

**REGIONAL OLYMPIAD IN ENGLISH**

**2014**

**Group Three**

**Part Two**

**READING COMPREHENSION**

**Section One**

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

**Neighbours**

I had two neighbours at Overstrand Mansions – we shared the same landing. In America ‘neighbour’ has a friendly connotation; in England it is a chilly word, nearly always a stranger, an address reference more than anything else. One of my neighbours was called R. Wigley; the other had no nameplate. That did not surprise me at all: the man who lived in 4C owned a motorcycle and kept late nights. He wore leather – I heard it squeak, and heavy boots – they hit the stairs like hammers. His motorcycle was a Kawasaki – Japanese, of course – the British are only patriotic in the abstract. I had never seen his face, though I had heard him often enough. His hours were odd, he was always rushing off at night and returning in the early morning – waking me when he left and again when he came back. He was selfish and unfriendly, thoughtless: I pictured him like a Nazi trooper wearing one of those German helmets that looks like a kettle. And he kept his too-big Japanese motorcycle in the entryway of Overstrand Mansions, practically blocking it. It also struck me that this awful man might be a woman, an awful woman. But even after several months there I never saw the person from 4C face to face. Anyway, women didn’t behave like this.

R. Wigley was quite different – he was a civil servant, Welsh I think, very methodical. He wrote all sorts of leaflets issued by the Post Office – explaining pensions, television licences, driving permits, etc. When I told Wigley I wouldn’t be in London much longer than a couple of years, he became hospitable. No risk, you see. If I had been staying for a long time, he wouldn’t have been friendly – wouldn’t have dared. Neighbours are a worry – they stare, they borrow things, they judge. In the most privacy-conscious country in the world neighbours are a problem. But I was an American diplomat, I was leaving in a year or so..., and he suggested I call him Reg.

One day I had him over with my friends Vic and Marietta, and it was during dinner that talk turned to our neighbours. Wigley said that there was an actor on the ground floor and that several Members of Parliament lived in Overstrand Mansions. Vic asked some blunt questions I would not have dared to ask, but I was glad to hear Wigley’s answers. Rent? Thirty-seven pounds a week. Married? Had been – but no longer. University? Bristol. When Vic heard about Wigley’s job, he said, “Funny, I never actually imagined anyone writing those things. It doesn’t seem like real writing.” Good old Vic! He went on interrogating Reg – Americans are tremendous questioners – but noticing my neighbour’s discomfort made me more reserved. The British liked having secrets, they limited conversation to neutral, impersonal subjects, resisting any effort to be trapped into friendship.

Vic asked, “What are your other neighbours like?”

I looked at Wigley. I wondered what he would say. He answered quietly, “Some of them are incredibly noisy and others downright frightening.”

This encouraged me. I said, "Our Nazi friend with the motorcycle, for sure." I caught Wigley's eye – had I gone too far? "Well, I have never seen him, but I've heard his squeaky leather jacket and his heavy boots. It's just the three of us on this floor, I guess."

Wigley looked uncertain, but said, "I suppose so."

"Oh, our kids would love to have a motorcycle, but I think those things are a menace," Marietta said.

Wigley glanced at me, "Some of them aren't so bad. They are very economical, or so I've heard."

"It's an aggression thing, really. Psychologists would tell you all about it – the fool who wants to play tough guy." Vic was very pleased with himself: he liked analysing human behaviour. "And what do you do for laughs, Reg?"

Wigley said, "I'm not certain what do you mean by laughs."

"Fun," Vic said. "For example we've got one of these home computers – for about six thousand dollars. The kids love it."

"I used to be pretty keen on aircraft," Wigley looked quite embarrassed as if he were disclosing a big secret. "I took pictures of them – I had one of those huge Japanese cameras that were absolutely idiot-proof and terribly expensive."

"I never thought anyone taking little pictures of planes could be described as *keen*". Vic pronounced the word as if it were a brand name for underwear.

"Some of them were big pictures," Wigley said coldly.

Marietta turned to Wigley, "Sometimes the things my husband says are tactless. And he works for the government. You wouldn't think so, would you?"

