SOUTHERN AFRICAN ENGLISH OLYMPIADS

science & innovation
Department:
Science and Innovation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SA OLYMPIADS

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SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY ENGLISH (FAL)
FIRST ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE OLYMPIAD:
GRADE 4

DATE: 19 AUGUST 2026

TIME: 60 MINUTES

Instructions:

1. This booklet has 10 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 following magazine extract entitled, 10 COOL THINGS ABOUT THE CAPYBARA.

These chilled-out, super-social South American animals are awesome! Capybaras are native to South America, and they live in countries like Venezuela, Colombia, Uruguay, Brazil, and Argentina. They love places with lots of water, so you'll often find them near rivers, lakes, swamps, marshes, and flooded grasslands. They need water to keep cool, escape danger, and swim.

Capybaras are the world's biggest rodents. The Capybara (Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris) is the largest rodent on Earth, growing as large as a medium-sized dog and weighing up to 70kg.

Capybaras are known as water babies because they are excellent swimmers and can hold their breath for up to 5 minutes. They even sleep in the water, sometimes, with just their noses poking out.

Capybaras make loads of different sounds like whistles, purrs, barks, and squeals to communicate with each other.

They eat mostly grass, but they're picky about it. They'll ignore the older grass and search for fresh green shoots.

These chilled animals love company. They live in groups of 10-20 and sometimes even 100 during the dry season.

Capybaras are so calm and friendly that other animals love to hang out with them. Birds, monkeys, and even cats have been seen chilling on their backs.

A weird fact about these creatures is that they eat their own poop too to digest their own food properly. It sounds gross, but it helps them get all the nutrients from their tough, grassy diet.

After a swim, capybaras love to stretch out and warm up in the sun, usually with their buddies piled up together.

Their eyes, ears, and noses are on top of their heads so they can peek above the water while the rest of their bodies stay hidden.

Capybaras have small webbing between their toes, which makes them super good at swimming and walking through muddy areas.

To keep safe from predators, capybaras post “lookouts” who watch for danger while the rest graze. If they make a barking noise, the whole gang sprints for the water.

[Extract taken from Very Interesting Junior Magazine]

1. Underline the correct answer to each question below:

1.1 Where will you find Capybaras?

(a) India
(b) Bali
(c) Argentina
(d) Gaza

(1)

1.2 Capybaras are more likely to be found in _____ America.

(a) South
(b) North
(c) East
(d) West

(1)

1.3 You will NOT find Capybaras near _____.

(a) Lakes
(b) Tall buildings
(c) Marshes
(d) Swamps

(1)

1.4 Capybaras like water as they need to _____?

Keep cool	Keep warm

(1)

1.5 Capybaras grow to be as big as a _____?

(a) Small-sized dog
(b) Medium-sized dog
(c) Big-sized dog
(d) Medium-sized cat

(1)

1.6 For how long can capybaras hold their breath?

(a) 5 minutes
(b) 20 minutes
(c) 10 minutes
(d) 18 minutes

(1)

1.7 Which two sounds do Capybaras make?

a) Whistles
(b) Hiss
(c) Roars
(d) Squeals

(2)

1.8 Get clues from the text to decide what best describes Capybaras.

(a) Social butterflies
(b) Social misfits
(c) Prehistoric creatures
(d) Evolving beings

(1)

1.9 Which two animals can be found on the Capybara's back?

(a) Monkeys
(b) Cats
(c) Rats
(d) Flies

(2)

1.10 What does the Capybaras' poop help them do? (choose 2 options)

(a) Digest their food properly
(b) Stay full for longer
(c) Get nutrients from their diet
(d) Not need to find food elsewhere

(2)

1.11 Why are Capybaras heads above water?

_____**(1)**

1.12 What do lookouts do?

_____**(1)**

1.13 What is the best hiding place for Capybaras?

_____**(1)**

Marks: 16

QUESTION TWO:

Read the following extract on, "How Dangerous Is Quicksand Really?"

If you watch Scooby-Doo or Looney Tunes, you may end up thinking that quicksand is everywhere, like one wrong step and you'll sink to your doom! But don't stress-real life quicksand isn't nearly as dead as cartoons make it out to be. Quicksand does exist, though. You can find it on beaches, near rivers, and in marshy areas. It forms when the clay or sand gets full of water and turns all mushy. When that happens, the sand loses its grip, and if you step on it, it can suddenly turn all liquid under your feet.

Now the cool part: you're not going to disappear like in the movies. A study in 2005 found that quicksand is actually denser than your body- especially your upper half, thanks to the lungs. So, most people sink past their waist.

