

ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ ОЛИМПИАДА ШКОЛЬНИКОВ
АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК. 2025–2026 уч. г.
МУНИЦИПАЛЬНЫЙ ЭТАП. 9 КЛАСС

Максимальный балл за работу – 100.

LISTENING

Time: 15 minutes (15 points)

Task 1

*For items 1–10 listen to a talk by Ian Gerrard, a photographer, and decide whether the statements (1–10) are **TRUE (A)**, or **FALSE (B)** according to the text you hear. You will hear the text **twice**.*

1. Ian's parents didn't allow him to major in photography.
A) True B) False
2. Ian's interest in history boosted his photography talents.
A) True B) False
3. In his last year, Ian made a joint project with his friend on open-air markets.
A) True B) False
4. Upon getting a degree, Ian started applying for a job in media.
A) True B) False
5. It took Ian half a year to make amazing pictures for an American magazine.
A) True B) False
6. American photos helped Ian raise funds for his British journey.
A) True B) False
7. In the last decades, British photographers have ignored family life in fishing communities.
A) True B) False
8. Ian's new book will have been sold out by March.
A) True B) False

9. Ian considered several titles for his book.
A) True B) False
10. Ian's next exhibition will be devoted to lakes and mountains.
A) True B) False

Task 2

*For items 2–6 listen to a conversation. Choose the correct answer (A, B or C) to answer questions 2–6. You will hear the text **only once**.*

2. At the beginning of the conversation, Allie
A) has a bad headache.
B) has a cold.
C) feels fine.
3. At the party Mark felt
A) annoyed.
B) frustrated.
C) sorry.
4. What is NOT TRUE about Brad?
A) Women don't find him nice.
B) He isn't Allie's type of man.
C) He can be irritating.
5. What does Allie want to do on her last day in San Francisco?
A) Something special.
B) Nothing special.
C) She doesn't care.
6. At the end of the conversation Mark feels
A) bad.
B) fantastic.
C) pity.

READING

Time: 45 minutes (20 points)

Task 1

For items 1–10, read the passage below and choose option A, B, C or D which best fits according to the text.

How owls helped me conquer my fear of the dark

Polly Atkins was able to conquer her fears and learnt to love darkness and the night

As a child I was afraid of the dark, as so many children are. Not the dark in and of itself, but what I was certain it contained: bad spirits, bad people, monsters with ill intent. The dark hid creatures with talons and teeth, it let curses slip out of buildings or hedges and attach to a child walking past. I always stayed close any circle of light at home, imagining it as a kind of shield. At night, I fell asleep with the soft amber glow of a small lamp, the hallway light still on and my door slightly open. I needed to see things and that gave a sense of safety and security.

I borrowed Jill Tomlinson's book *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark* from the library and fell in love with the baby barn owl, Plop. He thinks "dark is nasty" and won't go hunting with his parents. He learns through others who love the dark that it can be exciting, kind, fun, necessary, beautiful and super. I identified with Plop, but I wasn't convinced about the wonderfulness of the dark.

At the same time, I read and reread Phyllis Arkle's *Magic at Midnight*, in which all the animals depicted on all the signs of a village's many pubs climb down from their frames as the clock strikes 12. These stories reframed night-time as a magical space where anything could happen. I began to see the possibilities of the dark, but I still preferred to meet it with a safety cordon of light.

For a long time I lived in east London, where atmospheric light pollution meant that night was never even close to dark. I used to love how the streetlight threw its orange glow into my room, like a city-wide nightlight. All this changed radically for me when I moved to the Lake District. Now I love our skies and soft and golden sunsets without unnatural illumination. There I had to face and live with real dark for the first time in my life. I spent more time outdoors and more time at night. I learned the wonder of a starful sky, how the longer you look up the more appear and the deeper you can see into the fabric of the universe. On frosty evenings I would wrap myself up in my granny's sheepskin coat and lie in back yard to the soundtrack of owls calling from the woods. I learned to love the dark and everything that lives in it and needs it.

