

**OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ
CLASA A XII-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. (20 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. 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.

A. Answer the following questions: 8 points

1. What is the author's main aim in the first paragraph?
2. What, according to the text, can be damaged in children by overuse of screens?
3. What are the advantages mentioned in the text?
4. What stimulus do children need in order to empathise with others?

B. Choose the right synonym: 6 points

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. to foster | A to renounce | B to encourage | C to ooze | D to spin |
| 2. to stunt | A to prevent | B to soothe | C to revamp | D exempt |
| 3. to empathise | A to wind | B to enact | C to linger | D to sympathise |

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

6 points

1. The children`s ability to concentrate and communicate would improve if they didn`t spend so much time in front of the screen.
The children`s ability to concentrate and communicate would improve on..... spend so much time in front of the screen.
2. TV programmes and educational apps are used to help children sharpen their brains.
TV programmes and educational apps are used.....sharpen their brains.
3. The only way to empathise with others is by practicing in the real world.
In order to empathise with others children.....in the real world.

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

10 points

We often think of consumerism as a new phenomenon brought about by **(1 INDUSTRY)**. We bemoan the good old days when people were happy with their lot and didn`t always crave new things, fashionable clothes and new furnishings for their house. But conspicuous consumption is much older than we might imagine. The Chinese poet Lin Sumen wrote in 1808 about the super-rich flaunting their wealth, about women **(2. YEARN)** for the latest fashion, hoping to achieve **(3. SOPHISTICATED)** at last, despite the fact that with sleeves almost half a metre wide, they surely must look quite ridiculous. But is consumerism such a bad thing? However **(4. SIMPLE)** it might sound, the truth is we can`t really survive without it. Our economy depends **(5. ENTIRE)** on consumer spending, perpetuated by our never-ending need for the new. Unless we are in the service sector, or doctors, teachers or lawyers, we are most likely to be involved in one way or another with consumerism. There is no doubt that our houses are stuffed with an **(6. ABUNDANT)** of things we don`t need and don`t want any more, things we`ve hardly ever used, clothes never worn, gadgets **(7. DISCARD)** once a better one comes along. It is a very strong-minded person who isn`t seduced at some point or another by some useless but **(8. ALLURE)** new contraption or item of clothing. And so, despite the **(9. DETRIMENT)** effects of overwork, people work harder and harder to afford all the tat they don`t need. And although consumerism is the bedrock of our economy it is also **(10. INSTRUMENT)** in much of our downfall. We are overburdened with huge debts which we won`t be able to pay back, all for the sake of stuff we never really needed. As Scottish thinker James Steuart wrote in 1770, `men are forced to labour now because they are slaves to their own wants`.

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

When I left home to go to university last year, I knew my mum would find it hard, but I never thought it would be my brother who would end up missing me most. In **(1)** _____ we should have realised just how difficult it would be for him to be like an only child all of a sudden. My sister had left the **(2)** _____ year, but it never occurred to us that my brother would be so upset **(3)** _____ my leaving. Family dynamics had certainly changed. It finally **(4)** _____ on me that he was actually feeling quite low. Luckily, however, my brother began to find having the house to himself quite liberating, not least when he got a girlfriend and me and my sister weren`t there to tease him **(5)**..... it!

SUBJECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)

Read the text below and do the tasks that follow.

The Higher They Climb, the Harder They Fall

Lance Armstrong was the embodiment of ambition and fierce determination in the face of incredible odds. He fought and beat cancer, then went on to win the Tour de France an incredible seven times straight. He

pocketed millions of dollars from sponsorship deals and enjoyed the kind of acclaim reserved only for rock stars. But all along, there were rumours. Was he really such a magnificent athlete or was there something murky behind his spectacular success?

Initially, many Armstrong supporters pointed out that during his seven Tour de France victories, he was the most drug-tested athlete in the world, and that he never tested positive. But cycling is rife with banned performance-enhancing drugs, and many cyclists who never failed a drug test have gone on to admit their guilt later, such as Tour de France winner Bjarne Riis. In 2007, Riis admitted taking EPO, growth hormone and cortisone from 1993 to 1998, including during his 1996 Tour de France win. Some people believe there is evidence to suggest that Armstrong did, in fact, return positive results, but was protected by various cycling bodies so as not to ruin the image of the sport. It cannot be forgotten that Armstrong's amazing journey from near death to sporting triumph had created a whole new generation of cycling enthusiasts.

Although he was never caught red-handed, the World Anti-Doping Agency had no choice but to strip him of all his titles. How could WADA not? Armstrong had worked with trainers who were caught doping their athletes, and he had former teammates, friends and associates inform on him. Forced to publicly apologise to Livestrong (his cancer support organisation), he then confessed to doping in an interview with Oprah Winfrey, though he refrained from revealing his methods. From the height of fame, Armstrong is now in the depths of infamy.

The Greatest athlete You've Never Heard of

Trischa Zorn owns the title of the greatest ever Paralympian. The swimmer, blind since birth, competed in seven consecutive Paralympic Games from Arnhem in the Netherlands in 1980 to Athens, Greece in 2004.

She won a staggering 55 medals consisting of 41 gold, nine silver and five bronze. Zorn is humble about her success, stating that as a swimmer, she was simply fortunate enough to be able to compete in multiple events.

She first experienced the Games at the age of 16. Since then, the Paralympics have changed enormously. Back in 1980, few people had heard of the Paralympics. The US Paralympic athletes had to pay their own way to attend the Games, and pay for their uniforms. The able-bodied athletes, on the other hand, were funded by the state. 1988 was the first time that the Paralympics were held at the same venues as the Olympics. 1992 was the first time national anthems were played during the medal ceremony for Paralympic champions.

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

10 points

- 1 According to the writer of the first article, cyclists were able to get away with doping because
 - a no one they knew had spoken out against them.
 - b none of them felt guilty until much later.
 - c it was more important to protect the sport.
 - d they were only tested for three substances.
- 2 Which statement about Lance Armstrong is true?
 - a He has not explained how he managed to avoid detection.
 - b He enjoys being treated like a celebrity rock star.
 - c There were no suspicions of doping until he confessed.
 - d His name still appears as a Tour de France winner.
- 3 What does Trischa Zorn attribute her medal success to?
 - a competing in seven different Paralympics
 - b being in a sport for which there are many races

- c striving to be as worthy as an Olympian
 - d knowing there would be a cash bonus for winners
- 4 According to the writer of the second article, the Paralympic Games
- a cost less than the Olympic Games.
 - b take place in different arenas to the Olympics.
 - c only began medal ceremonies for winners in 1992.
 - d are beginning to resemble the Olympics in some ways.
- 5 Which aspect of sport do the two articles have in common?
- a cash incentives paid for individual titles or medals
 - b methods and incentives for achieving success
 - c upholding standards of moral behaviour
 - d illegal activities in the pursuit of success

II. Write an *opinion essay* starting from the statement: The idea of `Mens sana in corpore sano` is simply a myth . (250-280 words) 50 points

