REGIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETITION

SCHOOL QUALIFYING ROUND | LEVEL B2

School: .....

Candidate: .....

Suggested time: 50 minutes (including listening) Total: 50 points

Answer all questions. Choose only one answer where options are given. Write clearly. No dictionaries or electronic devices.

PART I — READING COMPREHENSION (16 points)

Task 1. Read the article and choose the best answer (A–D). (8 × 1 = 8 points)

When a Library Becomes a Laboratory

At first glance, the Riverside Library's new “repair café” seemed an unlikely success. On Saturday mornings, residents brought broken lamps, torn jackets and temperamental kitchen appliances to a room once reserved for silent study. Volunteers helped visitors diagnose faults and, where possible, fix them. The project was not designed to compete with professional repair businesses. Its stated purpose was to make practical knowledge more accessible and encourage people to question the assumption that a faulty object belongs in the bin.

The organisers initially expected retired engineers to dominate the sessions. Instead, they found a remarkably mixed group: teenagers who had learned basic electronics online, parents who could sew, and older residents eager to understand the devices their grandchildren used. This diversity was useful, although it occasionally caused friction. One volunteer admitted that explaining a repair took three times longer than doing it alone. Yet the organisers insisted that teaching was precisely the point: a repaired toaster was welcome, but a visitor leaving with greater confidence was an even better outcome.

Not every attempt ended well. Some items were unsafe to open, and others required components that were too expensive to justify replacing. Rather than hide these failures, the team recorded them. Their public log soon revealed a pattern: certain appliances were assembled in ways that made even simple maintenance unnecessarily difficult. The library used this evidence to host a discussion with local retailers about product durability. Attendance was modest, but two shops subsequently agreed to display repairability information beside selected products.

A year later, the café had not transformed the town's consumption habits. Nevertheless, a survey suggested that regular visitors had become more willing to attempt minor repairs and less likely to regard technical problems as beyond their abilities. The organisers are careful about what this proves: those who attended may already have been interested in reducing waste. For them, the project's strongest achievement is not the number of objects saved, but the conversations it has made possible between people who might otherwise never have met.

1. What was the repair café primarily intended to do?

A. Provide cheaper repairs than local businesses.

B. Train professional technicians.

C. Share practical skills and challenge disposal habits.

D. Raise money for the library.

2. What surprised the organisers?

A. The range of people offering expertise.

B. The number of appliances beyond repair.

C. The lack of interest among teenagers.

D. The demand for quiet study space.

3. Why did one volunteer find the sessions demanding?

A. Visitors rarely brought suitable objects.

B. Spare parts were difficult to obtain.

C. The library imposed strict time limits.

D. Teaching required more time than repairing.

4. The organisers' attitude to unsuccessful repairs was to

A. exclude them from official reports.

B. use them as a source of information.

C. blame the visitors' lack of experience.

D. refer every case to a retailer.

5. What resulted from the discussion with retailers?

A. All shops offered free repairs.

B. The library began selling appliances.

C. Some products gained repairability labels.

D. Manufacturers redesigned their products.

6. What limitation of the survey do the organisers recognise?

A. Participants may not represent the wider population.

B. It covered only repairs completed successfully.

C. It measured attitudes before the project began.

D. The responses were collected by retailers.

7. The phrase 'beyond their abilities' most nearly means

A. not worth their time.

B. forbidden by regulations.

C. too expensive to replace.

D. too difficult for them to deal with.

8. Which statement best reflects the writer's overall view?

A. The project failed to meet its original objectives.

B. Its social and educational value may exceed its measurable impact.

C. The project should be run by commercial businesses.

D. Its environmental benefits have been conclusively established.

Task 2. Read the four notices (A–D). Match statements 9–16 to the correct notice. You may use each letter more than once. (8 × 1 = 8 points)

A — Community Science Evening. Visitors can examine local air-quality data and learn how measurements are collected. No previous scientific knowledge is required. The event is free, but places must be booked because equipment is limited.

B — Museum After Hours. A curator will lead a discussion of objects that were once considered ordinary but are now historically significant. The ticket includes access to the temporary exhibition. Participants are encouraged to bring questions; photography is not permitted.

C — Urban Sketching Walk. A local illustrator will demonstrate quick observation techniques before participants draw buildings around the market square. Bring your own pencils and sketchbook. The walk will take place even in light rain; beginners are welcome.

D — Debate Workshop. Practise constructing arguments and responding to opposing views in small groups. Rather than delivering prepared speeches, participants will receive unfamiliar topics on arrival. Feedback will focus on clarity and listening as well as persuasion.