Learning to love the dark changed my relationship with night-time. I always struggled to fall asleep, even as a small child. I would read or listen to music to lull myself into the kind of space where sleep might enter, but it was never guaranteed. In my teens, I was diagnosed with a serious genetic condition. It caused a host of

symptoms, including fatigue and widespread pain. I found myself needing more and more sleep to feel even slightly rested, but was less and less able to slip into it.

Night became a space of a new kind of fear: fear of never being able to sleep, of being too exhausted to move or think the next day. I tried every strategy I could to shut myself down. I found it helped if I accepted wakefulness and gave up trying to sleep. I would circle the garden when everyone else was sleeping. I would moonbathe. I would write. And eventually, this extreme insomnia retreated.

I soon learned to see the owls as companions. Tawny owls had been a feature of my life in the Lake District since the beginning, coming down from the woods at night hooting and calling around our cottage. But during the lockdown of 2020, they took on a deeper significance. My husband and I took the same walk regularly in the evening, and most days met a tawny owl, sunbathing on a low branch. I determined to find out more about tawny owls, to be a better neighbour. In the spring of 2021, we were rewarded by seeing owlets for the first time. In the midst of fear and despair they brought us great joy.

Sitting in the woods at twilight as the owlets leapt around in the treetops, I thought of how I used to take it as a slight and snub when people said I reminded them of an owl, with my sharp nose and big eyes. I did not want to be owl-like, but I do have a lot in common with an owl. We are both at our best in the night-time; enjoy a good bath; are hypersensitive to sound and light. Our ears are asymmetrical on our heads and our stomachs will get blocked by indigestible food. As a result of this affinity with the beautiful bird I wrote a book *The Company of Owls*, which I myself call a nocturnal love song to the owls that surround my Lake District home. I do hope this book brings the love of owls right from my heart to yours.

1. What is the main idea of the first paragraph?

- A) Children always enjoy quiet places at night.
- B) Children feel uneasy when they cannot see what's around them.
- C) Children prefer silence to loud environments.
- D) Children stay and play outdoors until late in the evening.

2. What role did illumination play in the Polly's perception of the dark?

- A) It created a distraction from unrecognized fears.
- B) It symbolized control and protection over uncertain elements.
- C) It looked similar to the presence of adults in the room.
- D) It reinforced traditional beliefs about bedtime rituals.

3. What is the main purpose of mentioning the two books about owls?
- A) To compare writing styles of different authors.
 - B) To explain why certain books are suitable for young readers.
 - C) To show how stories shaped the speaker's changing viewpoint.
 - D) To describe how animals behave at night.
4. Which of the following best describes Polly's attitude toward nighttime after reading both books?
- A) Total acceptance and enthusiasm about the dark.
 - B) Continued fear and discomfort about the dark.
 - C) Mixed feelings of curiosity combined with caution.
 - D) Willingness to explore the wonders of the dark.
5. What contrast does Polly highlight between urban and rural living environments?
- A) The change from artificial brightness to natural light.
 - B) The shift from rural to urban landscapes.
 - C) The difference between warm and cold climates.
 - D) The brightness of sparkling stars in the winter sky.
6. What became one of Polly's main challenges during the night?
- A) Finding a quiet place to study
 - B) Staying motivated to finish chores
 - C) Being unable to fully disconnect and rest
 - D) Dealing with frequent nightmares
7. How did Polly's health condition affect her daily life?
- A) It improved her sleep and wakefulness pattern.
 - B) It increased her need for rest while making it harder to achieve.
 - C) It allowed her to adapt easily to a new routine.
 - D) It helped her fall asleep quicker due to fatigue and ache.
8. What eventually helped Polly manage the situation better?
- A) Letting go of the pressure to fall asleep
 - B) Following strict bedtime rules
 - C) Forcing on rest even if she couldn't
 - D) Using technology to distract themselves all night

9. What effect did the repeated walks during the lockdown have for Polly and her husband?

- A) The owls grew quiet and stopped hooting at night.
- B) They discovered a new route to the owls' nests.
- C) Watching the owls was a new type of entertainment.
- D) They developed a stronger connection with the bird.

10. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a similarity between Polly and the bird?

- A) Being active during unsocial hours
- B) Being sensitive to sensory input
- C) Having identical eating patterns
- D) Having unusual body features

Task 2

For items 1–10, read the passage below and choose which of the sentences A–K fit into the numbered gaps in the text. There is one extra sentence which does not fit in any of the gaps.

The first 10 minutes: the way you start your day matters

Ten minutes doesn't seem very long. Can it indeed determine your whole day lying ahead? Surprisingly, it can. This morning I slept through my alarm, realised too late that I'd run out of toilet roll and then pulled the handle off my kitchen drawer.

(1) _____.

But why does a bad morning lead to a bad day? (2) _____. Thus, when you wake up feeling tired, rushed or out of sync, it can trigger a cascade of negative emotions and decision fatigue that together make it harder to stay focused, patient or productive.

How so? (3) _____. The disruption of that system – maybe forgetting to brush your teeth or make coffee or exercise – can have a knock-on effect that resonates throughout the rest of the day. (4) _____. They are responsible for routine behaviors. The more consistently you practice positive things, the more your brain becomes wired to handle the morning with ease and efficiency.

This means that the time at the start of your day offers an incredible opportunity to build positive habits that compound over time. (5) _____. Gradually, these morning habits can lead to improved productivity, greater emotional resilience, and more fulfillment throughout the day.

(6) _____. During university, I would often start a free day playing “just one or two” games of “League of Legends”. (7) _____.

When the morning goes sideways, most people have a go-to fix. For me, it's a solid breakfast. **(8)** _____. While it's helpful to know how to bounce back from a rough start, the best mornings are the ones that don't need fixing.

(9) _____. If my room is messy or chaotic, it may trigger feelings of stress or distraction before I've even left bed. **(10)** _____. Overall, the power of the first 10 minutes cannot be overstated; they are the key to unlocking a more intentional, focused, and peaceful day.

- A) Whether you incorporate light exercise, journaling, or practicing gratitude, doing so regularly will train your brain to naturally follow these behaviors.
- B) One possible explanation is that the first ten minutes of your day shape your mindset, stress levels and energy.
- C) For others, it's as simple as stepping outside for fresh air or sipping more water alongside that first cup of coffee.
- D) Therefore, the key to using the first 10 minutes effectively lies in the power of habits.
- E) In contrast, starting your day in a tidy, well-ordered space promotes a sense of peace and clarity, creating the right mindset for a productive and balanced day.
- F) On purpose? No, of course not, though it does explain why I'm having such a terrible day.
- G) Needless to say that I never stopped after two rounds and that those days were not the most productive.
- H) These activities can overwhelm you with stress and distractions, setting a reactive tone for the rest of your day.
- I) But if you don't have an external schedule to stick to, it's easy to get distracted.
- J) Another important thing for me is the atmosphere I wake up in as it significantly influences how my day begins.
- K) It takes us about 25 minutes to properly wake up, which is why we usually have a set sequence of events we like to follow.

USE OF ENGLISH
Time: 60 minutes (40 points)

Task 1 (15 points)

For Questions 1–15, read the text below and look carefully at each line. Some of the lines are correct, and some have a word which should not be there.
If a line is correct put a tick. Use letter "V" as a tick. If a line has a word which should not be there, write the word in a given space. There are two examples at the beginning (0 and 00).

Example:

0	V
00	far

CULTURAL BEHAVIOUR IN BUSINESS

0	Much of today's business is conducted across international borders, and while the majority of the global business community might share the use of English as a common language,	V
00	the nuances and expectations of business communication might differ far greatly from culture to culture.	far
1	A lack of understanding of the cultural norms and practices of our business acquaintances can result in so unfair judgements, misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication.	
2	Here are three basic areas of differences in the business etiquette around the world that could help stand you in a good stead when you next find yourself working with representatives of different cultures.	
3	<i>Addressing someone.</i> When discussing this topic in a training course, a German trainee and a British trainee got into a mostly hot debate about whether it was appropriate for someone with a doctorate to use the corresponding title on their business card.	
4	The British trainee maintained that anyone who wasn't a medical doctor expecting to be addressed as 'Dr' was disgustingly pompous and full of themselves. The German trainee, however, argued that the hard work and years of education having put into earning that PhD should give them full rights to expect to be addressed as 'Dr'.	
5	This stark difference in opinion over something that could be conceived as if minor and thus easily overlooked goes to show that we often attach meaning to even the most mundane practices.	

