

**Etapa județeană / a sectoarelor municipiului București a olimpiadelor naționale școlare - 2025**  
**Probă scrisă**

**Limba engleză**

**CLASA a XI-a - SECȚIUNEA B**

- 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.**

**10 points**

**Megabrands**

The process of branding in its simplest form is just the process of marking a product with a consistent logo, image, mascot, which sends a message to the consumer — a message of consistency, a message of quality. How did we get from this fairly simple role of the brand to these brand tribes that we have now, where we almost follow brands like we would follow rock stars? We organise ourselves into brand tribes, we are a Nike type of person or a Tommy Hilfiger type of person. How did that happen?

There were a handful of brands that understood that marketing could play a larger role than simply branding their product as a mark of quality. They understood that they could sell ideas, and what is more, that they could sell lifestyles. Coca-Cola, Disney, McDonalds — these **core** American brands became powerful precisely because they understood that they were selling ideas instead of products, that they were selling an idea about family. Coca-Cola was selling the youth lifestyle — in the 60s they started selling peace and love — they were selling something much more profound than their fairly generic product, which was this black fizzy liquid. Walt Disney understood that he was selling the American dream, he was selling a nostalgic vision of the small-time American town that people felt sad about — they felt it had disappeared. The CEO of Nike, Phil Knight, says that he had a kind of an **epiphany** in the mid-80s where he realised that he didn't want to compete in a commodity marketplace any more, that he did not want to be a sneaker company, or, as he said, a fashion company. He wanted to be a sports company. And that their message was not about their sneakers being better than Reeboks but was an idea about the nature of sports, and that pure athletic ability is a metaphor for the American dream, and so he decided to sell that idea. More and more, the measure of a successful brand is not whether it's truly a mark of quality on a product, but how well it stretches. If it's a successful cola, can it also be a line of clothing? If it's a line of clothing, can it also be a house paint? So, you have this stratosphere of **warring** megabrands that want to be everywhere and be everything.

**A. Choose the right synonym for the words given below, according to their meaning in the text.**

**3 points**

- |                     |               |               |                |                |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>core</b>      | a. root       | b. inner      | c. typical     | d. key         |
| 2. <b>epiphany</b>  | a. revelation | b. indication | c. sign        | d. inspiration |
| 3. <b>warring</b> : | a. compatible | b. opposing   | c. overrunning | d. hostile     |

**B. Rephrase the following sentences so as to preserve the meaning. Use the word given WITHOUT changing it.**

**3 points**

1. They understood that they could sell ideas, and what is more, that they could sell lifestyles. **BUT**  
They understood that not \_\_\_\_\_ also sell lifestyles.
2. These core American brands became powerful precisely because they understood that they were selling ideas instead of products. **NOT**  
Had \_\_\_\_\_ ideas instead of products, these core American brands would not have become powerful.
3. They were selling something much more profound than their fairly generic product. **SOLD**  
Something much more profound than their fairly generic \_\_\_\_\_.

**C. Four words have been removed from the summary of the text. Choose the right words to fill in the summary. There are four extra words which you do not need to use. 4 points**

stretch showing rise derived spread leading boost shifted

Branding has evolved from simply marking products with a logo to creating entire lifestyles, with brands like Coca-Cola, Disney, and Nike (1) \_\_\_\_\_ the way. These companies understood that they were not just selling products but ideas, like youth, family, or the American dream. Nike, for instance, (2) \_\_\_\_\_ from selling sneakers to promoting the idea of sports and athletic excellence. Successful brands now focus on how far they can (3) \_\_\_\_\_, expanding beyond their original products into various markets. This shift has led to the (4) \_\_\_\_\_ of "brand tribes," where consumers strongly identify with a brand's image and message.

