hardly any people in the room. "She may have given them the wrong address," I worried, .....  
7. hoping everyone would find their own way. Soon the party was in full swing. However, one .....  
8. guest seemed to dominate the conversation. She went on to talking about her holiday plans .....  
9. until everyone around her was bored out of their mind. I chuckled inwardly, grateful for her .....  
10. enthusiasm but hoping for a change of topic. Overall, my sister's birthday party turned it out .....  
to be a memorable and joyous occasion.

**I.3. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in capital letters. 5 points**

1. She danced \_\_\_\_\_ around the stage, captivating her audience with her movements. **GRACE**
2. Taking \_\_\_\_\_ for you actions is the first sign of maturity. **RESPONSIBLE**
3. Never \_\_\_\_\_ the impact your smile can have on people's lives. **ESTIMATE**
4. Unfortunately, he was \_\_\_\_\_ because he tried to cheat in the exam. **QUALIFY**
5. Many people still have their doubts about the \_\_\_\_\_ of extraterrestrial life. **EXIST**

**SUBIECTUL al II-lea – READING COMPREHENSION (25 points)**

**Read the text below and complete the tasks that follow.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Classic fairy tales have entertained generations of children while showcasing the universal theme of the victory of good over evil. "Cinderella," where a kind-hearted girl triumphs over adversity with the help of a fairy godmother, offers insights into the cultural values of perseverance and kindness. Similarly, "Little Red Riding Hood" has variants across different cultures, warning against the dangers of trusting strangers.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Through magical settings, fantastic characters and enchanting plots, these stories transport children to imaginative worlds where anything is possible. "Alice in Wonderland" depicts a surreal realm where logic is suspended. In Neverland, Peter Pan leads the Darling children on adventures filled with pirates, mermaids and fairies, while Tinker Bell, a playful fairy who communicates through tinkling bells, inspires children to create their own magical companions and invent unique forms of communication. As Dorothy of "The Wizard of Oz" encounters talking animals, magical objects and fantastic landscapes, readers are inspired to picture their own extraordinary journeys and invent new worlds.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Many classic fairy tales teach valuable moral lessons and important life skills. For example, "The Ugly Duckling" promotes acceptance and self-confidence. In "The Three Little Pigs," children learn the importance of hard work as the diligent pigs outsmart the cunning wolf. Likewise, "The Little Mermaid" teaches the importance of selflessness through the sacrifices made by the mermaid protagonist. Additionally, "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" warns against dishonesty and the consequences of false alarms, offering children practical wisdom in order for them to make their own ethical choices.

4. \_\_\_\_\_

On the other hand, the black-and-white portrayal of good versus evil may lead to the oversimplification of moral issues. As a result, fairy tales usually fail to teach children about the complexities of human nature. In "Cinderella," for example, the stepmother and stepsisters are described as purely wicked characters without any character development or ability to improve. Similarly, in "Jack and the Beanstalk," Jack's theft of the giant's treasure is portrayed as heroic rather than morally questionable, thus sending mixed messages to young readers.

5. \_\_\_\_\_

What is more, some classic fairy tales perpetuate stereotypes while others contain elements of violence, cruelty, punishment and dangerous situations. Thus, princesses are often described as in need of rescue by a prince, which contradicts the modern values of gender equality. In "Hansel and Gretel," the siblings' encounter with the witch in her gingerbread house and their plan to outsmart her involve dark scenarios, featuring themes of abandonment and violence. Similarly, in "Little Red Riding Hood," the protagonist encounters a deceitful wolf who threatens her and her grandmother, while "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" falls prey to the same creature. While these themes may serve as cautionary tales, they may be upsetting or inappropriate for young children.

**II.1 Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-G) for each part (1-5). There are two extra headings which you do not need to use.** **10 points**

- A. *Reaching beyond the boundaries of reality*
- B. *Learning life lessons the hard way – from experience*
- C. *The reverse of the medal*
- D. *A window into cultural traditions*
- E. *Real life is shades of grey*
- F. *Learning life lessons the easy way – from tales*
- G. *All's well that ends well*

**II.2 For questions 1-5, choose the answer A, B, C, or D which you think fits best according to the text.** **15 points**

1. What role does the fairy godmother play in "Cinderella"?

- A. a wise mentor
- B. a guardian angel
- C. a magical benefactor
- D. a playful fairy

2. What lesson can be learnt from "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"?

- A. the value of patience
- B. the consequences of lying
- C. the importance of bravery
- D. the power of friendship

3. In which fairy tale are characters depicted without significant character development or ability to improve?

- A. Cinderella
- B. The Ugly Duckling
- C. The Wizard of Oz
- D. The Little Mermaid

4. What do "The Three Little Pigs", "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" and "Little Red Riding Hood" have in common?

- A. They are all-animal stories.
- B. The protagonists are little children.
- C. They are morally questionable.
- D. They have the same antagonist.

5. Which of the following is an example of a cautionary tale?

- A. The wolf eats Little Red Riding Hood and her grandma because Red stops to talk to strangers on her way.
- B. The Ugly Duckling becomes a beautiful swan and is accepted by the swan community.
- C. Dorothy of "The Wizard of Oz" encounters talking animals, magical objects and fantastic landscapes.
- D. Jack steals the giant's treasure and returns safely home.

**SUBIECTUL al III-lea – WRITING (50 points)**

**Write a narrative essay beginning like this:**

*In the cosy town of Green Grove, where the sun always shone and the birds always sang, Alex stumbled upon a mysterious note tucked under a forgotten bench in the park: "Adventure awaits."*

**Write your story in 120-150 words and give it an appropriate title. Pay attention to the following:**

- you don't need to write long descriptions;
- use dialogues only if they are relevant to your characters or events;
- you should use this plan:

1. **Introduction** (paragraph 1 – set the scene)
2. **Main Body** (paragraph(s) 2/3 – develop the story)
3. **Conclusion** (paragraph 4 – end the story).

Do not count the words given.

**Etape județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a VIII-a**

- **Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.**
- **Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.**
- **Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 2 ore.**

**SUBIECTUL I – USE OF ENGLISH (25 points)**

**I.1. Read the following text and fill in the blanks with the correct verb forms.**

**10 points**

Lena (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (**always, love**) cooking. She (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (**try**) many different recipes over the years, always experimenting with new ingredients and techniques. Recently, she (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (**spend**) hours in the kitchen, kneading dough and shaping noodles. She knows that as long as she (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (**keep**) practising, she will continue to improve her culinary skills.

Last weekend, Lena had planned to surprise her roommate with a homemade lasagna. She (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (**already, buy**) the ingredients but, when she arrived home from work on Friday, she realized that she (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (**forget**) to buy the main ingredient: lasagna noodles. Feeling still insecure about her pasta-making skills, Lena decided to make a different dish instead.

Later that evening, after dinner, Lena's favorite cooking show was on TV. The host was demonstrating how to make homemade pasta. She realized that she (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (**use**) the wrong technique all along. If only she (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (**watch**) the show earlier, she could have avoided all those mistakes. She also remembers that some time ago Lena's friend asked her if she (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (**like**) to join a cooking class together. Lena declined the invitation at the time, but now she is regretting her decision. She wishes she (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (**say**) yes. So the next time her roommate suggests that they take cooking lessons together, Lena will sign up unconditionally!

**I.2. Read the text below and look carefully at each line. If the line is correct, write a tick (✓). If it has a word that should not be there, write the word.**

**10 points**

00. Emma often goes to the park on Saturdays, enjoying the fresh air and peaceful atmosphere. ....✓.....
0. But last Saturday was different because she has had plans to attend a party in the evening. ...has.....
1. While Emma was getting ready, her friend Tom called. "How about we calling Mark to find .....  
2. out if he has been invited too?" he suggested. Emma remembered Mark had been struggling .....  
3. financially lately. "He has had got to borrow money twice already this month," she sighed. ....  
4. There was no way he could be have persuaded to come so she dropped the idea. During the .....  
5. party, Emma noticed something peculiar. "This dress is too short to wear it," she overheard .....  
6. someone say. Looking around, she saw that some guests seemed uncomfortable with the .....  
7. crowded space. "There are by far too many people," she thought, feeling slightly overwhelmed. ....  
8. As the night went on, Emma learned that someone had been given away the surprise party .....  
9. planned for their friend Alex. Despite of the mishaps and the crowded room, Emma enjoyed .....  
10. herself. After all, she believed that everyone was too old enough to make their own decisions, .....  
including how to have fun at a party.

**I.3. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in capital letters.**

**5 points**

1. If you act \_\_\_\_\_, do not expect empathy. **RESPECT**
2. The ending of the movie was so \_\_\_\_\_ that it took everybody by surprise. **PREDICT**
3. The sales have decreased \_\_\_\_\_ since the financial crisis. **NOTICE**
4. Mihai Eminescu spent his \_\_\_\_\_ in Botosani and Ipotesti. **BOY**
5. Unfortunately, he \_\_\_\_\_ his capabilities and failed to keep his promises. **ESTIMATE**

**SUBIECTUL al II-lea – READING COMPREHENSION (25 points)**

**Read the text below and complete the tasks that follow.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Simon's Cat is a charming animated series loved by many around the world. The idea for Simon's Cat came to its creator, Simon Tofield, back in 2008 when he made a short animated film inspired by his own experiences with his cat, Hugh, who often displayed amusing behaviors. The first Simon's Cat film, "Cat Man Do," was uploaded to YouTube and it quickly gained popularity, capturing the hearts of viewers with its simple yet hilarious portrayal of cat antics. The success of the first film encouraged Simon to create more episodes alongside a small team led by Tofield himself. He sketches the characters and storyboards the animations, while his team assists with coloring, animating and editing the final videos.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

One of the most popular Simon's Cat stories is "The Gnome". The story begins with Simon's Cat lounging lazily in the sun, perhaps plotting his next scheme. However, his attention is soon captured by an intriguing figure standing amidst the foliage – a decorative terracotta garden gnome. With typical feline curiosity, Simon's Cat approaches the gnome cautiously, eyeing it with suspicion and intrigue. As he paws at the gnome and tries to topple it over, the gnome remains understandably indifferent to the cat's antics. This only serves to further arouse Simon's Cat's interest, as he becomes determined to solve the mystery of the enigmatic gnome. Despite his best efforts, though, Simon's Cat ultimately finds himself outsmarted by the gnome, to the amusement of viewers.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Simon's Cat has garnered immense popularity across the internet, with millions of views on YouTube and a strong presence on social media platforms, where comments range from "This is so relatable! My cat does the same thing!" to "I can't stop watching these adorable animations!" Many viewers enjoy the simplicity of the animations and the attention to detail in the character design, as well as the clever storytelling. Simon's Cat has become an iconic figure in the world of animation and has generated merchandise, books and even a mobile game, further solidifying its place in popular culture.

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Additionally, viewers enjoy interacting with fellow fans and sharing their interpretations of the episodes. Social media provides a platform for discussions about favorite episodes, character traits, and even speculation about future storylines. The sense of community fostered by Simon's Cat extends beyond the animations themselves, creating a bond among fans who share a love for cats and humor.

