SOUTHERN AFRICAN ENGLISH OLYMPIADS

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SOUTH AFRICAN HIGH SCHOOLS
ENGLISH OLYMPIAD HOME LANGUAGE (HL)
GRADE 10

DATE: 06 AUGUST 2026
TIME: 75 MINUTES

Instructions:

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

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

QUESTION ONE:

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

The Topical Talk Festival

In January 2026, the *Topical Talk Festival will begin*, bringing students from across the globe to discuss important issues in the news. The festival runs from January 19th to March 13th 2026, and is supported by topic experts who guide conversations. Participants share perspectives shaped by their local experiences, allowing them to learn how global events affect people differently depending on where they live.

One of the central aims of the festival is to encourage young people to see themselves as active citizens of the world. By debating issues such as climate change, artificial intelligence, and social justice, students gain a deeper understanding of how these challenges connect communities across continents. For example, a student in South Africa might explain how droughts affect farming, while another in India could describe the impact of rising temperatures on city life. These exchanges highlight the importance of listening to diverse voices.

The festival also emphasizes the skills needed for the future. Activities include exploring the news in their own communities, debating what matters most to youth, and connecting with peers internationally. By participating, students not only improve their comprehension and communication skills but also develop empathy and critical thinking. Teachers report that students become more confident in expressing opinions, more respectful of differences, and more curious about the wider world.

Ultimately, *The Topical Talk Festival* shows that young people are not just passive observers of current affairs. They are capable of shaping conversations, asking difficult questions, and imagining solutions. In doing so, they prepare themselves to become leaders who can respond thoughtfully to the challenges of tomorrow.

(Information from: Official Topical Talk Festival)

1. Choose the correct answer from the options that follow:

1.1 Where do students come from to attend the Topical Talk Festival?

(a) European countries
(b) English-speaking countries
(c) Countries from across the world
(d) First-world countries

(1)

1.2 What is the main purpose of the festival?

(a) To celebrate cultural traditions
(b) To promote sports competitions
(c) To encourage young people to discuss current issues
(d) To teach students about history

(1)

1.3 Who supports the conversations during the festival?

(a) Journalists
(b) Topic experts
(c) Parents
(d) Politicians

(1)

1.4 Which skill is NOT directly mentioned as being developed through the festival?

(a) Empathy
(b) Communication
(c) Critical thinking
(d) Mathematical problem-solving

(1)

1.5 Why is it valuable for students to share perspectives shaped by local experiences?

(a) It teaches them how to write well.
(b) It allows them to avoid reading the news.
(c) It shows how global events affect people differently.
(d) It helps them memorize facts.

(1)

1.6 What do teachers report as a benefit of the festival?

(a) Students gain in confidence and respect.
(b) Students find it easier to memorize more facts.
(c) Students avoid difficult questions.
(d) Students are more aware of local issues.

(1)

1.7 In India, they are experiencing rising city temperatures. Which of the following would NOT be affected by the increase in temperatures?

(a) The strain on the power grid
(b) Productivity of workers
(c) The availability of water resources
(d) Air transportation

(1)

1.8 Give an antonym for the word "diverse" found in paragraph 2. **(1)**

1.9 Give a synonym for the word "empathy" found in paragraph 3. **(1)**

1.10 In the following sentence:

"The festival also emphasizes the skills needed for the future."

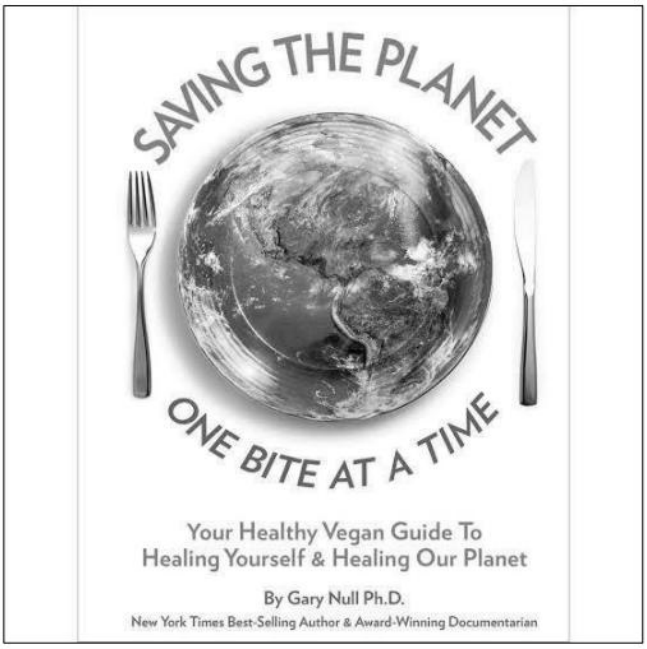
(a) What part of speech is the word "also"? **(1)**
(b) What is the subject of the sentence and what is the predicate? **(1)**
(c) What is the direct object? **(1)**
(d) What part of speech is the word "for"? **(1)**