**II. For questions 1-5, think of one word only which can be used appropriately in all three sentences. Write only the missing word on your answer sheet. 10 points**

1. Barbara Molland had found the box in a \_\_\_\_\_ that stood under the window in Kate's room.  
The children had an itchy rash on the \_\_\_\_\_ and extremities.  
The enormous tree \_\_\_\_\_ provided a home for a family of squirrels.
2. It's just a \_\_\_\_\_ to them. They don't care what happens.  
It's a secret, so don't give the \_\_\_\_\_ away, will you?  
Love is just a \_\_\_\_\_ to him. He doesn't care at all.
3. I have made a dinner reservation for a \_\_\_\_\_ of eight tonight.  
They are planning to postpone their house-warming \_\_\_\_\_ till the spring when the weather is nicer.  
There is little support within the \_\_\_\_\_ for a change of leadership and most politicians seem happy to support the Prime Minister.
4. I seem to have lost the \_\_\_\_\_ with all my personal records on it.  
Today is your last chance to \_\_\_\_\_ a complaint about our services.  
We walked in single \_\_\_\_\_ along the path.
5. His new job will \_\_\_\_\_ travelling all over the world.  
It was \_\_\_\_\_ of him to criticise her in front of their guests.  
Lower grades \_\_\_\_\_ fewer chances of being admitted to university.

**III. For questions 1-10, read the text below and look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct and some have a word that should not be there. If a line is correct, put a tick (✓) by the number on your answer sheet. If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word down next to the number on your answer sheet. 10 points**

Although the act of writing a book is by its necessity a solitary process, it's often after publication that the sense of isolation is strongest. Many writers long for critical feedback, but have such little access to the average reader's opinion. While it may be true that good reviews in newspapers and magazines can be gratifying, they're of little help in establishing what do ordinary people think of your work. So, well done to those websites where anyone with access to the internet can post an own opinion about any book. Having said this, these customer reviews are not without risk. Most of writers can expect some glowing praise from family or friends but these reviews are easy to recognize since they tend to be sent in there anonymously. On the other hand, visits to these websites can also result in great anxiety. It might well be the case that you receive so an unkind review and there is no kind editor to shield you. You can expect that most reviewers to be brief but there are those who write long, strangely formal essays, which usually containing references to classical literature, presumably in an attempt to impress others with their literary knowledge.

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#### IV. Translate the following text into English.

10 points

După o noapte în care abia am putut dormi de nerăbdare, am luat trenul Brașov-Constanța. Drumul avea câteva momente de maxim interes. Prima atracție erau tunelurile de la Predeal, când lumina zilei dispărea de parcă ar fi stins cineva soarele. Între mama și sora ei a început o discuție în jurul misterului jegului din trenurile noastre. Noi, toți patru copiii, am stat însă cu nasul lipit de jegul geamului și am urmărit peisajul care, de la un moment dat, pierdea mereu din înălțime, se domolea, se rotunjea și până la urmă se lăsa de tot, ca o saltea dezumflată. Cum, din punctul nostru de vedere, fără munți sau măcar dealuri, nu mai era nimic interesant de văzut, am început să fugim de colo-colo pe hol. În vagonul alăturat, am dat de un compartiment gol. Am început să-l explorăm așa cum făceam întotdeauna în locurile noi. (...)

Cum am coborât pe peron, am simțit baia de aer cald și am inspirat adânc mirosul sărat. Și la scurt timp, în aceeași zi, deși eram obosiți de drum, ne bălăceam în apa Mării Negre, care avea să ne fie gazdă bună timp de aproape două săptămâni.

(Ioana Pârvulescu, *Inocenții*)

#### SUBIECTUL B – INTEGRATED SKILLS (60 points)

I. Five paragraphs have been removed from the following text. Choose from the paragraphs A-F the one which fits each gap 1-5. There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Write your answer on your answer sheet.

10 points

##### How and Why Do We Choose Our Friends?

The way we choose our friends is much more complicated than we realise, and probably not very moral. Plato wrote, 'similarity begets friendship' in his play Phaedrus, and Aristotle, along the same lines, wrote, 'some define it as a matter of similarity; they say that we love those who are like ourselves'.

(1) ...

Social psychologists, however, have finally uncovered the fact that people do not retain a list of who owes them a favour or who they owe a favour to, in their head. Primatologist Joan Silk expressed the conundrum of friendship as: 'reciprocity and equity are important among friends, but tit-for-tat reciprocity is antithetical to the formation and maintenance of close friendship. If these seemingly contradictory claims are correct, then friendship presents a puzzle for evolutionary analysis.'

