



International English Olympiad
“Formula of Unity” / “The Third Millennium”
Year 2025/2026. Qualifying round
Tasks for grades R10–R11



The last day to send your answers is **November 13**.

All the information about the Olympiad and the instruction for participants: <https://www.formulo.org/ru/olymp/2025-lang-ru/>
and <https://www.formulo.org/en/olymp/2025-lang-en/>

Each item must be entered in a separate field. 10 items = 10 fields in total.

1. (10 points) Fill in the gaps with one of the given words.

Each item must be entered in a separate field. 10 items = 10 fields in total.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| [1] After mulling _____ the proposal for several days, the crew decided to accept the offer despite some concerns. | |
| [2] Although she had not practiced in years, she managed to brush _____ her Spanish skills quickly before the business trip. | |
| [3] It's important not to give _____ to peer pressure when making important decisions. | A) up |
| [4] It's becoming increasingly difficult to keep up _____ the rapid advancements in technology. | B) back |
| [5] The company had to make up _____ the inconvenience caused by the delayed delivery with a significant discount. | C) over |
| [6] Students often need to swot up _____ their grammar rules before taking important exams. | D) for |
| [7] Scientists hit _____ a groundbreaking discovery while conducting routine experiments. | E) across |
| [8] Many people mistakenly look _____ on those who choose unconventional career paths. | F) upon |
| [9] Despite his best efforts to come _____ as confident during the interview, his nervousness was obvious to everyone in the room. | G) on |
| [10] Unfortunately, the politician went _____ on his promise to reduce taxes after being elected. | H) with |
| | I) in |
| | J) down |

2. (10 points) Answer the questions about the article “Could the magic of memory manipulation ever become real?” by Andrea Tamayo.

Could the magic of memory manipulation ever become real?

In the world of Harry Potter, memories can be manipulated with the flick of a wand. Albus Dumbledore reels wispy memories out of his head and puts them in a Pensieve. If he later dunks his head in that magical basin, he can see his past experiences with lifelike clarity. Hermione Granger, meanwhile, uses the spell Obliviate to remove herself from her parents' memories to protect them from the wizarding world.

In real life, memories are not storable liquids or files that can simply be deleted from people's brains. “I find memory very difficult to define,” says André Fenton. This neuroscientist studies memory at New York University in New York City.

To make a memory, a person needs to experience something. This could be riding a bike, losing a tooth or playing with a pet. Then electricity courses through connections between the nerve cells, or neurons, in their brain, Fenton says. This electrical activity can strengthen those connections. The more exposure to an experience someone has, the stronger those connections become. These connections can also weaken over time, leading to forgetting.

The power to make someone perfectly remember or completely forget something is still mere fantasy. But some researchers have taken early steps to strengthen or weaken people's memories. That work could help people suffering from disorders like Alzheimer's. This is a disease in which people can lose their memories. Or it could help people with post-traumatic stress disorder. This PTSD is a condition in which people might suffer from memories they don't want to have.

Storing memories

Neuroscientist Robert Hampson is fascinated by the idea of the Pensieve. “I love to see the idea of being able to pull a memory, store it, look at it, examine it,” he says. Hampson studies memory at Wake Forest University School

of Medicine. That's in Winston-Salem, N.C.

He and his colleagues haven't found a way to store past experiences like leftovers in magical dishes. But they have found that giving tiny electrical zaps to people's brains could help them form stronger memories.

In one experiment, Hampson's team placed wires about as thick as a strand of hair in the brains of 17 patients with epilepsy. (The researchers chose patients with epilepsy because they often have wires placed in their brains to map and understand their seizures.) The wires recorded the electrical activity of brain cells in the hippocampus. That's a part of the brain that processes memories.

Patients then looked at a picture on a computer screen. A few seconds later, the screen showed that same picture, plus three different pictures. Patients were asked to choose the picture they had first seen. They repeated this process 100 times, then took a short break.

Afterward, patients were shown 100 more pictures. These included pictures they had seen in the first part of the experiment. There were also pictures they had never seen. The patients were asked to touch the picture they were most familiar with.

When we see a picture, electrical activity courses through our brains, says Hampson. But this electrical activity was different for every picture. Hampson's team studied the electrical patterns produced when nine patients saw pictures in their sample. Then, the researchers could use math equations to mimic the patterns.

The researchers applied tiny zaps that mimicked those electrical patterns to the other eight patients. In picture memory tests, the patients' memories for images paired with the small jolts improved by 35 to 40 percent. Their memory did not improve for pictures not paired with the zaps.

In the future, brain implants that deliver such tiny zaps might be used to boost memory. The researchers aren't sure when this tech will be ready for widespread use. "The first users would likely be people suffering from a disease such as Alzheimer's disease," Hampson says. "Or from a head injury that results in damage to the parts of the brain associated with memory."

