

Etapa județeană / a sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2026

Probă scrisă

Limba engleză

CLASA a XII-a - SECȚIUNEA A

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Se acordă zece 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

Queen Victoria

Victoria first learned of her future role as a princess (1) ___ a history lesson when she was 10 years old. Over four decades later, Victoria's governess recalled that the future queen reacted to the discovery (2) ___ declaring 'I will be good'. This combination of earnestness and egotism marked Victoria as a child of the age that bears her name. It was an era of industrialisation and colonial expansion which (3) ___ not happened before. By the end of her reign, about a third of the known world was (4) ___ her rule. However, the queen herself was resistant (5) ___ technological change even while mechanical and technological innovation was reshaping the face of European civilization. (6) ___ significantly, Victoria was a queen determined to retain political power; yet unwillingly and unwittingly she presided (7) ___ the transformation of the sovereign's political role into a ceremonial one and thus helped preserve the English monarchy. When Victoria became queen, the political role of the crown was by (8) ___ means clear or defined, nor (9) ___ the permanence of the throne itself. When she died, the change in the monarch's roles was one of social (10) ___ than of political focus.

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

10 points

1. _____, the prototype failed spectacularly: nevertheless, the team _____ give up and refined the design.

- A. Predictably / did not
- B. Fortunately / would
- C. Surprisingly / could
- D. Unfortunately / must

2. She burst _____ tears upon hearing _____ news and struggled _____ composure for several minutes.

- A. into / the / regaining
- B. out / a / to regain
- C. in / those / with regaining
- D. into / that / to regain

3. The diplomats _____ conferring _____ private for hours before _____ a joint statement.

- A. were / about / issue
- B. have been / on / to issue
- C. had been / in / issuing
- D. are / in / issued

4. He glanced _____ the report and immediately picked _____ several _____ in the methodology.

- A. through / out / flaws
- B. over / up / flaw
- C. at / on / weaknesses
- D. across / off / weakness

5. The delegation insisted that concessions be made on both sides.

- A. The delegation demanded mutual concessions.
- B. The delegation insisted concessions be unilateral.
- C. Both sides refused concessions, the delegation insisted.
- D. Concessions were insisted upon only by the delegation.

6. _____ you _____ the contract carefully, you _____ noticed _____ discrepancies earlier.

- A. Had / read / would have / those
- B. Were / to read / will / the
- C. Did / read / would / those
- D. Have / read / might / any

7. His failure didn't deceive her.

- A. She was not taken in by his failure.
- B. She was not taken into by his failure.
- C. She was not taken aback by his failure.
- D. She was not taken of by his failure.

8. Immediately after Sam began his presentation the lights went out.

- A. Hardly had Sam begun his presentation than the lights went out.
- B. No sooner had Sam begun his presentation than the lights went out.
- C. Hardly had Sam began his presentation when the lights went out.
- D. No sooner did Sam begin his presentation when the lights went out.

9. He is in prison because a witness recognized him.

- A. He wouldn't have been in prison, if a witness wouldn't have recognized him.
- B. He wouldn't be in prison if a witness wouldn't have recognized him.
- C. He wouldn't be in prison if a witness hadn't recognized him.
- D. He would be in prison, unless a witness recognized him.

10. So much rain in March is something of a rarity.

- A. Rarely had it been so much rain in March.
- B. Rarely is it so much rain in March.
- C. Rarely it has been so much rain in March.
- D. Rarely has there been so much rain in March.

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. I decided right there and then to buy it and now I really regret it!
I _____ and now I really regret it! | WHIM |
| 2. When he was at his most successful, the President had enormous influence.
At _____, the President had enormous influence. | HEIGHT |
| 3. They dismissed the rumours as completely unfounded.
They didn't believe the _____ truth. | GRAIN |
| 4. It was only after the meeting had finished that she admitted the truth.
Not until the meeting _____ the truth. | DID |
| 5. The experiment failed despite meticulous planning.
The experiment _____ meticulous planning. | COME |

IV. Translate the following text into English.

10 points

A doua zi dimineața, Paul, care se trezise târziu, o găsi pe Adriana în curte, scriind într-un caiet de școală ceva. Se apropie de ea neobservat, se aplecă din spate ținându-și răsuflarea și cu o mână îi fură brusc caietul dinainte. Fata scoase un țipăt scurt.