6	When things that we are used to are done differently, it could spark the strongest reactions in us.	
7	While many Continental Europeans and Latin Americans prefer to be addressed with a title, for example Mr or Ms and their surname when meeting someone in a business context for the first time, unlike Americans, and increasingly the British, now tend to prefer using their first names.	
8	The best thing to do is to listen and observe it how your conversation partner addresses you and, if you are still unsure, do not be afraid to ask them how they would like to be addressed.	
9	<i>Smiling.</i> In a piece of research done on smiles across cultures, the researchers found that smiling individuals were being considered more intelligent than non-smiling people in countries such as Germany, Switzerland, China and Malaysia.	
10	However, in countries like Russia, Japan, South Korea and Iran, pictures of smiling faces were rated as less likely intelligent than the non-smiling ones. Meanwhile, in countries like India, Argentina and the Maldives, smiling was associated with dishonesty.	
11	<i>Eye contact.</i> American or British people might be looking their client in the eye to show that they are paying a full attention to what is being said, but if that client is from Japan or Korea, they might find this direct eye contact awkward or even disrespectful.	
12	In parts of South America and Africa, prolonged eye contact could also be seen as challenging authority. In the Middle East, eye contact across genders is considered inappropriate, although eye contact within a gender could signify honesty and truthfulness.	
13	Having an increased awareness of the possible differences in expectations and behaviour can help us avoid cases of miscommunication, but it is vital that we will also remember that cultural stereotypes can be detrimental to building good business relationships.	
14	Although national cultures could play a part in shaping up the way we behave and think, we are also largely influenced by the region we come from, the communities we associate with, our age and gender, our corporate culture and our individual experiences of the world.	
15	The knowledge of the potential differences should therefore be not something we keep at the back of our minds, rather than something that we use to pigeonhole the individuals of an entire nation.	

Task 2 (10 points)

*For items 1–10, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. **Do not change the word given.** Use **from three to five** words. Please mind both grammar and spelling. Do not use contractions. There is an example at the beginning (0).*

Example: 0. The pool isn't deep enough to swim in.

too

The pool swim in.

0	is too shallow to
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1. Bob was making fun of me when he said there was a snake on my bed.

leg

Bob _____ when he said there was a snake on my bed. (4 words).

2. When he had finished his first book, he later wrote seven more.

went

When he had finished his first book, he _____ seven more. (4 words)

3. I am sorry to tell you that you have failed the test.

regret

I _____ you that you have failed the test. (3 words)

4. People say that the company is having problems.

said

The company _____ problems. (5 words)

5. I think I should leave.

better

I think I _____. (3 words)

6. Please be quiet, (but I do not expect you will).

wish

I _____ quiet. (4 words)

7. My sister is in hospital where they are taking her appendix out.

having

My sister is in hospital _____ out. (4 words)

8. If you want a day off, you will have to find someone to replace you.

stand

If you want a day off, you will have to find someone ____ ____ ____ ____ you. (4 words)

9. I was sorry I could not stay longer.

like

I ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ longer. (5 words)

10. I do not think she wants us to mention the subject.

rather

I think she ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ mention the subject. (5 words)

Task 3 (10 points)

For items 1–10 read the text below. Use the word given in capitals to form a new word that fits in the space in the same line. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Example:

0	specific
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Five horror film clichés

