

OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ ETAPA LOCALĂ, 25 februarie 2023

CLASA A XII-A, SECȚIUNEA B-Bilingv/Intensiv Varianta 1

Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.

- Pentru rezolvarea corectă a tuturor subiectelor din Partea A și Partea B se acordă 100 de puncte.
- Timpul de lucru este 3 ore.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.

SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH

(40 points)

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

(20 points)

Why long-distance runners should take barefoot running seriously

To many long-distance runners, the idea of running with no sneakers on sounds preposterous. Understandably, perhaps, these runners recoil from the thought of venturing out onto the streets barefoot and letting the tender flesh of their soles come into painful contact with a hard, rough, uneven, and often filthy concrete surface. Why would anyone in their right mind willingly subject their feet to such punishment?

Before long-distance running enthusiasts rush to dismiss the idea of barefoot running, however, they should consider the arguments in favor of this practice. Barefoot running is as old as running itself. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors would run in pursuit of small prey, such as a young pig, and keep up the high-speed chase until the poor creature *collapsed* from exhaustion. The first humans obviously performed these feats of long distance endurance with no sneakers on their feet. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that the human body has naturally evolved to run barefoot.

This hypothesis seems to be confirmed in places like Kenya, where some of the best runners in the world can be found. There, running is a principal means of transportation, and runners cover large distances daily, without wearing shoes. Yet foot, ankle and knee injuries are practically unheard of. This is explained by simple anatomical mechanics. Barefoot runners land on the ground with the front part of the foot, called ‘the ball of the foot’. This provides natural shock absorption. By contrast, runners wearing sneakers run in such a way that it is the heel of the foot that lands on the ground first, sending a sharp shock through the joints. Because running shoes have soft *soles*, wearers do not feel this nasty *jolt*, and they therefore feel no need to adjust their stride so that the ball of the foot lands first.

But what about new designs of running sneakers that supposedly encourage the wearer to naturally switch to a new running style? Don’t these new sneakers make actual barefoot running unnecessary? In these designs, the sole is slightly lower at the front than at the heel, to encourage the runner to land with the ball of the foot first. It was while wearing such a design that the Kenyan athlete Eliud Kipchoge completed the first sub-2-hour marathon, thereby lending further weight to the claim that this new generation of running shoes is not only safe but conducive to optimum performance as well.

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

1. What hypothesis does the writer make about barefoot running?
2. What is the new design of running shoes, described in paragraph 4, meant to do?
3. In sentence 3 of paragraph 2, what does the phrase “the poor creature” refer to?
4. In sentence 4 of paragraph 3, what does the word “This” refer to?

B. Choose the synonym for the words given below, according to their meaning in the text. (6 points)

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. jolt: | a) surprise | b) shock | c) collision |
| 2. soles: | a) pelma | b) paw | c) shoe-pad |
| 3. collapsed | a) slumped | b) failed | c) lost |

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

1. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors would run in pursuit of small prey.

Our hunter-gatherer ancestors

2. This new generation of running shoes is not only safe but conducive to optimum performance as well.

Not only

3. This is explained by simple anatomical mechanics.

Simple

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

1. The noise above was scarcely _____ and he left home. **TOLERATE**
2. It has been discovered that there was an Iron Age _____ in this area. **SETTLE**
3. _____ behaviour is to be put down to lack of education as well. **SOCIAL**
4. The government promised to _____ the public transport next year. **SUBSIDY**
5. She is not exactly _____, but she is not very good at counting. **NUMERATE**
6. That school was known for its discipline and _____. **SEVERE**
7. We were shocked by the _____ damage. **EXTEND**
8. A few _____ of furniture and household goods were given away. **REMAIN**
9. We can admire century-old _____ in this museum. **POTTER**
10. My uncle left the army and became a _____ again. **CIVIL**

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

AN ECONOMIC PROBLEM

Inflation is not a new phenomenon, (0) *but* one that has existed at various times in various places. In (1) _____ severest form, (2) _____, hyperinflation can destroy a nation’s economy. (3) _____ happened in revolutionary France and Weimar Germany, (4) _____ bundles of notes were needed to pay for a loaf of bread. But what is inflation? Briefly, it may be defined (5) _____ a continual increase in prices affecting the economy. The rate of

inflation is determined (6) _____ changes in the price level which is an average of all prices. When (7) _____ prices rise while others fall, this will not necessarily affect the price level, as inflation occurs (8) _____ if most major prices increase. The problem with inflation is that it reduces the value of purchasing power of money, as well as eroding people's savings. Wage increases which are below or equal (9) _____ the level of inflation will result in a declining or static (10) _____ of living for workers, while wage increases above the rate of inflation will merely stoke the fire for further inflation.

SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS

(60 points)

Read the text below and do the tasks that follow.

How the human brain reacts to criticism

Everyone knows what it is like to receive praise, just as everyone knows what it is like to be on the receiving end of criticism. Yet it is usually the latter experience that leaves a more lasting impression. Childhood memories of being reprimanded by a teacher tend to be particularly vivid, and this highlights the long-term psychological impact of criticism. Even in adulthood, negative comments have surprising power, with people deeply affected by the criticism they hear from others.

While constructive criticism and balanced feedback can be as motivating as admiration and praise, the influence of overly severe criticism should be of concern, especially in the online age. Social media users expose themselves to unwelcome criticism, whether this is explicit and deliberate, such as a sarcastic reply in an online dispute, or implicit and probably accidental, such as the 'friend request' that receives no response. Therefore, it is worth considering the psychological reasons why human beings are naturally oversensitive to criticism in order to better manage our natural tendency to magnify critical comments from others.

The first thing to understand is that criticism is often seen as a negative stimulus, and humans have specifically evolved to respond strongly to negative stimuli. A part of the brain called the amygdala permanently stores memories of traumatic experiences, and it triggers immediate fear responses. From an evolutionary point of view, this makes perfect sense: the more the brain pays attention to negative stimuli, the less likely it is that we will fall victim to a sudden danger. However, this important survival mechanism for our prehistoric ancestors can result in creating difficulties for modern humans. Chronic stress and anxiety disorders have been attributed to hyperactivity in the amygdala. This may also be the reason why the human mind becomes fixated on the experience of being criticized.

Modern culture intensifies the problem, by making politeness the norm and criticism the exception. Behavioral psychologists describe polite comments, such as 'Have a nice day!' and 'Good job!', as repeated stimuli that have become overly familiar or 'habituated'. According to the theory of habituation, we stop devoting attention to these kinds of unthreatening stimuli, and instead we react strongly to stimuli that are unfamiliar and might pose an imminent threat. Here again, this mechanism makes perfect evolutionary sense: by reducing the demands on the brain, habituation allowed our ancestors to save their mental energy so they could respond to potentially dangerous changes in their environment. Yet this survival mechanism has become disadvantageous in the modern age, making people desensitized to politeness and praise, and overly sensitive to the occasional harsh comment.

A further factor to consider is that the codes of politeness used in a culture may cause people to question the sincerity of praise they receive. People are aware that they frequently offer compliments only out of politeness, and not because they really mean it. Because humans are self-centered by nature, they automatically perceive in others the same motives and tendencies that they have themselves, and they therefore assume that any praise they receive must be as insincere as much of the praise they offer others. The opposite is true, however, when it comes to criticism. Because criticizing someone involves breaching the accepted social code of politeness, people generally avoid doing so unless they sincerely mean it. From this, it is thus easy for people to conclude that other people's criticism must be equally genuine.

When facing criticism, it is important for a person to remember the brain's natural mechanisms – the amygdala's sensitivity to negative stimuli, the habituation of politeness, and the assumption that praise is less sincere than criticism – and how it is these that give negative comments their sting, not the validity or otherwise of the comments themselves. This simple understanding makes it easier to distinguish between constructive criticism, which should be welcomed, and malicious criticism, which should be dismissed.

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

1. What is the writer's main purpose?
 - A. to advise the reader how to react to negative criticism
 - B. to warn the reader about the risks of being too sensitive
 - C. to convince the reader that all feedback is important
 - D. to inform the reader about the evolution of the brain
2. According to the writer, what is the difference between praise and criticism?
 - A. Most criticism is encountered during childhood.
 - B. Praise is given more often by teachers than criticism.
 - C. Criticism seems to have a longer-lasting effect.
 - D. Adults are less affected by criticism than by praise.
3. What does the writer say about social media?
 - A. There are numerous online debates about criticism.
 - B. Many users are at risk of being unfairly criticized.
 - C. Social media sites give advice on handling criticism.
 - D. Using social media sites can be highly motivating.
4. According to the text, what is the function of the amygdala?
 - A. to produce chronic stress
 - B. to help avoid danger
 - C. to deal with criticism
 - D. to reduce negative stimuli
5. According to the writer, why has praise become a 'habituated' stimulus?
 - A. Praise does not serve any evolutionary purpose.
 - B. Praise causes increased demands on the brain.
 - C. Praise is considered polite in modern society.
 - D. Praise is not perceived as dangerous by the brain.