Rămase un moment încremenită și pe urmă se aruncă asupra vărului ei.

- Nu, nu, te rog, te implor, dă-mi-l înapoi. N-ai să-l citești, nu trebuie să citești, nu vreau, jură-mi că n-ai să-l citești.

Vorbea repede, aproape fără să-și dea seama de ce spunea. Era palidă, ochii îi erau aprinși, mâinile rugătoare, trupul agitat. Paul nu înțelegea nimic. Încercase să glumească și mica lui glumă stârnise o disperare, pe care nu o așteptase, care îl încurca și pe care nu știa cum să o calmeze.

Puse caietul pe masă, fără să-l privească și încercă să se scuze.

- Dar, Adriana, n-am vrut decât să glumesc...

(Mihail Sebastian, *Orașul cu salcâmi*)

SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (50 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 paragraph which you do not need to use. 10 points

What inspires people to make changes in their lives?

People rarely change their lives without a reason. Whether it involves changing careers, improving relationships, or adopting healthier habits, personal transformation is usually triggered by a combination of internal reflection and external influence. Understanding what inspires such changes helps explain why some people act decisively while others remain stuck in familiar patterns. **(1) [.....]**

For many individuals, dissatisfaction is a powerful starting point. Feeling unfulfilled, overwhelmed, or disconnected can prompt people to question their current circumstances. These moments of discomfort often act as a wake-up call, forcing individuals to confront the gap between the life they are living and the life they would like to lead. Without such tension, the motivation to change may never fully develop. **(2) [.....]**

However, inspiration does not always come from negative experiences. Positive role models can be equally influential. Observing someone who has successfully transformed their life can make change seem both desirable and achievable. Seeing real examples of improvement helps people imagine alternative futures for themselves and challenges the belief that change is too risky or unrealistic.

Life-changing events also play a significant role. Major transitions such as illness, loss, relocation, or unexpected success can disrupt routines and force individuals to reassess their priorities. **(3) [.....]** When familiar structures disappear, people are often compelled to make conscious choices about what truly matters, rather than simply continuing out of habit.

In addition, gradual exposure to new ideas can inspire change over time. Books, conversations, education, and travel introduce different perspectives and values, encouraging people to question assumptions they may have accepted uncritically for years. **(4) [.....]** Unlike sudden shocks, this type of inspiration works slowly, reshaping beliefs until change feels not only necessary, but inevitable. Ultimately, change depends not only on inspiration, but on the willingness to act upon it. **(5) [.....]**

In conclusion, people are inspired to change their lives through a complex interaction of dissatisfaction, influence, and experience. While inspiration may arise suddenly or develop gradually, meaningful change ultimately depends on recognizing these signals and responding with deliberate action rather than remaining confined by familiar routines.

- A. Such moments often remove the illusion of control and highlight the need for adaptation.
- B. As a result, comparison can become a motivating force rather than a source of discouragement.
- C. Often, it is a matter of mental preparation, where a person finally feels "ready" to face the unknown.
- D. While the spark of insight is essential, it is the consistent application of that insight that leads to a new reality.
- E. This process is often subtle, influencing attitudes long before behavior visibly changes.
- F. Many people find that maintaining a strict routine is the only way to avoid these external pressures.

II. You have been asked to write an article for your high school magazine exploring the factors that motivate people to make significant changes in their lives. Starting from the text above, consider the role of dissatisfaction, role models, and life experiences, and explain which of these you believe to be the most influential.

Write your article in 250–280 words.

40 points