That was it. My friends started arguing, and Wigley left; a highly successful evening, I thought. Thanks to Vic's pestering, however, I knew much more about Wigley. He was decent and I respected him for the way he handled good old Vic. We were no more friendly than before – that was all right with me. I only wished the third tenant on our floor was as gracious a neighbour as Wigley. I asked him if he would join me in making a complaint against the motorcyclist. He said he'd rather not. That was the British way – don't make a fuss, Reg.

He said, "To be perfectly frank, he doesn't actually bother me."

"He drives me crazy sometimes. But I can't make a complaint unless you back me up."

"I know," said Wigley.

I could tell he thought I was being unfair. It created a little distance, this annoyance of mine that looked to him like intolerance. I knew this because Wigley had a girlfriend and didn't introduce me. A dozen times I heard them on the stairs, I knew their laughs. People who live alone are authorities on noises.

In the next couple of weeks I didn't see much of him. Occasionally, we walked together to the underground station, speaking of the weather.

One day, however, he said, "I might be moving soon."

I felt certain he was getting married. I did not ask.

"I wish it were the crazy motorcyclist who was leaving, not you."

"Oh, well," he said, and walked away.

*Might be moving*, he had said. It sounded pretty vague. But the following Friday he was gone. I saw the moving van in front but I didn't stir – it was too embarrassing, especially as I had knocked on his door that very morning hoping for the last time to get him to join me in a protest against the noisy cyclist. I'm sure he saw me through his spy-hole in the door, but he didn't open. Obviously he didn't care about the awful noise the previous night.

Wigley left without a word. British neighbours! I wasn't angry with him, but I was furious with the motorcyclist who had created a misunderstanding between Wigley and me. One good thing, I no longer needed Wigley's signature on a complaint. Now there were only two of us here. I could go in and tell him exactly what I thought of him. I could play the nasty American. Wigley's leaving gave

me unexpected courage. I banged on the door of 4C, hoping that I was waking him up. But there was no answer that day or any day. And there was no more noise, no motorcyclist, from the day Wigley left.

**1. According to the narrator, the word “neighbour”**

- A. is associated with cool strangers in England.
- B. has negative overtones for American citizens.
- C. denotes just a place on the town map for the English.

**2. The man in 4C at Overstrand Mansions**

- A. was a German trooper who wore leather clothes and a funny helmet.
- B. kept irregular hours and wanted to remain anonymous.
- C. had bought an oversized Japanese motorcycle out of patriotic feelings.

**3. The narrator thinks that R. Wigley**

- A. was quite the untypical civil servant as he was very efficient with his work at the Post Office.
- B. became more amiable when he realized that there was no need to establish a long-term friendship with the American.
- C. asked to be called by Christian name because he was well-disposed towards foreign diplomats.

**4. At the dinner party,**

- A. Wigley made some comments which showed his genuine interest in his neighbours' lives.
- B. Marietta shared that her children loved motorcycles despite their fear of riding.
- C. the narrator finally posed some blunt questions about Wigley's education and career.

**5. Vic's true character was best revealed when he**

- A. ended the interrogation the moment he noticed Wigley's discomfort.
- B. spoke disapprovingly of Wigley's job duties and hobby interests.
- C. demonstrated his outstanding skills in psychological analysis.

**6. In the course of the conversation it became clear that**

- A. Wigley knew more about motorcycles than he cared to admit.
- B. the narrator was embarrassed when he heard Wigley disclose his secret hobby.
- C. Vic was surprised by Wigley's keen interest in underwear brand names.

**7. After the get-together evening,**

- A. the narrator figured out that Wigley was as gracious a person as their third neighbour.
- B. Wigley was reluctant to introduce the American diplomat to his girlfriend.
- C. the narrator saw through the spy-hole the two lovers chatting and laughing on the stairs.

**8. Which of the following opinions is NOT expressed in this short story?**

- A. The British are more conscious of private property than other nations.
- B. Americans have inquisitive minds but sometimes they say tactless things.
- C. The British would rather make small talk than engage in serious discussions.

**9. The narrator's attitude towards the British**

- A. helps him to interact adequately with his neighbours.
- B. seems appropriate for a diplomat appointed to the UK.
- C. interferes with his judgement of his neighbours' character.