5. \_\_\_\_\_

However, as is the case with any popular series, there are occasional negative reviews or criticisms from viewers. Thus, some viewers complain about similar themes and gags appearing in multiple episodes and express a desire for more variety. Other viewers find the pacing of some episodes to be too slow and feel that some scenes could be condensed. Occasionally, viewers may raise concerns about certain stereotypes or clichés in the series, such as the "crazy cat lady" stereotype or the portrayal of cats as solely mischievous or selfish. These viewers advocate for more diverse and nuanced representations of cat behavior and ownership. Finally, some viewers may feel that the characters lack depth or progression beyond their initial traits and express a desire for more character development.

**II.1 Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-G) for each part (1-5). There are two extra headings which you do not need to use. 10 points**

- A. *Making a new friend*
- B. *An all-around success*
- C. *Not every "sitting duck" is an easy target*
- D. *Minor complaints*
- E. *An added bonus*
- F. *An overnight success*
- G. *Reasons for concern*

**II.2 For questions 1-5, choose the answer A, B, C, or D which you think fits best according to the text. 15 points**

1. The animated series Simon's Cat started
  - A. back in 2008 as a tribute to Hugh, Simon Tofield's late pet cat
  - B. in an attempt to make an ordinary cat famous
  - C. when a small team of animators decided to sketch the story of a famous cat character
  - D. on Youtube, where it became an almost instant hit.
2. According to paragraph 2,
  - A. Simon's cat was plotting to teach the gnome a lesson while he was lying lazily in the sun.
  - B. the gnome proves an unworthy opponent for Simon's cat.
  - C. to the cat's irritation, the gnome remains suspiciously silent and unmoving.
  - D. Simon's cat is an intriguing feline, whose mysteries remain unsolved.
3. As a result of the immense popularity of the animated series,
  - A. books and other merchandise have become best-sellers in every community.
  - B. Simon's cat has become an iconic figure in the gaming community.
  - C. fans have contributed with ideas for future episodes.
  - D. animated discussions have started among cat lovers with a sense of humour.
4. Some viewers of Simon's Cat
  - A. feel that the series can become repetitive over time.
  - B. complain about the condensed episodes.
  - C. feel that the character progression is beyond their expectations.
  - D. advocate for the rights of cats and their owners.
5. Overall, what makes this animated series such a huge success is
  - A. its humour, simplicity and attention to detail.
  - B. the presence of gnomes and other supporting characters.
  - C. the fact that it is so relatable since all pet cats behave exactly the same.
  - D. the fact that it promotes stereotypes.

**SUBIECTUL al III-lea – WRITING (50 points)**

**Write a narrative essay ending like this:**

*With a sudden twist that left everyone breathless, the true identity of the thieving rascal was finally revealed, bringing closure to the long quest for truth.*

**Write your story in 150-180 words and give it an appropriate title. Pay attention to the following:**

- you don't need to write long descriptions;
- use dialogues only if they are relevant to your characters or events;
- you should use this plan:

1. **Introduction** (paragraph 1 – set the scene)
2. **Main Body** (paragraph(s) 2/3 – develop the story)
3. **Conclusion** (paragraph 4 – end the story).

Do not count the words given.



**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a IX-a - SECȚIUNEA A**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBJECT A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the following text and put the verbs in brackets in the correct form. 10 points**

When Sarah woke up last Saturday, it (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (**pour**) with rain. She felt really disappointed as she (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (**already, plan**) to go for a hike in the nearby mountains. She (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (**look forward to**) it for weeks and (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (**check**) the weather forecast obsessively. Unwilling to risk getting soaked, she decided to stay home and read a book instead.

Later that day, Sarah's friend called to invite her to a movie the next day. After the call, Sarah's mom asked: " (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (**you, make**) any plans for the weekend?" "I (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (**just, agree**) to go to a movie with Meg tomorrow." Her mom then asked if Sarah could babysit her younger brother that evening, to which she agreed.

While they (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (**play**) together, Sarah's brother asked: "What will you do if it (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (**rain**) again next weekend?" Sarah replied that she (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (**probably, stay**) indoors. She kept her fingers crossed for good weather, though, so she could finally go hiking. In the end, Sarah knew that, regardless of the weather, she (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (**make**) the most of her next weekend.

**II. Use the word given in capitals to form a word that fits in each sentence. 10 points**

1. His wife gave him a lot of \_\_\_\_\_. **ENCOURAGE**
2. The total in this chart is certainly \_\_\_\_\_ as the amount is much too high. **CALCULATE**
3. These fish typically live at \_\_\_\_\_ of 200 metres or more. **DEEP**
4. It was very difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ her resistance to the new technology. **COME**
5. She has always been \_\_\_\_\_ generous to her classmates. **BELIEVE**
6. During the conference, coffee and \_\_\_\_\_ will be available in the lobby. **REFRESH**
7. What was the \_\_\_\_\_ cause for the closure of the company? **LIE**
8. In your paper, you have made several \_\_\_\_\_ mistakes. **CARE**
9. Although the restaurant is very good, some reviewers consider it \_\_\_\_\_. **RATE**
10. Sadly, many employees feel \_\_\_\_\_ for the work they do. **PAY**

**III. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given. 10 points**

1. Jeff and Clare were both unable to do the task. **NOR**  
Neither Jeff \_\_\_\_\_ do the task.
2. Daisy felt lonely because she didn't have many friends in the new town. **FEW**  
Daisy felt miserable \_\_\_\_\_ in the new town.
3. I couldn't borrow your car next week, could I? **ME**  
You couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ next week, could you?
4. Sybil didn't think the course would be so expensive. **THAN**  
The course was \_\_\_\_\_ expected.
5. Jason felt so tired that he couldn't drive any further. **WAS**  
Jason \_\_\_\_\_ any further.

**IV. Translate the following text into English. 10 points**

Statul medieval de pe insula Rhodos este alcătuit dintr-o rețea de străzi pietruite. Acropola Lindos se află deasupra orașului și oferă vederi spectaculoase ale porturilor și ale litoralului. Plaja Lindos și plaja Saint Paul sunt la o mică distanță de centrul orașului. Cu siguranță sunt multe alte locuri absolut deosebite de vizitat, oamenii sunt calzi și primitivi, iar mâncarea este nemaipomenit de gustoasă! În funcție de cât de mult îți dorești să stai, ai mai multe opțiuni, poți ajunge fie cu avionul, fie cu mașina sau chiar poți folosi taxiul. Odată ajuns aici, nu poți să ratezi șansa de a asculta legenda uneia dintre cele Șapte Minuni ale Lumii: Colosul din Rodos.

*Adaptat din Top 8 atracții în Grecia (Dilema Veche)*

## SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)

I. Five sentences have been removed from the following text. Choose from the sentences A-F the one which fits each gap 1 – 5. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use. Write your answers on your answer sheet. **10 points**

### The Treasure Ship

The coast of the Namib Desert in South West Africa is the location of Namibia's diamond industry. **1** [...] Recently, a team of divers working for a diamond company were searching for diamonds under the sea when they made an exciting discovery.

The divers had just started digging when they uncovered a few gold coins and also some pieces of metal and wood. Although they didn't know what the objects were, they realised they had to stop work straight away and inform a historical expert called Derek Ambrose, who worked for the same company.

Ambrose is based in the city of Cape Town in South Africa, and he mainly looks at anything of historical importance found in the Namibian desert, which is where the company usually digs for diamonds. **2** [...] As soon as he received the photographs of what they had found, he decided to visit the site and invited his former teacher, Bruce Warner, from the University of Cape Town, to help him do research into the discovery.

They quickly realised that the divers had discovered a sunken ship. Based on what the ship was carrying, they believe that the ship sank in the late 1400s or early 1500s. Ambrose and Warner are now trying to fit the pieces of information they have into a story. **3** [...] Soon they will leave for Europe and go to Portugal or Spain to search for records of a ship that went missing with similar items on board.

The gold and valuable metals on board are proving very interesting. Ambrose believes the ship was on government business - probably looking for enough metal to make big guns. **4** [...] Shouldn't he have used them to buy the metal? 'Perhaps a group of pirates stole the ship before it sank,' Ambrose said. 'I intend to find out what really happened.'

What sank the ship may remain a mystery. But Ambrose has several ideas: this coast was well known for storms and thick fogs. **5** [...] He has found pieces of wood from the ship with large holes and repairs done by sailors, so the ship was clearly old, even then.

- A. They divide their time between looking at the remains of the ship under the sea off the West African coast and doing research in museums and libraries in Cape Town.
- B. Even today sailors keep away from it, despite having more accurate maps and better equipment.
- C. These valuable stones can be found both in the desert and in the seabed.
- D. The maritime mysteries veiled by the storms and fogs of that notorious coast seemed to guard their secrets fiercely, refusing to yield to the passage of centuries.
- E. However, Ambrose already knew about the digging that the divers were doing under the sea.
- F. On the other hand, Ambrose wonders why the captain still had so many coins on board.

II. You have seen the following announcement on a website and decided to write a letter.

***Research assistants needed!***

We are looking for enthusiastic teenagers who are keen on starting an adventure in Namibia, Africa. Join now the professional researchers as research assistants in exploring a ship that sank hundreds of years ago! The purpose of this expedition is to identify clues leading to the reason for which the ship sank.

Starting from the text above, write your letter to the coordinator of the international research team applying for the position of research assistant advertised on the website. (180-200 words) **50 points**

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a IX-a - SECȚIUNEA B**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the text below and do the tasks that follow. (10 points)**

***How Agatha Christie created the modern murder mystery***

They are assembled – maybe eight or nine people – in a small place: a snowbound train, a girls' school, an English country house. Then – oh no! A body drops. Who did this? And why, and how? Among those gathered, there is a detective saying: 'No one should leave, please!' He then begins questioning the people concerned, one by one. In the end, he collects all the interested parties and delivers the "revelation": he names the murderer and the motive and the method. Almost never does the **culprit** protest. Occasionally, he goes off and commits suicide and exits quietly, under police escort. Anyone who has ever seen a Charlie Chan movie, or played Clue, or, indeed, read a detective story of the past half century will recognize this scenario, created by Agatha Christie, the so-called Queen of Crime, in the 1920s.

The murder that sets the plot in motion is rarely shocking. For one thing, we almost never see it happen. Furthermore, the victim is ordinarily someone with whom we do not **sympathize**, even when we feel we should. Much more often, however, the victim is a rich, nasty old person who enjoys **taunting** his prospective heirs with the accusation that they wish him dead, so that they can collect their inheritances. He's usually right. Rather boringly, the most common motive for homicide in Christie is money.

**A. Choose the right synonym for the words given below, according to their meaning in the text.**

**3 points**

- |                       |                 |                 |              |               |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>culprit:</b>    | a) offender;    | b) shoplifter;  | c) smuggler; | d) accomplice |
| 2. <b>sympathize:</b> | a) soothe;      | b) empathize;   | c) sustain;  | d) care       |
| 3. <b>taunting:</b>   | a) threatening; | b) encouraging; | c) joking;   | d) mocking    |

**B. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. Use the word given WITHOUT changing it.**

**3 points**

1. In the end, he collects all the interested parties and delivers the "revelation". **AFTER**  
Only ..... the "revelation".

