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

DATE: 20 AUGUST 2026
TIME: 60 MINUTES

Instructions:

1. This booklet has 6 questions.
2. Answer on the sheet 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 passage and then answer the questions that follow.

MAGNIFICENT DIVERS

If you were a fish, one of the last birds you would want to see flying overhead is a hungry osprey. These majestic birds of prey average over half a metre in length and may have an incredible 1,8 metres wingspan. These enormous predators are also equipped with long, sharp talons for snagging a meal swimming in the water below.

Ospreys, also known as fish hawks or fishing eagles, have short, hooked beaks and wings that taper down to rounded tips. Their colouring ranges from white to dark brown. The white feathers on ospreys' heads look like little crests and their wings include a mixture of white and dark brown feathers. Their chests, bellies and chins are white, and their tails are marked with several white bands, or stripes. Ospreys in flight are easy to identify, thanks to their distinctive plumage. Not surprisingly, these birds are related to eagles, hawks and even vultures. They can live a long time; the average life span in the wild is 18 years. The oldest known osprey lived to be 25 years old.

Ospreys are designed to fly fast and dive at amazing speeds. Soaring one hundred feet above the water, their sharp eyes watch the surface carefully for any tell-tale signs of fish. Ospreys hover over the water and wait for some indication of activity. Once prey is spotted, the birds fold their wings to their sides and begin a dive to catch their food. Water sprays in all directions as the birds reach underwater to grab a fish. They have been seen diving as much as one metre underwater to capture their prey! Once a fish has been snagged in its sharp claws, an osprey soars back up into the sky, pausing in flight just long enough to shake the water from its feathers before flying away to enjoy its meal. To help ospreys hold onto their catch, each of their feet has a unique reversible front toe.

Since their diet is almost entirely fish, ospreys make their homes near water. They live on islands and around bays, such as Chesapeake Bay between Virginia and Maryland in North America. The birds spend summers in Alaska, Canada, and the north-western parts of the United States. During the colder months, they stay in warmer places like the Caribbean and Central and South America. The Chesapeake Bay is home to the largest nesting population of ospreys in the world. Observers have counted as many as 2,000 pairs. The area has even been called "the osprey garden".

Like other birds, ospreys like to build their nests in high locations. In some coastal communities, they have built nests on top of electric power poles and towers. This is dangerous and can result in power failures. Some cities build nesting platforms for the big birds to use instead. In other regions, ospreys build nests high in trees or on rock cliffs. Osprey nests have even been found on channel markers and buoys on the water.

Ospreys use their nests repeatedly. When ospreys return to their nests, they spend time repairing them before laying their eggs. Most ospreys lay three eggs at a time. They are about the same size as chicken eggs and take approximately five weeks to hatch. If anything threatening approaches the nest, the ospreys' usual call of cheep-cheep-cheep turns into an angry *cheereek, cheereek.* The call means "Get away immediately!"

When the eggs crack open, the chicks which weigh only about 55 grams, crawl out. In less than two months, these tiny birds will have grown enough to take their first flight. It will not be long before a new generation of ospreys is ready to imitate their parents and head out for a tasty meal.

With their beautiful colouring, threatening size, and natural ability to bolt out of the sky at high speeds, there is little doubt that ospreys are remarkable birds. Imagine these majestic birds soaring from the heights of the sky and plunging into the depths of the water. It is no surprise that this amazing scene draws attention from people who see it. Ospreys will continue to populate the skies for future generations.

1. Choose the correct option from the answers that follow:

1.1 What is the main purpose of paragraph 2?

(a) To compare ospreys to other birds.
(b) To discuss the lifespan of ospreys.
(c) To discuss the appearance of ospreys.
(d) To tell how ospreys protect their young.

