

MINISTERUL EDUCAȚIEI NAȚIONALE
OLIMPIADA DE LIMBA ENGLEZĂ
ETAPA NAȚIONALĂ, BRĂILA, aprilie 2014
SECȚIUNEA B /PROBA SCRISĂ
CLASA a X-a

Varianta 2

Question I (50 points)

Children in developing countries could educate themselves using computers, the TED Global conference in Edinburgh has been told. Read Prof Sugata Mitra's description of the first "school in the cloud", then write a 300-word descriptive-narrative essay on *A School Day in a Cloud School*.

At the main TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) conference in LA in February, Prof Sugata Mitra was awarded a \$1m (£638,000) prize fund to set up a series of cloud schools.

At TED Global, he laid out how he intended to spend the money and what a cloud school would be like. "A school in the cloud is basically a school without physical teachers. We need this because in many places you can't get teachers or the teachers are very bad," he said. Initially, he intends to set up five cloud schools, three in India and two in the UK, near the University of Newcastle where he teaches. The remotest of the locations is Korakati, a village in eastern India, where he hopes to build a school in the next four months.

It will be very different from a conventional school - a glass pod filled with computers and with one large screen to allow moderators to Skype in and play a role in the education of the children. For him, the key part of the project will be to let the children self-organise. There will be no timetables or curriculum and much of the learning will be left to the children. "We will let 300 children in on the first day and all hell will break loose. But gradually they will start to organise themselves," he said.

"In the first few weeks they will go berserk with games. Then one child will discover Paint and the others will copy. After four months they will discover Google," he said. The children will not be pre-warned about the moderator but at some point in the first couple of weeks they will appear on the big screen. "They will be life-size because this is important to children. It will be interesting to see how they react," said Prof Mitra.

TED Global: Cloud schools offer new education, by Jane Wakefield Technology reporter, TED Global, Edinburgh, 14 June 2013

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Question II (50 points)

The following excerpt comes from an article published in *The Guardian*. Write a **letter to the editor of the newspaper**, addressing the views presented and expressing your opinion (agreeing or disagreeing with the topic). Use arguments to support your opinions. (200 words)

I must apologise to the Germans. They are about to suffer an avalanche of often sickening Great War memorabilia, largely at their expense. It will be the British at their worst: sanctimonious, self-congratulatory, worshipping at the tomb of the unknown, awful German. The centenary of the First World War is already flooding the television schedules before the date of its outbreak (in autumn 1914). History bestseller lists focus on little else: there are no fewer than 8,000 titles on the Question. War magazines cram newsstands. Churches will fill with candles for the fallen. Children carry flowers "of reflection and remembrance". The horror, the mistakes, the cruelty, the crassness of war will be revived over and over again, "lest we forget".

The essence of the outbreak of the Great War was that no one thought it was the start of anything. It was a saber-rattling face-off expected to last a month or two. To revel in a final victory is one thing; to revel in these squalid initial miscalculations is gratuitous. One aspect of the centenary is undeniably welcome. Rarely can a historical event have become so wrapped in argument. The causes of the war have been analysed in their intense complexity by authors such as MacMillan, Hastings, Stone and Clark. A recent debate in London between the latter two turned into a swirl of cause and counter-cause, accident and counter-accident, until they came close to concluding the cause was indeed Principe's Sarajevo bullet of 1914.

No less fierce has been argument over whether Britain needed to fight at all. Niall Ferguson yesterday called it "the biggest error in history". Britain had previously held aloof from the feuds of Europe's nation states. Germany was no existential threat to Britain. Even if Britain had wanted to intervene, it and America should have waited for Germany to win or lose to Russia and France. As it was, the war was staggeringly expensive. It lost Britain an empire and left Germany fit only for Hitler and catastrophe. It was hardly a triumph.

Germany, I apologise for this sickening avalanche of First World War worship in *The Guardian*

Toate subiectele sunt obligatorii. Timp de lucru 3 ore.