



OLIMPIADA NAȚIONALĂ DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ - ETAPA LOCALĂ
11 februarie 2026

CLASA a X-a, SECȚIUNEA B (regim de studiu intensiv/bilingv)

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Se acordă 10 puncte din oficiu.
- Timp de lucru: 180 minute

SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH 40 points

I. Read the paragraph below and do the tasks that follow.

20 points

Genetically modified food is produced from plants which have had their genes **tweaked** in the lab. Scientists ‘cut and paste’ a gene from another organism into a plant’s DNA to give it a new characteristic. This can be done to increase **yield** or to allow a plant to exist in a more hostile environment than normal. Pro-GM scientists say this means cheaper, more plentiful food but opponents argue we do not know the consequences of **meddling** with nature. Farmers have modified their crops for thousands of years by crossing similar species. However, modern GM is controversial. Critics say the modified crops could escape and cross with wild plants, with unknown consequences. They also argue that more chemicals are used on some GM fields which may have a negative impact on wildlife. And while no study has found GM food to be harmful to humans, opponents say it is too soon to be sure. A group of biotechnology experts say it is time to loosen Europe’s draconian regulations on genetically modified crops. In a report released today they argue that GM crops have been used safely for decades, so no longer need to be automatically treated as unsafe. They also say that GM crops should be reclaimed from multinational companies and treated as a public good.

A. Answer the following questions, according to the text:

8 points

1. Why is GM food mainly produced?
2. What do Pro-GM scientists say about this food modification?
3. What are the dangers of modified crops?
4. In biotechnology experts’ opinion, what should happen to policies governing GM crops?

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

6 points

- | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. tweaked: | a. contested | b. acknowledged | c. modified | d. torn |
| 2. yield: | a. harvest | b. barn | c. drought | d. malfunction |
| 3. meddling: | a. interfering | b. arguing | c. connecting | d. squeezing |

C. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning.

6 points

1. We know nothing about the consequences of meddling with nature.
Little the consequences of meddling with nature.
2. Critics say the modified crops are likely to escape.
The modified crops
3. It’s time to relax Europe’s draconian regulations on GM crops.
It’s time weregulations on GM crops.

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

10 points

The (1) _____ (SAY) ‘never judge a book by its cover’ could not be more true for *Ridiculous Rules* by Marjorie Allen. The cover is completely blank, whereas the book is crammed full of wonderful examples and anecdotes. Allen is a/an (2) _____ (SPEAK) critic of much of what is taught to native and non-native speakers of English, and has issued a (3) _____ (DECLARE) of war against textbooks and style books which tell lies. Take the ridiculous and (4) _____ (MEAN) rule of never ending a sentence with a preposition. The lovely – if famous – story goes, that Winston Churchill, well known for his numerous (5) _____ (WRITE) as well as for being British Prime Minister during the Second World War, received a manuscript back from an ignorant (6) _____ (EDIT), who had told him rather rudely that he had to (7) _____ (PHRASE) a sentence which ended with a preposition. Churchill responded by making the simple, yet forceful (8) _____ (STATE) in the margin: ‘This is an impertinence up with which I will not put’ – the (9) _____ (IMPLY) being that not to end a sentence with a preposition often sounds ridiculous in English. Sadly, Allen informs us that the story is probably mere (10) _____ (HEAR), and that Churchill may have actually only written ‘rubbish’ in the margin.

III. Complete the following text by writing one word in the gap.

10 points

Hayley Westenra, a pretty teenage soprano from New Zealand, has found herself at the centre of an unseemly row in the classical music world. Her latest album is about to be released and there is ... (1) sign that it will make her into an even bigger star. This, ... (2), will only serve to annoy further some purists in the world of classical music. These critics of ... (3) is known as “crossover” classical music, ... (4) basically means classical hits marketed as easy listening, associate the popularity of artists ... (5) as Hayley with a symptom of cultural decline. Harley is dismissive of such people. “I don’t really understand their position”, she says, adding ... (6) anything which increases the appeal of classical music amongst the young must be a good thing. She has heard from many young fans who have ... (7) up the violin or piano as a result of enjoying her albums. They ... (8), she argues, never have ... (9) interested in classical music ... (10) it hadn’t been made accessible to them.

SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS

50 points

Read the text below and do the tasks that follow.

When we think of time, we think of clock time. Action all around the world is synchronized by clock time, starting with train schedules, worldwide plane schedules, navigation, astronomy, worldwide telecommunication, etc. These depend completely on accurate timing. The accuracy standards of timekeeping devices have been increasing rapidly due to the demands for more and more accurate timing for space communication, navigation, astronomy. Rather than use mechanical clocks, we are relying nowadays on ‘atomic clocks’. This is not a clock in the usual sense but a device that uses the very stable oscillation of the cesium atoms as a standard for timekeeping.

From grandfather clocks to wristwatches, all these clocks are supposed to chop up for us the 24 hours of the day more or less reliably into hours, minutes and seconds. Let’s call this kind of time ‘objective’ since everybody’s watches are supposed to cut time into slices of even thickness. However, we know from personal experience that time does not ‘feel’ as passing evenly under different circumstances. When pursuing some interesting activity, time ‘flies’; while waiting in the dentist’s office, it ‘drags’. When Einstein was once asked about this ‘psychological time’ he replied with a now famous observation: ‘When you spend two hours with a nice girl, you think it’s only a minute. But when you sit on a hot stove for a minute, you think it’s two hours.’ Realizing the relativity of time, let us see, then, how this subjective time can be put to some use.

I. For questions 1-5, decide which answer (A, B, C or D) fits best according to the text.

10 points

1. According to the text, which of the following is NOT an example of accurate timing?

- A. clock time
- B. psychological time
- C. atomic clock time
- D. objective time

2. Demands for more accurate timing have resulted in

- A. the growth of telecommunication, navigation and astronomy
- B. the development of better mechanical clocks
- C. the improvement of accuracy standards for timekeeping devices
- D. the dependence on atomic power

3. Because of the need for more accurate standards of timekeeping, today we are

- A. thinking about time in a different way
- B. revising schedules of trains and planes
- C. relying more on atomic clocks
- D. enjoying more leisure time

4. A defining characteristic of objective time is that

- A. it divides time evenly for everyone
- B. it is different from clock time
- C. it seems to pass quickly
- D. it uses a 24-hour system

5. When asked about psychological time, Einstein

- A. declined to answer
- B. commented on its stability
- C. said that socializing was more time-consuming than tending the fire
- D. observed that time seems to pass quickly or slowly according to our activity

II. WRITING

40 points

Many high school students struggle to balance their studies with hobbies, family time and social activities.

You have been asked to write a **report** on time management, discussing:

- ✓ the most common reasons why students waste time or fall behind with schoolwork
- ✓ the consequences of poor time management
- ✓ practical suggestions to help students develop better study routines

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