(1)

1.2 The name "Osprey Garden" in paragraph four gives the reader the impression of:

(a) fields of flowers eaten by ospreys
(b) colourful ospreys that look like flowers
(c) fields filled with flowers and ospreys
(d) ospreys living together as thickly as flowers

(1)

1.3 Which *one of these words* best describes the author's word choice in Paragraph 4?

(a) enthusiastic
(b) cautious
(c) factual
(d) cheerful

(1)

1.4 Paragraph 5 contains the most information about:

(a) How ospreys cause power failures.
(b) How people can help ospreys.
(c) Where ospreys mostly like to build nests.
(d) Why ospreys like tall buildings.

(1)

1.5 In paragraph 6 the phrase "Get away immediately" tells the reader:

(a) What people should do when they see an osprey.
(b) What an osprey should do if it is near an electric pole.
(c) What an angry bird call from an osprey means.
(d) What people should do when an osprey nest is discovered.

(1)

1.6 Which word best expresses the author's view of ospreys?

(a) Frightening
(b) Disruptive
(c) Intelligent
(d) Impressive

(1)

1.7 Which sentence shows a cause-and-effect relationship?

(a) Since their diet is almost entirely fish, ospreys make their homes near water.
(b) During the colder months, they stay in warmer places like the Caribbean and Central and South America.
(c) The Chesapeake Bay is home to the largest nesting population of ospreys in the world.
(d) When ospreys return to their nests, they spend time repairing them before laying their eggs.

(1)

1.8 Which sentence from the article contains a comparison?

(a) Usually, ospreys hit the water feet first, plunging completely underwater to catch their food.
(b) Like other birds, ospreys like to build their nests in high locations.
(c) When the eggs crack open, the chicks, which weigh only about 55 grams, crawl out.
(d) In less than two months, these tiny birds will have grown enough to take their first flight.

(1)

1.9 The main purpose of the article is to:

(a) Tell how ospreys hunt for food.
(b) Explain how to identify ospreys.
(c) Describe the way ospreys nest.
(d) Provide information about ospreys. **(1)**

1.10 Complete the following analogy: Talon is to grab as –

(a) foot is to kick.
(b) drawing is to illustrate.
(c) tree is to climb.
(d) bread is to bake.

(1)

1.11 Find a synonym from the text for the word "grabbing." **(1)**

1.12 Give 3 reasons why ospreys are "remarkable birds". **(3)**

1.13 Provide an antonym for the word "ordinary" from paragraph 3. **(1)**

Total: 15

QUESTION TWO: VISUAL LITERACY

Read and analyse the advertisement below and then answer the questions that follow.

2.1 Which company is advertising their product? **(1)**

2.2 What is the slogan of the company? **(1)**

2.3 Which model of this car brand is being advertised? **(1)**

2.4 What is the purpose of this advertisement? **(1)**

2.5 What impact will this car have on the environment? **(1)**

Total: 5

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**
	She went to school yesterday.	
Present continuous tense	**Past continuous tense**	**Future continuous tense**
She is driving her new car.		
Present perfect tense	**Past perfect tense**	**Future perfect tense**
		I will have played in the snow.

Total: 6

QUESTION FOUR: Parts of speech

Identify the parts of speech in the sentence below which are underlined.

"She stood on tiptoes to see over the wall when she heard her neighbour scream."

Total: 6

QUESTION FIVE: Logic

(a) What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks, has a head but never weeps, has a bed but never sleeps?

(1)

