

**OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ**  
**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.**

The periodic table – that set of boxes you remember hanging on the wall of your chemistry class – is many things. It’s an invaluable tool for organizing the building blocks of the universe. Its columns and rows is a microcosm of the history of science. And it’s also a storybook, containing all the wonderful and clever and ugly aspects of being human. From simple hydrogen at the top left to the man-made impossibilities at the bottom that can only be conjured into existence for fractions of a second, the periodic table describes every single known element: the chemical substances that, separately or combined, make up everything we can see or sense around us. We eat and breathe the periodic table; people bet and lose huge sums on it; it poisons people; it spawns wars.

Some elements have been important since the early days of civilization. However, simply relying on the elements we found around us was never enough. For thousands of years, alchemists attempted to unearth new elements, and study their properties. But it was not until the late 1700s that our knowledge of the elements really took off, as chemists developed new ways to purify and isolate elements. Such research was, in terms of the technology of the time, incredibly cutting-edge. The discovery of dozens of elements challenged scientists. Biology had the Tree of Life, which linked the various species and phyla – but did anything similar exist to organise the elements? Or were they inherently chaotic, a jumble of substances that could be arranged equally well by any old trait? The answer, of course, was that there was a pattern – and it’s embodied in the periodic table. **8 points**

**A. Answer the following questions.**

1. What does the writer refer to by „building blocks of the universe”?
2. How is the periodic table perceived to be in the first paragraph?
3. How did researchers manage to study the properties of elements?
4. What is the periodic table compared to in the second paragraph?

**6 points**

**B. Choose the right synonym.**

1. **unearth:** A. determine B. dig out C. discover D. excavate
2. **inherently:** A. intrinsically B. congenitally C. imminently D. natively
3. **spawn:** A. create B. design C. originate D. spark

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

**6 points**

1. The discovery of dozens of elements challenged scientists.

Unless dozens .....been challenged.

2. But it was not until the late 1700s that our knowledge of the elements really took off, as chemists developed new ways to purify and isolate elements.

Not until the late 1700s ....., as chemists developed new ways to purify and isolate elements.

3. For thousands of years, alchemists attempted to unearth new elements, and study their properties.

For thousands of years, ..... by alchemists to unearth new elements, and study their properties.

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

**10 points**

One more chance! That’s all we’re giving you to tell us about your favourite restaurant and boost its chances of becoming the (1)\_\_\_\_\_ **WIN** of our Restaurant of the Year competition. This is the last time the official (2)\_\_\_\_\_ **NOMINATE** form will appear in the paper and next Thursday is the final date for (3)\_\_\_\_\_

**RECEIVE** of completed forms. Over the past few weeks we have been swamped by a paper mountain as (4) \_\_\_\_\_ **DINE** across the city jot down the compelling reasons why they believe their (5) \_\_\_\_\_ **CHOOSE** restaurant should definitely win our hotly (6) \_\_\_\_\_ **CONTEST** competition. Once the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ **DEAD** has passed, our judges will sit down and count all the forms. The three restaurants which receive the most votes will then be visited by the judges. These visits will of course be (8) \_\_\_\_\_ **ANNOUNCE**, so the restaurants themselves will not know that the judges are there. After their visits, the judges will make their final (9) \_\_\_\_\_ **DECIDE** over who wins the (10) \_\_\_\_\_ **PRESTIGE** title 'Restaurant of the Year'.

**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**

It has been described as the solution to a problem nobody realised existed. But that hasn't stopped the self-attaching Post-it note – that little square piece of paper that sticks in (1) \_\_\_\_\_ a clever way that it can be removed, leaving no damage – (2) \_\_\_\_\_ becoming an essential piece of stationery worldwide. (3) \_\_\_\_\_ so many other simple inventions, the Post-it note was invented by accident. A scientist working for a US company was attempting to develop a super-strong adhesive, (4) \_\_\_\_\_ instead came up with a super-weak one. It was just strong (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to stick light objects together.

**SUBJECTUL B- INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)**

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

**IMAGE AND THE CITY**

In the city, we are barraged with images of the people we might become. Identity is presented as plastic, a matter of possessions and appearances; and a very large proportion of the urban landscape is taken up by slogans, advertisements, flatly photographed images of folk heroes—the man who turned into a sophisticated dandy overnight by drinking a particular brand of drink, the girl who transformed herself into a femme fatale with a squirt of cheap scent.

