

REGIONAL OLYMPIAD IN ENGLISH

2012

Group Five

Part Two

Reading Comprehension

Directions: *Read the text below. Then read the questions that follow it and choose the best answer to each question – A, B, C or D. Use the ANSWER SHEET.*

Kay Oakley stretched out on her sun-lounger, wiggled her toes and decided that the deep plum polish the beautician had talked her into really was too dark. The nails looked bruised, as if someone had stepped on her foot. The infuriating thing was she'd known all along she wouldn't like it, but had given in. Now she'd have to go back tomorrow and have them re-varnished her usual pillar-box red.

Then she sighed. Was this what her life had come to? When the colour of her nail-polish constituted a crisis? It wasn't as if another trip to the salon was even an inconvenience. She genuinely didn't have anything better to do. And when had she lost the ability to paint her own toenails? When had the prospect of lifting a finger to do anything herself become inconceivable?

From an outsider's point of view, she had little to complain about. The twenty-metre pool rippled in front of her, blue and inviting. The gardens were lush and well-kept, the stone of the terrace glowed warm in the afternoon sun. The nearby poolhouse provided a wet room, a huge fridge stocked with beers, wines and soft drinks, and a stack of fluffy towels that was replenished daily by the maids. A walkway sheltered by a vine-covered framework meandered back up to the house, with its white-washed walls and cool tiled floors. Her daughter Flora and her little friend splashed in the children's pool under the watchful eye of the nanny.

Here she was, leading the perfect magazine existence, in a luxury villa on a luxury complex in Portugal, and she was bored out of her mind. She'd thought about getting a job, but there were none. At least nothing that would make it worth her while. She could get a job as a manicurist. Or as a guide, showing potential purchasers around the new developments that her husband Lawrence and his colleagues were throwing up overnight. But neither of these opportunities was what she had in mind. She wanted something that would shake her out of her complacency. Something that would make her feel excited. Afraid, even. Something that would enable her to justify her place on this planet. It wasn't as if they needed the money. At the moment, they couldn't get rid of it fast enough. What she needed was some mental stimulation.

A few months ago, in desperation, she'd tried setting up a book club. Kay was no scholar, but she longed for some witty repartee. For the opening read she had chosen *Chocolat*, because she didn't want to put the other women off with anything too erudite. But out of six, only three managed to finish it, and the ensuing discussion revolved around the calorific content of the subject matter and the casting of Johnny Depp in the movie. Hardly an intellectual debate. Kay, who'd devoured it, adored it, and been enchanted by the concept of magical reality (which she'd read about in the reader's notes on the website) realized she was fighting a losing battle. There were no like-minded women in her social circle. Kay had never been one for close friends, but she found that for the first time in her life she was lonely.

Added to which, she missed England dreadfully. She's never considered herself particularly at one with nature, but she missed the changing seasons. The relentless Portuguese sunshine was driving her mad. She'd give anything for a sparkling frost, or a brisk autumnal breeze, or even a torrential downpour.

In her mind's eye she longingly imagined Honeycote, the tiny village she and Lawrence had lived in before they moved here. It would be preparing for winter now, shedding its leaves, putting on its mantle of mist, the air crisp and sharp.

She'd talk to Lawrence when he got home this evening. She was starting to suspect that he too had had enough of paradise. He had been restless of late. A bit heavy on the vodka and tonics too, which she didn't like. It was often the way, when you had the Midas touch. Money didn't always make life easier. Maybe they should cut their losses, get out while the going was good, and settle for a quieter existence. She pictured a small house back in Honeycote – well, not *small* small, but certainly not as big as the manor house they had once lived in. Flora could go to a decent school – she pictured her in the red and gray uniform of the prep school in Eldenbury, the nearby market town. And she could have a proper conversation, with a man who wasn't a sexist jerk drenched in Hugo Boss, trying to paw you under the dinner table at every opportunity. Not that men in the Cotswolds didn't have wandering hands, but they were more subtle about it. Kay allowed herself a little smile, both at the memory and the prospect, and felt a flicker of adrenalin. Perhaps they could be back in time for Christmas? Images of roaring log fires, flickering candles and intoxicating mulled wine rushed through her head. Surely Flora deserved a proper English Christmas. Perhaps that was the tack she should take with Lawrence? Flora was his Achilles' heel, after all.

Something had to happen to get them out of this existence.

