

**OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ  
ETAPA JUDEȚEANĂ, 18 MARTIE 2017  
CLASA a XI-a  
SECȚIUNEA B**

**SUBJECT I (25 POINTS)**

**Read the following texts and then choose the best answer for the questions that follow:**

**A Claire Lippold, 23, works for the Bat Conservation Trust**

I did a degree in biology, and studied bats as parts of my thesis. When I saw the ad for this job, I thought it would be perfect for me. We get about ten thousand calls a year, many from people worried that if they have bats in their loft they can't have any building work done. They need the right advice, because the law protects bats. We're contracted by an organisation called Natural England to arrange a service whereby anybody with bats on their property can have a specialist volunteer come out and give information and advice about the creatures they're living with. Generally, once they have the information, they're happy. It's the sign of a really green environment if you have bats. In the summer, we get calls when bats have flown uninvited into people's houses after dark. We advise turning the lights out, shutting the door, leaving the window open and allowing the bat to find its own way out. One of the most common myths we have to explode is that the bats always turn left when they leave roofs. Apparently that was printed in a magazine recently, so we got a clutch of calls about it. We also get people calling and humming the entire Batman theme tune down the phone. The jokes are pretty predictable, I'm afraid.

**B Anthea, McNuffy, 26, works for NHS Direct, the phone-in helpline operated by the National Health Service**

Having worked as a nurse training for a while, I found I missed the patient contact I'd enjoyed doing nursing itself. When I saw this job, I thought of it as a way of getting some of that contact back-without the cleaning up! I remember the dread of what the calls might be about on my first day, but they give you so much training before you're let loose that you can handle it. It was a bit difficult not having the physical clues I'd have been able to pick up on the wards. But you very quickly get used to working with the computer, it makes you feel safe. Occasionally, there are problems with the system but you're never left with a blank screen, and because we're a national service there's always somebody else who can take a call. The most common calls are about coughs and colds, things people can manage on their own, but I need to look out for anything that will indicate that they might need to go and see a doctor. People can be too embarrassed to go to hospital with what seem like minor ailments, and we do have to reassure them that if they do have to go in, people aren't going to laugh at them.

**C Agnes, Thompson, 60, works for a major broadcasting company**

Yesterday, I got lots of calls relating to weekly programmes, though there was quite a contrast: the radio show for the blind, "In Touch", and "Watchdog" on TV. The "In Touch" callers had heard of some new equipment and wanted further details. "Watchdog" is a consumer programme and people generally call me because they have a problem with a product from a company we've covered on the show. We have regular callers, some very nice and some not so nice, and you get to know them.

Quite often people phone to complain spontaneously, and when we call them again within ten days with a response, which we promise to do in some cases, they've forgotten what made them cross. Television programmes probably generate more calls, particularly medical programmes or programmes about children. People have a sense that we're a general repository of knowledge and wisdom-which we're not! There'll have been a show that has covered most things at one time or another so I can always look things up. As a result, I have a lot of what you might call useless knowledge.

#### **D Caroline Hickman, 34, works for a company with a wide range of households products**

I really get out a lot of the work. We have such a wide range of products-from beauty and haircare through to nappies and household cleaners-that no two calls are even the same. With laundry products, for example, we get lots of specific queries-people want to know what to use with certain types of material. We can't always go into details of all the settings of different brands of machine, though. We also get a lot of calls about skincare from people who want to know about specific ingredients in our products. You also get fascinating insight into the country's lifestyles. For instance, we tend to get lots of calls about cleaning products on a Monday, presumably because people buy them over the weekend, then towards Friday we'll get haircare and beauty because they're planning a night out. I also long for one-off problems I can really get my teeth into-the ones that come out of the blue. We once had a call from a woman who'd seen a wedding dress on one of our TV adverts and wanted one identical to it for her own big day. We found that it was still at the television studio and was available for her to borrow- which she did. It just goes to show that it's always worth asking!

Which of the call-centre workers says she .....

1. Advises people on the legal background to a problem? .....
2. Enjoys the variety of things which people call about? .....
3. Finds the equipment that she works with reassuring? .....
4. Used to find it hard to work with only a spoken description of people's problems? .....
5. Gets back to certain callers within a given period of time? .....
6. Can arrange for an expert to visit callers at home? .....
7. Has identified a regular pattern in calls on certain subjects? .....
8. Helps people to solve unexpected problems at night? .....
9. Was sorry not to be in direct touch with the people she had the skills to help? .....
10. Finds some people have unrealistic expectations of the service she can provide? .....

#### **Subiectul II (50 points)**

Starting from the text, write a **solutions-to-problems essay** of about 350 words, providing suggestions for dealing with the noise issue.

In a survey of 2,000 residents in Britain in 2006, more than a third of them claimed their lives had been adversely affected by noise. Fourteen per cent said they had been woken up at night by noisy neighbours and five per cent that they had argued with neighbours about noise at least once in the past year. The list of noise sources published by the survey was impressive. It included not only noisy cars, motorbikes, car alarms, and neighbours arguing with each other. It also included noisy children, loud music or TVs, DIY, and footsteps. Yes, footsteps! Some people can find almost anything except silence noisy. The headline-grabbing finding from the survey was that for twenty respondents the noise had got so bad they had been forced to move house. That's one per cent of

those surveyed. Extrapolated to Britain as a whole, this suggests that half a million people in the country move house to escape noisy neighbours each year.

How are we to read these findings? It could suggest that the British are a noisy, insensitive lot. Or it could suggest they are so peace-and-quiet loving that they are hypersensitive to noise. Alternatively, perhaps this was just a badly conducted survey. If people are asked to think of noises they would rather not have around their houses, they oblige. And, in this context, they are asked if noise had ever made them move house, many might agree that the desire for more tranquility was the most important motivation.

### SUBJECT III (25points)

**You see this announcement on an international website.**

Articles wanted – What makes you laugh?

What do you think is funny? Do your friends and family laugh at the same things as you do? What do you think people all over the world might agree is funny?

**After reading the text below, write your article. (200-220 words)**

Modern British humour derives from the music-hall tradition which had its most popular period at the beginning of the 20th century. Singers, dancers, comedians and acrobats performed in "turns" to provide light theatrical entertainment. British humour today is mainly urban in character, though only specific urban areas produce comedians. People from northern cities like Liverpool and Manchester are funny because the alternative is suicidal despair. Rural areas do not really generate humour because the British take the countryside seriously.

To be funny in Britain, you have to:

- **be a loser or an idiot.** The British comedian often plays the nerd or the loony, both in sitcoms and as a stand-up comedian. A classic example is John Cleese as Basil Fawlty Towers, where he is in a hopeless fight against a basically sane world. Cleese and the other members of the Monty Python team are famous for sketches where the world and the people in it are mad:

*"We buried the cat last week"*

*"Was it dead?"*

*"No, we just didn't like it much"*

- **be brave about death.** Nothing raises a bigger laugh than a good death or funeral joke, and most stand-up comedians have at least a couple of jokes set in a doctor's surgery:

*Doctor: You're in great shape. You'll live to be 90.*

*Patient: I am 90.*

*Doctor: Oh, well. That's it, then.*

**Nota: Timp de lucru – 3 ore.**

**Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii. Nu se acorda 10 puncte din oficiu.**