



BRAINIACS OLYMPIAD

3RD BRAINIACS OLYMPIAD
SHAPE DISCIPLINES
BRAINIACS ENGLISH SYLLABUS
CATEGORY I | GRADES 7–8



Category 3 (Grade 7-8) - B1

Texts argue as well as describe. They deal with school, technology, the environment, volunteering and work, and they expect a point to be followed from one paragraph into the next.

1. Grammar and Sentence Structure

- Tense and aspect across a continuous text, including the past perfect
- The passive in the present and the past
- Relative clauses
- Which verbs take -ing and which take to
- Reported speech, including reported questions
- Conditionals of types 0, 1 and 2, and wish for a regret about now
- Modal verbs for obligation, advice, possibility and deduction, and used to for past habit
- The preposition a word insists on
- Linking and contrast across sentences and paragraphs
- Articles and quantifiers inside continuous text rather than a single sentence
- and other structures within B1, reaching B2 in the hardest questions

2. Vocabulary Development

- Topic vocabulary — education, technology, the environment, community and volunteering, work, media and culture
- Word families across all their forms
- Prefixes and suffixes, including those that change the part of speech
- Collocation, including verb with noun and adjective with noun
- Multi-word verbs, and how the small word after the verb changes the meaning
- Words of similar meaning that are not interchangeable
- Working out an unfamiliar word from the sentence around it
- and other vocabulary within B1, reaching B2 in the hardest questions

3. Reading Comprehension

- Read narrative, factual and argued texts, and a notice
- Finding the main point, the evidence for it, and what the writer concludes
- Reading what a text implies but does not say
- Hearing the writer's tone, and whether they approve of what they describe
- Seeing what caused what, and how a text is put together
- Matching a heading to each paragraph, and restoring removed sentences by the links either side of the gap
- Deciding which of four people a statement belongs to
- and other reading at this level

4. Listening Comprehension

- Understand extended conversations and talks on school, work and general subjects

- Separate the overall point from the detail that supports it
- Recognise a speaker's attitude, and what they are trying to achieve
- Follow a conversation in which the speakers do not simply agree
- Complete notes while listening, writing one word, a number or a time
- Hold a fact in mind while the speaker moves on, from a recording played only once
- and other listening within B1, reaching B2 in the hardest questions

5. Written Expression

- Write a letter or formal message that covers four content points you are given
- Write a piece that argues one side of a question
- Open a paragraph with its point, support it, and close it
- Use linking words so an argument runs rather than stops and starts
- Match the tone to the reader, formal or informal
- Keep to the length you are given
- and other writing within B1, reaching B2 in the hardest questions

6. Question Types in the Olympiad

- Multiple choice — four options, one of them right
- Multiple response — you choose every right answer. Two of four options are right in a 2-point question, three of five in a 3-point question
- Multiple-choice cloze — a passage with gaps, four words offered at each gap
- Open cloze — a passage with gaps and no options at all. You type one word
- Word formation — a word is printed in capitals beside the gap and you type the form the sentence needs
- Multiple matching — headings against paragraphs, and statements against the people who said them
- Gapped text — sentences have been lifted out of a passage and you put them back
- Note-taking gap-fill — you complete a set of notes while the recording plays, one word, number or time per gap
- Two writing tasks — the first sets you content points to cover, the second leaves the shape to you
- Every multiple-choice question at this category offers four answers to choose from

7. Recommended Focus Areas

- Practise the gapped text above everything else. Every gap is decided by a link to the sentence before or after it — a pronoun, a linking word, a fact that follows on. An answer that merely sounds reasonable will be wrong, and this is where most marks are lost
- Learn words in families instead of one at a time
- Read opinion writing and watch for the sentence where the writer changes direction
- Practise note-taking — two of the listening parts are played only once
- Practise a formal letter and a piece that argues a case, and keep to the length

- Practise a proposal that recommends something, and an essay that argues a position and defends it