1. When Kay Oakley looked at her toes, she realized that

- A. they were bruised.
- B. her nails were varnished red.
- C. she shouldn't have listened to her manicurist.
- D. None of the above.

2. Kay Oakley sighed because

- A. the way she looked constituted a crisis.
- B. she realized the emptiness of her life.
- C. she didn't like doing things herself.
- D. she hated going to the salon.

- 3. The only thing Kay could complain about was**
- A. the overgrown vegetation.
 - B. the humidity of the place.
 - C. the noise made by the children.
 - D. None of the above.
- 4. Kay was keen on getting a job as**
- A. a beautician.
 - B. a real estate agent.
 - C. a librarian.
 - D. None of the above.
- 5. The members of the book club Kay set up**
- A. indulged in intelligent debate.
 - B. turned out to be rather superficial.
 - C. were genuine soul-mates.
 - D. eagerly devoured the suggested reading.
- 6. Kay's choice of *Chocolat* was determined by**
- A. its usefulness to people of her class.
 - B. Johnny Depp's popularity.
 - C. the club members' refined literary tastes.
 - D. its enchanting fictional world.
- 7. What Kay missed most at the time was**
- A. the English landscape.
 - B. the language of her native country.
 - C. her close friends in England.
 - D. All of the above.
- 8. Kay intended to talk to Lawrence that evening because**
- A. he had been drinking too much.
 - B. he had become too money minded.
 - C. they needed a change.
 - D. they had been losing money.
- 9. Kay felt a flicker of adrenalin when she imagined**
- A. being courted in a more sophisticated way.
 - B. living in a nice English home.
 - C. the typical English Christmas.
 - D. chatting with an elegantly dressed man.
- 10. Flora was to be the focus of Kay's conversation with Lawrence because**
- A. she deserved better living conditions.
 - B. she was unhappy in Portugal.
 - C. Lawrence was especially fond of her.
 - D. All of the above.

Part Three

Use of English

Section One: Cloze Test

Directions: Read the text below and for each numbered gap 1-20 circle the letter (A, B, C or D) of the word or phrase that best suits each space. Use the ANSWER SHEET.

Walking the Tightrope: Facebook and Privacy

A few years ago, *Facebook* was forced to retreat from a new service called Beacon. It tracked what the social network's users were doing elsewhere on the web – which **1. A. did B. caused C. brought D. created** a huge fuss because of the loss of personal privacy. At the time, *Facebook* promised to make serious efforts to better **2. A. protect B. guard C. preserve D. defend** people's information.

But apparently the firm has not been trying very hard. On November 29th America's Federal Trade Commission (FTC) released the results of an investigation it had **3. A. acted B. carried C. conducted D. set** of *Facebook*. They showed that the world's biggest social network, which now **4. A. praises B. prides C. boasts D. exalts** more than 800 million users, has been making information public that it had **5. A. pledged B. voted C. affirmed D. bet** to keep private.

The FTC's findings come at a sensitive time for *Facebook*, which is preparing for an initial public offering (IPO) that is almost certain to take place next year. Some recent reports have **6. A. contemplated B. speculated C. reflected D. pondered** that the firm may seek a listing as early as next spring, and that it will try to raise \$10 billion in an IPO that would value it at \$100 billion. To **7. A. clear B. sweep C. brush D. clarify** the path for an offering, *Facebook* badly needs to resolve some of the regulatory debates over privacy that it has become involved in.

Hence the FTC's announcement, which came as part of a settlement **8. A. stroked B. stricken C. struck D. stuck** between the commission and *Facebook*. The FTC's investigation highlighted a number of instances in which the social network had **9. A. deceived B. seduced C. cheated on D. tempted** its users. In what is perhaps the most damning of the findings, the agency documents that *Facebook* has been sharing personal information with advertisers – a practice its **10. A. senior B. superior C. adult D. elder** executives have repeatedly sworn it does not indulge **11. A. of B. at C. by D. in**. The FTC also says that the firm failed to make photos and videos on deactivated and **12. A. taken off B. deleted C. eliminated D. wiped off** user accounts inaccessible after promising to do so.

The settlement imposes a number of sanctions **13. A. over B. to C. at D. on** *Facebook*. The company has agreed, among other things, to an external audit of its privacy

policies and practices every two years for the next twenty years. And it has agreed to henceforth seek users' **14. A. recognition B. permission C. allowance D. acknowledgement** before making any changes that override existing privacy settings. (In the past, the company often introduced changes that made more data public by default, **15. A. taking B. violating C. forcing D. making** people to “opt out” in order to keep their information private.)