2. The victim taunts his prospective heirs with the accusation that they wish him dead, so that they can collect their inheritances. **VIEW**

The victim taunts his prospective heirs with the accusation that they wish him dead ..... their inheritances.

3. Rather boringly, the most common motive for homicide in Christie is money. **CONSIDERED**  
Rather boringly, money ..... homicide in Christie.

**C. Four words have been removed from the summary of the text above. Choose the right words to fill-in the summary. There are four extra words which you do not need to use. 4 points**

demand, classy, testimony, opting, provoke, classic, staple, begging

In a (1) ..... mystery setting – a train, a school, or a country house – a group of individuals gathers, only for a murder to occur. A detective takes charge, prohibiting anyone from leaving as he meticulously interrogates each suspect. Eventually, he reveals the murderer, motive, and method. The culprit typically accepts their fate, sometimes (2) ..... for suicide. This timeless scenario, crafted by Agatha Christie, epitomizes the murder mystery genre. The victims, often unpleasant and wealthy, (3) ..... little sympathy, with financial gain serving as the primary motive. Christie's formula, established in the 1920s, remains a (4) ..... of detective fiction, recognizable to fans of Charlie Chan, Clue, and detective stories.

**II. Use the word given in brackets to form a word that best fits in each sentence. 10 points**

I've always been fascinated with ancient (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (CIVILIZE), so when I got the chance to visit Egypt, I was (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (INCREDIBLE) excited. The pyramids and the Sphinx were even more impressive than I'd imagined. However, what (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (STRIKE) me the most was the (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (INTRICATE) of the hieroglyphics. It was amazing to see these symbols that had been carved thousands of years ago still so well-preserved. During the tour, our (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (KNOWLEDGE) guide regaled us with tales of pharaohs, gods and everyday life in ancient times. Their explanations brought to life the (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (GRAND) and mystique of Egypt's past, making the experience all the more enriching. As we explored the temples and tombs, I couldn't help but marvel at the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (CRAFT) and ingenuity of the ancient Egyptians, who left behind a legacy that continues to captivate the world. Overall, my visit to Egypt was a truly (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (FORGET) experience, one that (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (DEEP) my appreciation for history and the remarkable (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (ACHIEVE) of humanity across the ages.

**III. For questions 1-10, read the text below and look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct and some have a word that should not be there. On your answer sheet, if a line is correct, put a tick (✓) by the number on your answer sheet. If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word down next to the number on your answer sheet. 10 points**

0. *.both.* Reading books is a profound activity that enriches both the mind and
00. ....✓.. expands horizons. Beyond mere entertainment, it fosters critical
1. .... thinking and empathy. Engaging with diverse characters and any narratives
2. .... enhances understanding of the human experience. Moreover, books serve
3. .... as a gateway to different cultures, not allowing readers to explore worlds
4. .... beyond their own. Through our reading, one can acquire new knowledge and
5. .... perspectives, continuously evolving intellectually. It also improves language
6. .... skills and vocabulary, making it communication more effective. Whether
7. .... or delving into fiction or non-fiction, each book offers a unique journey of
8. .... discovery and self-reflection. Thus, by cultivating a habit of reading not only
9. .... entertains but also enlightens, empowering individuals to ever navigate
10. .... life with wisdom and insight.

**IV. Translate the following text into English. 10 points**

Ștefana a traversat șoseaua și-a continuat drumul pe trotuarul celălalt, către Doamna Ghica. Mergeam după ea cu mâinile-n buzunarele paltonului, fără să mă feresc măcar, căci ea nu se uitase niciodată în urmă și simțeam că nici n-avea s-o facă. Nu trecuse un an, ci o viață de când, pe aceeași șosea [...] merseserăm împreună pe mijlocul drumului și mai înzăpezit ca acum, și tramvaiul oprise între stații ca să ne ia, și lumea dinăuntru ne aplaudase cu palmele înghețate, râzând și bucurându-se, în ciuda nefericirii generale.

(Mircea Cărtărescu, *Solenoid*)

## B. Integrated Skills (60 points)

1. Five sentences have been removed from the following interview. Choose from the sentences A-F the one which fits each gap 1-5. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

10 points

Playing has been shown to improve the mental health of adults, but most people stop in childhood. How can we rediscover the benefits of playfulness after the toys have been put away?

After Federica Pallavicini's father was treated for brain cancer, she wanted to help him with his recovery from the surgery. Inspiration came from an unusual source – video games. Pallavicini has a personal connection with gaming. As a psychologist who studies the applications of virtual reality and video games for mental health and psychological wellbeing at the University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy, she noticed the improvement on her own mental health and lower stress levels after she played Call of Duty (CoD).

1) ..... Pallavicini, however, says playing became a form of therapy that was highly beneficial in her day-to-day life, and later inspired her career in research. With this in mind, she wondered if play could help her father, too. Pallavicini had good reason to believe it could. Adults who demonstrate more playful personality traits are more motivated, creative and spontaneous.

2) ..... While less playful people struggle in their leisure time to relax and often feel bored when their minds are not preoccupied, those that are more playfully inclined are aware of new opportunities and open to trying a wider variety of activities.

René Proyer, professor of psychology at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany, says that playful adults are those able to frame everyday situations in such a way that they become entertaining and intellectually stimulating. Whether it's an obsession with Candy Crush on the morning commute, playing video games with friends or even sharing a private joke with your partner or colleague, most people are playful, and yet the benefits might go unnoticed or nurtured.

The benefits of playfulness can be embraced again in adulthood, says Proyer, adding that in the same way that you might take part in meditation or exercise, playfulness should be viewed as a skill that can be developed, harnessed and used for mindfulness. A good place to start is by simply observing. Proyer suggests listing three moments at the end of every day where something spontaneous happened. It could be a funny interaction with a stranger while getting your coffee or a joke shared with your colleague. 3) .....

But Proyer urges people not to be afraid to find fun in something not normally associated with adults. Socially acceptable adult games, like board games for instance, are often accompanied by a list of rules and require a specific environment to be played. 4) ..... Sometimes activities like this also involve competition and the related frustration with winning and losing. Essentially, the more unexpected the interaction or activity, the better for experiencing and enhancing your playfulness, he says.

Your enjoyment of play can depend on both your personality and your willingness to be open to new forms of conversation and experiences. 5) ..... With the evidence so strongly pointing towards a wide array of social benefits, it can't hurt to look a little harder for those small moments that make a much bigger difference than you might think to both yourself and the people you interact with.

Video games are one of the few forms of adult play therapy that carry less social stigma, says Pallavicini. While some adults might feel the need to hide their playfulness, the market for video games and mobile gaming among adults has boomed in recent years. Playing to find the flow state can provide an enjoyable challenge and distraction from mental health issues, she says, meaning the player can work on their wellbeing without feeling pressured to improve. So with all the benefits that come along with it, it's not a stretch to say that making an effort to be a little more playful should be a part of your day. Do you ever think wistfully about your childhood toys and envy that lost feeling of playfulness? Well maybe that feeling never really left you at all – it can be just a little harder to find.

(adapted from *BBC-why-adults-should-embrace-their-playfulness*)

**A.** But these moments make up the most memorable parts of the everyday and the funniest memories of friends and family.

**B.** This does less to encourage creativity and spontaneous playful behaviour despite the elements of luck and strategy, says Proyer.

**C.** Proyer suggests that if you're most playful at home with your partner or family, for example, try using similar conversational techniques with colleagues or more distant friends and observe the results.

**D.** This will help you to begin to feel confident in being playful and make you more aware of joy in your everyday life.

**E.** The first-person shooting game put players into a simulated war, and so is more commonly associated with violence and stress than as a way of improving mental health.

**F.** There have even been links between people with more playful characteristics having lower blood pressure.

**2. Starting from the text above, answer the following announcement on a website. 50 points**

**Reviews wanted- A video game you can learn from**

**Have you recently played an instructive computer game? Write a review of the game, including:**

- **a brief description of the game**
- **what you learned while playing it**
- **whether you would recommend it to people your age and why**

**We'll post the best reviews on the website next month.**

**Write your review in 220-250 words.**

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a X-a - SECȚIUNEA A**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the following text and fill in the blanks with ONE word only.**

**10 points**

Today's grandparents are joining their grandchildren (1) \_\_\_\_\_ social media, but the different generations' online habits couldn't (2) \_\_\_\_\_ more different. In the UK the over-55s are joining Facebook in increasing numbers, meaning that they will soon be the site's second biggest user group, (3) \_\_\_\_\_ 3.5 million users aged 55–64 and 2.9 million over-65s.

Sheila, aged 59, says, 'I joined to see what my grandchildren are doing, as my daughter posts videos and photos of them. It's a better way to see what they're doing than waiting for letters and photos in the post. That's how we did it (4) \_\_\_\_\_ I was a child, but I think I'm lucky I get to see so (5) \_\_\_\_\_ more of their lives than my grandparents did.'

Ironically, Sheila's grandchildren are (6) \_\_\_\_\_ likely to use Facebook themselves. Children under 17 in the UK are leaving the site – only 2.2 million users are under 17 – but they're not going far from their smartphones. Chloe, aged 15, even sleeps with her phone. 'It's my alarm clock so I have to,' she says. 'I look at it (7) \_\_\_\_\_ I go to sleep and as soon as I wake up.'

Unlike her grandmother's generation, Chloe's age group is spending so much time on their phones at home that they are missing (8) \_\_\_\_\_ on spending time with their friends in real life. Sheila, on the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ hand has made contact with old friends from school she hasn't heard (10) \_\_\_\_\_ in forty years.

**II. Use the word given in brackets to form a word that fits in each sentence.**

**10 points**

1. It may seem ...**(BELIEVE)** but the days of the printing press are coming to an end.
2. In spite of the ... **(ECONOMY)** crisis, unemployment does not seem to have increased.
3. This car has been ... **(CREDIBLE)** successful in the past couple of years.
4. The police are constantly trying to bring more criminals to ... **(JUST)**.
5. Gabriela took the ... **(INITIATE)** and had a sincere conversation with her family.
6. In the summer, the seas around the island are ... **(VIGOROUS)**.
7. One of the skills required by this position is ...**(LEAD)**.
8. Should the media be allowed to print ... **(ACCURATE)** and unresearched stories?
9. Some factory workers enjoy their job because it provides a ... **(RELY)** income.
10. In spite of his parents' ... **(APPROVE)**, Tom decided to go to the party.



**III. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given** **10 points**

1. Pauline hadn't expected to see so many people at the concert. **surprise**  
It came ... .. to see so many people at the concert.
2. The teacher will have to postpone the test if so many students are absent. **off**  
The test will..... if so many students are absent.
3. My grandmother was making my favourite apple pie when I got home yesterday. **made**  
My favourite apple pie ..... my grandmother when I got home yesterday.
4. He was sent for trial, accused of armed robbery. **sent**  
If he had not committed armed robbery, he ... .. for trial.
5. It is certain that they will have a better plan next time. **bound**  
They ..... a better plan next time.

