

Olimpiadi delle Lingue  
1<sup>a</sup> edizione



Cognome e nome

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Classe e sezione \_\_\_\_\_ Data \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

### **Prova di lingua INGLESE**

#### **PART 1 OF 2 - READING COMPREHENSION (MAXIMUM 40 POINTS)**

**Read the following text and then answer the 20 questions below.**

**Each question is worth a maximum of two points.**

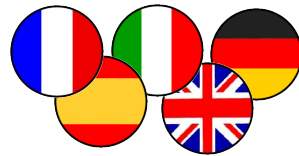
**All answers must be written on this test paper.**

#### **London and Paris: a tale of two bike-hire schemes**

*(Adapted from the article by Leo Hickman, The Guardian, 20th July 2010)*

It's not the best of starts. I've only been in the saddle of this new bicycle – the centrepiece of London's cycle hire scheme, which should launch in a few months – for two minutes and I'm already being made to pull over by a policeman. 'What have I done wrong?', I wonder nervously. 'Did I cut across someone when changing lanes on the approach to Westminster Bridge? Should I be wearing a helmet?' It's been three decades since I passed my cycling proficiency test, and there's been little serious cycling in between.

The policeman points to the spot on the curb where he wants me to park up. "What have I done, officer?" "Oh, nothing," he says. "I just wanted to ask what the bike was like to ride. Do you think it will be popular?" Squeezing the brakes and ringing the bell, he's like a wide-eyed boy in a bike shop. I offer him a ride. "I can't," he says, "I'm on duty."



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It strikes me, during this rather surreal exchange, that at least the bike isn't best suited to being a getaway vehicle. It weighs more than 20kg, and has three gears: Sloth, Tortoise and Ageing Elephant. **It's** designed for leisurely riding rather than APD (aggressive pursuit of destination), which is clearly the normal setting of every other cyclist on the road today. The looks of disdain and irritation are palpable as **they** continually whizz past me.

After Paris, **this** will be the world's second-largest urban cycle hire scheme. The scheme, vigorously promoted by London's mayor Boris Johnson, will eventually see 6,000 bikes parked at 400 "docking stations" spread every 300 metres or so across central London. After paying a daily access fee of £1, and providing details of a credit card for the deposit, the first 30 minutes of bike use will be free, although the price escalates rapidly as the clock ticks on.

My first impressions of the bike, riding it from Victoria to Borough and back along the South Bank, are good. Yes, it is heavy – you're never going to overtake Lance Armstrong on this thing – but it needs to be built to last, and be thief- and vandal-proof, a problem that has blighted other systems around the world (particularly Paris). It is purposely not designed for long or speedy rides: the pricing structure encourages sub-30-minute journeys and, given the limited geographical spread of the distinctive blue docking stations, it is not yet a bike aimed at commuters. Rather, it is there to replace a short taxi ride, or a two- or three-stop tube journey.

A considerable inconvenience, however, is the lack of a basket or a security chain, both of which come as standard on the Vélib' cycle hire project in Paris. On the bikes in London there is just enough space to carry your newspaper. In Paris similar bikes all have baskets. Around 90% of Parisians use the basket on their Vélib'. Ladies' purses, backpacks, shopping bags – they all go in there. And in London rather than chain it to a lamppost when you pop into the shop to buy said paper, you will have to find a docking station or risk losing the £300 deposit should it be stolen.

Then there is the name. Parisians have fallen in love with the Vélib' – a portmanteau of *velo* (bicycle) and *liberté* (freedom). Londoners are, one feels, less **likely** to fall for the 'Barclays Cycle Hire', as the bike is officially known. 'Freecycle' is already taken, but this bike urgently needs an affectionate alternative if Londoners are to develop the same levels of affection.



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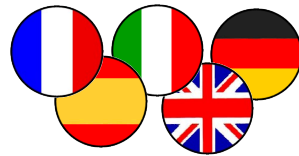
Mr. Bogdanovich, an expert on cycle hire schemes, says an estimated 250,000 people cycle in London every day, and that one in three people are "interested" in cycling. "But that's still far behind cities such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen. The system should take advantage of the fact that London is a cluster of villages. Hackney, for example, has very high cycling rates – 10% of all journeys. Also, the average bike journey in London now is 3.5km, yet this system is largely aimed at replacing short tube journeys in central London. Over time, the system will need to serve more demands."

