

**Etapa județeană/sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2024**

**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a VIII-a**

- Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii.
- Nu se acordă puncte din oficiu.
- Timpul efectiv de lucru este de 2 ore.

**SUBIECTUL I – USE OF ENGLISH (25 points)**

**I.1. Read the following text and fill in the blanks with the correct verb forms.**

**10 points**

Lena (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (always, love) cooking. She (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (try) many different recipes over the years, always experimenting with new ingredients and techniques. Recently, she (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (spend) hours in the kitchen, kneading dough and shaping noodles. She knows that as long as she (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (keep) practising, she will continue to improve her culinary skills.

Last weekend, Lena had planned to surprise her roommate with a homemade lasagna. She (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (already, buy) the ingredients but, when she arrived home from work on Friday, she realized that she (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (forget) to buy the main ingredient: lasagna noodles. Feeling still insecure about her pasta-making skills, Lena decided to make a different dish instead.

Later that evening, after dinner, Lena's favorite cooking show was on TV. The host was demonstrating how to make homemade pasta. She realized that she (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (use) the wrong technique all along. If only she (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (watch) the show earlier, she could have avoided all those mistakes. She also remembers that some time ago Lena's friend asked her if she (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (like) to join a cooking class together. Lena declined the invitation at the time, but now she is regretting her decision. She wishes she (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (say) yes. So the next time her roommate suggests that they take cooking lessons together, Lena will sign up unconditionally!

**I.2. Read the text below and look carefully at each line. If the line is correct, write a tick (✓). If it has a word that should not be there, write the word.**

**10 points**

- |     |  |             |
|-----|--|-------------|
| 00. | Emma often goes to the park on Saturdays, enjoying the fresh air and peaceful atmosphere.      | .....✓..... |
| 0.  | But last Saturday was different because she has had plans to attend a party in the evening.    | ...has..... |
| 1.  | While Emma was getting ready, her friend Tom called. "How about we calling Mark to find        | .....       |
| 2.  | out if he has been invited too?" he suggested. Emma remembered Mark had been struggling        | .....       |
| 3.  | financially lately. "He has had got to borrow money twice already this month," she sighed.     | .....       |
| 4.  | There was no way he could be have persuaded to come so she dropped the idea. During the        | .....       |
| 5.  | party, Emma noticed something peculiar. "This dress is too short to wear it," she overheard    | .....       |
| 6.  | someone say. Looking around, she saw that some guests seemed uncomfortable with the            | .....       |
| 7.  | crowded space. "There are by far too many people," she thought, feeling slightly overwhelmed.  | .....       |
| 8.  | As the night went on, Emma learned that someone had been given away the surprise party         | .....       |
| 9.  | planned for their friend Alex. Despite of the mishaps and the crowded room, Emma enjoyed       | .....       |
| 10. | herself. After all, she believed that everyone was too old enough to make their own decisions, | .....       |
- including how to have fun at a party.

**I.3. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in capital letters.**

**5 points**

- |    |   |                 |
|----|---|-----------------|
| 1. | If you act _____, do not expect empathy.                                  | <b>RESPECT</b>  |
| 2. | The ending of the movie was so _____ that it took everybody by surprise.  | <b>PREDICT</b>  |
| 3. | The sales have decreased _____ since the financial crisis.                | <b>NOTICE</b>   |
| 4. | Mihai Eminescu spent his _____ in Botosani and Ipotesti.                  | <b>BOY</b>      |
| 5. | Unfortunately, he _____ his capabilities and failed to keep his promises. | <b>ESTIMATE</b> |

**SUBIECTUL al II-lea – READING COMPREHENSION (25 points)**

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

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Simon's Cat is a charming animated series loved by many around the world. The idea for Simon's Cat came to its creator, Simon Tofield, back in 2008 when he made a short animated film inspired by his own experiences with his cat, Hugh, who often displayed amusing behaviors. The first Simon's Cat film, "Cat Man Do," was uploaded to YouTube and it quickly gained popularity, capturing the hearts of viewers with its simple yet hilarious portrayal of cat antics. The success of the first film encouraged Simon to create more episodes alongside a small team led by Tofield himself. He sketches the characters and storyboards the animations, while his team assists with coloring, animating and editing the final videos.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

