SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH OLYMPIAD
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (FAL)
GRADE 9

DATE: 04 - 08 SEPTEMBER 2023

TIME: 75 MINUTES

Instructions:

1. This booklet has 7 questions.
2. Answer on the paper below.
3. Read the questions carefully before answering.
4. Visit the website: www.saolympiads.co.za.

NAME OF LEARNER:	
SCHOOL:	**GRADE:**

QUESTION ONE:

Read the extract from "The Stray Cats of Homs" by Eva Nour (Text A) below and then answer the questions that follow. Refer to the text to check your answers when appropriate.

It wasn't because they might be diseased, though many of them likely were. No, it was because they lived under siege, just like you. The cats were as innocent and as thirsty, as emaciated and starving as you.

"It would be like eating your neighbour," you said. A cat has seven souls in Arabic. In English cats have nine lives. You probably have both nine lives and seven souls, because otherwise, I don't know how you've made it this far.

What determines whether you survive or not? Chance. But chance doesn't inspire hope. Instead, you say there are strategies, two strategies to be precise. The first piece of advice came from a friend in the Syrian army, who said that imagined freedom is a kind of freedom…

It was his older sister's idea to fetch a kitchen knife to save the sparrow. The little bird sat stock still, chirping urgently, in the glue their parents smeared across a couple of flattened cardboard boxes on the roof terrace. The glue was meant to catch the mice, but the sparrow got stuck instead. Down below, the streets and square courtyards of Homs shimmered in the heat. The air was thick with exhaust fumes and the sweet fragrance of jasmine, which climbed over stone walls and iron gates, but the occasional refreshing breeze reached seven-year-old Sami and his nine-year-old sister.

They leaned over the bird. Hiba gently cut away the glue from under its claws as though she were a top surgeon from Damascus and not a schoolgirl with a short attention span. But they soon realized there was glue in the bird's feathers, and it wouldn't be able to fly. Sami carried it in cupped hands down the stairs to the bathroom, careful not to hurt it - and they rinsed and washed the sparrow in the sink, making sure the water was neither hot nor too cold, the jet neither too powerful nor too gentle. The light brown ball of fluff rested in his hands while Hiba softly dabbed the trembling body with the green towel.

"What are you doing?" their mum asked from the kitchen. Their parents, Samira and Nabil would sit in there on the weekends discussing matters relating to the children and the house, listening to Fairuz' soft songs on the radio.

Sami heard the clinking of their cups, black coffee in which cardamom pods rose and sank, and the sound of his father clearing his throat as he wiped crumbs out of his moustache, the part of his appearance he was proudest of.

"Saving a bird!" Sami replied.

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"No more animals," Nabil said.

"No, we're going to release it now," Hiba promised, in the same tone she used to tell her teacher she hadn't glanced at her classmate's answer on the test.

They each kissed the bird's beak and stroked its back. At that moment, Sami regretted not giving it a name. If it had a name, it would stay with them, a name would anchor his love for it. Instead, he whispered, "Teer ya tair: fly, bird."

He raised his hands and hurled the sparrow into the air, and, for a moment, it looked like it was flying in a wide arc, out across the rooftops and courtyards of Homs, through the shimmering blue sky, before it plummeted towards the asphalt three floors down, broke its neck and died.

[Taken from The Stray Cats of Homs-Eva Nour]

Choose the correct option from the choices below:

1. **What does siege NOT mean? Tick the correct answer.**

   (a) blockade
   (b) investment
   (c) besiegement
   (d) guard

   (1)

2. **The word, "emaciated," means _____. Tick the correct option.**

   (a) flexible
   (b) abnormally thin
   (c) emancipated
   (d) free

   (1)

3. **What does the author believe determines whether you survive or not? Tick the correct answer.**

   (a) fate
   (b) chance
   (c) emaciated
   (d) your past

   (1)

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4. **What was the glue meant to catch? Tick the correct answer.**

(a) The sparrow
(b) Stray cats
(c) Mice
(d) the neighbour

(1)