1.11 In line 14, is "most" the superlative form of the word "much"? **(1)**

1.12 What is the comparative form for "sympathetic"? **(1)**

Total: 15

QUESTION TWO: Visual Literacy



[Source: garysvitamincloset.com, accessed on 5 April 2019]

2.1 What is the most appealing and striking part of this advertisement?

(a) That it is by a New York Times best-selling author?
(b) That you can save the planet?
(c) That you can heal yourself and the planet?
(d) The plate in the middle representing the world?

(1)

2.2 What figure of speech is used in the phrase: "One Bite at a Time"?

(a) Simile
(b) Metaphor
(c) Irony
(d) Hyperbole

(1)

2.3 What is a "Vegan"?

(a) A person who does not eat meat.
(b) A person who only eats vegetables and dairy products.
(c) A person who does not eat any animal products.
(d) A person who does not eat meat but will eat fish.

(1)

2.4 Which one of the following statements would not help to "Heal the Planet"?

(a) Animal farming is hazardous to the environment.
(b) It uses much more water to produce beef than grains.
(c) Animal farming leads to trees being cleared for farms.
(d) Chicken farming is good for the environment.

(1)

2.5 Give an antonym for the word "harmful". **(1)**

Total: 5

QUESTION THREE: Verb Tenses

Go through the sentences and change their tenses as directed.

(a) The boy speaks the truth. (Present Continuous Tense)
(b) Mr. Cooper has spoken about Dinosaurs. (Present Perfect Continuous Tense)
(c) Amy went to school yesterday. (Future Continuous Tense)
(d) I have finished my assignment. (Past Perfect Tense)
(e) Priya shall finish her stitching by then. (Future Perfect Tense)

(5)

Total: 5

QUESTION FOUR: Proverbs and their Meanings

Match the proverbs in Column A with their meaning in Column B.

Column A	Column B
1. A stitch in time saves nine.	A. What you do matters more than what you say.
2. Too many cooks spoil the broth.	B. Don't make plans based on something that hasn't happened yet.
3. Actions speak louder than words.	C. A small effort now makes a huge difference later.
4. Don't count your chickens before they hatch.	D. You cannot change your basic nature or character.
5. A leopard cannot change his spots.	E. Too many people involved in a task makes it harder.

(5)

Total: 5

QUESTION FIVE:

Read the following sentences and turn the word in brackets into an abstract noun, adjective, or adverb to help the sentence make sense.

(a) She told us a ……. story. (fancy)
(b) We are waiting …… for your answer. (hope)
(c) The old man was sleeping …… (peace)

(3)

Total: 3

QUESTION SIX: L O G I C

(a) What can you break without touching it? **(1)**

(b) What common phrase can you form from this word arrangement?

GROUND
FEET
FEET
FEET
FEET
FEET
FEET

(1)

