International Youth Olympiad – 2018/2019

DEMO VERSION OF OLYMPIAD ASSIGNMENTS

MODERN POLITICS

11th GRADE

to be completed within 120 minutes

the maximum score is 100 points

Assignment 1. (25 points)

An aspiring journalist from a top-tier newspaper has written an article about the 2016 parliamentary elections in Country B, which has a long and recognized tradition of representative government. Party S. won the elections after gaining 35% of the votes of all voters taking part in the election. At the same time, it received slightly less than 55% in the Parliament and established a one-party government. Based on these outcomes, the journalist reached the conclusion that Country B is not a democracy. After reading the article, the editor criticized the aspiring journalist's conclusion, pointed out the mistake and provided a brief explanation, which the journalist accepted and agreed that the original conclusion was wrong.

What arguments do you think were made by the editor? What electoral system did they discuss? What countries feature such an electoral system?

Assignment 2. (10 points)

Find the odd item out in each row. Please explain your choice in a single sentence (scores shall be awarded for correct explanations).

2.1. Party; elections; coalition; riots; members; faction (5 points)

The odd one out is: _____, because _____

_____.

2.2. Participatory; patriarchal; subject-based; civil; communist (5 points)

The odd one out is: _____, because _____

_____.

Assignment 3. (20 points)

Find all interrelated elements in the four sections below. State your answers in the table:

Political slogan:

I. Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité
II. Be realistic - demand the impossible!
III. Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationalism
IV. Ein Reich, ein Volk, ein Führer
V. Peace! Work! May!

Date:

A. 1834
B. 1961
C. 1789
D. 1938
E. 1968

Event/Epoch:

1. The French Revolution
2. The Khrushchev Thaw
3. The reign of Emperor Nicholas I
4. Student unrest in Paris
5. Nazi Germany

System of ideas:

Q. National socialism
W. Liberalism
X. Socialism
Y. Gauchism
Z. Theory of official nationalism

Table of keys

Political slogan	Date	Event/epoch	System of ideas
I			
II			
III			
IV			
V			

Assignment 4. (25 points)



The picture symbolizes a political event that occurred in 2016. Please answer the following questions:

4.1. What happened, and as the result of what course of events did it happen? (5 points)

_____
_____
_____
_____

4.2. How did this event affect the executive power in the country, which was at the centre of this event? (10 points)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4.3. Are there any disintegration processes occurring in the country in question, and what could be the reason for that? (10 points)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

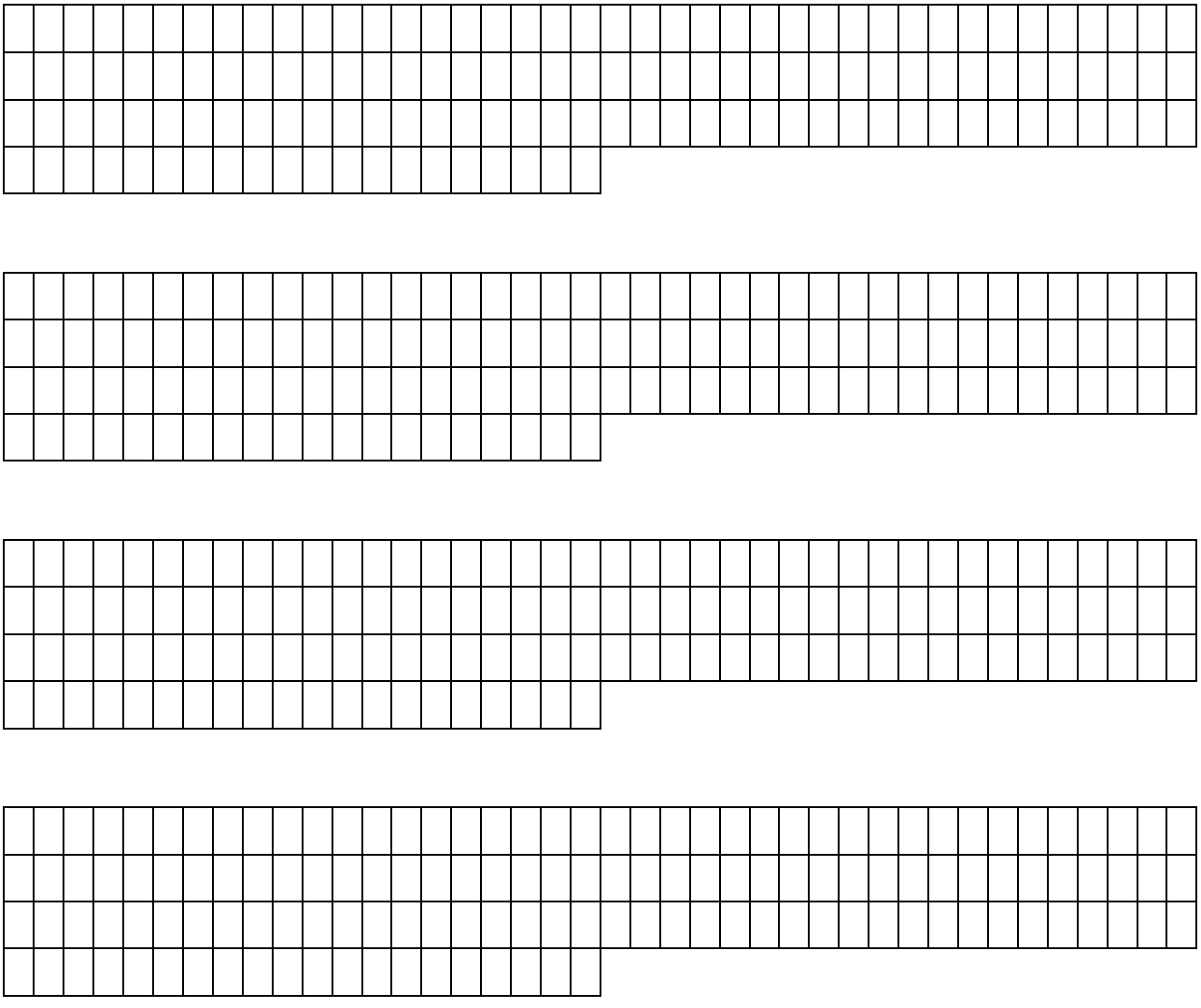
Assignment 5. (20 scores)

