



**OLIMPIADA NAȚIONALĂ DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ - ETAPA LOCALĂ**  
**11 februarie 2026**  
**CLASA a IX-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**

People with greater working-memory capacity may be able to suppress unwanted memories according to Katherine Branson of University College London. She says that the process of inhibiting memories, or forgetting, uses up mental resources - that forgetting is an active rather than a passive process - and that it is surprisingly important for useful brain function. Many of our everyday memories aren't lost or thrown away, they are just **merged**. As time passes, the details drop away and only the broad outlines remain. You don't **reminisce** about every breakfast you ate as a child, but you will remember those foods you habitually ate or never liked. In other words, you remember the **essence** of breakfast past.

**A. Answer the following questions, according to the text. 8 points**

1. What kind of people can suppress undesirable memories?
2. In what way(s) is forgetting vital?
3. What is the impact of time passing on memories?
4. What kind of foods are typically recollected?

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

**6 points**

- |                      |               |              |            |                |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| <b>1. merged:</b>    | a. refreshed  | b. uncovered | c. blended | d. confused    |
| <b>2. reminisce:</b> | a. understand | b. recall    | c. evoke   | d. reconstruct |
| <b>3. essence:</b>   | a. main point | b. purpose   | c. flavour | d. role        |

**C. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. 6 points**

1. The brain can function properly due to people's ability to forget.  
If people ..... function properly.
2. People consider forgetting surprisingly important for useful brain function.  
Forgetting ..... for useful brain function.
3. Some recollections disappeared because of poor memory functioning.  
Some ..... to poor memory functioning.

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

For some, heroes are people who are (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (**WILL**) to take a stand while others sit idly by doing nothing, people who are anything but (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (**DIFFER**) to the problems which surround them. These heroes are (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (**THINK**) and don't hesitate to help out when needed. For others, heroes are (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (**ASSERT**) people who rarely feel (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (**SECURE**), even in the most challenging situations. Imagine the self-confidence and determination needed to start your own business, for example. Alternatively, a hero may be someone who refuses to (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (**WEAK**) in the face of adversity; for instance, a person who has overcome a great (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (**DIFFICULT**) such as a physical (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (**ABLE**). Perhaps a hero is someone who has been able to move past significant (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (**DISAPPOINT**), such as an athlete losing a major (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (**COMPETE**), only to return victorious the next year.

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

Do you feel the cold? If the answer is "yes", then why not try a cold bath or shower? This unusual advice (1) \_\_\_\_\_ from a natural health therapist in Germany (2) \_\_\_\_\_, for the last 30 years, has (3) \_\_\_\_\_ studying the effects of cold water. Most people are brought (4) \_\_\_\_\_ to believe that it's important to (5) \_\_\_\_\_ warm during the cold weather, with extra clothing and heaters, (6) \_\_\_\_\_ research shows that the opposite is true. At a German health centre, hundreds of visitors follow this advice by taking their first cold bath at 6 am, and come out feeling (7) \_\_\_\_\_ more relaxed. This is (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to the fact that the cold water increases blood sugar levels, the heart beat and breathing rate. New research at the medical centre of Hanover has (9) \_\_\_\_\_ that those taking daily cold baths have 50% (10) \_\_\_\_\_ colds and breathing problems than those who don't.

**SUBIECTUL B - INTEGRATED SKILLS****50 points****Read the text bellow and do the tasks that follow:****Food Scientist**

Hi there. I'm Ruth and I have always loved food. As a child, my favourite book was *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* with its rivers of chocolate and sweet trees created by the mysterious Willy Wonka. Now I'm at university studying to be a food scientist, and I hope to have the opportunity to help turn a dull cupcake into a colourful work of art that tastes great.

To become a food scientist, it's really important to have an interest in food and to study science at university. In particular, I'll need to learn how to change the appearance or taste of food by adding different ingredients. Some food scientists work on making food healthier for us to eat, but when I finish my studies I really want to get a job working with cakes. I want to design new flavours of icing with bright colours and brilliant decorations.

I know that sometimes the job can be hard work and I might need to spend hours in the laboratory testing chemicals for ingredients. I'll also need to wear a white coat, blue gloves, a hat and shoe covers. I don't think I'll enjoy wearing these clothes but sometimes it can become untidy in a laboratory and they are necessary to keep everything clean and safe. The equipment used in food laboratories can be very expensive and there are lots of different machines and computers.

In the future, more food scientists are going to be needed because companies are trying to make their products tastier and more attractive so that we'll buy more of them. Because of this, people are experimenting with food more than ever before. A famous chef and food scientist called Heston Blumenthal has made food with real gold, food that explodes and even orange-

flavoured jelly lights to decorate his home. His creations make me even more excited to work with food. At the same time, food scientists at NASA are developing a food printer for the astronauts to use to create tastier meals while on missions in space. My mission as a food scientist will be to make cupcakes even more delicious!

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

**10 points**

**1. What is Ruth doing in the text?**

- A. giving advice about how to bake cakes;
- B. encouraging people to study food science;
- C. explaining why food has different colours;
- D. giving information about a job she wants to do.

**2. What does Ruth say about food scientists?**

- A. They must enjoy eating everything;
- B. They should cook healthier meals;
- C. They mostly try to make food more colourful;
- D. They must know how to create different flavours.

**3. What is Ruth's attitude towards the special clothing?**

- A. She understands it is important for safety;
- B. She will refuse to wear it because it looks silly;
- C. She thinks it will be expensive to buy;
- D. She does not know how she will keep it clean.

**4. What effect has Heston Blumenthal had on Ruth?**

- A. He has changed her opinion about chefs;
- B. He has helped her to improve at cooking;
- C. He has made her more interested in food science;
- D. He has encouraged her to use gold in her cooking.

**5. What might Ruth write on her blog?**

- A. I love food science, but I know that it will be hard to get a job as a food scientist;
- B. I first became interested in food science after reading about a famous chef;
- C. I think that it is important for food to look fantastic as well as taste fantastic;
- D. When I am a food scientist, I'm going to make food for astronauts.

**II. WRITING**

**40 points**

Choose a restaurant you have recently visited and write a **review** of it. In your review, you should address the following:

- ✓ food quality (taste, presentation, portion sizes)
- ✓ service and atmosphere (staff friendliness, efficiency, décor, lighting, music, overall atmosphere)
- ✓ pricing and efficiency (value for money and affordability, speed of service and ease of reservations).

**Write your review in 180- 200 words.**