

MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI, CERCETĂRII ȘI INOVĂRII
OLIMPIADA NAȚIONALĂ DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ
FEBRUARIE 2009
CLASA A XII-A

Varianta I

Subject I

Write a reflective essay analysing people's inability to understand and react to the spread of contemporary global phenomena such as the one suggested by the balloon in this excerpt. Use about 400 words.

The balloon, beginning at a point on Fourteenth Street, the exact location of which I cannot reveal, expanded northward all one night, while people were sleeping, until it reached the Park. There, I stopped it; at dawn the northernmost edges lay over the Plaza; the free-hanging motion was frivolous and gentle. But experiencing a faint irritation at stopping, even to protect the trees, and seeing no reason the balloon should be allowed to expand upward, over the parts of the city it was already covering, into the "air space" to be found there, I asked the engineers to see to it. This expansion took place throughout the morning, soft imperceptible sighing of gas through the valves. The balloon then covered forty-five blocks north-south and an irregular area east-west, as many as six crosstown blocks on either side of the Avenue in some places. This was the situation, then. [...]

There were reactions. Some people found the balloon "interesting". As a response, this seemed inadequate to the immensity of the balloon, the suddenness of its appearance over the city; on the other hand, in the absence of hysteria or other societally-induced anxiety, it must be judged a calm, "mature" one. There was a certain amount of initial argumentation about the "meaning" of the balloon; this subsided, because we have learned not to insist on meanings, and they are rarely even looked for now, except in cases involving the simplest, safest phenomena. It was agreed that since the meaning of the balloon could never be known absolutely, extended discussion was pointless, or at least less purposeful than the activities of those who, for example, hung green and blue paper lanterns from the warm gray underside, in certain streets, or seized the occasion to write messages on the surface, announcing their availability for the performance of unnatural acts, or the availability of acquaintances. (from Donald Barthelme, "Unspeakable Practices, Unnatural Acts")

50p

Subject II

You are employed as a researcher by your local tourist office. Your manager has asked you to write a proposal on how to attract more visitors, both from your country and abroad, to your town. Within your proposal you should include ideas on how to improve the amenities in your town, and increase income from tourism. Use 270-300 words.

25p

Subject III (25 points)

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A. Find one word which is appropriate for all three gaps of the following sentences (5 points):

1. The problems of global warming are the minds of scientists.
During the summit meeting, protesters werethe right of free speech.
By playing tennis, you are in factnearly every muscle in your body.
2. As the town was still reeling from the first tremor, a second oneit to its foundations.
The news of the influential diplomat's deathinternational political circles.
The hammockgently in the afternoon breeze, and it wasn't long before James fell asleep.
3. Against all odds, underdogs Redwood United are stillonto the top of the league table.
My daughter enjoysaround my study and watching me work on the computer.
He was his jacket in his wardrobe when he saw a stain on the sleeve.
4. In sunny weather, people are advised to wear a hat.
If the tyres of a car are, there is an increased risk of slipping due to the surfaces being worn down.
The company chairman's resignation came as astatement during the monthly sales meeting.
5. There has been a stomach going around school for weeks.
The computer engineer found ain the software which was corrupting files.
The tsetse fly is a which spreads diseases to cattle and humans.

B. Think of a word which best fits each space.

A few generations ago, a university education could only be aspired (0) . **to**... by an elite minority. In the (1).....few decades, however, a change has slowly but (2).....been taking place and prospective students who, a century ago, would have known that (3)....a basic education was beyond (4)reach, can now look forward to gaining a degree in higher education. Universities have been transformed (5).....places not only of learning, but also of business and are churning out on a regular (6).....their finished product - the graduate. However, degree-holders are still faced (7)..... a problem, (8) used to be a passport to employment is no (9)..... a guarantee of success. And understandably so: (10)..... are so many graduates on the job market these days that it would be impossible to employ them all.

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C. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence. Use the word given without changing it (10 points):

1. You have the ability to do really well in your career if you make an effort. **(mind)**
You could do really well in your careerit.
2. I expected the film to be good, but it wasn't at all. **(live)**
The filmat all.
3. There wasn't a single ticket left for the concert, so we couldn't go. **(sell-out)**
The, so we couldn't go.
4. David's good work record enabled him to get promotion. **(strength)**
Davidgood work record.
5. The government has tried to make the incident seem less serious. **(played)**
The governmentof the incident.

TOTAL = 100 PUNCTE

TOATE SUBIECTELE SUNT OBLIGATORII. TIMP DE LUCRU 3 ORE.
NU SE ACORDA PUNCTE DIN OFICIU.