SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE OLYMPIAD (HL): GRADE 7

DATE: 7-21 AUGUST 2025

TIME: 60 MINUTES

Instructions:

1. This booklet has 6 questions.
2. Answer on the paper below.
3. Read the questions carefully before answering.
4. Visit the websites: www.saolympiads.co.za.

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

QUESTION ONE: TEXT A

Read the following passage and then answer the questions that follow.

What Do Animals Dream About?
(Peek Inside the Minds of Sleeping Animals by Mary Bates)

Your dog whimpers in his sleep. Your cat twitches. It definitely looks like your pet is dreaming. We can't ask them about it, but scientific evidence—based on similarities in our brains and behaviour while sleeping—seems to indicate that animals do dream, just like us. But what are they dreaming about? Scientists are looking at sleeping cats, rats, and even bees to find out what really goes on when they snooze.

In people, the most vivid dreams happen when we experience rapid eye movement, or REM, sleep. During this time, our muscles are normally paralyzed so we don't act out our dreams, but our brains can be even more active than they are when we're awake.

All mammals and some birds also experience REM sleep. Other creatures, like reptiles and some insects, might go through REM sleep—or something resembling it.

"They probably don't have the rich narrative dreams that we experience, but it seems reasonable to think that animals have images and some form of thinking during REM sleep," says Patrick McNamara, a neuroscientist at Boston University. . . .

Rat Slumber
For laboratory rats, dreams may take the form of replaying the fastest route through a maze to a tasty piece of food. Matthew Wilson, a neuroscientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and his colleagues compared the brain patterns of rats running through a maze with their brain activity during sleep afterward.

"It's like going down the halls in your school or the different rooms of your house," says Wilson. "The rats can follow different paths to get to a food reward, so there's some incentive for them to explore."

Wilson and his colleagues looked at an area of the brain called the hippocampus. Cells in this area activate in ways that correspond to a rat's location in space. The rats' movements create new patterns of activity in the hippocampus. The researchers could tell where an awake rat was in the maze by the pattern of activity in its hippocampus.

When Wilson and his colleagues looked at the activity of the same nerve cells while the rats slept, they found nearly identical patterns of activity. It was as if the rats were running the maze in their minds while they slept. The brain patterns were so similar that the researchers could tell what part of the maze the rats were dreaming of.

"The rats seem to be traveling back in time, revisiting places they have been," says Wilson. "Their dreams take the form of these short snippets of experience, like little movies." . . .

Insects and Other Creatures

Animals such as rats, cats, and finches have brains that are like our own and show similar behaviour during sleep. But what about more distantly related animals? How can we tell if they are dreaming?

"Of the nearly one million described species of insect on the planet, only a handful have been studied with respect to sleep," says Barrett Klein, a biologist at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

Measuring sleep in insects is tricky. Scientists have generally focused on a group of behavioural signs of sleep, such as stillness, drooping, and muscle relaxation. Sleeping bugs also require intense stimulus to jar them into responding. Experiments show that some insects experience sleep rebound, which means that if deprived of sleep, they will subsequently need more of it.

Going without sleep has serious consequences for people. Insects can also suffer from lack of shut-eye. Klein investigated how sleep deprivation affects honeybee communication. Bees tell each other about the direction and distance to food sources with something called a waggle dance. Klein found that the dances of sleep-deprived bees are sloppier than those of bees that slept soundly. . . .

Klein says no one is sure if insects like bees dream, but there is great potential. "In my experience, there is no reason why an insect would not or could not do something comparable to human dreaming," he says. "If they can process odours and replay information while they sleep, that's what dreams are made of. If you watch a sleeping bee, there are titillating hints that she might be processing something. I've seen bees twitch their antennae and extend their tongue-like mouthparts during sleep. Are they dreaming about lapping up nectar from a flower?"

Recent research suggests dreaming may be more common in the animal kingdom than previously thought.

For instance, cuttlefish, relatives of the octopus, demonstrate a sleep-like state similar to REM sleep in which their eyes move rapidly, their arms twitch, and their bodies change colour. And scientists observed something comparable to REM sleep in a lizard called a bearded dragon.

To Sleep, Perchance to . . . Understand You're Dreaming?

While the behavioural and biological evidence that other animals dream continues to grow, what that actually means remains elusive. We do not know what dreaming is like for animals or if they know that they are dreaming. People do not often realize they are dreaming while asleep, but it usually becomes clear as soon as we wake up. . . . Do rats wake up remembering the mazes they ran while they dozed? Do cats recognize their dreams of stalking prey as dreams and not reality? We can say with reasonable certainty that other animals dream. But how animals experience those dreams is a mystery—for now.

Choose the correct answer from the following:

1. **"The rats seem to be travelling back in time, revisiting places they have been," says Wilson. (paragraph 9)**

   How does the phrase "travelling back in time" contribute to the tone of the paragraph?

   (a) By showing concern about rats' dreams.
   (b) By showing uncertainty about rats' dreams.
   (c) By creating a sense of wonder about rats' dreams.
   (d) By creating a sense of longing about rats' dreams.

   (1)

2. **Which word from paragraph 12 comes from a Latin word meaning "to spring back or bounce back from an impact."**

   (a) focused (b) relaxation
   (c) stimulus (d) rebound **(1)**

3. **Select TWO statements that describe the significance of the rhetorical question at the end of paragraph 14.**

   (a) Klein is calling for further studies on the subject.
   (b) Klein is challenging an accepted notion about bees.
   (c) Klein is using his research to make an educated guess.
   (d) Klein is encouraging the reader to think about bee dreams.
   (e) Klein is persuading the reader to ask new questions about bees.