(2) ...

The scientists concentrated their research on blacktip reef sharks, whose habitat is coral reefs in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. They discovered that specific sharks favoured the companionship of certain others, and that their friendship continued over time. Other sharks, however, avoided each other at all costs, even if their feeding grounds coincided with each other. It would seem that geographic or territorial closeness are inadequate to clarify the reasons why one is a friend and another a foe.

(3) ...

However, Australian researchers have found a third level of social hierarchy: a sort of super group that contained dolphins who were not related. Just like human relationships, this arrangement cannot be explained by reciprocity. For instance, a group of dolphins the scientists named PD triumphed over a second group, the KS set, on two different occasions. The dolphin social hypothesis would suggest that the two groups would never collaborate together, but researchers were shocked to see exactly that when a third group, called WC, attacked KS. The PD group entered the fray to help their one-time arch-rivals defeat this third group.

(4) ...

Politics also plays a major part in forming friendships amongst the male Assamese macaque monkeys that are found in Thailand. A very social primate, domination is the only way for them to succeed with the female macaques. Failure to dominate leads to them slipping down the reproductive ladder into insignificance.

(5) ...

So, could the protection of one's reputation be the answer to the friendship mystery instead of similarity as Plato and Aristotle believed, or reciprocity as evolutionary biologists have theorised? In 2009, an experiment was carried out whereby volunteers were asked to make a list of ten of their closest friends who were not family members, and then put them in order of how close they were to each of these people. They then were told to pretend they had a hundred points to allocate between these ten friends. When the participants believed that their point system would be made public, they apportioned the points evenly between all their friends, with ten points being the average. Yet

when they were informed that their point division would remain a secret, the number of points awarded to each person was very different. Their best friend got the lion's share of the points, followed by the next best friend, and so on.

**A** Whenever there is a problem understanding anything to do with evolution, it is time to look to the animal kingdom for help. Shark scientists from France researched whether groups of sharks stayed together for social reasons, such as friendship, if they just stayed together because their range intersected or if there was a common food supply.

**B** Forming a friendship based on having the same ideas, tastes or outlook on life might appear to be obvious and instinctive, but that instinct is misleading. The majority of friendships are cultivated between people who are not related or romantic partners, so friendship cannot be accounted for on a genetic or reproductive basis. Rather, evolutionary biologists have usually depended on a 'you help me and I'll help you' scenario, called reciprocal altruism to rationalise the bonds of friendship.

**C** It would seem that dolphin relationships are not established because of earlier dealings, but are based on political motives. Mutual decisions are centred on who else is there at the time. Despite the PD and KS groups having been adversaries, their common animosity towards the WC group turned them into temporary allies.

**D** The non-family relationships that abound in the animal kingdom are very like friendships, according to Dr. Crockford. Animals with friends live longer and it is more likely that their offspring will survive. However, not much is known about how these animals become friends, though findings from the research show a direct link between co-operation and social bonds, which includes food sharing and shared hunting and grooming.

**E** One male macaque monkey was studied in 2010. At the beginning of the research, he was third in the group, yet in spite of his good physical condition and large size, he seemed unable to bond with the other male monkeys. He soon dropped to sixth in the group and before long, had tumbled still further to eighth, losing all reproductive advantage.

**F** This research did not provide many answers, so science next looked to dolphins for help. Dolphins, just like some other non-human primates like chimpanzees, are typified by two levels of social hierarchy: a set of two or three males who work as one to safeguard the females from the attentions of other males, and larger sets who work together to entice females from other groups. By and large, the dolphins within each group are related, so they could perhaps co-operate because of shared genes or family selection.

## **II. You have seen the following announcement on a website.**

### Articles wanted

Send us an article about how friendship can shape people's personality. To what extent can friendship influence decision-making in a person's life? Are people cautious when they choose their friends? What role do friendships play in our lives?

**Write your article starting from the text above. (250-280 words)**

**50 points**