Still, it's satisfying to know that most people questioned seem to be optimistic that London's bikeshare scheme will be a success; Bogdanovich adds, "The real genius of the systems in both London and Paris is that the first 30 minutes are free. In London it needs to be 100% ready on day one, though. All the problems need to be resolved by then, otherwise people may conclude that it's not worth the effort."

### Questions 1-10

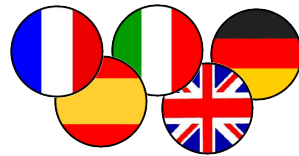
**For each of the following questions choose the correct answer from the four possible choices.**

1. What was the author's main worry at the start of the article?
  - A. He wasn't wearing a helmet and should have been wearing one.
  - B. He couldn't cycle well because he had taken his cycling proficiency test three decades previously.
  - C. He didn't know why the police officer was asking him to stop.
  - D. He'd had a problem when changing lanes near Westminster Bridge.



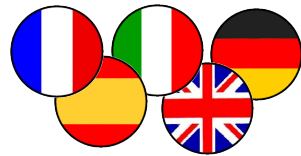
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2. What do we learn from the author's conversation with the policeman?
  - A. The policeman had already tried the bike and wanted to know if the author found it easy to ride.
  - B. The policeman wasn't allowed to try the bike because he was working.
  - C. The policeman wasn't very interested in the bike, but wanted to be certain that the brakes and bell worked well.
  - D. The brakes and the bell made the policeman think of when he was a boy in a bike shop.
  
3. What does the author say about the design of this bike?
  - A. It's heavy, but is an ideal getaway vehicle.
  - B. It is designed to withstand theft and vandalism.
  - C. It was designed for long rides, but in reality is only suitable for short rides.
  - D. It will never be suitable for commuters.
  
4. The cycle hire scheme...
  - A. ...uses bikes that are designed for fast city bike-rides.
  - B. ...has 6,000 bikes available immediately.
  - C. ...will cost £1 for 30 minutes during the day.
  - D. ...has a cost which increases considerably the longer you use it.
  
5. What is meant by the word 'likely' which is underlined on line 2 of paragraph 7?
  - A. Happily
  - B. Lovely.
  - C. Probable.
  - D. Free.



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6. What does the author say about the name of the cycle hire scheme?
- A. Londoners will not like the name, which is Vélib'.
  - B. Londoners will develop a high level of affection for cycle hire's official name.
  - C. Unless a nicer name is found, Londoners will not fall in love with the cycle hire scheme.
  - D. The London cycle hire scheme urgently needs a name because it doesn't yet have one.
7. What does Bogdanovich say about cycling in London?
- A. A third of all people are interested in cycling.
  - B. Amsterdam and Copenhagen have less cyclists than London.
  - C. 10% of all bike journeys in London are 3.5 km long.
  - D. London is a cluster of villages and this is a problem.
8. What does the final paragraph conclude?
- A. The scheme will have to be entirely functional from the very start in order to be successful.
  - B. Resolving all the problems is not worth the effort.
  - C. If all the problems are resolved, people will think that the scheme is worth little.
  - D. Everyone is already convinced that the scheme will be successful.
9. What do we learn from the article about the author's opinion of the London cycle hire scheme?
- A. Despite some negative aspects he seems to have a positive view overall.
  - B. Despite a positive first impression there are too many negative aspects.
  - C. He has an entirely positive impression.
  - D. Some people like it but he doesn't seem to like it at all.



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10. In your opinion this article...

- A. ...was written by a journalist who knew the Parisian scheme and tried the London bikes because he wanted to use them regularly.
- B. ...was written by a journalist who wanted to try the new London cycle hire scheme and also compare it to the Parisian equivalent.
- C. ...was written to publicise the London and Parisian cycle hire schemes.
- D. ...is about the positive and negative aspects of the London cycle hire scheme which has already been open to the public for several months.