**10. The end of the story suggests that**

- A. with Wigley gone, the narrator filed a complaint against the noisy third tenant.
- B. the annoying motorcyclist seemed to have moved out together with Wigley.
- C. the narrator was furious at Wigley for sneaking out without a proper good-bye.

**Section Two**

**Directions:** Read the text below. Five paragraphs have been removed from the text. Choose from paragraphs A-F the one which fits each gap. There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Write your answers on the **ANSWER SHEET**.

**A Quick Guide to Oxbridge**

Struggling to choose between Oxford and Cambridge? Find out how these two historic rivals compare in rankings, subject reputations, lifestyle and location – and get some advice on how to choose and apply from a distance. With more than 800 years of rivalry behind them, Oxford and Cambridge ('Oxbridge') share many elements in common.

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

The first key 'Oxbridge' element is the college system. Oxford and Cambridge are each made up of colleges – more than 40 at Oxford, and just over 30 at Cambridge. And what is an Oxbridge college? It's basically a collection of buildings, often historic and attractive, which form a small self-enclosed community. Within each college complex you'll find student accommodation, common rooms, cafés and bars, library and computer facilities (often open 24/7), and offices for staff members.

Students usually live in college in their first year, and may have the option to do so in later years as well.

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

In addition to being a social hub, colleges also provide academic support. Students' primary tutors are usually based in the same college, holding tutorials in their own college rooms. This is really important because both universities focus on teaching in very small groups, sometimes even one-to-one. These group teaching sessions usually last an hour at a time and are known as 'tutorials' in Oxford and 'supervisions' in Cambridge.

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

For this reason, it's relatively uncommon to find Oxbridge students with part-time jobs during the term-time – there simply isn't enough time. However, terms are also shorter compared to other UK universities. The academic year is split into three terms of about eight or nine weeks each. This means that students can enjoy nice long holidays in between, which many of them use to find temporary work, as well as to catch up with their studies and take a well-deserved break!

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

For instance, Oxford students are required to wear black trousers, a white shirt, and a white bowtie for exams and you may even see them with a flower pinned to their gowns – a white carnation for the first exam, a red one for the last, and pink for those in between. So at times it may be annoying to have to dress in a certain way or be surrounded by people talking strange Oxbridge jargon. But for most students holding on to the quirks and traditions of Oxbridge life is part of the sense of belonging to a community.

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

So choosing between Oxford and Cambridge is likely to be tricky – but it's also unavoidable, as the UK's Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) only allows students to apply to one half of 'Oxbridge'. Naturally, the decision-making process will be different for each student, but as long as you choose a program that fits your own interests and ambitions, you're unlikely to regret your choice. That said, you'll probably find it's not too long before you're able to give a long list of reasons explaining why your chosen half of Oxbridge is the better one – keeping that centuries-old rivalry going is all part of the fun.

- A** However, don't be afraid that you'll be trapped within the college walls for three years as it's fairly common to spend at least one year 'living out' – renting a flat privately with friends out in town. Also, bear in mind that most lectures, labs and larger classes are held in the faculty buildings, where you can meet students from other colleges who study the same subject as you. Lots of social events are based in and around college communities – and intercollegiate rivalry plays a big role in Oxbridge sports, especially rowing!
- B** Another element that sets Oxbridge apart is a number of famous – and to the outside observer, often rather bizarre – traditions. One of these is the use of Latin at special ceremonies, such as matriculation (when you officially join the university), graduation, and formal dinners. These events are also characterized by another very distinctive element – the wearing of gowns. Once worn pretty much all the time by members of the university, now they are reserved just for some special occasions.
- C** Obviously, few universities can afford this level of contact time, and the regular individual attention means that all students are fully supported in their academic development. But as you might expect, this also means a particularly intense workload. Depending on the subject, you can expect to have one or two tutorials per week – each requiring a significant amount of out-of-class study and preparation.