**IV. Translate the following text into English.** **10 points**

În aceeași după-amiază am luat trenul și am plecat. Era în decembrie '48. După debut petrecusem vara la Bălcești, să scriu un roman. Îl scrisesem, era un eșec; la întoarcere, în septembrie, nu-mi mai plăcuse deloc. Acum părăsisem Bucureștiul, și ce era și mai grav, și serviciul, și mă retrăsesem în munți, s-o iau de la cap... Eșecul din vară nu mă neliniștea, fiindcă trăiam încă sub euforia debutului în proză, care oricum, în ciuda injuriilor, fusese un succes(...). Aveam douăzeci și șase de ani, trecusem printr-un război în care nu murisem, debutasem în literatură chiar în toiul acestui război, aveam iluziile întregi...

(adaptat după *Viața ca o pradă*, Marin Preda)

**SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)**

**I. You are going to read an article in which stage manager Adam James talks about his work in technical theatre. Five sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A-F the one which fits each gap (1-5). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.** **10 points**

Technical Theatre

When we go to the theatre, we go to see the actors and their performance; the stage is the central focus point; it is where everything happens, or at least everything that we, the audience, are supposed to see. But there is so much more to putting on a performance than just the acting cast. There is a whole team of people who we never see but without whom no production would be possible. We spoke to Adam James who has worked in technical theatre since the age of 14 to find out what goes on behind the scenes and how he got involved.

"I was 12 years old when I first saw a show in my local leisure centre. I was fascinated by the fact that everything came in about ten lorries and they basically built a theatre from scratch. (1) ... . I got to know some of the people working on the stage management team and they let me shadow them while they worked. I met the stage manager and after watching the team work and talking to him I decided that was what I wanted to do as a job. I didn't know anything about work in the theatre industry so I started studying and learning about the job. (2) ... . However, what I really wanted was to get involved and start working as part of a stage management team. Once I was 14 I managed to get some work experience and I started to miss school sometimes and go to work at the theatre instead.

I left school when I was 16 and because I had quite a lot of experience, I was able to get a job as an assistant stage manager in a theatre in London. I worked there for about a year and then did some freelance work in Cornwall and went on tours around the country. (3) ... Working on tour was intense but really good fun. A typical Monday would see us arrive at about 8 o'clock in the morning and open up the lorries. We would have some coffee and then, when everyone had arrived, we would spend the day building the show. In the afternoon the cast would arrive and I would show them around so they knew where they could make quick costume changes and things like that. (4)... Once the show had started, it was just a case of watching and supervising and letting the show happen around us. As stage manager I was always the first and the last person on stage. Working on tour can be stressful as you have to keep track of where everyone is for health and safety reasons and monitor everything that goes on back stage and keep to time. Then, once the show is over, you have to check everything and make a note of everything that needs repairing or re-doing before the next performance.

After a couple of years touring I decided to return to London and go to college to study technical theatre. I studied for a year but I realised that it wasn't very useful to me. I had learnt a lot more from my years working. It was a course for people who didn't know anything about the theatre. (5) ... When finding work in technical theatre, firsthand experience is much more important than qualifications. Theatres are looking for people with proven ability and who know what they are doing, and what interests them the most on your CV is your last job. I did some more freelance work in London for a while and now I work for a production company".

- A. I felt like I was already established in the industry so I decided to leave college and got a job in a theatre.
- B. The more I found out about technical theatre, the more interested I became.
- C. While the cast were getting ready, we would get on with any necessary maintenance jobs.
- D. I was very curious as I watched the whole thing being put together and I found it hugely exciting.
- E. Working in a large theatre is much more difficult because there are so many more people to organise.
- F. The work was quite sporadic but the money was good; in one month I could earn enough to last me six months.

**II. Your school e-journal is developing a new column dedicated to drama. As member of the school drama club, you have been asked to write the review of the most recent play you have seen and you would like to recommend to your fellow students. Include details about the performance itself but also technical considerations about settings, sound and costumes.**

**Write your review in 200-220 words.**

**50 points**

**Etapă județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare -  
2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a X-a - SECȚIUNEA B**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the text below and do the tasks that follow. (10 points)**

Civic engagement involves working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. Civic engagement includes both paid and unpaid forms of political activism, environmentalism, and community and national service.

Youth civic engagement includes activities which enrich the lives of youths and are socially beneficial to the community. Volunteering is only one form of civic engagement included, as defined above, in the **construct** of civic action and civic commitment or duty, but research has also shown a connection between youth who volunteer and other forms of youth civic engagement. The **findings** suggest that, among youth, volunteering plays a valuable role in shaping how youth learn to interact with their community and develop the skills, values, and sense of empowerment necessary to become active citizens.

Another possible form of civic action and civic commitment and duty is service-learning. Unlike civic engagement, service-learning does not have to include a civic dimension and all forms of civic engagement are not service-learning. It is a broader concept that may **encompass**, but is not limited to, service-learning. Service-learning differs from community service or volunteerism in two distinct ways: the service activity is integrated with academic curriculum and content and students engage in reflection activities after their service experience and apply their learning in real-life activities.

**A. Choose the right synonym for the words given below, according to their meaning in the text. 3 points**

- |                     |              |                  |               |                |
|---------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>construct</b> | a) endeavour | b) framework     | c) backbone   | d) venture     |
| 2. <b>findings</b>  | a) results   | b) breakthroughs | c) detections | d) allegations |
| 3. <b>encompass</b> | a) encourage | b) embrace       | c) enthrall   | d) encounter   |

**B. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. Use the word given WITHOUT changing it. 3 points**

1. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. **DOES**

What ..... promote the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.

2. Research has also shown a connection between youth who volunteer and other forms of youth civic engagement. **BY**

A connection ..... researchers between youth who volunteer and other forms of youth civic engagement.

3. Volunteering plays a valuable role in shaping how youth learn to interact with their community and develop the skills, values, and sense of empowerment necessary to become active citizens. **ONLY**

Not ..... a valuable role in shaping how youth learn to interact with their community but it also develops the skills, values, and sense of empowerment necessary to become active citizens.

**C. Four words have been removed from the summary of the text above. Choose the right words to fill-in the summary. There are four extra words which you do not need to use. 4 points**

involves, cultivates, springing, shaping, focuses, relies, enhance, enlarge

Civic engagement involves actively participating in community affairs to (1) .... quality of life through various means, including political and non-political avenues. Youth civic engagement particularly (2) ..... on activities benefiting both youths and communities, with volunteering being a significant aspect. Research indicates volunteering (3) ..... skills, values, and empowerment crucial for active citizenship. Service-learning, integrating service with academics and fostering reflection, extends beyond volunteerism in (4) ..... civic commitment.

**II. Use the word given in brackets to form a word that best fits in each sentence. 10 points**

Plastics are polymers: long-chain molecules made of repeating links, or monomers. The chains are strong, light, and (1) ..... (**DURATION**), which makes them so useful — and so (2) ..... (**PROBLEM**) when they're disposed of (3) ..... (**CARE**). The polymer here is PET, a type of polyester, the stuff of bottles and clothes.

The (4) ..... (**GROW**) of plastic production has far outstripped the (5) ..... (**ABLE**) of waste management to keep up — that's why the oceans are under assault. "It's not (6) ..... (**SURPRISE**) that we broke the system," Jambeck says. "That kind of increase would break any system not prepared for it." In 2013 a group of (7) ..... (**SCIENCE**) issued a new (8) ..... (**ASSESS**) of throwaway living. Writing in *Nature* magazine, they declared that (9) ..... (**DISPOSE**) plastic should be classified, not as a housewife's friend, but as a (10) ..... (**HAZARD**) material.

**III. For questions 1-10, read the text below and look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct and some have a word that should not be there. On your answer sheet, if a line is correct, put a tick (✓) by the number on your answer sheet. If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word down next to the number on your answer sheet.**

**10 points**

- (0) like It feels like unfair to be asked to change your day-to-day life to solve what is,  
(00) ..✓... by all scientific accounts, a global environmental crisis, especially when  
(1) ..... fossil fuel emissions continue unabated and celebrities famously take in  
(2) ..... private planes to cross distances they could easily drive. I get by it—it's exhausting.  
(3) ..... I'm not here to tell you to give up the hot shower you earned at the end  
(4) ..... of a long day. And if everyone needs a plastic water bottle now and then!  
(5) ..... But if you're like me and the state of our planet sends you into a mental tailspin,  
(6) ..... I've found that mindfully tending to your little slice of Earth can help it keep that  
(7) ..... existential dread at bay. You, individually, can't to stop sea levels from rising,  
(8) ..... but you, individually, can provide a small backyard refuge for some endangered  
(9) ..... monarch butterflies by planting a few milkweed bulbs. How sweet is that?  
(10) ..... And science shows up these individual actions can even make a difference.

**IV. Translate the following text into English.**

**10 points**

Multă vreme, cartierul dintre Piața Victoriei și „Lupoaică” a fost un cartier decorativ și pașnic. Se născuse pe un teren - parcul Bonaparte - aflat la marginea orașului, așadar într-o zonă aerisită, nezgomotoasă, foarte atrăgătoare pentru burghezia prosperă care își dorea case pitorești și confortabile. După revoluție, vecinătatea cu clădirea Guvernului a transformat, brusc, zona într-o culisă tulburătoare a politicii stradale. Am ghinionul să locuiesc peste drum de un stabiliment, „Saga”, care la început avea aerul unui experiment decent. Lucrurile s-au degradat galopant, se organizează mari petreceri de gașcă, se programează nunți și se pune muzică. Tare. Asurzitor. Nerușinat. De vreun an, ascult seară de seară, laolaltă cu o sumedenie de vecini terorizați, aceleași casete cu Armstrong și Pavarotti (deveniți, firește, pe această cale, odioși).

(Andrei Pleșu, *Comedii la porțile Orientului*, adaptat)

**SUBIECTUL B –Integrated Skills (60 points)**

**I. Five paragraphs have been removed from the following interview. Choose from the paragraphs A-F the one which fits each gap 1-5. There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Put your answer down on your answer sheet. 10 points**

Do you see a bird right now? Can you hear one chirping? If so, you might be getting a mental health boost. A study recently published in the journal *Science* found that being in the presence of birds made people feel more positive.

**(1) ....**

Emerging from the app's data was a discernible trend—study participants who saw birds were more likely to report a better mood. Research is increasingly finding that getting outside is good for our brains, which is why scientists want to know more about what aspects of nature may be the most therapeutic.

**(2) ....**

Why study birds? Andrea Mechelli, a psychologist at King's College London and one of the paper's authors, found himself studying the natural world by accident. "I don't have a particular agenda focused on nature myself. I wasn't thinking we were going to demonstrate nature has a strong effect," says Mechelli.

**(3) .....**

"Our first finding was that nature has a very powerful effect," says Mechelli. He and his colleagues then wondered if some aspects of nature were more beneficial than others. In August, they published a study finding a positive effect from walking along canals or rivers. To study the effect of wildlife, they turned to birds for their ubiquity in rural and urban environments. **(4) .....**

The mental health benefit was true both for people who disclosed a depression diagnosis and those without any diagnosed mental health conditions. Nature, Mechelli notes, isn't a cure all. The presence of trees and birds, for example, didn't result in a better sense of wellbeing if participants also noted their neighborhood felt unsafe.