Erasing memories

Other scientists, meanwhile, are looking into whether it's possible to help people forget certain memories. This research is still in its earliest stages. But experiments in animal cells suggest it might someday be possible.

When people sense things, such as the colors of a beautiful painting or the touch of a soft flower, that activates some neurons. This changes where in the cells many molecules are found. That affects how the nerve cells work and, in turn, how they connect to each other. Such altered connections encode, or store, the memory of the experience. The things we give more attention are more likely to be encoded.

But "you can interfere with that encoding," says Samuel Schacher. He is a retired neuroscientist based in New York City. He and his colleagues found they could manipulate memory encoding in an experiment with sea hare neurons.

The researchers worked with a circuit of three nerve cells. One was a motor neuron. That's a nerve cell that causes muscles to move. Connected to that motor neuron were two sensory neurons. Those nerve cells process information from the environment. By making molecular tweaks to those nerve cells, the scientists were able to erase the memory-storing connection between the motor neuron and one of the sensory neurons.

This hinted it could be possible to erase some memories while leaving others intact. And perhaps someday, new therapies could coax neurons into letting go of specific unwanted memories.

People with some mental health conditions might benefit from such memory wiping. Take people with PTSD. When someone has this condition, traumatic memories can cause their mind to link a neutral experience to a dangerous one, says Schacher.

"But you don't want to erase the fact that other behaviors associated with the bad event may be useful to remember," says Schacher.

While this science worked in sea hare cells, it's far from being used in people. In the meantime, there are a few medications and therapies that exist for helping people cope with traumatic memories, says Schacher.

Ethical questions

In some sense, "we've been trying to manipulate memories forever," says Fenton. For example, when we practice a sport, we are purposely strengthening our memories of how to move our bodies in certain ways. Likewise, if we choose not to study something, we allow ourselves to forget certain information.

But in each of these cases, we're manipulating our memories through lived experience.

Is it okay to make or erase memories instantly, no experience needed? "The ethics of that are very thorny," says Fenton. Our lived experiences — and memories of them — make us who we are. Changing a person's memories could, in some ways, cause them to be a different person, Fenton says. "We must proceed very carefully."

Each item must be entered in a separate field. 10 items = 10 fields in total.

the article?

- A) Memories are stored as physical files in specific brain regions
 - B) Memory formation is based on electrical activity between neurons
 - C) Memories are encoded through chemical reactions in the bloodstream
 - D) Memory creation involves magical processes similar to those in Harry Potter
- [12] Why is the hippocampus particularly important in memory research?
- A) It is responsible for motor functions
 - B) It regulates emotional responses
 - C) It controls sensory perception
 - D) It processes and encodes memories
- [13] How did Hampson's team enhance memory in their experiment?
- A) By using pharmacological interventions
 - B) Through targeted electrical stimulation
 - C) With psychological training exercises
 - D) By rewiring brain connections surgically
- [14] What ethical concern is the most significant regarding memory manipulation?
- A) Potential loss of personal identity
 - B) Risk of memory overload
 - C) Possible brain damage
 - D) Unintended memory enhancement
- [15] Why is selective memory erasure considered challenging?
- A) Due to the complexity of neural connections
 - B) Because memories are stored in a single location
 - C) Because memories are protected by biological barriers
 - D) Due to ethical restrictions on research
- [16] What was the key finding of Schacher's research with sea hare neurons?
- A) All memories can be completely erased
 - B) Specific memory connections can be manipulated
 - C) Memories can be transferred between individuals
 - D) Memory storage is independent of neural connections
- [17] Why are current memory manipulation techniques limited in their application?
- A) Treating memory disorders
 - B) Lack of technological advancements
 - C) Official ethical restrictions on research
 - D) Incomplete understanding of memory processes
- [18] What is the primary goal of memory manipulation research in medicine?
- A) Creating superhuman intelligence
 - B) Treating memory disorders
 - C) Enhancing academic performance
 - D) Improving athletic abilities
- [19] How does PTSD affect memory processing according to the article?
- A) It causes complete memory loss
 - B) It links neutral experiences to traumatic ones
 - C) It enhances all memory functions
 - D) It selectively erases traumatic memories
- [20] What is the fundamental difference between natural memory manipulation and scientific manipulation?
- A) Natural manipulation is more permanent
 - B) Scientific manipulation requires conscious effort
 - C) Natural manipulation occurs through lived experiences
 - D) Scientific manipulation can only strengthen memories

3. (10 points) There are 10 beginnings of small dialogues. Complete them. Choose the best answer for each situation from the list.

Each item must be entered in a separate field. 10 items = 10 fields in total.

- [21] — Are you sure about this new employee?
— Sure. He's _____. We'll hardly find anything similar to his prominent skills and experience.