- D** They are not only the UK's most famous universities, and two of its highest ranking – they're also different from other institutions in a number of key ways. Both are divided up into colleges, both use tutorial teaching systems – and, of course, both are surrounded in centuries of traditions, stories and stereotypes.
- E** If you choose the UK as your study abroad destination (and we certainly hope you do), then not only will you be able to experience the different cultures of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but you'll also experience Asian, African, Indian, European and American cultures as well. That's because more than one in ten students studying in Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, Warwick, Edinburgh, etc. come from overseas. So when you enrol at a UK university, you could expect to be studying alongside students from over 100 different countries. Now that's a truly global education.
- F** Both Oxford and Cambridge have very strong international reputations across all subject areas, as is shown by the results of *QS World University Rankings*. The latest survey indicates that Cambridge has a slightly stronger reputation for natural sciences, engineering and technology, and life sciences and medicine, while Oxford is marginally better known for social sciences, arts and humanities. However, the overall differences between institutions at this level are tiny, and both universities score extremely well across all the indicators used.

## Part Three

### USE OF ENGLISH

#### Section One: Cloze

**Directions:** Read the text and the sentences below and for each gap choose the letter (A, B, or C) of the word or phrase that best suits the space. Mark your answers on the **ANSWER SHEET**.

#### Text

#### Too Much Homework, Too Little Time

A 15-year-old young girl sits at her desk, reviewing her homework tasks for the evening. English: read three chapters of the novel and write a journal response. Math: complete 30 problems, **1. A. accounting B. justifying C. reasoning**. Science: do a worksheet, front and back, not forgetting to list your sources. French: study vocabulary for tomorrow's test. Clearly, it's going to be a long night.

This describes a typical weeknight for students across the USA. And it's all over the news: kids are spending a lot of time **2. A. for B. on C. with** homework. According to some, it's way too much. With the current emphasis on high-stakes testing – i.e. doing tests with important **3. A. conclusions B. effects C. consequences** for the test taker – educators are trying to do more with less, which results in an overabundance of schoolwork outside of school. Some critics say there is no **4. A. support B. evidence C. testament** to suggest that homework is helpful to student

achievement; **5. A. on the contrary B. on the other hand C. on the average**, too much of it can overwhelm students and cause them to disengage. Others, however, claim that homework is necessary, especially if it is designed in such a way that students can **6. A. practise B. exercise C. perform** the concepts taught in class, build good study habits, and reflect on their own learning.

According to the **7. A. headlines B. guidelines C. outlines** endorsed by the National Education Association (NEA), a student should be **8. A. appointed B. assigned C. attributed** no more than 10 minutes per grade level per night. For example, a first grader should only have 10 minutes of homework, a second grader – 20 minutes, and so on. This means that a student in my grade – tenth – should have no more than 100 minutes of work each night. Yet this is often doubled, sometimes even tripled! Thus I'm cascaded with homework tasks every day and I have to **9. A. stay up B. sit around C. stand by** until 11 o'clock at night more often than not. Obviously, this is a **10. A. dread B. fright C. threat** to my health as a developing teenager. It could stunt my growth because it causes a lot of fatigue and stress: everyone knows that no good sleep leads to no good grades.

William Crain, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at City College of New York says, "Kids are developing more school-related headaches, unhealthy eating habits, sleep problems and depression than ever before." The **11. A. average B. commonplace C. moderate** student is glued to his or her desk in school for almost seven hours a day. Add two to four hours of homework each night, and you cannot **12. A. fail B. lose C. omit** to see that students are working a 45- to 55-hour week! In addition, a student who receives excessive homework "will **13. A. get away with B. miss out on C. come up against** active playtime, essential for learning social skills, proper brain development, and warding off childhood obesity," concludes Harris Cooper, Ph.D., a professor of psychology and neuroscience at Duke University after **14. A. carrying B. fulfilling C. conducting** a number of empirical studies.

And what is my conclusion? Well, I say, a night off is better than homework which serves no **15. A. worthless B. worthwhile C. pennyworth** purpose.

### *Sentences*

1. I tried to call you at least a dozen times last night but the line was .....  
**A. occupied B. engaged C. taken**
2. Adrian is normally a very gentle man so his violent ..... shocked everybody.  
**A. outbreak B. outburst C. output**
3. Dear Mr. Clark, it has ..... to our attention that your daughter Pauline has missed five classes since the beginning of the term.  
**A. appeared B. brought C. come**
4. Emily's apartment is so tiny and ..... that there is hardly any space for a piano.  
**A. cramped B. restricted C. limited**





4. The rating system for electronic games is similar to the the movie rating system in that it provides consumers with a quick reference which makes easier for them to determine whether the subject matter and contents are appropriate.
- A B  
C D
5. Atoms that have the same atomic number, and therefore the same number of protons, but differ in their number of neutrons are said to have been isotopes of each other.
- A B  
C D

### Section Three: *Text Completion with Determiners and Quantifiers*

**Directions:** For each gap in the text write *ONE* word – an article, determiner or quantifier (e.g. *the, a, this, these, some, any, no, all, little, a little, few, a few, many, much, a lot of, both, each, every, neither, either, other, etc.*) – that best completes the meaning. You may *not* need to add anything in some of the gaps. Write your answers on the **ANSWER SHEET**.