When analyzing the data, researchers also combined the app's options for positive and negative emotions into two broad categories, which only allows a glimpse into an individual's wellbeing. Yet, James and other scientists note the study provides an interesting insight into how specific parts of nature may influence wellbeing.

**(5) ....**

The second theory is called attention restoration theory. Similar to the first, it theorizes that the constant strain of daily life—stressful commutes and constant Zoom calls—requires intense focus. Nature allows us to disengage that focus and engage in a sort of open-eyed meditation as we watch a bird flying from branch to branch.

**A.** Scientists have two main theories for why nature may be a soothing balm for our overworked minds. The first is that because homo sapiens evolved in nature, urban environments create a constant background stress. “And we can recover from that stress in natural settings because that’s what we evolved for,” James says of the theory. “We as human beings like nature because that’s where we’re meant to be.”

**B.** Instead, he was searching for answers to why people who live in cities seem to be more prone to mental illness, particularly psychosis. In 2015, he created the smartphone app Urban Mind to search for patterns in users’ environments. How crowded was their city? Did they feel safe in their neighborhood? Could they see trees?

**C.** For two weeks, study participants using a smartphone app were prompted to fill out a questionnaire three times a day. They were asked questions about their surrounding environment and their mental state.

**D.** A study first published in 1984 found that hospital patients recovering from surgery took fewer painkillers and had a shorter recovery if they also had a room with a view of nature. Another study looking at COVID-19 lockdown habits found those who spent time in nature reported less depression, anxiety, and stress.

**E.** “This kind of study helps us understand how people’s everyday experience with specific elements of nature, such as birds, can be restorative,” says Lisa Nisbet, a psychologist at Trent University in Canada, who was not involved with this research.

**F.** Their latest study included 1,292 participants, mainly in the United Kingdom and Europe, some of whom disclosed a professional mental health diagnosis such as depression. With the data he collected, Mechelli performed a statistical analysis that found a discernible improvement in wellbeing when birds were present, even when eliminating other factors like the presence of trees or waterways.

**II. You are the secretary of the student council in your high school. The principal has asked you to write a report on the wellbeing of students. Starting from the text above, write a report in which you should consider how schools could integrate spending time in natural environments to promote wellbeing among students. 50 points**

**Write a 220-250 word report.**

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare –2024**  
**Probă scrisă**  
**Limba engleză**  
**CLASA a XI-a - SECȚIUNEA A**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the following text and fill in the blanks with ONE word only. 10 points**

Think teenagers, think couch potatoes eating pizzas (1) \_\_\_ of the box or munching 99p burgers? Think again because there is a new teenager in town and he is (2) \_\_\_ a chocolate-coated mission! Louis Barnett runs a rapidly-growing chocolate empire which counts (3) \_\_\_ its customers the British supermarket chains Waitrose and Sainsbury's, as well as upmarket department stores in London, New York and as (4) \_\_\_ away as Moscow. All (5) \_\_\_ and Louis is still only eighteen. But things weren't always that easy. (6) \_\_\_ an IQ of 132, Louis dropped out of school when he was only eleven, frustrated and disheartened. 'It was terribly difficult for him,' his mother Mary explains. His handwriting was really bad and he struggled (7) \_\_\_ spelling.' The problem was that Louis was, in his own words, 'dyslexic, dyspraxic and dyscalculic'. Nothing the school system had to offer (8) \_\_\_ any sense to him. So, with the help of his parents and a specialized tutor, Louis (9) \_\_\_ about a vocational-based, home-study programme concentrating on the thing he loved (10) \_\_\_: chocolate.

**II. Choose the correct answer A, B, C or D.**

**10 points**

**1. She came....already dressed....dinner and....a little red spot in....cheek.**

- a. back/at/with/each
- b. in/for/of/either
- c. in/for/with/each
- d. in/at/with/either

**2. N-ar fi mai bine să faci ceva decât să trândăvești în pat?**

- a. Shouldn't it be better to do something instead of lying in bed?
- b. Wouldn't it be better to do something instead of laying in bed?
- c. Wouldn't there be better to do something instead of lying in bed?
- d. Would it be better to do something instead of lying in bed?

**3. She rejoiced.....she.....beautiful.**

- a. having been told/was
- b. to have been told/was
- c. to be told/is
- d. being told/is

**4. They are known....for more than half an hour and....yet.**

- a. to be quarrelling/not to make up
- b. to have been quarrelling/not to have made up
- c. to have quarrelled/ to not making up
- d. to be quarrelling/to not have made up



**5. So heavy....that no porter could carry....**

- a. were the luggage/them
- b. was the luggage /it
- c. the luggage was/it
- d. the luggages were/ them

**6. Why....me that the meeting....? I ....to the office.**

- a. didn't you tell/was postponed/didn't need to go
- b. hadn't you told/was postponed/shouldn't have gone
- c. didn't you tell/was postponed/needn't have gone
- d. didn't you tell/will be postponed/ didn't need to go

**7. She is happy now because she won her new car. If she....her new car she.... happy now.**

- a. didn't win/wouldn't be
- b. hadn't won/wouldn't be
- c. hadn't won/wouldn't have been
- d. wouldn't have won/ wouldn't be

**8. ....the clothes off the line before it....to rain.**

- a. You'd better take/start
- b. I'd rather you take/starts
- c. I prefer you to take/ will start
- d. I'd rather you took/ starts

**9. Although Jack was...and....of the two boys, he was clearly...than his.... brother.**

- a. the youngest/more good-looking/more mature/older
- b. the younger/most good-looking/the most mature/elder
- c. the younger/the better-looking/more mature/elder
- d. the younger/the best-looking/the most mature/older

**10. Ea ar fi dorit să știe ce a mai făcut el, unde este și cum își petrece zilele.**

- a. She wishes she knew what he has been doing, where he is and how he spends his days.
- b. She wished she knew what he had been doing, where he is and how he spent his days.
- c. She wished she knew what he had been doing, where he was and how he spent his days.
- d. She wished she knew what he was doing, where he was and how he has spent his days.

**III. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given. 10 points**

- 1. Bob is in danger of getting sacked since his bad behaviour continued all last week. **RISK**  
But for Bob's bad behaviour which continued all last week, \_\_\_\_\_ sacked.
- 2. I'm sure Ben wasn't pleased when Myra arrived, because he's never liked her. **HAVE**  
Ben has never liked Myra, so he \_\_\_\_\_ to see her arrive.
- 3. When people treated Jane like a child, she didn't like it. **RESENTED**  
Jane \_\_\_\_\_ she was a child.
- 4. They' d hired someone to redecorate their garden a short time before I visited them. **DONE**  
They had just \_\_\_\_\_ when I visited them.
- 5. George and Mary have refused to talk to each other since the argument. **TERMS**  
George and Mary haven't \_\_\_\_\_ since the argument.

**IV. Translate the following text into English.**

**10 points**

Veneam în ziua aceea cu brațul plin de flori...Nu mă așteptase...Nu dorisem decât să retrăiesc o clipă...ceva din trecut și mă supuneam acestui demers cum primești un singur pahar de vin, știind că mai mult nu ai putea suporta...dar servitorul mi-a dat un bilet când am sunat. Un plic odios, de un albastru pal, aproape alb. Parcă un gând otrăvit mi s-a împrăștiat în sânge și mi s-a uscat pielea.

Nu știam ce să răspund, nici n-am citit biletul, pentru că acum conținutul lui mi-era indiferent. Mi-era acum doar o imensă milă de bucuria mea și de florile pe care le aveam în brațe. Am regretat pe urmă brusc că am dat drumul trăsorii, din superstiție, căci eram atât de obosită că nu puteam merge pe jos. Nu știu de ce mi-era rușine să mă vadă servitoarea că aduc flori neprimite acasă și asta fără temeii pentru că de obicei cumpăr singură flori pe care le aduc și le risipesc în vase.

(Camil Petrescu - *Patul lui Procust*)

**SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)**

**I. Five paragraphs have been removed from the following newspaper article. Choose from the paragraphs A-F the one which fits each gap 1-5. There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use.**

**(5x2=10 points)**

**No Longer Blowing in The Wind**

*Plastic bags disfigured South Africa's landscape until a small town decided to act.*

They have been called the national flower of South Africa. Outside every city, town and village, hundreds of them flutter and rustle in the thorn bushes with the evening breeze. They come in red, green, blue and black, and even in multi-coloured stripes. Plastic bags. Lots of them. For South Africa consumes eight billion per year, or nearly two hundred for every man, woman and child in the country. But the country is not uniquely cursed. From the deserts of Yemen to the mangrove swamps of Thailand, the discarded plastic supermarket bag disfigures the landscape of much of the developing world.

1. [.....]

'Our town was filthy', says Sheila Joseph whose family has run the local general store for ninety years. 'Our park looked as though there had been a snowstorm every weekend. It was littered with plastic bags and rubbish. We had lots of clean-up campaigns, but they didn't work. After two or three weeks, the town was filthy again'.

2. [.....]

There are so many plastic bags blowing around the Northern Cape that a job-creation project in the provincial capital employs 38 peoples to wash discarded bags, cut them into strips and knit them together into brightly-coloured hats, carpets, doormats, bags and even picture frames for sale.

3. [.....]

'The biggest businesses have been with us from the start, and haven't given a plastic bag out since', says the polite but steely Joseph, whose advice is now eagerly sought by other litter-strewn towns across South Africa. 'Within two weeks, our park was clean. It's definitely brought the community of Douglas together'.

4. [.....]

As a representative explained: 'We all want Douglas clean, but I will give a plastic bag instead of talking about it for ten minutes if a customer moans'. But if the government has its way, the store and others like it across the country may soon be banned from handing out the bags.

5. [.....]

Plastic manufacturers and retailers have reacted to the plans with predictable outrage. They warn that thousands of people would lose their jobs and that the new rules are likely to be unenforceable as importers would almost certainly ignore them. They pointed out that old-fashioned heavy-duty bags use more plastic, not less. Consumers, they insisted, would be greatly inconvenienced. "It won't work", said a spokesperson. "The problem is not the plastic bags, the problem is litter, it's a question of attitude!"

- A. She blamed the mess on the thin bags handed out free to shoppers. Douglas's 15,000 residents did not like the litter. Nor did the tourists who came to see the confluence of the Vaal and Orange, two of southern Africa's greatest rivers. Farmers were unhappy too, Livestock sometimes ate the bags and died.
- B. Someone, of course, had to spoil the party. At the small Orange Vall store down the road from Joseph's, they're still giving out free plastic bags to customers who want them, although demand has halved since the campaign began.
- C. First inspired by the people of Douglas, they are equally passionate in their hatred of the bags. They nonetheless remain somewhat skeptical about the practicalities of such a solution.
- D. South Africans, however, have decided to do something. And it was the hitherto unremarkable town of Douglas in the arid Northern Cape region that took the lead.
- E. The argument put forward by the authorities is that thicker bags would not only be used again and again, but would also be easier to collect and recycle. Supply of bags with a thickness of less than 80 microns (a micron is a millionth of a meter) is therefore likely to be outlawed.
- F. So it was that the people of Douglas, rejoicing in the slogan 'Fantastic-no plastic' came to ceremonially execute an effigy made up from old plastic bags by the project staff. Since then, shoppers bring their own, reusable baskets and bags, including those made from locally recycled plastic.

