



SmartCo English Olympiad

Category 3 (Grades 7–8)

Section A: Reading Comprehension (20 Questions)

Text 1: Read the following report and answer questions 1–10.

The Urban Heat Island Effect

As cities continue to expand, meteorologists are increasingly concerned about the "Urban Heat Island" (UHI) effect. This phenomenon occurs when metropolitan areas experience significantly warmer temperatures than their rural surroundings. The primary cause is the replacement of natural vegetation with dry surfaces like pavement and rooftops, which absorb rather than reflect the sun's heat.

While some argue that urban warming is a minor inconvenience that can be solved with more air conditioning, environmentalists point out that UHI increases energy consumption and worsens air quality. Furthermore, the lack of "green lungs"—parks and gardens—prevents the natural cooling process of evapotranspiration. To combat this, some cities have begun implementing "cool roofs" painted with reflective white coating and "vertical gardens" on skyscraper walls. If we fail to integrate nature into our urban planning, our cities may become uninhabitable during summer peaks.

1. What is the "Urban Heat Island" effect?

- A) A holiday resort built in the middle of a city.
- B) Cities being warmer than nearby rural areas.
- C) The process of planting trees on city rooftops.
- D) A natural cooling system found in metropolitan areas.

2. According to the text, what is a primary cause of UHI?

- A) Excessive use of public transport.
- B) The reflection of sunlight off glass windows.
- C) Surfaces like pavement absorbing solar heat.

D) The natural growth of vegetation in cities.

3. What does the term "green lungs" refer to in the passage?

A) The oxygen tanks used by city workers.

B) Parks and gardens within a city.

C) The ventilation systems of tall buildings.

D) A specific type of reflective roof coating.

4. Which of the following is a "fact" mentioned in the text?

A) Urban warming is only a minor inconvenience.

B) Vertical gardens are the only way to save cities.

C) White roof coatings reflect sunlight.

D) Air conditioning is the best solution for UHI.

5. What is the author's attitude toward the current state of urban planning?

A) Indifferent and bored.

B) Cautious and urgent.

C) Enthusiastic and celebratory.

D) Aggressive and angry.

6. What is the purpose of "cool roofs"?

A) To provide a space for people to exercise.

B) To absorb more heat during the winter.

C) To reflect sunlight and reduce heat absorption.

D) To make buildings look more modern.

7. Based on the text, what can be inferred about evapotranspiration?

- A) It is a man-made cooling chemical.
- B) It is a natural process that helps lower temperatures.
- C) It only happens in cities with skyscrapers.
- D) It is the main cause of air pollution.

8. "Vertical gardens" are mentioned as an example of:

- A) A new way to grow expensive food.
- B) A strategy to integrate nature into city architecture.
- C) A reason why energy consumption is rising.
- D) A distraction from the real problems of UHI.

9. The word "uninhabitable" in the final sentence most nearly means:

- A) Uncomfortable to look at.
- B) Too expensive to live in.
- C) Unfit to live in.
- D) Difficult to build in.

10. What is the primary purpose of this report?

- A) To promote the sale of white paint for rooftops.
- B) To explain a geographical problem and suggest solutions.
- C) To criticize people who live in rural areas.
- D) To tell a story about a meteorologist's life.

Text 2: Read the narrative and answer questions 11–20.

The Silent Witness

The old clock tower had stood at the center of the village for three centuries. Its rhythmic *thrum-thrum* was the heartbeat of the community. However, last night, for the first time in living memory, the gears ground to a halt. Silence fell over the square like a heavy blanket.

Elias, the aging clockmaker, climbed the spiral stone steps with a heavy heart. He had warned the council for years that the copper springs were fatiguing. "It's just an old machine," the Mayor had scoffed during the last meeting. But to Elias, it wasn't just a machine; it was a record of time itself. As he reached the top, he saw the culprit—a small, rusted pin had snapped. It was a tiny part, yet its failure had silenced the entire village.

11. The author uses the phrase "heartbeat of the community" to show that the clock:

- A) Was very loud and annoying.
- B) Was essential to the village's sense of life and order.
- C) Needed a doctor to fix its mechanical parts.
- D) Was located inside the village hospital.