It is generally believed that young people nowadays spend **1.)** ..... time watching video films at home or going to the cinema, but so far there is **2.)** ..... sign that they have stopped reading books. Sometimes, it seems that every child in the world has read **3.)** ..... Harry Porter novel, and it has become a more frequent sight to observe teenagers on the beach reading something during the past summer seasons. Obviously, it is possible to enjoy **4.)** ..... books and films, but the great majority of people seem to agree that the experience of reading a good book can be more rewarding. Of course, films can be great too, so at the end of the day, **5.)** ..... of us is free to decide how to make most of their leisure time.

### Section Four: *Sentence Completion*

**Directions:** For each sentence below choose the word or expression that best completes its meaning. For each sentence, circle the letter (A, B or C) of the word or expression that you have chosen. Mark your answers on the **ANSWER SHEET**.

1. The government had not ..... the income tax for eight years until last month.  
A. raised                                      B. arisen                                      C. risen
2. Elizabeth really regretted her bad choice of words: it was a mistake that she .....  
A. was not to have made                      B. didn't have to make                      C. ought not to have made
3. Because of a few technical glitches my boss ..... we left the computer disconnected.  
A. had sooner                                      B. would rather                                      C. had better
4. In the past, people used to receive information from a finite number of traditional media products, ..... now we can utilize a huge range of online sources.  
A. notwithstanding                                      B. whereas                                      C. unlike

5. .... William has a master’s degree in business administration, he cannot fill out his tax form.

A. In spite

B. No matter

C. Even though

**Section Five: Sentence Transformation**

**Directions:** Transform each sentence below beginning with the word given. Preserve the meaning of the original sentence. Write your answers on the **ANSWER SHEET**.

1. “May I leave the room?” said Nick.

**Nick asked the teacher** .....to leave the room.

2. The rescue crew did not find the young pilot soon enough to save his life.

**If the rescue crew** .....,.....

3. The children were very excited and they couldn’t get a wink of sleep.

**So excited** ..... they couldn’t get a wink of sleep.

4. Although Michael was able to attract a good number of investors, he never realized the profit he hoped for.

**Despite** ..... to attract a good number of investors, he never realized the profit he hoped for.

5. In the past people thought that bilingual speakers were disadvantaged.

**In the past bilingual speakers** .....disadvantaged.

**Part Four**

**WRITING**

**Directions:** Write an essay of about 200 – 220 words on **ONE** of the following topics. Comment drawing upon your own experience, observations or reading. Write your essay on the **ANSWER SHEET**.

1. Is it always important to tell the truth, or are there circumstances in which it is better to tell a lie? Give specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.
2. What is one of the most important skills a person should learn in order to be successful in the world today? Choose one skill and use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

**МИНИСТЕРСТВО НА ОБРАЗОВАНИЕТО, МЛАДЕЖТА И НАУКАТА**

**REGIONAL OLYMPIAD IN ENGLISH - 2014**

**Group Three – 10<sup>th</sup> grade**

**ANSWER SHEET**

**Part One  
DICTATION**

## Part Two

### READING COMPREHENSION

#### Section One

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

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

#### Section Two

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Part Three

### USE OF ENGLISH

#### Section One: *Cloze*

##### *Text*

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

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

11. A B C
12. A B C
13. A B C
14. A B C
15. A B C

##### *Sentences*

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

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

#### Section Two: *Error Identification*

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

**Section Three: *Text Completion with Articles & Quantifiers***

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Section Four: *Sentence Completion***

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

**Section Five: *Sentence Transformation***

- 1. ....
- 2. ....
- 3. ....
- 4. ....
- 5. ....

**Part Four**

**WRITING**

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

