INSPECTORATUL SCOLAR JUDETEAN PRAHOVA

OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ – ETAPA LOCALA, 8.02.2025

CLASA a XI-a - SECȚIUNEA B

Varianta 1

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.

Mandy Price, aged nineteen years two months, and the acknowledged star of Mrs. Creasley's Nonesuch Secretarial Agency, set out on the morning of Tuesday, 14 September for her interview at the Peverell Press with no more **apprehension** than she usually felt at the start of a new job, an apprehension which was never acute and was rooted less in an anxiety as to whether she would satisfy the expectations of the **prospective** employer than in whether the employer would satisfy hers. She had learned of the job the previous Friday when she called in at the agency at six o'clock to collect her pay after a boring two-week stint with a director who regarded a secretary as a status symbol but had no idea how to use her skills, and she was ready for something new and preferably exciting although perhaps not as exciting as it was subsequently to prove.

Mrs. Creasley, for whom Mandy had worked for the past three years, conducted her agency from a couple of rooms above a newsagent and tobacconist's shop off the Whitechapel Road, a situation which she was fond of pointing out to her girls and clients, was convenient both for the City and the towering offices of Docklands. Neither had so far produced much in the way of business, but while other agencies **foundered** in the waves of recession, Mrs. Creasley's small and underprovisioned ship was still afloat, if precariously. Except for the help of one of her girls when no outside work was available, she ran the agency single-handed.

A. Answer the following questions. 8 points

1. Why was Mandy Price usually slightly apprehensive when going to a new job?
2. What was the main reason the director had hired Mandy?
3. Why did Mrs. Creasley consider the agency's position in relation to the city and Docklands to be advantageous?
4. In what way could Mrs. Creasley be considered a more successful businesswoman than others?

B. Choose the right synonym. 6 points

1. **apprehension** A. comprehension B. worry C. appreciation D. content
2. **prospective** A. previous B. foreign C. potential C. promising
3. **foundered** A. failed B. struggled C. thrived D. invested

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

1. She had learned of the job the previous Friday when she called in at the agency at six o'clock to collect her pay.
If she hadn't called in the previous Friday, she .....of the job.
2. She called in at the agency at six o'clock to collect her pay.
She called in at the agency ..... to collecting her pay.
3. The location was convenient both for the City and the towering offices of Docklands.
.....convenient for the city but also for the towering offices of Docklands.

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

The importance of symbols

A symbol is a word or even a picture that may be familiar in daily life, but possesses specific connotations over and above its standard and obvious meaning. It points to something vague or (1) ___ (MYSTERY), something which is normally hidden from us or may even be quite (2) ___ (COMPREHEND). On Cretan monuments, for instance, (3) ___ (ENGRAVE) in the form of a double-headed axe are often found. We know what this object is, but we do not know what it symbolises or what its (4) ___ (IMPLY) were for the people who used it. Since there are (5) ___ (NUMBER) things beyond the range of human understanding, we use symbolic terms all the time to represent concepts that are shrouded in (6) ___ (OBSCURE) or what we cannot fully understand. This is one reason why religions (7) ___ (WORLD) employ symbolic language or images. Man also produces symbols spontaneously in the (8) ___ (DEEP) of the unconscious mind, in the form of dreams. Our (9) ___ (PERCEIVE) of reality is enormously complex, and it is not (10) ___ (WHOLE) clear how events in our lives are recorded by our minds. What is clear, however, is that the unconscious aspect of any event is revealed to us in dreams – not as a rational thought but as a symbol.

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 New Magus5 Mini Tablet

I couldn't wait to get my hands on a new Magus5 when it came onto the market last year. If (1) _____ I could afford one! Of course I (2) _____,so I decided I would save up and try to get one (3) _____ the end of the summer. As I'd been working every Saturday morning in a café round the corner, I (4) _____ the manager if he'd increase my hours. Luckily, he said yes (5) _____ I started working full days on Saturdays, and occasionally on Sunday mornings. I also did loads of babysitting after school and saved not (6) _____ what I earned, but also the pocket money my parents gave me every week. Then, I (7) _____ a windfall. Both my parents and grandparents gave me some money for my birthday, so at (8) _____ I was able to buy my Magus5 mini tablet. You can imagine my excitement when we ordered it online. I chose the white one because it looked (9) _____ sleeker than the black one. It has all the qualities of a larger tablet, but it is small enough to fit (10) _____ a handbag or even a large pocket.

SUBIECTUL B- INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)
Read the text below and do the tasks that follow.

I. For each question decide which answer (A, B, C or D) fits best according to the text. 10 points

According to Childwise, a leading specialist market research group for children and young people, children of all ages are spending an average of six-and-a-half hours a day in front of a screen, with teenage boys spending up to eight hours a day. Kids are watching TV shows and films, playing video games, using social media, texting, surfing the web, and so on. But is spending so much time in front of tablets, smartphones or TVs such a bad thing? Surely TV programmes and educational apps can help children sharpen their developing brains and improve their communication skills. Used in moderation, might they not even be advantageous? They are certainly a welcome break for parents wanting a bit of peace and quiet. However, there have been a number of worrying studies connecting delayed cognitive development in children with prolonged exposure to electronic media, especially when this starts at a very young age.