**II. As representative of the students' council in your school, the principal has asked you to write a report to assess young people's awareness of the importance of recycling and to make suggestions of environmental activities schools can organise to involve students.**

**Write your report in 220-250 words, starting from the text above.**

**50 points**

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**

**Probă scrisă  
Limba engleză  
CLASA a XI-a - SECȚIUNEA B**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the paragraph below and do the tasks that follow. (10 points)**

The Japanese have a strong aesthetic sense: they **embellish**, adorn and decorate everything they touch. A sandwich in Japan is not just a sandwich, it is a work of art. It is cut into an artistic shape - it can be circular, octagonal or star-shaped - and given a colour scheme with carefully placed bits of tomato, coleslaw and pickles. There is, as a rule, a flag or some other decoration **hoisted** on top. Every dish is aimed at the eye as well as the palate.

Every tiny parcel, from the humblest little shop, radiates some original charm or at least tries to, and reflects pride: look how well done it is! Every taxi-driver has a small vase in front of him, with a beautiful, fresh, dark-red or snow-white flower in it. Once I watched a man at the counter in a fish-restaurant. Sushi and sashimi - the famous raw fish of Japan - comes in many forms and cuts, and it takes about ten years for a man to reach the counters of a first-class establishment. The man I watched was not bored with his somewhat monotonous job: he enjoyed every minute of it to the full and was immensely proud of it. Michelangelo could not have set a freshly carved Madonna before you with more pride than this cook felt when he put a freshly carved piece of raw fish on your plate.

The Japanese are unable to touch anything without beautifying it, shaping it into something pretty and pleasing to the eye. One evening I was walking in one of the **slummy** suburbs of Tokyo and saw a heap of rubbish outside the backyard of a factory. It was an immense mountainside of rubbish, but it was not just thrown out as it came: all the boxes were piled into a graceful if somewhat whimsical pyramid, while the loose rubbish was placed on top as artistic and picturesque decoration. Someone must have spent considerable time converting that heap of rubbish into a thing of beauty.

**A. Choose the right synonym for the words given below, according to their meaning in the text.**

**3 points**

- |                      |            |               |              |              |
|----------------------|------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. <b>embellish:</b> | a) embalm  | b) emancipate | c) embroider | d) beautify  |
| 2. <b>hoisted:</b>   | a) lifted  | b) risen      | c) elevated  | d) increased |
| 3. <b>slummy:</b>    | a) stained | b) bustling   | c) grimy     | d) blemished |

**B. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. Use the word given WITHOUT changing it.**

**3 points**

1. A sandwich can have many shapes and be given a colour scheme with carefully placed vegetables.

**BUT**

Not \_\_\_\_\_ it can also be given a colour scheme with carefully placed vegetables.

2. Michelangelo could not have carved Madonna before you with more pride than this cook felt.

**TAKEN**

Michelangelo could not \_\_\_\_\_ Madonna than this cook felt.

3. It was an immense mountainside of rubbish; someone must have spent considerable time in converting that heap of rubbish into a thing of beauty. **NOT**

Had \_\_\_\_\_ converting it into a thing of beauty, it would have been an immense mountainside of rubbish.

**C. Four words have been removed from the summary of the text above. Choose the right words to fill in the summary. There are four extra words which you do not need to use. 4 points**

beautifying, pleasing, preparing, radiating, shaping, showcasing, transforming,  
touching

The Japanese have a strong aesthetic sense, transforming everything they touch into something beautiful and pleasing to the eye. They treat every dish as a work of art, with every parcel (1) \_\_\_\_\_ charm and pride. Even small parcels, like taxi drivers' small vase with a beautiful flower, reflect pride. The Japanese feel proud of their work, even in the mundane tasks of preparing sushi and sashimi. They are unable to touch anything without (2) \_\_\_\_\_ it, shaping it into something pretty and (3) \_\_\_\_\_ to the eye. For example, in a slum suburb of Tokyo, a heap of rubbish was transformed into a graceful pyramid, (4) \_\_\_\_\_ their artistic and picturesque approach to transforming waste into a beautiful object.

**II. For questions 1-5, think of one word only which can be used appropriately in all three sentences. Write only the missing word on your answer sheet. 10 points**

1. When I first met Gerry, we didn't \_\_\_\_\_ it off very well and had one or two disagreements. What would you do if you \_\_\_\_\_ the jackpot and won millions on the lottery? You really \_\_\_\_\_ the nail on the head when you pointed out the lack of motivation amongst the players lately.
2. After all the problems they had been through, the couple decided to move to Spain and make a \_\_\_\_\_ start. John's so funny. He's like a breath of \_\_\_\_\_ air in this boring office. She joined the company \_\_\_\_\_ out of college at the age of 18.
3. Working in the travel industry, the peak season really \_\_\_\_\_ it out of you. Melanie really \_\_\_\_\_ after her mother when it comes to choosing holidays. It \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of courage to go bungee jumping at her age.
4. Walk down the \_\_\_\_\_, go up a flight of stairs and you'll see the library on your right. With the \_\_\_\_\_ of time, the events of that day began to fade in all their memories. The students were told to pick a short \_\_\_\_\_ from the novel and analyse it for homework.
5. If the lights should \_\_\_\_\_, there are some candles in the cupboard in the kitchen. It's assumed that those who \_\_\_\_\_ to turn up for the meeting aren't interested in joining the team. You can't \_\_\_\_\_ to notice Pauline's new hairdo; it's most unusual.

**III. For questions 1-10, read the text below and look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct and some have a word that should not be there. If a line is correct, put a tick (✓) by the number on your answer sheet. If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word down next to the number on your answer sheet.**

**10 points**

Obsessive note-taking which is the occupational hazard of students. They believe they remember things best by writing them down. Writing things down, however, is a practice that can be abused as it can so easily lead back to a passive and unconfident attitude to books. Every little point the student reads may, in its context, be so persuasive and that he feels obliged to include it in his notes. These become an abridged version of the original. What the obsessive note-taker usually postpones learning by understanding until he comes to read his notes; but as such these are not always the product of understanding, they may be lengthy and unreliable. Furthermore, sentence-by-sentence or paragraph-by-paragraph note-taking which commits the reader to further page-by-page reading; and, this is not necessarily the best way of reading it and understanding a book. The reader's notes should be either the outcome of understanding and not the prelude to it. Notes written of this kind are brief.

0	which
00	✓
1	_____
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____
5	_____
6	_____
7	_____
8	_____
9	_____
10	_____

**IV. Translate the following text into English.**

**10 points**

În Istanbulul acela forfotind de străini, era un medic care studiasse medicina la Roma și petrecuse apoi câțiva ani la curtea lui Brâncoveanu, în București. Chemat într-o zi la casa unui turc bolnav, pe când se afla acolo, sosi în vizită un prieten de-al acestuia. Începu vorba de sănătatea turcului și apoi de noutățile zilei. Musafirul destăinuie turcului, între altele, că Brâncoveanu a fost declarat rebel și că, după ce i se vor confisca toate averile, va fi adus la Istanbul cu toată familia sa. Doctorul, care se făcea că nu înțelege turcește, trăgea cu urechea cât putea. Leșit din casa bolnavului, alergă la prietenul său grec, pe care-l știa bine cu Brâncoveanu, și îi spuse tot ce auzise, rugându-l să dea de știre lui Vodă de soarta care-l așteaptă însă fără a-i descoperi numele. Când primi Brâncoveanu scrisoarea grecului, rămase foarte nedumerit. Nici nu o citi bine în gura mare sfetnicilor săi, că o și rupse mânios.

(*Trecute vieți de doamne și domnițe*- C.Gane -text adaptat)

**SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)**

**I. Five paragraphs have been removed from the following text. Choose from the paragraphs A-F the one which fits each gap 1-5. There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Write your answer on your answer sheet.**

**10 points**

As experienced operators and professionals retire, process manufacturers are facing a significant knowledge and skills gap for incoming workers. Artificial intelligence (AI) can help manufacturers capture and retain valuable historical knowledge and ease the transition for younger workers. Bayer Crop Science found one solution to help capture knowledge from their experienced workers through an AI-powered Smart Search system for their plant process management (PPM) software.

“Knowledge transfer is a big issue in shift operations,” said Matthias Hesskamp, the head of Site Operations and Excellence at Bayer Muttentz. “Shifts are producing and generating data 24/7. Day Operations, responsible for problem-solving, only works 40 hours per week. They face the challenge of processing data that is generated constantly every day.”

(1) ....

All these inputs generate vast volumes of information every single shift. Mining this data can help employees discover opportunities for continuous improvement, identify best practices, learn from prior mistakes and find solutions for recurring problems. But sifting through mountains of data to find the information needed can be time-consuming and cumbersome for human workers. Often, valuable knowledge and insights remain hidden within PPM software.

(2) ....

Eschbach worked with the Bayer Crop Science Muttentz site to develop a customized Smart Search system for their shift handover software. The Smart Search system was trained on industry- and plant-specific terminology and data formats and informed by user groups, employee workshops and onsite investigations that shaped development of the final product. The result is a search system that is highly customized for Bayer's workflows, language, and user requirements.

(3) ....

Smart Search has transformed Bayer's PPM software from an information repository and shift communication system to a centralized knowledge management platform. Knowledge management and transfer will be essential to help process manufacturers adapt to new workforce realities. In the U.S., nearly one-fourth of manufacturing workers are age 55 or older, and The Manufacturing Institute projects that nearly 2.1 million manufacturing jobs could go unfilled by 2030 due to skill gaps in younger generations.

(4) ...

A knowledge management platform with AI can help companies retain knowledge from experienced operators, technicians and engineers and make it accessible for the next generation. This includes valuable tacit knowledge: the “on-the-job” knowledge gained through experience and observation that exists outside of formal training programs and SOPs.

(5) ...

These are the types of knowledge that are often lost as older workers leave the workforce—but may be hiding within maintenance logs, shift notes and other human-generated records. A knowledge management platform with AI tools brings this kind of tacit knowledge to the surface, acting almost like an experienced mentor for newer workers.

**A.** Similar skills shortages are projected for Europe and other parts of the world. As the baby boomer retirement wave continues and fewer Gen Z workers choose manufacturing as a career path, talent acquisition, development and retention will be critical issues.

**B.** Process industries typically operate 24/7, with three or more shifts across the day and numerous different teams and areas of responsibility, including engineering, production, R&D/technical, maintenance and management. Bayer implemented an enterprise platform that improves communication and information transfer across shifts and teams. The software acts as a centralized PPM solution, gathering both user-derived data (such as shift notes, maintenance logs and inspection observations) and automated data from sensor and equipment readings.

**C.** For example, an experienced process engineer may know that a formulation has to be tweaked at certain times of year to account for environmental conditions, or a long-time maintenance director may know just what to do to resolve an idiosyncratic issue for a piece of machinery.