[ \_\_\_\_ / 20 ]

### Questions 11-17

**The following words are synonyms of words found in the text. Find the original words in the text.**

11. Amazed \_\_\_\_\_

12. Indicates \_\_\_\_\_

13. (The) project \_\_\_\_\_

14. Mainly \_\_\_\_\_

15. (The) cost \_\_\_\_\_



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16. Intentionally \_\_\_\_\_

17. Hopeful \_\_\_\_\_

[ \_\_\_ / 14 ]

### Questions 18-20

Three other words have been underlined in the text – what do they refer to?:

18. 'it' (paragraph 3, line 3) \_\_\_\_\_

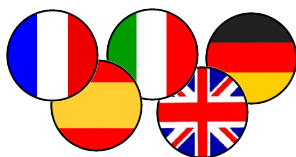
19. 'they' (paragraph 3, line 5) \_\_\_\_\_

20. 'this' (paragraph 4, line 1) \_\_\_\_\_

[ \_\_\_ / 6 ]

**END OF READING COMPREHENSION**

**TOTAL = \_\_\_\_\_ / 40**



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### **Prova di lingua INGLESE**

#### **PART 2 OF 2 - GRAMMAR AND USE OF ENGLISH (MAXIMUM 60 POINTS)**

All answers must be written on this test paper.

**1. Complete the following sentences using the word suggested and your own words, so that the second sentence has the same meaning as the first.**

1. On rainy days I prefer staying at home with a cup of tea.

**(RATHER)**

On rainy days I \_\_\_\_\_ at home with a cup of tea.

2. They say that the author writes books in a house on a small island.

**(SAID)**

The author is \_\_\_\_\_ books in a house on a small island.

3. Could you look after my brother this evening?

**(CARE)**

Would you mind \_\_\_\_\_ my brother this evening?





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4. Visitors must buy their tickets as soon as they enter the museum.

**(REQUIRED)**

Visitors \_\_\_\_\_ their tickets as soon as they enter the museum.

5. Tom took his map with him because he wanted to be sure of finding the campsite

**(ORDER)**

Tom took his map with him \_\_\_\_\_ the campsite.

[ \_\_\_\_ / 10 points]

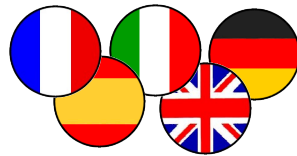
**2. Read the text and fill in the numbered gaps with one of the words given below (A, B, C or D).**

Writing was (1) \_\_\_\_\_ invented by different people and in different cultures at different times. The main (2) \_\_\_\_\_ for the invention of writing are the Ancient Sumerians and the Ancient Egyptians, (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of whom had devised highly effective and comprehensive writing systems by about 3,000 BC. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ there is evidence that writing systems existed in some parts of the world – including Central Europe – (5) \_\_\_\_\_ before this, very likely as long ago as 8,000 BC. Of course, for all we know, writing might have been invented and then forgotten many times in the even more remote past.

The (6) \_\_\_\_\_ is, we don't have enough information about the very earliest attempts at writing to allow us to be certain they were comprehensive writing systems rather than (7) \_\_\_\_\_ simple systems of signs. [...]

What we do know is that from the very earliest days, the (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of writing *was* believed to be magical. For (9) \_\_\_\_\_ the entire length of time that writing has existed, writing was, in all the countries of the world, the preserve of a privileged minority. Literacy, which in many countries is far from (10) \_\_\_\_\_ even today, was justifiably regarded as something very special: a mark of education, status and social standing.

*(Above text adapted from "Spellbound – The Improbable Story of English Spelling", James Essinger, 2006, Robson Books, London)*



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- |     |               |                |                 |                   |
|-----|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1.  | (A) not       | (B) however    | (C) apparently  | (D) doubtfully    |
| 2.  | (A) creators  | (B) contenders | (C) competition | (D) content       |
| 3.  | (A) either    | (B) neither    | (C) both        | (D) some          |
| 4.  | (A) Perhaps   | (B) However    | (C) Despite     | (D) Unless        |
| 5.  | (A) long      | (B) almost     | (C) ever        | (D) likely        |
| 6.  | (A) question  | (B) trouble    | (C) difficult   | (D) fascination   |
| 7.  | (A) something | (B) nearly     | (C) excessive   | (D) comparatively |
| 8.  | (A) invention | (B) vision     | (C) industry    | (D) exchange      |
| 9.  | (A) over      | (B) in excess  | (C) almost      | (D) under         |
| 10. | (A) known     | (B) widespread | (C) public      | (D) completed     |