5. **One adjective that described both Sami and Hiba is_____. Tick the correct answer.**

(a) heartless
(b) young
(c) cold
(d) brutal

(1)

6. **The ellipses dots… is used to indicate_____. Tick the correct answer.**

(a) an incomplete thought
(b) a change in thought
(c) a proper noun
(d) hesitation

(1)

7. **By using contextual clues, can you guess where is Homs a city in? Tick only the correct place.**

(a) Palestine
(b) Syria
(c) Saudi Arabia
(d) Denmark

(1)

8. **What had dad been drinking?**

(a) cardamom pods
(b) coffee with cardamom pods
(c) tea with cardamom pods
(d) Turkish tea

(1)

9. **What does this statement say about Hiba's tone?** Hiba promised, in the same tone she used to tell her teacher she hadn't glanced at her classmate's answer on the test. Tick the correct answer.

(a) innocently
(b) guiltily
(c) reluctantly
(d) sarcastically

(1)

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10. What are signs that Sami and Hiba were caring? Choose all the correct points.

(a) They kissed the bird.
(b) They released the bird.
(c) The helped get the glue off the bird.
(d) They put glue on the mouse.

(2)

11. What is asphalt? Choose all the correct synonyms.

(a) tar
(b) window
(c) concrete
(d) tarmac

(3)

12. The mention of the bird dying, and the stray cats are used in this story to indicate_____. Tick the correct answer.

(a) suffering and lack of freedom
(b) homelessness yet contentment
(c) peace and hope
(d) animal cruelty

(1)

13. What was the topic of discussion for Nabil and Samira?

_____

_____ **(2)**

14. What according to the text is a strong sign of endearment and love?

_____ **(1)**

15. Quote a line from the story that states the sky wasn't shimmering blue and clean.

_____ **(1)**

16. Why does the word "hurl" have a negative connotation?

_____ **(1)**

Marks: 20

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QUESTION TWO:

Identify the figure of speech in these clauses and sentences below:

2.1 Hiba gently cut away the glue from under its claws as though she were a top surgeon from Damascus.

2.2 The light brown ball of fluff rested in his hands while Hiba softly dabbed the trembling body with the green towel.

2.3 Listening to Fairuz' soft songs on the radio.

2.4 A name would anchor his love for it.

2.5 Cats have nine lives.

Marks: 5

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QUESTION THREE:

Choose the right part of speech from column B for the options provided in column A and write the correct answer from column B in column C.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C
3.1 regretted	a. Proper noun	3.1
3.2 thick	b. Preposition	3.2
3.3 neither	c. Adjective	3.3
3.4 over	d. Conjunction	3.4
3.5 Homs	e. Verb	3.5

Marks: 5

QUESTION FOUR:

Look at the advertisement below and answer the questions that follow:

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4.1 What is the logo of the advert featured above?

(a) A cat
(b) A paw
(c) Raleigh Paws
(d) bold font

(1)

4.2 The advert implies that when you see cats, you can't keep a straight face because you end up_____.

(a) sneezing
(b) frowning
(c) shouting
(d) smiling

(1)

4.3 Change the word "impossible" to its noun form.

(a) possible
(b) impossibility
(c) improbable
(d) impossible

(1)

4.4 Tick the correct option. The punctuation mark in the end of an advert was used to:

To indicate a quote	To show the name of an advert

(1)

4.5 Tick the correct option. In the word, "it's" the apostrophe is used to show:

Contraction	Possessions	Plural	Conjunction

(1)

Marks: 5

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QUESTION FIVE:

Form adverbs from the words in brackets:

5.1 We walk through the city of Homs **(regular)** _____on Saturdays.

5.2 Nabil hates animals, but he **(usual)**_____ tolerates the stray cats.

Marks: 2

QUESTION SIX:

Solve these riddles:

6.1 What is white when clean but black when dirty? _____

6.2 What can't be used until it's broken? _____

6.3 I am full of holes, but I can hold water, what am I? _____

Marks: 3

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FEMSSISA JUNIOR ENGLISH OLYMPIAD:

GRADE9

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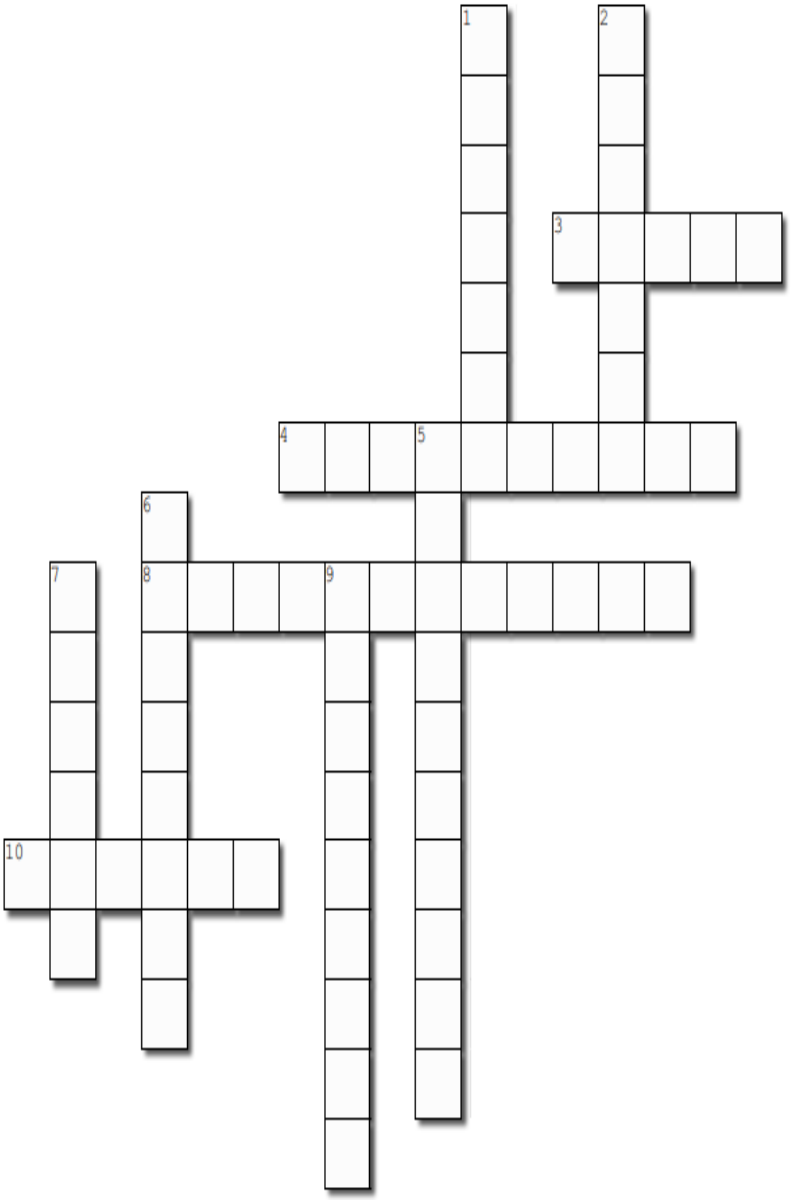
QUESTION SEVEN:

CROSSWORD: Fill in the crossword below.



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FEMSSISA JUNIOR ENGLISH OLYMPIAD:

GRADE9

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Clues:

Across

(3) One word for looking at someone for a long while.
(4) Identify the error in the sentence: Annually you see stray cats in Homs every year.
(8) Full word for “fridge”.
(10) Singular form for “media”.

Down

(1) Antonym for fact.
(2) One word for a story that is not true.
(5) Add a prefix to “expected” to change it to its antonym.
(6) Synonym for riveting.
(7) Kick the _____ is an idiom which means to die.
(9) Adjectival form of “inspire”.

ACROSS
3.
4.
8.
10.
DOWN
1.
2.
5.
6.
7.
9.

Marks: 10

TOTAL FOR PAPER: 50

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