**D.** As Gen Z enters the workforce, AI knowledge management tools will help them get up to speed quickly and maximize their on-the-job productivity. Younger workers appreciate cutting-edge technology tools that can help them do their jobs better. By harnessing the power of AI to amplify human potential, process manufacturers will be better positioned to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

**E.** That's where AI comes in. Tools like machine learning (ML) allow AI to quickly sort through large volumes of data to identify patterns and surface insights that would be difficult or impossible for humans to discern within a reasonable timeframe. Natural Language Processing (NLP), another AI tool, enables the system to understand queries and instructions provided in plain human language, derive meaningful information from text-based sources, and return results that humans can understand.

**F.** Using Smart Search, employees can now quickly uncover the information they need to perform their jobs effectively. For example, if a problem develops at a particular point in a process, they can simply submit a query (e.g., "Why is Product A brown instead of clear?") and quickly discover any previous instances of the problem and what was done to resolve it. The Smart Search system has reduced the amount of time employees spend searching for relevant information, often from several hours to mere minutes. This enables faster troubleshooting and problem resolution and greater worker efficiency.

## **II. You have seen the following announcement on a website.**

### Articles wanted

Send us an article about how automation has affected our everyday life. To what extent has automation unlocked a world of innovation? Has automation made our lives more complicated? Is it imminent that it will backfire on us in the future?

**Write your article starting from the text above. (250-280 words)**

**50 points**

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare -  
2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a XII-a - SECȚIUNEA A**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the following text and fill in the blanks with ONE word only. 10 points**

Studying is a multifaceted journey, requiring focus and strategy. We all know that in theory but putting it 1) \_\_\_\_\_ practice can be daunting. Let me tell you from experience some things that will help you study more efficiently. Only 2) \_\_\_\_\_ you grasp the significance of dedication 3) \_\_\_\_\_ you truly excel. 4) \_\_\_\_\_ you embrace active learning, you cannot unlock your full potential. Distractions needn't have a place in your study sessions; rather, hone in 5) \_\_\_\_\_ your goals with precision. Take moments to mull 6) \_\_\_\_\_ complex concepts, digesting them fully before moving forward. Don't put 7) \_\_\_\_\_ your efforts prematurely; perseverance is key. Avoid 8) \_\_\_\_\_ around the bush when tackling difficult subjects; instead, confront them head-on. Remember, setbacks are part and 9) \_\_\_\_\_ of the learning process; learn from them and adapt. Stay proactive; anticipate challenges by being 10) \_\_\_\_\_ notice of upcoming tasks and deadlines. With these approaches, your study sessions will be more effective and rewarding.

**II. Choose the best option A, B, C or D. 10 points**

1. .... the next train, we ..... on the rain - swept ..... at the station.

- A. Despite / would still stand / terminal
- B. But for / would still be standing / platform
- C. But for / had still stood / platform
- D. Although / would still be standing / terminal

2. You could do really ..... in your ..... if you put your mind .....

- A. fine / work / to it
- B. perfect / career / on it
- C. well / job / up it
- D. well / career / to it

3. I ..... the play for about one hour when I ..... that the person next to me was sleeping like a  
.....

- A. have been watching / noticed / log
- B. had been watching / realized / dog
- C. have been watching / noticed / crop
- D. had been watching / realized / log



4. The manager ..... us that it was ..... we had the office ..... up.
- A. said / the high time / done
  - B. announced / about time / got
  - C. told / high time/ done
  - D. said / about time / made
5. My cousin is a(n) ..... employee who .... himself into the work and always gets the job done ....
- A. valuable / throws / before
  - B. excellent / puts / in time
  - C. valued / puts / in time
  - D. excellent / throws / on time
6. My friend persuaded me to try snowboarding.
- A. It was my friend who talked me into trying snowboarding.
  - B. It is my friend who has talked me into trying snowboarding.
  - C. It was my friend who talked to me to try snowboarding.
  - D. It is my friend who has talked to me to try snowboarding.
7. Apart from composition, I thought the test was really easy.
- A. I find the test plain sailing except for the composition.
  - B. I have found the plain test sailing except from the composition.
  - C. I found the test plain sailing except for the composition.
  - D. I thought the test plain sailing excepting for the composition.
8. 'Will you lend me your car?' I asked my brother.
- 'No, I can't. The brakes are out of order and a mechanic is repairing it right now', he answered.
- A. I asked my brother if he lent me his car and he explained that he can't as the brakes were out of order and they were repaired by a mechanic right now.
  - B. I asked my brother if I can borrow his car but he told me that the brakes were out of order and a mechanic was repairing them right then.
  - C. I asked my brother if I could take his car and he explained that the brakes were out of order and they are being repaired by a mechanic right now.
  - D. I asked my brother if I could borrow his car but he told me that the brakes were out of order and they were being repaired by a mechanic right then.
9. Inefficient treatment of customers creates a bad impression of the company.
- A. Treating customers with inefficiency reflects bad on the company.
  - B. If customers are treated without efficiency, it reflects bad on the company.
  - C. Treating customers with a lack of efficiency reflects badly on the company.
  - D. If customers were treated without efficiency, it reflects badly on the on the company.
10. Diana thinks that creating things stops her from thinking about her work.
- A. Diana considers that to be creative takes her mind away from her work.
  - B. Diana thinks that being creative takes her mind off her work.
  - C. Diana considered that her creativity takes her mind off her work.
  - D. Diana thought that to be creative takes her mind up from her work.

**III. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given. 10 points**

1. She has finally accepted the fact that her novel will never be a best-seller. **RESIGNED**  
At last, she \_\_\_\_\_ the low sales of her novel.
2. The band is not going to play anymore, so why don't we leave? **WELL**  
We \_\_\_\_\_ that the band have given their final encore.
3. It's a long time since anyone checked my car properly. **SERVICED**  
I haven't \_\_\_\_\_ for a long time.
4. Mary is sad as she got a low grade in Maths yesterday. **UNLESS**  
Mary \_\_\_\_\_ she had got a low grade in Maths yesterday.
5. I regret having come to this horrible city. **SET**  
I wish \_\_\_\_\_ in this horrible city.

**IV. Translate the following text into English. 10 points**

"M-am gândit adesea la ce se s-ar putea exprima prin fotografie și nu s-ar putea exprima prin alt limbaj artistic. Care este, adică, specificul fotografiei. Aș vrea ca răspunsul să fie foarte simplu. Un fragment de realitate își lasă amprenta pe pelicula aparatului foto și această amprentă devine imaginea fixă pe care o contemplăm. Întotdeauna, fotografia trimite spre Real. Implicit, o fotografie e cu atât mai bună, cu cât pare să fi înghețat o frântură semnificativă, importantă, din realitate. Iar atunci când în fotografie apar oameni, ea e cu atât mai bună cu cât ceva din lumea interioară a acelor oameni ajunge până la noi. O mulțime de sentimente și emoții sunt zugrăvite pe chipul sau pe trupul celor fotografiați: relaxare, frustrare, teamă, jenă, bucurie, dispreț sau fericire. Nu poți să nu te gândești, văzând toate aceste imagini, la ce spunea mai demult un confrate - că adâncimea este ascunsă la suprafața lucrurilor."

Radu Jude - interviu 2020 (text adaptat)

**SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)**

**I. Five sentences have been removed from the article below. Choose from the sentences A-F the one which fits each gap (1-5). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.**

**10 points**

***The culture cure: how art can be a powerful healing experience***

Humans often find catharsis through creating art, while looking at paintings and sculptures can light up the pleasure centre in the brain and release dopamine. **(1)** \_\_\_\_\_

According to a recent study, looking at art can light up the pleasure centre in the brain and release dopamine, the feel-good chemical – which is why visiting a gallery can be a valuable act of self-care, especially in the cold, dark winter months. East London-based art therapist Alex Monk says viewing art in-person in a gallery, rather than virtually, elevates the experience. **(2)** \_\_\_\_\_

It helps that many galleries and museums are works of art in their own right; from the Tate Modern's colossal Turbine Hall – a space so spectacular that it inspires its own creations, such as El Anatsui's Behind the Red Moon, a monumental sculptural installation made of thousands of metal bottle tops and fragments, which is currently on show there – to the Grade II grandeur of Tate Britain, with its opulent circular balcony and domed atrium. These are public spaces with pizzazz – a break from the everyday. **(3)** \_\_\_\_\_

We live in a fast-paced culture, often consuming great works of art as quickly as we do content on our phones. But the act of engaging with art often defies our own deadlines and boundaries of time, inviting us to look a little longer. Next time you go to a gallery, try practising "slow looking", spending several minutes or even hours contemplating just one piece. **(4)** \_\_\_\_\_

According to a recent study, although 95% of UK adults agree that visiting museums and galleries is beneficial, 40% of us visit them less than once a year – which is especially regretful as so many of these incredible spaces and artworks, including the main collections in the Tate galleries, are completely free to view and open to all. **(5)** \_\_\_\_\_

**A.** That's not to say you should force yourself to settle in for half an hour to look at something that leaves you cold. Life's too short. But when you find a piece that arrests you, intrigues you, or sparks joy, why not commit to intently considering it for minutes, rather than seconds?

**B.** Galleries are full of amazing works, but observing just one on a deeper level can be incredibly meaningful. "We find it more difficult to stay with images or paintings for longer periods of time, but it's a really good antidote to the culture we have now where everything has to be really fast," says Monk, who likens slow looking to Pauline Oliveros's theory of deep listening.

**C.** "These gloomy winter months are the perfect time to get lost in our free displays, especially if you've never visited before," says Hindsbo. "From fluid contemporary sculpture to calming landscapes, vibrant abstract paintings to awe-inspiring installations, you'll find something in our collections for everyone." Now that sounds like our kind of self-care, no costs involved.

**D.** “From delighting in the creativity of others, seeing something from a different perspective, sharing that experience or forging connections, I know I always leave our galleries feeling energised, inspired and uplifted,” says Karin Hindsbo, the director of Tate Modern – and she’s certainly not alone.

**E.** Nottingham-based art psychotherapist Sofie Dobbelaere agrees that going to a gallery to view art can be a powerful healing experience. “When we look at art, we connect with our humanity, and therefore are pulled into dialogue with something outside of ourselves,” she says. “This can help us feel connected and like we are part of something important.”

**F.** “It might be the smell, or even seeing the shine of the paint. You might even be able to interact with the art on another level,” he says. “There is also a community aspect to walking around the gallery and looking at paintings or sculptures, which is very important.”

**II. Starting from the text above, do the following task.**

You see this announcement in an international student magazine.

**We are a popular international student magazine and we are preparing a special edition on the effects of AI on art. Which are the most important aspects of this issue as it affects people in your country? Is the impact positive or negative? Email us your articles!**

**Write your article in 250-280 words.**

**50 points**

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**  
**Probă scrisă**  
**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a XII-a - SECȚIUNEA B**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 3 ore.

**SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)**

**I. Read the paragraph below and do the tasks that follow. (10 points)**

Shrove Tuesday, also known as Pancake Day, is a beloved and delicious tradition embraced in many countries around the world. The tradition of eating pancakes to mark the beginning of Lent has been **observed** in Britain since around the 16th century. It is possible that this tradition occurred because some ingredients would typically be banned during Lent. These were eggs, butter and fat, which would not last throughout the lengthy fasting time. One of the easiest ways to **dispose of** such items was to turn them into pancakes.