9. Participants must supply their own materials. Answer: _____

10. Booking is compulsory because resources are restricted. Answer: _____

11. You will not know the subject of your task beforehand. Answer: _____

12. Taking pictures is explicitly prohibited. Answer: _____

13. The activity will proceed despite less-than-perfect weather. Answer: _____

14. The event examines information gathered in the local area. Answer: _____

15. Being attentive to others is part of the assessment. Answer: _____

16. Admission covers an additional display. Answer: _____

PART II — USE OF ENGLISH (20 points)

Task 3. Choose the option that best completes each sentence. (10 × 1 = 10 points)

17. Hardly _____ the meeting begun when the alarm sounded.

A. has

B. had

C. did

D. was

18. I would rather you _____ the figures before publishing them.

A. checked

B. will check

C. have checked

D. checking

19. The proposal was rejected on the _____ that it was too costly.

A. reasons

B. causes

C. grounds

D. purposes

20. She is believed _____ the original manuscript in 2019.

A. discovering

B. to discover

C. having discovered

D. to have discovered

21. The evidence is far from _____; further research is needed.

A. conclusive

B. concluding

C. concluded

D. conclusively

22. _____ the weather improved, the organisers cancelled the outdoor event.

A. In spite

B. Even though

C. Despite of

D. However

23. He managed to _____ an explanation for the unexpected delay.

A. take up

B. bring out

C. make up

D. turn over

24. Under no circumstances _____ confidential data be shared.

A. they should

B. should they

C. they must

D. must they

25. The new policy will come _____ effect next month.

A. into

B. onto

C. under

D. over

26. She speaks as though she _____ the answer, but she is only guessing.

A. knows

B. has known

C. knew

D. will know

Task 4. Complete each sentence with ONE word only. (10 × 1 = 10 points)

27. Not only _____ she finish early, but she also helped the others.

28. The lecture was called _____ because the speaker was ill.

PART II — USE OF ENGLISH (continued)

29. There is little point _____ arguing about something we cannot change.

30. It was the first time I _____ ever spoken in public.

31. He succeeded _____ persuading the committee to reconsider.

32. The report, _____ findings were controversial, was widely discussed.

33. No sooner had we arrived _____ it started raining.

34. She has been working here _____ 2021.

35. The decision depends _____ whether funding is available.

36. I wish I _____ paid more attention to the instructions.

PART III — LISTENING COMPREHENSION (8 points)

Task 5. You will hear eight short recordings from FCE Listening Practice Test 1, Part 1 (EngExam.info). Listen twice and choose the best answer (A, B or C). (8 × 1 = 8 points)

Audio source: https://engexam.info/fce-listening-practice-tests/fce-listening-practice-test-1/

37. What solution does the customer ultimately accept?

A. A refund for the original purchase

B. An order for the same coat in a more suitable size

C. A replacement jacket from the new collection

38. What is forecast for eastern areas around midday?

A. An improvement with brighter skies

B. Heavy rain and possible flooding

C. Thick fog throughout the afternoon

39. What benefit of commuting by bicycle does the speaker emphasise?

A. The opportunity to plan her working day

B. The absence of delays at traffic lights

C. The feeling of having been physically active

40. Which submission would be allowed in the writing competition?

A. Several original stories sent by post

B. One story from a writer aged at least 18

C. A story exceeding 750 words

41. What attracts the man to the novels he now prefers?

A. Characters who resemble his friends

B. Unfamiliar and distant settings

C. Humorous events in everyday life

42. What do the speakers agree about obtaining films online?

A. Viewer reviews are generally dependable

B. Home viewing is better than the cinema

C. It provides convenient access to a wide selection

43. What prevented the traveller from boarding her flight this time?

A. A mistake involving the terminal

B. Excessive waiting time before reaching the desk

C. An unexpected delay on the road

44. What was the main attraction of the advertised position?

A. The possibility of a higher salary

B. A clear route into management

C. The chance to make better use of existing experience

PART IV — CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE (6 points)

Task 6. Choose the correct answer (A–D). (6 × 1 = 6 points)

45. Which document, signed in 1215, is associated with limits on royal authority in England?

A. The Bill of Rights

B. The Act of Union

C. The Domesday Book

D. Magna Carta

46. Which US city is known as the birthplace of jazz?

A. New Orleans

B. Seattle

C. Boston

D. Philadelphia

47. The Booker Prize is primarily associated with

A. architecture.

B. cinema.

C. literature.

D. scientific research.

48. Which country has both English and Māori as official languages?

A. Canada

B. New Zealand

C. Ireland

D. Australia

49. The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is best known for

A. agricultural exhibitions.

B. international sporting events.

C. parliamentary debates.

D. performing arts.

50. Which writer created the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes?

A. Arthur Conan Doyle

B. Agatha Christie

C. Charles Dickens

D. George Orwell

Score: Reading ____ / 16 | Use of English ____ / 20 | Listening ____ / 8 | Culture ____ / 6 | TOTAL ____ / 50