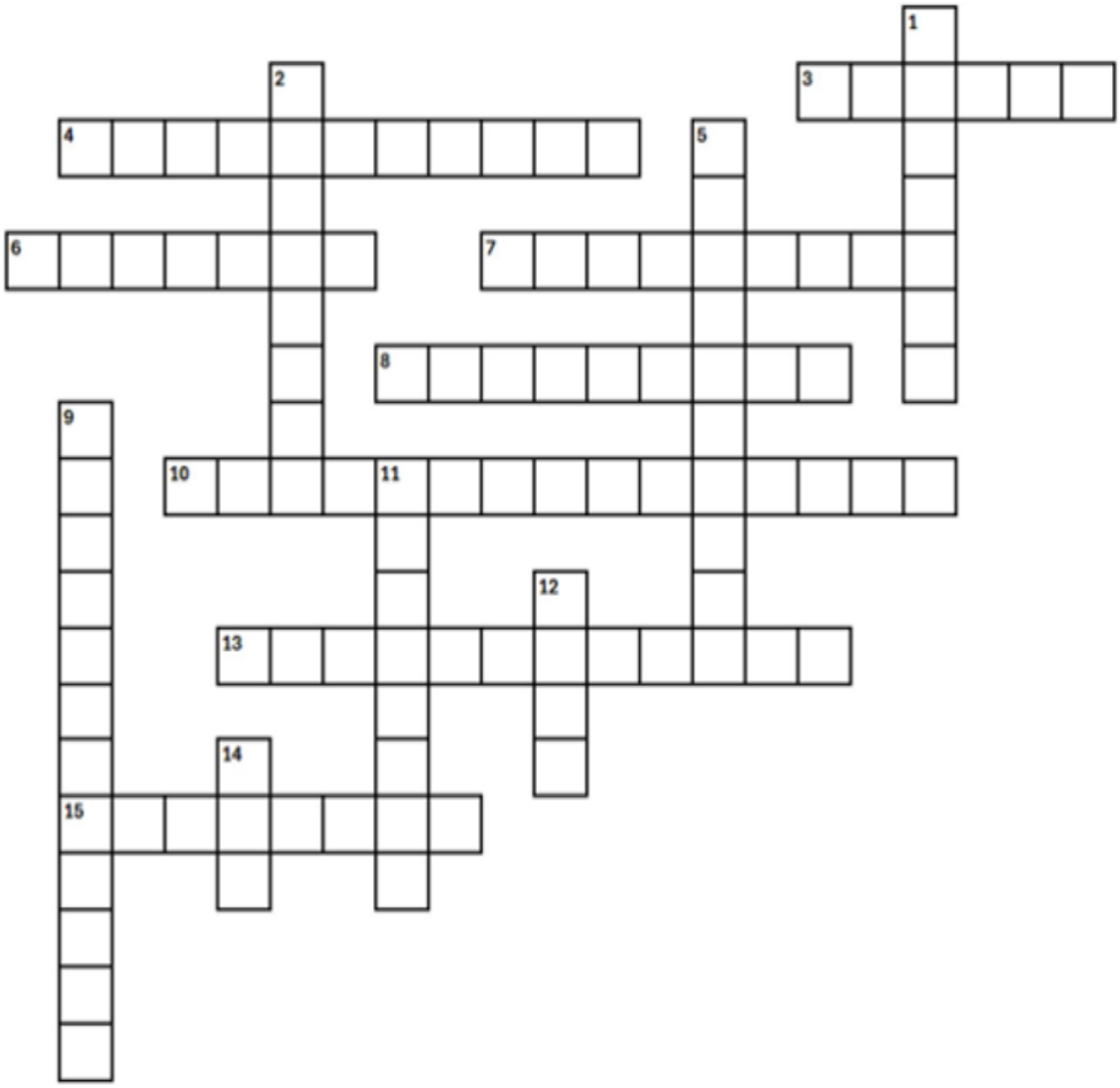
Total: 2

QUESTION SEVEN: CROSSWORD

Read the clues below and then fill in the grid.

Across:	**Down:**
3 Comparison using like or as.	1 The use of words that appeal to the senses.
4 The pattern of rhyming words at the ends of lines.	2 A direct comparison saying one thing is another.
6 A short, wise or witty saying, expressing the truth.	5 The repetition of consonant sounds within or at the end of words.
7 The repetition of vowel sounds in nearby words.	9 Repetition of the same initial consonant sound in poetry.
8 A deliberate exaggeration for effect.	11 Words placed next to each other that have opposite meanings.
10 Giving human qualities to non-human things.	12 The overall feeling or emotion created in a poem.
13 A word that imitates a sound, e.g. buzz.	14 A play on words with double meanings.
15 A reference to a well-known person, event or work.	

Total: 15



Total for paper: 50