- [22] — I've come up with a new plan.
— I hope this one is more effective than the previous event. Let me remind you that the last team-building activity didn't help us to _____ our huge team.
- [23] — I'm mad! The technology is useless!
— Keep calm and let's _____. We'll reconsider the wrongs.
- [24] — Are we meeting the deadline?
— Not really. It'll take some time to finish. It seems _____ ...
- [25] — The finance department signed a new contract.
— I hope it will _____ their and our interests.
- [26] — I'm looking forward to witnessing the results of our investment!
— Don't hurry. We've done so much, therefore the company will finally _____ and get the profit.
- [27] — You look suspicious. Good or bad news?
— To put it mildly, we are _____ disaster.
- [28] — There is a big lack of clues. Any ideas, colleagues?
— I have a hint! The photocopy of this document must be _____ that will lead to success.
- [29] — Our goal is to make our technology environmentally-friendly.
— Switching to an alternative energy source is going to be _____. Nobody has done it before. It's a big breakthrough.
- [30] — I've just talked with our new boss, such a big cheese! And so arrogant!
— Can relate. I've tried to have a small talk with him about his ex-subordinates, but he's _____. It's quite weird, to be honest.
- A) The missing link
B) Piece together
C) Hit pay dirt
D) In a class of his own
E) A hard nut to crack
F) Light years away
G) On the verge of
H) Back to the drawing board
I) A quantum leap
J) Bridge the gap

4. (5 points) Find lexical mistakes in these sentences. There is only ONE wrong word in every line. Write it down without correcting this mistake.

He is so intelligent: he knows the rules of behavior and norms of etiquette. - The wrong word is «intelligent».
So you write in the answer sheet: intelligent.

Each item must be entered in a separate field. 10 items = 10 fields in total.

- [31] I'm not sure of the efficiency of that nutrition system. Should I have cut down on sugar? Anyway, it's not relevant now.
- [32] If I were you, I wouldn't be so confident. You'd rather go to Pete's party. Otherwise, you'll face with some consequences of your choice...
- [33] If we compare these two actors, I'd choose the first one. Of course, Mike Jayson is not so popular... I mean, he is absolutely infamous unlike the second boy who has a huge audience.
- [34] I'm convinced that this is the solution everyone is looking for. How do you think, Milo? I'm waiting for your opinion.
- [35] Could you borrow me a book, please? I'll return it as soon as I finish the project. I'll be as careful with the book as you are.

5. (5 points) Find one extra word in every line which is not necessary and makes this sentence wrong. Write it down into the answer sheet.

For example: I don't not like it. - The extra word is «not». So you write in the answer sheet: not.

Each item must be entered in a separate field. 10 items = 10 fields in total.

- [36] I want to have this paper be signed right now! I can't stand any delays and breaking the rules of our company!
- [37] Not until I read the book myself can I not truly understand its message. So let's postpone our talk.

- [38] Having been happened without any warning, the earthquake caused widespread panic among the residents. Consequently, we couldn't avoid having so many victims.
- [39] But for the Smiths' awareness, we wouldn't have had a chance to change our lives now.
- [40] Everything happened so fast, nobody was ready to cope with the aftermath. Even though it took place in 1956 year, it remains one of the most essential parts of our existence.

6. (10 points) Unscramble the words. All of them are connected with famous people, places or cultural concepts. Then match each place/name/concept with one fact from the list that describes this phenomenon.

For example:

1) II Qneel Etbahsilta - Queen Elizabeth II

The fact: A) She ruled the country for 70 years.

So you write in your answer sheet: 1A.

Each item must be entered in a separate field. 10 items = 10 fields in total.

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| [41] jollsonckpocka | A) This modern linguist is associated with the birth and development of artificial languages and hierarchy. |
| [42] rahanowldy | B) This English-speaking world's place is the champion of tides. |
| [43] lojnkeoch | C) This piece of art was created by a lawyer and later became the symbol of the whole country. |
| [44] chmonkysao | D) Belonging to the Age of Enlightenment, this prominent person saw the human mind as a blank space, field that should be shaped by external factors. |
| [45] calurnbercetartahyd | E) Being located in the county of Kent, this human-made landmark is a must-see for every tourist. Its foundation is connected with the person named Augustine. |
| [46] kmersirnoty | F) This person is known for his/her innovation in painting: the technique of splashing paints onto the canvases. |
| [47] santsparbnnngeraledeht | G) Before this Australian sight was named after a pig and its children. But then it was renamed using a number and the «name» of Christ's students. |
| [48] gdsoathvkieeng | H) York's attraction can be easily distinguished: the statue of Emperor Constantine decorates the entrance. |
| [49] tveleptwoselas | I) This artist started the career with a can of soup. |
| [50] bunfdayofy | J) This «song» has many potential writers. It didn't manage to become common for the whole country. Some parts has their own «song». |