In a bid to minimize the effects of this mess, Mark Zuckerberg, *Facebook*'s boss, took to the company's blog to apologise **16. A. about B. over C. for D. on** the network's failings and to claim that *Facebook* has had “a good history of **17. A. letting B. distributing C. supplying D. providing** transparency and control” over users' information. Critics **18. A. urge B. plead C. beg D. appeal** to differ from this view. “Zuckerberg is walking a privacy tightrope” by trying to **19. A. serve B. cater C. observe D. reckon** both advertisers and users, says one sceptical privacy activist. “Sooner or later he is **20. A. meant B. predicted C. obliged D. bound** to trip up badly.”

Section Two: *Error Identification*

Directions: *Some of the sentences below contain an error in grammar or usage. Others are correct. The error, if any, is contained in one of the underlined parts of the sentence. For each sentence, circle the letter (A, B or C) of the underlined part that contains the mistake. If there is no error in the sentence, mark answer D. Use the ANSWER SHEET.*

- As the world is becoming one big playground, the challenge is how mankind deal with true freedom after a long history of oppression and social conditioning. **A B C D**
No error.
- Personal freedom and the discipline required to attain it are themes science fiction explores in their more positive views of our future. *No error.* **A B C D**
- By that time the research projects had made significant steps towards understanding the nature of the newly discovered particle. *No error.* **A B C D**

Example:

- 0. It is a fact that postwar art killed our culture.**X**.....
- 00. As an entirely new lifestyle of consumerism had born,*was born*

- 1. no sphere of high culture was implicated in the fall of
- 2. society in the same way art did. The power of the
- 3. economies were unprecedented in history. Pop art took
- 4. the surfaces of objects like its subject matter. Everywhere,
- 5. emotional depth in art censored. Abstract Expressionism
- 6. had to have died. Pop art taught people to enjoy money
- 7. and the postmodernism did the same. Art has even fed
- 8. the unsustainable appetites destroyed the planet by
- 9. telling every one cities are better than the countryside,
- 10. culture more real than nature. It has become the murderer of decency.

Section Four: *Paraphrase*

Directions: *Transform the sentences in bold type following the instructions and choosing one (in sentences 1-5) or two (in sentences 6-10) of the suggested structures – A, B, C or D. Mark your answers on the ANSWER SHEET.*

1. He is the first president of the country who was tried in a criminal court.

Transform the sentence after “country”, choosing among:

- A. ... being tried in a criminal court.
- B. ... to have been tried in a criminal court.
- C. ... to be tried in a criminal court.
- D. ... having been tried in a criminal court.

2. The novel is noted for its colourful description of characters and places along the Mississippi river.

Transform the sentence, choosing among:

- A. That this novel is noted is for its colourful description of characters and places along the Mississippi river.
- B. What this novel is noted for is its colourful description of characters and places along the Mississippi river.
- C. The colourful description of characters and places along the Mississippi river is that for what this novel is noted.
- D. Noted is this novel for the colourful description of characters and places along the Mississippi river.

3. Satirizing a society that had ceased to exist, the book offers criticism of entrenched attitudes.

Transform the sentence, finishing with "... and it also offers criticism of entrenched attitudes." and choosing a beginning among:

- A. In order to satirize a society that had ceased to exist ...
- B. The book satirizes a society that had ceased to exist ...
- C. In so far as it satirizes a society that had ceased to exist ...
- D. Because it satirizes a society that had ceased to exist ...

4. The Prime Minister said he would veto any treaty that did not contain "safeguards" to protect British interests; if the euro zone wanted a treaty change, so did Britain.

Transform the second part of the sentence, choosing among:

- A. ... as well as the euro zone, Britain wanted a treaty change.
- B. ... should the euro zone want a treaty change, Britain would want it too.
- C. ... just like the euro zone, Britain wanted a treaty change.
- D. ... if the euro zone wanted a treaty change, Britain would have wanted it.

5. British officials like the initiative, but the Germans think it will not be effective enough to impose fiscal discipline.

