



**OLIMPIADA NAȚIONALĂ DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ - ETAPA LOCALĂ**  
**11 februarie 2026**  
**CLASA a XI-a, SECȚIUNEA B (regim de studiu intensiv/bilingv)**

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

**SUBIECTULA – USE OF ENGLISH 40 points**

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

**20 points**

The eight masked bandits, who burst into a Naples railroad station, seemed to have stepped out of spaghetti Western. After ordering the station master to stop the train, they opened by force the doors of the mail car and grabbed the bags containing approximately £100,000 in cash. They finally managed to make a successful getaway **with blazing guns**. Train robberies have recently become a usual phenomenon in Italy. Sometimes, the robbers get on the train as passengers, who later put on their masks and hold up the rest of the passengers. Others work less **ostentatiously**; they quietly break into mail cars, tie up the guards and jump off in time before the train pulls into the next station. The Italian Press has pointedly described train robberies as the new frontier of organised crime. Italian officials think the **upsurge** in the once-forgotten train robberies comes as direct result of the introduction of effective, modern security devices elsewhere. Since some targets such as banks have become too difficult for common criminals, trains are more accessible targets for them.

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

**8 points**

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. What do some robbers pretend to be?
3. How did the eight bandits escape?
4. Why do common criminals mostly attack trains instead of banks nowadays?

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

**6 points**

- |                              |                         |                  |                          |                           |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>1. with blazing guns:</b> | a. in a flicking manner | b. energetically | c. in a bustling way     | d. in a lightening manner |
| <b>2. ostentatiously:</b>    | a. obviously            | b. openly        | c. in an outgoing manner | d. outrageously           |
| <b>3. upsurge:</b>           | a. influence            | b. improvement   | c. increase              | d. torment                |

**C. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. Use between three to five words including the given ones. Do not change them in any way.**

**6 points**

1. The eight masked bandits seemed to have stepped straight from a spaghetti western. (AS)  
The eight masked bandits ..... stepped straight from a spaghetti western.
- 2 They finally managed to make a successful getaway. (IN)  
They ..... away successfully.

3. The upsurge in the train robberies comes as direct result of the introduction of modern security devices elsewhere. (FROM)

The upsurge in the train robberies ..... the introduction of effective, modern security devices elsewhere.

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

We all know that a balanced diet is essential for our health but do we worry (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (NECESSARY) about what children eat? Schoolboy Craig Flatman astonished (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (SCIENCE) by surviving for 15 years on a diet of jam sandwiches. At first, Craig's (3.) \_\_\_\_\_ (REFUSE) to eat any other kinds of food drove his mum to despair, but she soon realised that he wasn't just being difficult. When he tries other foods, he is physically sick. Most children (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (NATURAL) go through a phase of not eating well, so much so that faddy eating is now recognised as a normal part of a child's (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (DEVELOP). In a survey conducted by University College London, nearly 20 percent of children under seven were described as "food neophobic", meaning they are (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (WILLING) to try new foods. For some children with food allergies this (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (RELUCTANT) is a result of negative associations they have with food. In other cases, it can be a demand for attention or sometimes it can follow an (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (ILL). Craig has (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (GO) medical tests, which revealed that he is (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (BASIC) healthy but that he hasn't got enough iron in his blood.

**III. Read the text below and think of the word which best fits in each gap. Use only one word in each gap. 10 points**

The capital of Japan's northernmost island attracts many visitors every year at the beginning of February. (1)...this being the coldest time of the year, visitors flock to the city, which transforms (2)...into a winter dream world heaving with glittering figures and beautiful palaces. More than two million people come to marvel (3)...the frosted statues. The festival, which (4)...extremely humble origins, is today a high-profile international event. It began in 1950 (5)...a couple of young students fashioned six snow statues in Odori Park. Five years (6)..., members of Sapporo's Defence Force sowed the seeds (7)...the now world-famous festival by building the first statue, which was megalithic in (8)...proportions. Snow sculpting might sound (9)...one of those skills best suited to the school playground, but it actually takes a (10)...of patience and artistic talent to form these snow giants.

**SUBJECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS 50 points**

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

Looking for a good domestic robot? According to one website the world's first fully automated, life-sized domestic assistant is about to go on sale. There's just one catch: the website promoting the gadget is just a tease, a clever bit of advertising from 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox to promote its movie *I, Robot*. In this sci-fi action thriller, detective Spooner, played by Will Smith, investigates the murder of a scientist employed by a fictional robotics company. Despite the fail-safe mechanism built into the robots, which prevents them from harming humans, the detective suspects one of them was responsible for the scientist's death. Further investigation leads him to believe that robots may even be planning to take over the world.

*I, Robot* is loosely based on a collection of short stories by science-fiction writer, Isaac Asimov. Most of these revolve around the famous three laws of robotics which he first drew up in 1940. In those days barely two decades after the word robot had been coined by playwright Karel Capek, other writers were still reworking Capek's narrative about robots taking over the world. But Asimov's grasp of science fact - he gained a PhD in chemistry - lent rigour to his science-fiction and he was already asking what practical steps humanity might take to avoid this nasty fate. His solution was to program all robots to follow these laws: 1. A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm. 2. A robot must obey the orders given

it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law. 3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or second Law.

These three laws might seem like a good way to keep robots in their place, but to a roboticist they throw up more problems than they solve. Experts in the field of A.I. (artificial intelligence) have come to the sobering conclusion that preventing intelligent robots from harming humans will require something much more complex than simply programming them. In fact, programming a real robot to follow the three laws would be a formidable undertaking. For a start, the robot would need to be able to recognise humans and not confuse them with chimpanzees, statues and humanoid robots. This may be easy for us humans, but it poses considerable difficulty for robots. To follow rule two, the robot would have to be made capable of recognising an order and distinguishing it from a casual request-which is beyond the capability of contemporary artificial intelligence.

To follow any of the three laws, the robot would have to determine whether and to what extent any of them applied to the current situation. This would involve complex reasoning about the future consequences of its own actions and of the actions of other robots, humans and animals in its vicinity. But why should the robot restrict its actions to its own immediate vicinity? The first law, as stated above, includes no clause restricting its scope to the immediate surroundings of the robot. A robot standing in the Arctic might reason that it could take food to Africa and thereby save a child from starvation. If it remains in the Arctic, the robot would, through inaction, allow a human to come to harm, thus contravening the first law. To enable robots to avoid getting caught on such dilemmas, they would need some capacity for moral reasoning. Ensuring robots had such a capacity would be really complex compared to Asimov's three laws.

If these speculations seem exaggerated, the day when they become important issues may be closer than you suspect. Computer scientist Bill Joy is not the only expert who has made the public start thinking about the dangers of robotics, and the Greenpeace has brought out a special report forcing people to debate the matter seriously. We should not be too alarmist, however. While the field of robotics is progressing rapidly, there is still some way to go before robots become as intelligent as Will Smith's fictional adversary. As Chris Melhuish, a leading British roboticist admits, 'The biggest threat our robots currently pose to humans is that you can trip over them.'

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

**10 points**

**1. Shoppers can't buy the domestic assistants mentioned in the first paragraph because they**

- A. are not yet in the shops.
- B. can only be acquired online.
- C. don't actually exist.
- D. are only available to filmgoers.

**2. Isaac Asimov's short stories differ from those of his contemporaries because they**

- A. were influenced by Karel Capek.
- B. are less imaginative.
- C. describe a world ruled by robots.
- D. are more grounded in science.

**3. Experts believe that protecting us from intelligent robots would be difficult because they**

- A. can't be controlled just by programming.
- B. can't be programmed to recognize adults.
- C. don't respond to casual requests.
- D. will never be able to obey orders.

**4. The example of a robot taking food to Africa is used to show that**

- A. robots are capable of unselfish actions.

- B. Asimov's laws require robots to think.
- C. travel is a difficult concept for robots.
- D. Robots can make moral judgements.

**5. Many experts think that the dangers posed by the science of robotics are**

- A. being covered up by experts.
- B. over-dramatised by pressure groups.
- C. overestimated by the public.
- D. worthy of more discussion.

**II. WRITING**

**40 points**

**A recent class discussion focused on the growing role of robots and artificial intelligence in everyday life.** You have been asked to write an **article** for your school website discussing whether robots are likely to replace humans in the workplace in the future. **(220-250 words)**