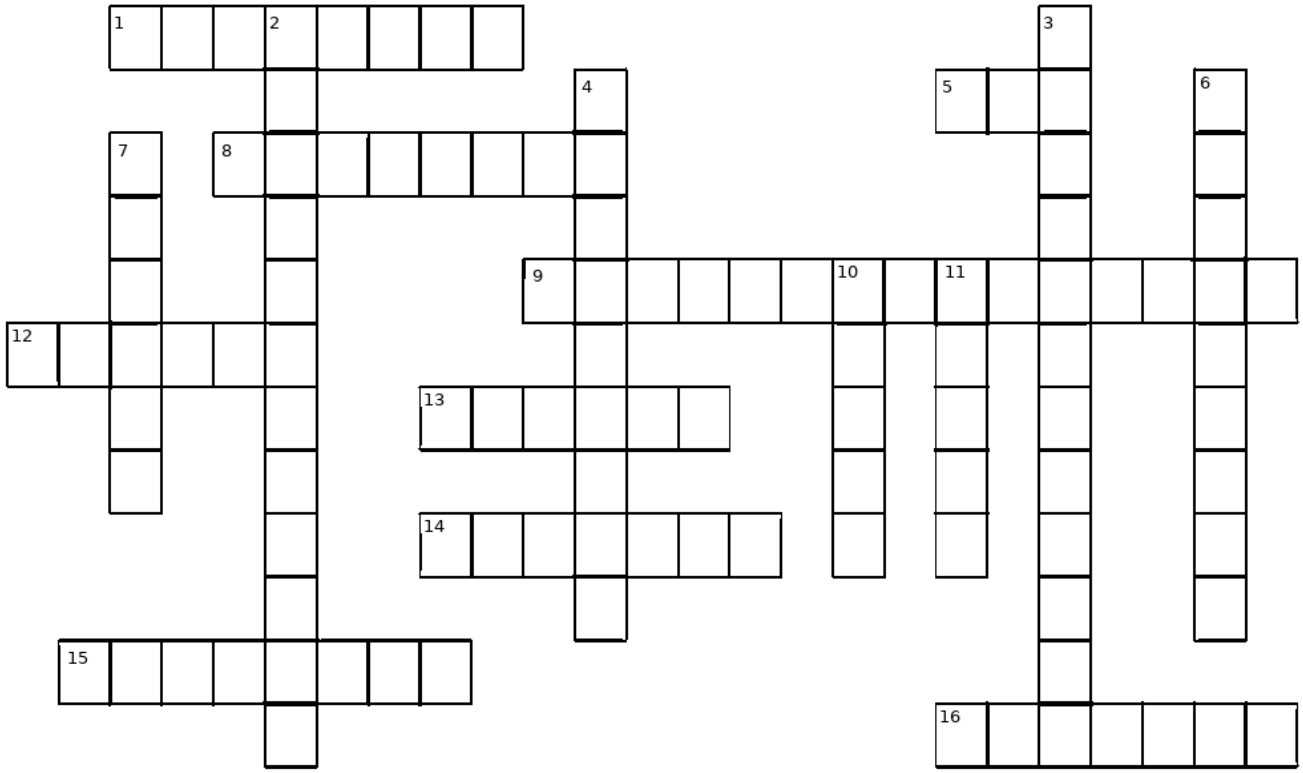
(b) If Mrs Smith's rooster lays an egg in Mr Brown's yard, who owns the egg?

(1)

Total: 2

QUESTION SIX: CROSSWORD PUZZLE: FIGURES OF SPEECH

Read the clues below and then fill in the crossword grid. Remember to look at the WORD BANK.



CLUES:

Across:	Down:
1 Comparing two things without using "like" or "as".	2 The repetition of beginning sounds.
5 A play on words using double meaning for fun.	3 The formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named.
8 A symbolic narrative in which the characters and events are symbols that stand for a spiritual, historical or political situation.	4 Extreme exaggeration.
9 Giving human qualities to inanimate objects.	6 The repetition of vowel sounds.
12 An overused phrase or expression used so often that it is no longer original, interesting or effective.	7 Comparing two things using "like" or "as".
13 A person, place or object which has a meaning in itself but suggests another meaning as well.	10 A commonly used phrase or expression whose literal meaning is different from its figurative meaning.
14 A comparison of two things based on their being alike in some way.	11 The use of words that mean the opposite of what you really mean, especially in order to be funny. A situation in which the opposite of what is expected happens.
15 Two contradictory words joined together.	
16 Descriptive language that creates a picture in your mind.	

Total: 16

WORD BANK

hyperbole	oxymoron	irony	pun	cliche
symbol	assonance	imagery	simile	alliteration
analogy	allegory	idiom	onomatopoeia	personification
metaphor				

TOTAL FOR PAPER: 50