Transform the second part of the sentence, choosing among:

- A. ... it will not be so effective in order to impose fiscal discipline.
- B. ... it will not impose fiscal discipline enough effectively.
- C. ... it will impose ineffective enough fiscal discipline.
- D. ... it will not be so effective as to impose fiscal discipline.

6. The filmmakers' ambition is to educate people and have them reflect on why it is important to have peaceful elections.

Transform the sentence after "important", choosing among:

- A. ... that people have peaceful elections.
- B. ... for people to have peaceful elections.
- C. ... people having peaceful elections.
- D. ... for people to have had peaceful elections.

7. They didn't want to scare us out of our wits so they used something familiar to dull the shock.

Transform the sentence, choosing among:

- A. Had they wanted to scare us ... , they wouldn't have used
- B. If they had wanted to scare us ... , they wouldn't have used
- C. If they wanted to scare us ... , they would have used
- D. If they hadn't wanted to scare us ... , they would have used

8. At a time when the Occupy movement has taken centre stage in the battle against unbridled capitalism, another cultural revolution is an all too credible scenario.

Transform the sentence after “is”, choosing an ending among:

- A. ... highly probable.
- B. ... quite improbable.
- C. ... not so probable.
- D. ... not improbable.

9. Regrettably, politicians often make choices based on emotion rather than on the results of scientific investigation.

Transform the first part of the sentence, choosing among:

- A. Regrettably, many a time make politicians choices ...
- B. Regrettably, politicians are likely to make choices ...
- C. Regrettably, it is not the first time that politicians have made choices ...
- D. Regrettably, politicians use to make choices ...

10. As soon as Mrs. Pena left the car, I opened the contract template on my laptop and typed in the necessary names and numbers.

Transform the first part of the sentence, choosing among:

- A. No sooner had Mrs. Pena left the car than ...
- B. Hardly had Mrs. Pena left the car when ...
- C. Hardly had Mrs. Pena left the car that ...
- D. No sooner Mrs. Pena had left the car that ...

Part Four

Writing

Directions: Write an essay (270-300 words) on **ONE** of the following topics. Comment drawing upon your own experience, observations or reading. Use your **ANSWER SHEET**.

1. “Sons have always a rebellious wish to be disillusioned by that which charmed their fathers.” **Aldous Huxley**

2. “Life is a game that one plays according to the rules.” **J.D. Salinger**

REGIONAL OLYMPIAD IN ENGLISH - 2012

Group Five

ANSWER SHEET

Part One

DICTATION

Part Two

READING COMPREHENSION

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| 1. A B C D | 6. A B C D |
| 2. A B C D | 7. A B C D |
| 3. A B C D | 8. A B C D |
| 4. A B C D | 9. A B C D |
| 5. A B C D | 10. A B C D |

Part Three

USE OF ENGLISH

Section One: Cloze Test

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. A B C D | 8. A B C D | 15. A B C D |
| 2. A B C D | 9. A B C D | 16. A B C D |
| 3. A B C D | 10. A B C D | 17. A B C D |
| 4. A B C D | 11. A B C D | 18. A B C D |
| 5. A B C D | 12. A B C D | 19. A B C D |
| 6. A B C D | 13. A B C D | 20. A B C D |
| 7. A B C D | 14. A B C D | |

Section Two: Error Identification

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| 1. A B C D | 6. A B C D |
| 2. A B C D | 7. A B C D |
| 3. A B C D | 8. A B C D |
| 4. A B C D | 9. A B C D |
| 5. A B C D | 10. A B C D |

Section Three: Error Correction

0. It is a fact that postwar art killed our culture.X.....
00. As an entirely new lifestyle of consumerism had born,
.....was born
1. no sphere of high culture was implicated in the fall of
2. society in the same way art did. The power of the
3. economies were unprecedented in history. Pop art took
4. the surfaces of objects like its subject matter. Everywhere,
5. emotional depth in art censored. Abstract Expressionism
6. had to have died. Pop art taught people to enjoy money
7. and the postmodernism did the same. Art has even fed
8. the unsustainable appetites destroyed the planet by
9. telling every one cities are better than the countryside,
10. culture more real than nature. It has become the murderer
of decency.

Section Four: *Paraphrase*

1. A B C D
2. A B C D
3. A B C D
4. A B C D
5. A B C D

6. A B C D
7. A B C D
8. A B C D
9. A B C D
10. A B C D

**Part Four
WRITING**

Topic 1 / Topic 2 (Please underline to indicate your choice.)