Of all the genres that exist, horror is perhaps one of the most conventional. Many horror films rely on (0) ____ plot devices, also called tropes, to make their audience frightened.	SPECIFY
When a trope is used too much, it can become a cliché. Here are some of the most used, and perhaps abused, clichés in horror films. No matter what kind of house it is, the (1) ____ is a scary place in horror films.	BASE
That's usually where something is hiding or where the evil (2) ____ has hidden their tools. In older horror films, when protagonists were in desperation, it was difficult or impossible for them to call for help or call the police.	PSYCHE
Mobile phones have made that situation a bit less believable now. How to maintain (3) ____ then?	SUSPEND
No phone (4) ____! If you're a hero in a horror film, it's almost certain that at a key moment, just when you absolutely need to call for help, your phone battery will die just as you are making the call.	COVER
Horror films love (5) ____ places.	INHABIT

This could be a(n) (6) _____ hospital, a scary empty house or a ghost town.	ABANDON
The hero has been driving for hours. It's night-time and it's beginning to rain. Suddenly he sees a person on the side of the road. Maybe the company will keep him (7) _____? In horror films, giving anybody a ride is asking for trouble. The hero always does it, and it always ends badly.	WAKE
This horror film cliché was especially popular with horror films of the late 20th century. It starts with a group of teenagers all enjoying (8) _____, and it ends with everyone dead except one girl.	THEY
What's the (9) _____? At the beginning the girl is usually innocent, shy and not particularly strong.	SOLVE
In the end, she has become the toughest and most (10) _____ person in the world. The last girl almost always wins in the end.	RESOURCE

Task 4 (10 points)

For items 1–10, match the items 1–10 to the phenomena A–N. There are some extra phenomena which do not match.

1. Greenwich
2. John Nash
3. The Athens of the north
4. Common Sense
5. euphemism
6. Greenwich village
7. synecdoche
8. The Black Country
9. The Fens
10. the white man's burden

- A) During the Industrial Revolution, this area was full of factories and coal mines. The air became dark with smoke and soot from all the industry. It's located just west of the big city of Birmingham.
- B) R. Kipling's timeless guidance on how to live a fulfilling life. It explores the qualities of virtue, morality, and masculinity.
- C) the phrase used by R. Kipling to describe the sense of moral obligation among British empire builders
- D) "New York won the game" meaning *a sports team from New York won the game*

- E) Its name comes from the Dutch word *Groenwijck*, which means "Green District". For a long time, it was known as a home for artists and a center for new ideas. It is a unique part of Manhattan.
- F) It is a famous spot in south-east London, England. It is well-known for its amazing maritime history, meaning its connection to the sea and ships. It's also where the 0° longitude Meridian gets its name.
- G) The old medieval city of Edinburgh had long been an issue of concern. Its dilapidated housing was prone to fires, disease, overcrowding, crime and collapse. It used to be a medieval city of slums and sewers.
- H) one of the most prominent British architects of the 19th century. Some of his most famous works include Marble Arch, the Royal Mews, and Buckingham Palace.
- I) He is best known for designing 52 churches in London after the Great Fire of London in 1666. His most famous work is St Paul's Cathedral, which was finished in 1710.
- J) The flat, watery area in East Anglia
- K) It was written by Thomas Paine in 1775 and 1776. It encouraged people in *the Thirteen Colonies* to seek independence from Great Britain. It was published without its author's name. This was right at the start of the American Revolution. It quickly became incredibly popular.
- L) Built in stages between 1767 and 1850, James Craig's design helped Edinburgh transform itself from 'auld reekie' to this grand state. He designed a plan which was distinguished by elegant views, classical order and plenty of light.
- M) *correctional facility* instead of *prison*
- N) It was published by Benjamin Franklin in America from 1732 to 1758. Besides the usual information, it also included witty sayings, proverbs, and advice. These sayings often taught lessons about hard work and saving money.

WRITING

Time: 60 minutes (20 points)

You see the following notice in an English youth magazine and decide to send your story.

Stories Wanted

Write a story for our magazine. The story must begin with the sentence:

Tom had a very special reason for getting up early the next day, so he set the alarm for 6 am.

The story must include:

- a title
- a phone call
- a trip

Write 200-250 words (the title is included in the word count).