II. Starting from the text above, write an essay giving your opinion on the following statement: *Praise should be given more often by teachers than criticism.* (250-280 words)

(50 points)

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BAREM

SUBIECTUL A – USE OF ENGLISH (40 points)

I. Read the text below and do the tasks that follow. (20 points)

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

1. Evolution has shaped the human body to run barefoot.
2. Encourage the runner to land with the ball of the foot first.
3. An animal being hunted, for instance a pig.
4. The fact that Kenyan barefoot runners rarely suffer injuries

B. Choose the synonym for the words given below, according to their meaning in the text. (6 points)

1. 1. b, 2. c, 3. a

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

1. ... used to run in pursuit of small prey.
2. ... is this new generation of running shoes safe, but also conducive to optimum performance.
3. ... anatomical mechanics explains this.

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

1. TOLERABLE, 2. SETTLEMENT, 3. ANTISOCIAL, 4. SUBSIDIZE, 5. INNUMERATE, 6. SEVERITY, 7. EXTENSIVE, 8. REMNANTS, 9. POTTERY, 10. CIVILIAN

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

1. its, 2. however, 3. This, 4. where, 5. as, 6. by, 7. some, 8. only, 9. to, 10. standard.

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

- 1) A, 2. C, 3. B, 4. B, 5.D

MARKING SCHEME FOR THE OPINION ESSAY

Analytical criteria	Exemplary 10p	Proficient 8p	Partially Proficient 6p	Weak 4p	Incomplete 2p	Points
CONTENT	The essay is completely relevant to topic, the introduction clearly stating opinion, whilst the contents offer arguments to support it, followed by a counterargument, leading to a conclusion in which the opinion is restated.	The essay is fairly completed, the opinion in the introduction being further developed with arguments and relevant ideas, the counterargument is present but could be better substantiated, the conclusion is present but the restated opinion might be missing	The essay is partially relevant to topic, there is no opinion formulated in the first paragraph, which leads to inconsistencies in the logical development of arguments.	The essay is faulty, including serious logical impediments in the sequencing of arguments / ideas.	The essay is wholly inadequate, there is no opinion in the first paragraph, while the arguments offered lack logical development.	
ORGANIZATION AND COHESION	There is complete logical connection of paragraphs due to a judicious use of linking devices, mechanics, and length requirements.	There is a fairly completion of paragraph organization due to scarce misuse of linking devices, mechanics, and length requirements.	There is partial completion of the task. Paragraphs are partially complete due to unfinished ideas and scarce use of linking devices, mechanics, and length requirements.	There is serious inconsistency in the organization of the paragraphs due to the misuse of the linking devices, mechanics, and length requirements.	Paragraphs are incomplete, both linking devices, mechanics, and length requirements having been disrespected.	
VOCABULARY	A wide range of vocabulary is used appropriately and accurately throughout the essay; precise meaning is conveyed; minor errors are rare; spelling is very well controlled. The register of the opinion essay is totally relevant to the task, being organically integrated all along the discourse.	A range of vocabulary is used appropriately and accurately in the essay; occasional errors in word choice/formation are possible; spelling is well controlled with occasional slips. The register of the opinion essay is relevant to the task with slightly incongruent lapses within the discourse	The range of vocabulary is adequately used in the essay; errors in word choice / formation are present when more sophisticated items of vocabulary are attempted; spelling can be faulty at times The register of the opinion essay is partially relevant to the task with a narrow inconsistency of style, leading to halts in the logical development of ideas.	A limited range of vocabulary is present within the essay; less common items of vocabulary are rare and may be often faulty; spelling errors can make text understanding difficult. The register of the essay is inconsistent due to the mixture of styles	A very narrow range of vocabulary is present; errors in word choice/formation predominate; spelling errors can make the essay obscure at times. The register used in the opinion essay is inappropriate for this type of writing.	
STRUCTURES	A wide range of grammatical structures is used accurately and flexibly throughout the essay; minor errors are rare;	A range of grammatical structures is used accurately and with some flexibility along the essay; occasional errors are possible;	A mix of complex and simple grammatical structures is present throughout the essay; errors are present when	A limited range of grammatical structures is present along the essay; complex language is rare and may be often faulty;	A very narrow range of grammatical structures is present within the essay; errors predominate; punctuation errors make the text obscure at times.	



	punctuation is very well controlled.	punctuation is well controlled with occasional slips.	complex language is attempted; punctuation can be faulty at times.	punctuation errors can make text understanding difficult.			
EFFECT ON TARGET READER	The interest of the reader is aroused and sustained throughout.	The text has a good effect on the reader.	The effect on the reader is satisfactory.	The effect on the reader non-relevant.	The text has a negative effect on the reader.		