Imagine that Twitter was invented in the 16th century. Many philosophers probably would have preferred to express their ideas in short messages, rather than in lengthy treatises. They probably would have had blogs, as well. In such circumstances, it is easy to image Jean Bodin posting the following message on his @JeanBodin Twitter account:

Democracy is incompatible with sovereign power. Everyone is their own small king. When you say "democracy", you think "anarchy" #allpowertomonarchs

Put yourself in the place of monarchomachs, John Locke or Jean-Jacques Rousseau (the difference in the period when they lived can be ignored). Looking at Jean Bodin's message, they both would have lost their temper and scribbled no less than 4 posts in response on Twitter. Choose one of the characters (monarchomachs, John Locke or Jean-Jacques Rousseau – *underline as appropriate*), and write a well-grounded reply to Bodin's statement.

Write your answer in the boxes below (Each box corresponds to one symbol. Your answer may not exceed 560 symbols; spaces and hashtags are counted as symbols):



KEYS

Assignment 1.

A significant difference between the total number of received votes and parliamentary places gained is quite possible in the context of democratic elections, as the results largely depend on a given electoral system's special characteristics. The majority system of a relative majority (providing for one round of elections), which is applied, for example, in the UK, the USA, Canada, and India, results in the strongest distortions of this kind. A majority electoral system initially puts the party with vague electoral support throughout the country at a disadvantage. This, in turn, leads to the strategic voting on the part of many voters, making them vote for the strongest candidate (the person most likely to win in any particular electoral district). According to surveys, such electoral systems allow candidates to win an absolute majority in the parliament with support from only 37-38% votes of total voters.

Assignment 2.

2.1. The odd one out is "riots", because the other concepts refer to the electoral process and electoral behaviour, while riots or protests are a form of remonstrative, i.e., less conventional, behaviour.

2.2. The odd one out is "communist", because the other concepts are types of political culture, according to Almond and Werbe, while "communist" refers to a system of values (e.g., ideology, doctrine, etc.).

Assignment 3.

Political slogan	Date	Event/epoch	System of ideas
I	C	1	W
II	E.	4	Y
III	A	3	Z
IV	D	5	Q
V	B	2	X

Assignment 4.

4.1. The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union (Brexit). It happened after a nationwide referendum was held on June 23, 2016.

4.2. In July 2016, UK Prime Minister David Cameron resigned, because he, as Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party, did not back the idea of Brexit. The Conservative Party then elected Theresa May as its new leader, who formed a new government.

4.3. Scotland has been in the process of devolution since 1979: conducting referenda on the country's independence and adopting bylaws to expand its powers. In the Brexit referendum, Scotland voted to stay in the EU (62% vs 38%), which, in turn, boosted disintegration sentiments in regards to the outcomes of the referendum. Similar sentiments, though not so pronounced, have been observed in the Northern Ireland, which also voted to stay in the EU (56% vs 44%).

Assignment 5.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's responses to Jean Bodin on Twitter:

Jean, you are wrong! Democracy as a form of government is one thing, and the people's power as the state's foundation is something absolutely different! #geneva

For the first, angels are really needed. The second is possible among the people. And only this can take us out of slavery! #freedom

Only a social contract creates a social organism, and only public consensus serves as the basis of power that does not kill freedom! #contract

The common will of the community is represented neither by deputies nor the monarch. Freedom means subordination to the common will, not to the monarch! #republic #commonwill