As psychologist Dr. Aric Sigman explains, allowing very young children to spend an excessive amount of time in front of a screen can cause permanent damage to their still developing brains. This, says Dr. Sigman, 'is the very thing impeding the development of the abilities that parents are so eager to foster through the tablets. The ability to focus, to concentrate, to lend attention, to sense other people's attitudes and communicate with them, to build a large vocabulary – all those abilities are harmed'. In other words, parents who are trying to give their children an advantage by letting them use an educational app, for example, might in fact unknowingly be stunting the development of their children's brains, unless they significantly limit the amount of screen time, relative to the age of the child. Sigman believes that the younger the child, the fewer hours they should spend at a screen. This is especially true for children up to the age of three, which is when the brain is developing at its quickest and is at its most sensitive. It is crucial, therefore, that during this critical period in a child's development, the stimuli they are getting is from the real world and not from a screen. Children who follow a story on a smartphone, for example, will have images and words readily available to them. They will not have to make an effort in the way they would if they were being told a story by a parent, when they not only have to work hard to follow the storyline, but they have to use their imagination to visualise it as well: when having to think for themselves, their cognitive abilities grow. In front of a screen, however, being spoon-fed information, their cognitive muscles aren't developing and can remain stunted.

This is even more alarming when you realise that, according to recent surveys, over 90 per cent of one-year-olds have already used a mobile device. Not only can this inhibit a baby's development, it can also cause difficulties with sleep and concentration. And as children grow up, things can only get worse. As Oxford-based child psychiatrist, Dr. Hayley van Zwanenberg, explains: 'There is ample evidence to demonstrate the negative effects of screen time on older children, particularly on those using screens for more than three hours a day; these include structural and functional brain imaging changes, increases in emotional distress and higher rates of anxiety and depressive symptoms, as well as lack of sleep. The pre-school years are particularly vital for developing non-verbal skills that young people miss completely when using screens.'

Overuse of screens has also been found to lead to problems making friends. Children need the stimulus of real interaction with others in order to learn how to communicate. The only way to learn how to read facial expressions, understand tone of voice, and empathise with others, for example, is by practising in the real world with other children and adults. No amount of screen time can teach this. Furthermore, it is just as easy for very young children to become addicted to their screens, as it is for older children and adults. The instant gratification of a swipe on a screen causes the brain to release dopamine, the pleasure hormone. This chemical is what causes addiction and can lead children to prefer their gadgets to real-world, complicated interactions, which are not so easily

controlled and require harder work to navigate. So should parents ban all screen time? Experts don't all agree, but the US Department of Health recommends that children under two should not be exposed to any screens at all, not even the TV. After that screens should be limited to a maximum of two hours a day. The French government has gone further by banning all digital terrestrial TV aimed at children under the age of three. There are similar guidelines in Australia and Canada. The UK has yet to follow suit, but a recent government press release has warned that too much screen time for young children is linked to sedentary lifestyles, and lower levels of self-esteem. The bottom line: moderation is key, make sure you limit the hours spent.

1 In the introductory paragraph, the author's main aim is to
a shock the reader with the amount of time children spend in front of a screen.
b convey some facts about children's use of screens and question their advantages.
c prove that time in front of screens can be beneficial.
d question whether screen time is so bad for children.

2 What do both Dr. Aric Sigman and Dr. Hayley van Zwanenberg believe?
a There should be little or no screen time for children under three.
b Brain development suffers if a child spends too much time in front of a screen.
c Too much screen time can cause depression.
d Children's sleep patterns can be disrupted by too much screen time.

3 What, according to the text, can be damaged in children by overuse of screens?
a Language development, friendships, cognitive skills, sleep and relationships, mood, obesity.
b Addictive behaviours, obesity, verbal skills, making friends and getting enough sleep.
c Cognitive skills, verbal and non-verbal skills, sleep patterns, the ability to make friends and empathise, emotional states.
d Learning how to empathise, language development, building relationships, muscle development.

4 According to the text, addiction to screens
a is less prevalent in young children. .
b increases dopamine levels.
c is more dangerous for younger children.
d can happen at all ages equally

5 The US, France and Canada
a have made recommendations to limit screen time for very young children.
b have banned all screens for children under two.
c have banned TV for toddlers and babies.
d recommend only educational TV programmes aimed at the under-twos.

II. Starting from the text above write an article on the following topic: "Digital Footprints: Understanding the Effects of Screen Time on Children". You should include in your essay both positive and negative effects of screen time on children, physical and mental health concerns and future considerations.

The best articles will be published in your school magazine.

Write your article (220- 250 words)

50 points