12. What happened "last night" that was unusual?

- A) The clock tower was struck by lightning.
- B) The clock stopped working.
- C) Elias decided to retire.
- D) The Mayor held a secret meeting.

13. What does the simile "like a heavy blanket" suggest about the silence?

- A) It was warm and comfortable.
- B) It was noticeable and perhaps a bit suffocating or strange.

- C) It was made of thick wool.
- D) It made everyone in the village feel sleepy.

14. Why did the Mayor scoff at Elias's warnings?

- A) He didn't believe the clock was important.
- B) He wanted to buy a new digital clock.
- C) He thought Elias was trying to steal money.
- D) He had already fixed the clock himself.

15. What was the actual cause of the clock stopping?

- A) Someone stole the copper springs.
- B) A small, rusted pin broke.
- C) The stone steps collapsed.
- D) Elias forgot to wind it up.

16. How does Elias's view of the clock differ from the Mayor's?

- A) Elias thinks it is a toy; the Mayor thinks it is a tool.
- B) Elias sees it as a historical record; the Mayor sees it as just a machine.
- C) Elias wants to sell it; the Mayor wants to keep it.
- D) Elias thinks it's broken; the Mayor thinks it's working.

17. Which word best describes the tone of the narrative?

- A) Humorous
- B) Melancholic
- C) Scientific
- D) Terrifying

18. The word "fatiguing" in the text refers to:

- A) The clockmaker being tired.
- B) The metal parts becoming weak over time.
- C) The Mayor's lack of interest.
- D) The sound the clock makes.

19. What is the implicit message of the story?

- A) Small things can have a big impact.
- B) Technology is better than old machines.
- C) Mayors should always be trusted.
- D) Rusted metal is more expensive than copper.

20. Where does the climax of this short passage take place?

- A) In the village square.
- B) At the council meeting.
- C) At the top of the clock tower.
- D) In Elias's workshop.

Section B: English Usage (25 MCQs)

21. By the time we arrived at the cinema, the movie _____ already started.

- A) has C) was
B) had D) would

22. The bridge _____ by famous engineers in 1920. (Passive Voice)

- A) was built C) was build
B) built D) has built

23. If it _____ tomorrow, we will cancel the picnic. (First Conditional)

- A) rains C) rained
B) will rain D) rain

24. He asked me _____ I had seen his keys. (Reported Speech)

- A) that C) if
B) weather D) which

25. The girl _____ lives next door is a talented pianist. (Relative Clause)

- A) which C) whose
B) whom D) who

26. I am not used to _____ up so early in the morning.

- A) get C) got
B) getting D) gets

33. "If you heat ice, it melts." This is an example of which conditional?

- A) Zero Conditional
- B) First Conditional
- C) Second Conditional
- D) Third Conditional

34. She works _____ than anyone else in the office.

- A) more harder
- B) hardest
- C) harder
- D) most hard

35. The man _____ car was stolen went to the police station.

- A) who
- B) whom
- C) whose
- D) that

36. Which of these is a correctly reported version of: "I am tired," said Tom.

- A) Tom said that he is tired.
- B) Tom said that he was tired.
- C) Tom said that I was tired.
- D) Tom says that he was tired.

37. We need to _____ the problem before it gets worse.

- A) look into
- B) look for
- C) look at
- D) look up

38. Identify the error: "Despite of the rain, they decided to go hiking."

- A) Despite
- B) rain
- C) decided
- D) hiking

39. I _____ my homework yet, so I cannot go out.

- A) didn't finish
- C) hadn't finished

B) haven't finished

D) don't finish

40. The news _____ surprisingly positive today.

A) are

C) is

B) were

D) be

41. He is very good _____ playing the guitar.

A) in

C) on

B) at

D) with

42. They _____ each other since they were in primary school.

A) know

C) are knowing

B) have known

D) had known

43. Which word is an adverb in: "He spoke quite softly during the meeting."?

A) Spoke

C) Softly

B) Quite

D) Both B and C

44. "To put up with" someone means to:

A) Support them

C) Visit them

B) Tolerate them

D) Argue with them

45. Choose the correct sentence:

A) He has been went to London twice.

C) He has been to London twice.

B) He had been going to London twice.

D) He has gone to London twice.