If the characters they represent really are heroes, then they clearly have no individual claim to speak for society as a whole. The clean-cut and the shaggy, innocents, brutes, home-lovers, adventurers, clowns all compete for our attention and invite emulation. As a gallery, they do provide a glossy mirror of the aspirations of a representative city crowd; but it is exceedingly hard to discern a single dominant style, an image of how most people would like to see themselves. Even in the business of the mass-production of images of identity, this shift from the general to the diverse and particular is quite recent.

Consider another line of stills: the back-lit, soft-focus portraits of the first and second generations of great movie stars. There is a degree of romantic unparticularity in the face of each one, as if they were communal dream-projections of society at large. Only in the specialized genres of westerns and gangster movies were stars allowed to have odd, knobbly cadaverous faces. The hero as loner belonged to history or the underworld: he spoke from the perimeter of society, reminding us of its dangerous edges. The stars of the last decade have looked quite different. Soft-focus photography has gone, to be replaced by a style which searches out warts and bumps, emphasizes the uniqueness not the generality of the face. Voices, too, are strenuously distinctive; whines, stammers and low rumbles are exploited as features of 'star quality'. Instead of romantic heroes and heroines, we have a hard-edged style in which isolation and egotism are assumed as natural social conditions. In the movies, as in the city, the sense of stable hierarchy has become increasingly exhausted; we no longer live in a world where we can all share the same values, the same heroes. The isolate and the eccentric push towards the centre of the stage; their fashions and mannerisms are presented as having as good a claim to the limelight and the future as those of anyone else. In the crowd on the underground platform, one may observe a honeycomb of fully-worked-out worlds, each private, exclusive, bearing little comparison with its nearest neighbour. What is prized in one is despised in another. There are no clear rules about how one is supposed to manage one's body, dress, talk, or think. Though there are elaborate protocols and etiquettes among particular cults and groups within the city, they subscribe to no common standard. For the new arrival, this disordered abundance is the city's most evident and alarming quality. He feels as if he has parachuted into a funfair of contradictory imperatives. There are so many people he might become, and a suit of clothes, a make of car, a brand of cigarettes, will go some way towards turning him into a personage even before he has

discovered who that personage is. Personal identity has always been deeply rooted in property, but hitherto the relationship has been a simple one - a question of buying what you could afford, and leaving your wealth to announce your status.

Literature and art are promoted as personal accessories: the paintings of Mondrian or the novels of Samuel Beckett 'go' with certain styles like matching handbags. There is in the city a creeping imperialism of taste, in which more and more commodities are made over to being mere expressions of personal identity. The piece of furniture, the pair of shoes, the book, the film, are important not so much in themselves but for what they communicate about their owners; and ownership is stretched to include what one likes or believes in as well as what one can buy.

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

1. What does the writer imply about portraits of old movie stars?
  - A. They tried to disguise the less attractive features of their subjects.
  - B. Most people did not think they were accurate representations of the stars in them.
  - C. They made people feel that their own faces were rather unattractive.
  - D. They reflected an era in which people felt basically safe.
2. What does the writer suggest about the stars of the last decade?
  - A. Some of them may be uncomfortable about the way they come across.
  - B. They make an effort to speak in a way that may not be pleasant on the ear.
  - C. They make people wonder whether they should become more selfish.
  - D. Most people accept that they are not typical of society as a whole.
3. The writer uses the crowd on an underground platform to exemplify his belief that
  - A. no single attitude to life is more common than another in a city.
  - B. no one in a city has strict attitudes towards the behaviour of others.
  - C. views of what society was like in the past are often inaccurate.
  - D. people in cities would like to have more in common with each other.
4. The writer implies that new arrivals in a city may
  - A. change the image they wish to have too frequently.
  - B. underestimate the importance of wealth.
  - C. acquire a certain image without understanding what that involves.
  - D. decide that status is of little importance.
5. What point does the writer make about city dwellers in the final paragraph?
  - A. They are unsure as to why certain things are popular with others.
  - B. They are aware that judgments are made about them according to what they buy.
  - C. They want to acquire more and more possessions.
  - D. They are keen to be the first to appreciate new styles.

**II. Starting from the text above, write a for-and-against essay on “Advertising is the greatest art form of the twentieth century”. (220- 250 words) 50 points**