One of the most popular Simon's Cat stories is "The Gnome". The story begins with Simon's Cat lounging lazily in the sun, perhaps plotting his next scheme. However, his attention is soon captured by an intriguing figure standing amidst the foliage – a decorative terracotta garden gnome. With typical feline curiosity, Simon's Cat approaches the gnome cautiously, eyeing it with suspicion and intrigue. As he paws at the gnome and tries to topple it over, the gnome remains understandably indifferent to the cat's antics. This only serves to further arouse Simon's Cat's interest, as he becomes determined to solve the mystery of the enigmatic gnome. Despite his best efforts, though, Simon's Cat ultimately finds himself outsmarted by the gnome, to the amusement of viewers.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Simon's Cat has garnered immense popularity across the internet, with millions of views on YouTube and a strong presence on social media platforms, where comments range from "This is so relatable! My cat does the same thing!" to "I can't stop watching these adorable animations!" Many viewers enjoy the simplicity of the animations and the attention to detail in the character design, as well as the clever storytelling. Simon's Cat has become an iconic figure in the world of animation and has generated merchandise, books and even a mobile game, further solidifying its place in popular culture.

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Additionally, viewers enjoy interacting with fellow fans and sharing their interpretations of the episodes. Social media provides a platform for discussions about favorite episodes, character traits, and even speculation about future storylines. The sense of community fostered by Simon's Cat extends beyond the animations themselves, creating a bond among fans who share a love for cats and humor.

5. \_\_\_\_\_

However, as is the case with any popular series, there are occasional negative reviews or criticisms from viewers. Thus, some viewers complain about similar themes and gags appearing in multiple episodes and express a desire for more variety. Other viewers find the pacing of some episodes to be too slow and feel that some scenes could be condensed. Occasionally, viewers may raise concerns about certain stereotypes or clichés in the series, such as the "crazy cat lady" stereotype or the portrayal of cats as solely mischievous or selfish. These viewers advocate for more diverse and nuanced representations of cat behavior and ownership. Finally, some viewers may feel that the characters lack depth or progression beyond their initial traits and express a desire for more character development.

**II.1 Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-G) for each part (1-5). There are two extra headings which you do not need to use. 10 points**

- A. *Making a new friend*
- B. *An all-around success*
- C. *Not every "sitting duck" is an easy target*
- D. *Minor complaints*
- E. *An added bonus*
- F. *An overnight success*
- G. *Reasons for concern*

**II.2 For questions 1-5, choose the answer A, B, C, or D which you think fits best according to the text. 15 points**

1. The animated series Simon's Cat started

- A. back in 2008 as a tribute to Hugh, Simon Tofield's late pet cat
- B. in an attempt to make an ordinary cat famous
- C. when a small team of animators decided to sketch the story of a famous cat character
- D. on Youtube, where it became an almost instant hit.

2. According to paragraph 2,

- A. Simon's cat was plotting to teach the gnome a lesson while he was lying lazily in the sun.
- B. the gnome proves an unworthy opponent for Simon's cat.
- C. to the cat's irritation, the gnome remains suspiciously silent and unmoving.
- D. Simon's cat is an intriguing feline, whose mysteries remain unsolved.

3. As a result of the immense popularity of the animated series,

- A. books and other merchandise have become best-sellers in every community.
- B. Simon's cat has become an iconic figure in the gaming community.
- C. fans have contributed with ideas for future episodes.
- D. animated discussions have started among cat lovers with a sense of humour.

4. Some viewers of Simon's Cat

- A. feel that the series can become repetitive over time.
- B. complain about the condensed episodes.
- C. feel that the character progression is beyond their expectations.
- D. advocate for the rights of cats and their owners.

5. Overall, what makes this animated series such a huge success is

- A. its humour, simplicity and attention to detail.
- B. the presence of gnomes and other supporting characters.
- C. the fact that it is so relatable since all pet cats behave exactly the same.
- D. the fact that it promotes stereotypes.

**SUBIECTUL al III-lea – WRITING (50 points)**

**Write a narrative essay ending like this:**

*With a sudden twist that left everyone breathless, the true identity of the thieving rascal was finally revealed, bringing closure to the long quest for truth.*

**Write your story in 150-180 words and give it an appropriate title. Pay attention to the following:**

- you don't need to write long descriptions;
- use dialogues only if they are relevant to your characters or events;
- you should use this plan:
  1. **Introduction** (paragraph 1 – set the scene)
  2. **Main Body** (paragraph(s) 2/3 – develop the story)
  3. **Conclusion** (paragraph 4 – end the story).

Do not count the words given.