[ \_\_\_\_ / 10 points ]

**3. Put the verbs in parentheses into the most logical form. You may have to use both active and passive forms.**

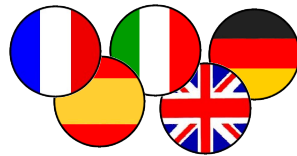
When I first (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (to arrive) in Sheffield, I wasn't too sure that I would like it. I (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (to read) about the city many years earlier, when I was a child at school, and I remembered that it was said to be an industrial place. I particularly remembered that most of England's steel products (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (to produce) there in the past. I (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (never, to be) interested in industrial towns in my life, and to be honest I (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (to think) about going home as the train (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (to begin) to enter the station.

However, when we left the station and walked out onto the streets, a vibrant, modern city greeted us - nothing like the dull, grey city that I (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (to expect).

It's a city that has changed so much in recent years, and even today exciting and positive changes (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (still, make).

Now I've left the UK and I'm back home, but I (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (to go) there again tomorrow, if I (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (to have) the chance!

[ \_\_\_\_ / 10 points ]



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4. Choose a suitable phrasal verb for each sentence. The phrasal verbs are given in the box below. You may use each verb once. (It may be necessary to change the verb form).

hand in	come across	fall out	get through	take after
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1. I tried calling several times but I couldn't \_\_\_\_\_.
2. He \_\_\_\_\_ his assignment yesterday.
3. We were tidying the attic when we \_\_\_\_\_ some old family photos.
4. Harriet really \_\_\_\_\_ her Dad – they have the same sense of humour.
5. We were best friends until we went to middle school, but then we \_\_\_\_\_.

[ \_\_\_\_ / 10 points]

5. Direct / indirect speech – change these sentences from direct to indirect speech.

1. Helen said, "I've been thinking of selling my house".

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Tom asked Sue, "Would you like to go to the cinema tomorrow?"

\_\_\_\_\_

3. The teacher said to the class, "Sit down."

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Mark said, "I visited Paris last year".

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Jane said, "I'll be at home".

\_\_\_\_\_

[ \_\_\_\_ / 10 points]



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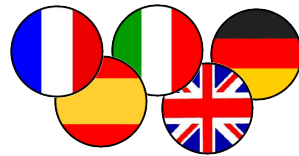
**6. 0/1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> conditionals – consider the meaning of each sentence and complete them, filling in the gaps using the verbs given (in the correct tense).**

1. I didn't know you'd had a problem – if you (1a) \_\_\_\_\_ (to tell) me, I (1b) \_\_\_\_\_ (to help) you.
2. I don't know if you want my opinion, but I (2a) \_\_\_\_\_ (not, to phone) them if I (2b) \_\_\_\_\_ (to be) you.
3. If our cousin (3a) \_\_\_\_\_ (to come) to visit this summer as planned, we (3b) \_\_\_\_\_ (to take) him to London.
4. Snow (4a) \_\_\_\_\_ (to melt) if you (4b) \_\_\_\_\_ (to heat) it.
5. If she (5a) \_\_\_\_\_ (to see) a UFO she (5b) \_\_\_\_\_ (to scream).

[ \_\_\_\_ / 10 points]

End of Grammar / Use of English

TOTAL = \_\_\_\_\_ / 60



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## **Prova di lingua INGLESE**

### **ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION - ANSWERS**

#### **Questions 1 - 10 (Maximum score 20/20).**

Two points per correct answer.

No points for an incorrect answer.

1. C	2 points	6. C	2 points
2. B	2 points	7. A	2 points
3. B	2 points	8. A	2 points
4. D	2 points	9. A	2 points
5. C	2 points	10. B	2 points

#### **Questions 11 – 17 (Maximum score 14/14).**

Two points for each fully correct answer.

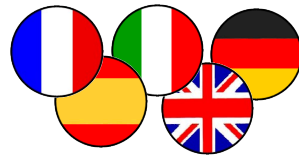
11. Amazed	wide-eyed
12. Indicates	points to
13. (The) project	scheme
14. Mainly	largely
15. (The) cost	fee / price
16. Intentionally	purposely
17. Hopeful	optimistic

#### **Questions 18-20 (Maximum score 6/6).**

Two points for each correct answer.