The real danger? It's what can happen while you're stuck. If you're caught in quicksand near the sea, the tide can come in fast and drown you. Even away from the ocean, being stuck for too long without help could lead to things like getting too cold, too thirsty or super tired.

[Extract taken from Very Interesting Junior Magazine]

2. Underline the correct answer to each question below:

2.1 Which cartoon makes you think quicksand spells your doom?

(a) Inside Out
(b) Scooby Doo
(c) Smurfs
(d) Looney Tunes

(1)

2.2 Where can you NOT find quicksand?

(a) Beaches
(b) Marshy areas
(c) Rivers
(d) In houses

(1)

2.3 Quicksand forms when clay or sand gets filled with _____?

(a) Cement
(b) More sand
(c) Water
(d) Waste

(1)

2.4 When was the study conducted that found quicksand is denser than our bodies?

(a) 2005
(b) 2015
(c) 2025
(d) 2050

(1)

2.5 Since quicksand is denser than our bodies, most people will sink until their _____.

(a) legs
(b) waist
(c) chest
(d) head

(1)

2.6 What is NOT the real danger of being stuck in quicksand _____?

(a) Being stuck
(b) A tide can come and drown you
(c) You could get too cold
(d) You could feel too thirsty or starve to death

(1)

2.7 In this extract, the word, "grip," means _____.

(a) camouflage
(b) release
(c) hold
(d) grit

(1)

2.8 This text is an example of an _____ text?

(a) Informational text
(b) Narrative
(c) Descriptive
(d) Argumentative

(1)

2.9 Which word from the extract is a synonym for 'tense'?.

(a) marshy
(b) mushy
(c) stress
(d) sink

(1)

Marks: 9

QUESTION THREE:

Guess the riddle below:

3.1 I can hold your tracks for a while, but wind or sea will surely take them away. I am found in the vast desert and on sunny beach shores. What am I?

_____ **(1)**

Marks: 1

QUESTION FOUR:

Underline the adjectives below:

4.1 Capybaras are calm and friendly. **(2)**

Marks: 2

QUESTION FIVE:

When did the following actions happen? The action happened in the _____.

5.1 Scooby Doo drowned in quicksand.

(a) Present tense
(b) Past tense
(c) Present continuous tense
(d) Future tense

(1)

5.2 Check the tides if you are near the sea.

(a) Present tense
(b) Past tense
(c) Present continuous tense
(d) Future tense

(1)

Marks: 2

QUESTION SIX:

Fill in the correct plurals.

6.1 One Capybara but many _____.

6.2 One toe but many _____.

6.3 One body but many _____.

(3)

Marks: 3

QUESTION SEVEN:

State whether the nouns below are countable or uncountable:

7.1 Sand_____

7.2 Animal _____

(2)

Marks: 2

QUESTION EIGHT:

Find the three four-letter words hidden in this puzzle

F	O	L	A
E	L	E	P
S	A	N	D
M	A	D	E

_____

_____

_____

(3)

Marks: 3

QUESTION NINE:

Unscramble the words below:

9.1 N A R E D G _____

9.2 W N O S _____

9.3 T O M S R S _____

9.4 P P R E A _____

9.5 N I A M L A _____

9.6 R O E Z F N _____

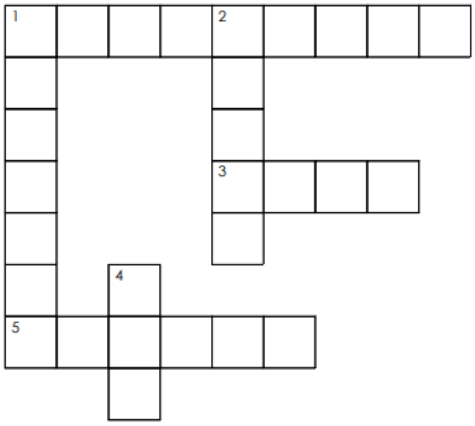
(6)

Marks: 6

QUESTION TEN:

Complete the crossword below using the clues provided:

A Day at the Beach



CLUES

Across: →

1. Protective lotion for your skin.
3. Object used to play catch on the beach.
5. Tools used to build sandcastles.

Down: ↓

1. Footwear worn on the beach.
2. Creatures that dig holes in the sand.
4. Sun protection for your head.

ACROSS
1.
3.
5.
DOWN
1.
2.
4.

Marks: 6

TOTAL FOR PAPER: 50