The primary focus of many people on Pancake Day is the excessive consumption of palate-pleasing pancakes. Some also take part in an activity called “pancake racing”, which, as the name suggests, involves participating in a race while flipping pancakes in a frying pan. People say this tradition originated in 1445. According to the story, a woman lost track of time while making pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. As she heard the church bell ring, calling for the community to head to the church for confession, she ran out of her house to make her way to church, all the while still holding her frying pan with the pancake on top.

In the UK, some also celebrate Pancake Day by taking part in “mob football” matches. This centuries-old tradition used to be more common, and involved teams kicking a ball around on public roads. While many no longer partake in the activity, some villages continue to **uphold** the tradition.

**A. Choose the right synonym for the words given below, according to their meaning in the text. 3 points**

- |                      |              |              |                |                 |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>observed</b>   | a) obeyed    | b) watched   | c) remarked    | d) noticed      |
| 2. <b>dispose of</b> | a) deal with | b) give away | c) get rid of  | d) do away with |
| 3. <b>uphold</b>     | a) to defend | b) to state  | c) to renounce | d) to keep      |

**B. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. Use the word given WITHOUT changing it. 3 points**

1. It is possible that this tradition occurred because the ingredients would typically be banned during Lent. **GIVEN**

This tradition may ..... of some ingredients during Lent.

2. One of the easiest ways to dispose of such items was to turn them into pancakes. **BUT**  
There ..... to turn them into pancakes.

3. People say this tradition originated in 1445. **TO**  
This tradition ..... in 1445.

**C. Four words have been removed from the summary of the text above. Choose the right words to fill in the summary. There are four extra words which you do not need to use. 4 points**

certainty, stack, savor, meal, solemnity, gulp, earnest, tradition

Shrove Tuesday, known as Pancake Day in Britain and in many parts of the world, is a delightful occasion to **1**\_\_\_ delicious pancakes and embrace the spirit of celebration before the **2**\_\_\_ of Lent. Before Lent could begin in **3**\_\_\_, all edible temptations had to be removed. Whether you're flipping pancakes in a race, playing mob football or enjoying a **4**\_\_\_ at home, Shrove Tuesday is a day to indulge in this tasty tradition.

**II. For questions 1-5, think of one word only which can be used appropriately in all three sentences. Write only the missing word on your answer sheet. 10 points**

1. She answered their question with a faint ..... of boredom.  
As an English teacher, I often encourage my students to engage in discussions about current affairs to ..... their opinions and develop their speaking skills.  
Exploring the majestic Alps, one cannot help but feel invigorated by the crisp mountain ....., a refreshing departure from the city smog.
2. The negotiation process requires careful diplomacy, as no one likes it when one party ..... away dissatisfied with the terms of the agreement.  
Growing up in a bustling metropolis, I cherished the opportunity to talk to people belonging to all ..... of life.  
With each step, the elderly man's ..... became slower and more deliberate, yet he cherished the simple pleasure of being outdoors.
3. As an educator, I emphasize the importance of taking regular ..... during study sessions to maintain focus and prevent burnout.  
A ceasefire ..... the relentless cycle of conflict, offering hope for peace in the region.  
I often encourage children to talk to an adult when one of their friends ..... the silence regarding bullying.
4. Marylin had a really ..... budget and had to think twice before spending every cent.  
The dress suits me, but it is a bit ..... around the chest.  
As expected, the security was ..... at the G8 summit.
5. Garry is so ruthless that he will ..... at nothing to get what he wants.  
The formula one driver lost precious minutes at a pit ..... and came third in the race.  
Many disgruntled Internet users wanted the Internet provider to put a ..... to spam.

**III. For questions 1-10, read the text below and look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct and some have a word that should not be there. If a line is correct, put a tick (✓) by the number on your answer sheet. If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word down next to the number on your answer sheet. 10 points**

- |    |                                     |  |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|
| 0  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | How much does it cost to run a repair cafe? Here's how to cut waste while              |
| 00 | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>the</u> | raising the money for charity. "It's abhorrent seeing things thrown away," says        |
| 1  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Chris Murphy, the organiser of Tunbridge Wells Repair Cafe. Chris who is the type      |
| 2  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | of person who goes to the dump and leaves with much more things than he went           |
| 3  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | with. He makes do and mends items when they are broken. And he enjoys bringing         |
| 4  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | people over together. So when he learnt about repair cafes from a friend back in 2019, |
| 5  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | his next step was a no-brainer. "I thought, well, we don't have the one, I'll start    |
| 6  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | one," the 51-year-old from Tunbridge Wells, UK tells Euronews Green. Just over         |
| 7  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | three years later on, he oversees one of the largest repair cafes in southeast England |
| 8  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | with 28 repair stations and 75 volunteers. "There's broken stuff over here, people     |
| 9  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | who can mend stuff and they have got a charity ethos. Bring them together - I love the |
| 10 | <input type="checkbox"/>            | idea of it," Chris explains. Repair cafes are some free, community-run meeting         |
|    |                                     | places where locals can bring broken items for volunteers to fix.                      |

**IV. Translate the following text into English.**

**10 points**

În secolul al XIX-lea, de la gară până în centrul orașului sunt trei kilometri care pot fi străbătuți într-o jumătate de ceas cu o trăsură dusă de cai buni, dacă nu cumva n-a plouat înainte. Legătura dintre capriciile cerului și drumurile târgului acestuia omul încă n-o pricepea. Deocamdată privea peronul îngust, fațada roșie de cărămidă a sălii de așteptare năpădită de iederă, geamurile pline de praf ale biroului, dinlăuntru cărui se auzea păcănitul telegrafului. Nu mai coborâse nimeni altcineva. Șeful de gară dăduse semnalul de plecare și trenul dispăruse în câteva clipe, mistuindu-se în depărtarea sură a zilei de toamnă. Era duminică, apropo de ora două și nu-i rămânea decât să găsească trăsura. Îi fu o clipă teamă că dincolo de gardul pitic al gării nu va găsi pe nimeni. Străbătu linia ce-l despărțea de ușile peronului. Odată ieșit în piața pavată cu piatră cubică, se lămură. Și să fi vrut să aleagă, n-ar fi putut, deoarece nu se afla decât o trăsură aducând mai degrabă cu obiectele bizare uitate prin expoziții pentru a aminti oamenilor istoria mijloacelor de transport.

(Eugen Barbu – *Unsprezece*)

**SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)**

**I. Five paragraphs have been removed from the following text. Choose from the paragraphs A-F the one which fits each gap 1-5. There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Write your answer on your answer sheet.**

**10 points**

**Fear of ageing is really a fear of the unknown – and modern society is making things worse**

For the first time in human history, we have entered an era in which reaching old age is taken for granted. Unlike in ages past, when living to an older age was a luxury afforded mainly to the privileged, globally around 79% of women and 70% of men can expect to reach the age of 65 and beyond. Despite longer life expectancy, many people in the contemporary west see growing old as undesirable and even scary. Research shows, however, that anxiety about ageing may in fact be fear of the unknown. Society's focus on youthfulness and capability can cause anxiety about becoming weak and unwanted. [.....] 1. We frequently hear about attempts to reverse ageing, often by the super rich. For example, Bryan Johnson, a 45-year-old American entrepreneur, is spending millions of dollars a year to obtain the physical age of 18.

While the desire to reverse ageing is not a new phenomenon, advancements in biomedicine have brought it closer. Work published by genetics professor David Sinclair at Harvard University in 2019 suggests that it may be possible to challenge the limits of cell reproduction to extend our lifespan, for example. His information theory of ageing argues that reprogramming DNA can improve damaged and old tissues, and delay or even reverse ageing. However, these new possibilities can also heighten our fear of ageing.

People haven't always dreaded growing older. In many societies, older people used to be widely regarded as wise and important – and in some they still are. In ancient China, there was a culture of respecting and seeking advice from older family members. There is still an ethos of filial piety (showing reverence and care for elders and ancestors) today, even if it's not as pronounced as it used to be. [.....] 2. People who had surpassed the age to work, alongside those with incurable diseases, were regarded by society as "evils" in need of assistance.

The treatment of older people has taken a different form since the early 20th century. The introduction of universal pension systems made ageing a central concern in welfare systems. [.....] 3. This can result in the institutionalisation of older people in residential facilities that keep them hidden, sequestered from the awareness of younger generations.

Research analysing the responses of 1,200 US adults from the American Association of Retired Persons' Images of Ageing survey shows that much of the perceived fear of ageing is closely aligned with the fear of the unknown, rather than the ageing process itself. This fear is only exacerbated by the largely separate lives lived by older and younger generations. The prevalence of nuclear families and the decline of traditional mixed-generational communities have deprived younger people of the opportunity to more fully understand the experiences of older people. [.....] 4. Older people are frequently portrayed in the media as conservative and privileged, making it difficult for younger generations to comprehend why older people act and think the way they do.

Academics suggest that creating a system for older and younger generations to interact in everyday settings is vital. A set of three UK-based studies in 2016 analysed and compared the effects of direct contact, extended contact and interactions between younger (aged 17 to 30) and older people (65 and over). [.....] **5.** Studies show that these activities can not only enhance the wellbeing of older people but also help younger people gain an appreciation of ageing as a valuable and fulfilling life stage.

Getting worried about growing older is normal, just as we experience anxieties in other stages of life, such as adolescence and marriage. But here's the thing – instead of seeing ageing as a looming figure, it is important to realise it is just a part of life.

- A. The findings indicated that good quality direct intergenerational contact can improve young people's attitudes towards older adults (especially when sustained over time). Intergenerational programmes have been adopted globally, including mixed and intergenerational housing, community choirs and senior volunteers reading to young children in nurseries.
- B. Once we understand ageing as a regular experience, we can let go of these worries and approach the journey through different life stages with a positive attitude and a fortified will to enrich our lives and the lives of those around us.
- C. The same went for medieval Europe, where older people's experiences and wisdom were highly valued. However, the industrial revolution in the west from the 18th century led to a cultural shift where older people became excluded from society and were considered unproductive.
- D. Adverts for anti-ageing products are everywhere, reinforcing the idea that growing older is inherently unattractive. Some people fear ageing so much that it becomes a pathological condition called gerascophobia, leading to irrational thoughts and behaviour, for example, a fixation on health, illness and mortality and a preoccupation with hiding the signs of ageing.
- E. Plus, the rapid increase in house prices means many young people cannot afford to live near their older relatives. The separation of older people from children and young people has sparked generational conflicts that seemingly continue to grow wider than ever.
- F. But as the demands for social and health care have increased, journalists increasingly portray ageing as a burden on society. Consequently, growing older is often associated with managing the risk of ill health and alleviating the onus of care from younger relatives.

**II. The director of the charitable organisation for which you volunteer twice a week would like to start a programme meant to bring both senior citizens and teenagers in your community together. The volunteers have been asked to write proposals suggesting three common activities for the two age groups, describing how these activities will benefit both the young and the elderly and recommending two activities for the charity to organise.**

**Starting from the text above, write your proposal. (250-280 words)**

**50 points**