   (2)

4. **How does beginning the sentence with the phrase "recent research" help achieve the author's purpose in paragraph 15?**

   (a) It provides background on dream studies.
   (b) It contrasts different types of animal dreams.
   (c) It introduces major questions for future explorations.
   (d) It emphasises the idea that new facts have been accepted.

   (1)

5. **In the section INSECTS AND OTHER CREATURES, how does the Author develop the argument that insects probably dream?**

   (a) By citing an expert in insect sleep.
   (b) By making guesses about insect sleep.
   (c) By providing an opinion about insect sleep.
   (d) By comparing insect sleep and human sleep.

   (1)

6. Choose a synonym for the word "elusive".

(a) definite (b) understandable
(c) unspecific (d) intelligible **(1)**

7. List two things that the Researcher has seen honey bees do while they are sleeping that may suggest that they are dreaming? (2)

8. In the sentence: "Are they dreaming about lapping up nectar from a flower" – what figure/s of speech has/have been used ?

(a) Simile (b) Metaphor
(c) Onomatopoeia (d) Assonance

(2)

9. What is the purpose of this article you have just read?

(a) to inform (b) to entertain
(c) to make one think (d) to consult

(2)

10. What do we call a pair of words, such as prey/pray that sound the same but are spelled differently? (1)

Total: 14

QUESTION TWO:

The three children will be drawing a comic.

Write down in relation to the sentence above.

(a) the subject **(1)**

(b) the predicate **(1)**

(c) verb and object **(2)**

Total: 4

QUESTION THREE:

Change the tense of the sentences on the tenses table according to the headings.

Simple present tense	**Simple past tense**	**Simple future tense**
		He will explore Nature.
Present continuous tense	**Past continuous tense**	**Future continuous tense**
	The girl was drawing.	
Present perfect Tense	**Past perfect tense**	**Future perfect tense**
They have asked questions.		

(6)

QUESTION FOUR:

Find the main clause and the subordinate clause and write them down.

"The girl who was drawing a picture was very proud of her efforts."

(a) Main clause _____ **(1)**

(b) Subordinate clause _____ **(1)**

QUESTION FIVE:

Identify the parts of speech in the sentence below. Use the word box to help you to answer this question.

proper noun collective noun abstract noun common noun
finite verb infinitive auxiliary verb preposition conjunction
adverb of time/place/manner descriptive adjective possessive adjective
numerical adjective personal pronoun reflexive pronoun

"Here is my story for today. Everything up to when Pete asked about my personal experiences."

(a) today
(b) my
(c) Everything
(d) asked
(e) personal
(f) Pete

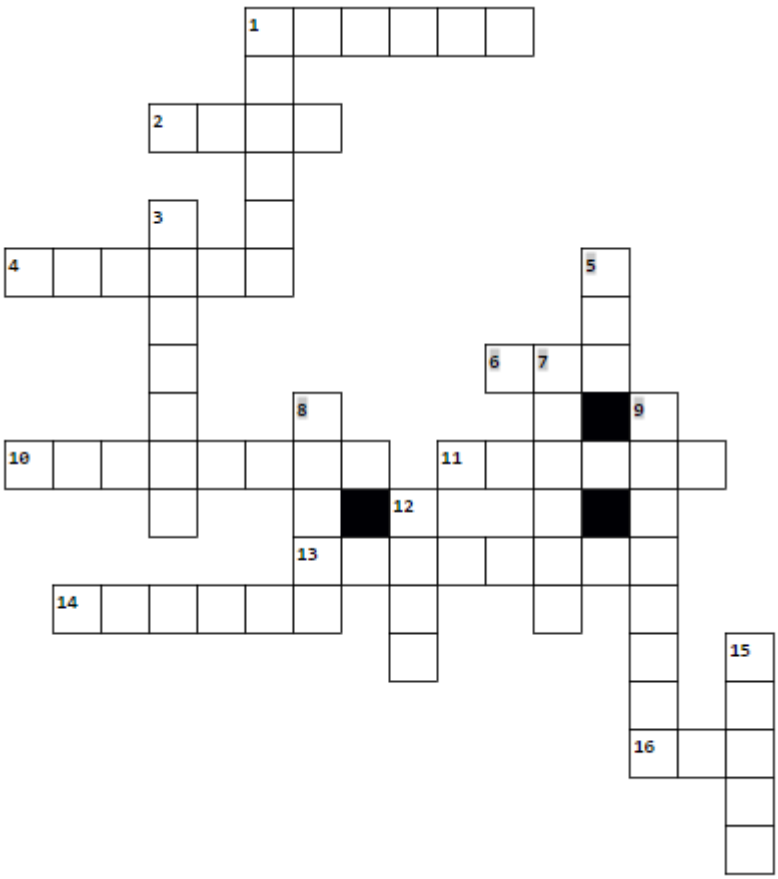
(6)

QUESTION SIX:

1. LOGIC:

When you have me, you want to share me. But if you share me, you don't have me any longer. What am I? **(1)**

2. CROSSWORD PUZZLE: VOCABULARY



CLUES:

Across: **Down:**

1 the middle point, area	1 a child of your uncle or aunt
2 high in volume of sound	3 a piece of written or spoken information that you send to someone
4 a brown or gray bird that often lives in cities and sometimes sits on statues.	5 likes to chase mice
6 flying mammal	7 when you go to another country or other countries, you are considered to be _____
10 large marsupial that carries its young in a pouch.	8 the outside page at the front or back of a book or magazine
11 to receive and use something that belongs to someone else, and promise to give it back to them later	9 a small card that you write on one side of and send to someone in the mail. It usually has a picture on it, a stamp as well, and is sent from a place you are visiting
13 An animal that has a trunk	12 the part of a chair that you sit on
14 a person who drives a vehicle	15 very annoyed; used about people's behaviour
16 man's best friend	

(17)

Total for paper: 50