18. 'it' (paragraph 3, line 2)	the (writer's) bike
19. 'they' (paragraph 3, line 4)	every other cyclist / other cyclists
20. 'this' (paragraph 4, line 1)	the London cycle hire scheme

The maximum total score for the "Reading Comprehension" section is 40/40



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## GRAMMAR AND USE OF ENGLISH – ANSWERS

### **Part 1**

Maximum 10 points.

Each question carries two points. The answer must be entirely correct in order to earn 2 points. For one small error, one point may be given. No half points.

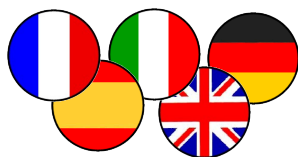
- A. would rather stay / 'd rather stay      2 points
- B. said to write      2 points
- C. taking care of      2 points
- D. are required to buy      2 points
- E. in order to find      2 points

### **Part 2**

Maximum 10 points.

One point for each correct answer. No half points.

- 1. C      1 point
- 2. B      1 point
- 3. C      1 point
- 4. B      1 point
- 5. A      1 point
- 6. B      1 point
- 7. D      1 point
- 8. A      1 point
- 9. C      1 point
- 10. B      1 point



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### Part 3

Maximum 10 points

One point for each correct answer. The answer must be entirely correct – in choice of tense, spelling and structure. In some cases various tenses are possible – the various possibilities are listed below.

Half marks are not allowed.

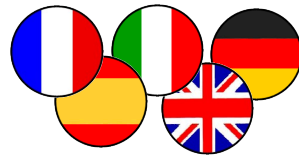
- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1. arrived  | 1 point |
| 2. had read   | 1 point |
| 3. were produced / had been produced                            | 1 point |
| 4. have never been / had never been                             | 1 point |
| 5. was thinking   | 1 point |
| 6. began  | 1 point |
| 7. had been expecting / was expecting / had expected / expected | 1 point |
| 8. are still being made   | 1 point |
| 9. would go   | 1 point |
| 10. had   | 1 point |

### Part 4

Maximum 10 points

Two points for each correct answer. One point for a correct choice of verb but with a small error. It is necessary to select the correct phrasal verb and the correct verb tense to obtain both points. Half points are not allowed.

- |                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| 1. get through | 2 points |
| 2. handed in   | 2 points |
| 3. came across | 2 points |
| 4. takes after | 2 points |
| 5. fell out    | 2 points |



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### Part 5

Maximum 10 points

Two points for a correct sentence. For **one** error, **one** point only may be given. No half points.

1. Helen said (that) she had been thinking of selling her house. 2 points
2. Tom asked Sue if she wanted to go to the cinema the following day / next day / day after 2 points
3. The teacher told the class to sit down. 2 points
4. Mark said (that) he had visited Paris the previous year / year before. 2 points
5. Jane said (that) she would be at home. 2 points

### Part 6

Maximum 10 points

The candidate must complete each space correctly using the appropriate tenses. Two points per question (one point for each of the two gaps). Each gap must be completed correctly in order to gain one point. Half points are not allowed. All possible answers are listed below.

- 1.a. 'd told / had told (1 point)
- 1.b. would have helped (1 point)
- 2.a. would not phone / wouldn't phone (1 point)
- 2.b. were you (1 point)
- 3.a. comes (1 point)
- 3.b. 'll take / will take (1 point)
- 4.a. melts (1 point)
- 4.b. heat (1 point)
- 5.a. saw (1 point)
- 5.b. would scream / 'd scream (1 point)

The maximum total score for the "Grammar and Use of English" section is 60/60 (parts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6)





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## HOW TO CALCULATE THE OVERALL SCORE FOR THE ENGLISH TEST

The 'Reading Comprehension' test has a maximum score of 40 points.

The 'Grammar / Use of English' test has a maximum score of 60 points.

In order to calculate the overall score add together both scores to create the final score.

Eg. Reading = 30/40

Grammar / Use of English = 48/60

Total =  $30 + 48 = 78/100 = 78\%$