



Conquesta 2008

(International Multiple Choice School Olympiads – Est. 1998)
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English Language 1 – Year 7

Welcome to your Conquesta Olympiad. As you read and answer the questions, we hope that you enjoy and learn from the information. Once you have read the information and the questions carefully, you have to make a choice. When you have decided which of the answers is correct, completely fill in the matching square on your answer sheet using a 2B or a B pencil. For example, if the answer to question 4 is c, then neatly fill in the square containing c next to the number 4. See example below. Fill in only one square per question and make sure you completely rub out any mistakes so that the answer is clear.

Example:-

4.	a	b	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	d
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The World's Greatest Overland Explorer

They called him 'the man with a million stories'. People flocked to Marco Polo's home to hear him tell exciting tales about his travels in distant lands.

Marco Polo won fame for his journeys across Asia. He wrote a book about his travels that became one of the most famous travel guides in history. Theirs, surely, was the strangest home-coming in exploration history.

They stepped ashore in Venice one late afternoon in the nineties - the nineties of the 13th century - a bedraggled, weather beaten trio, in queer, coarse garments. Their faces were leathery and bronzed, scorched perhaps, by tropic sun, yet scarred as if they had been frostbitten, too.

The tales the wanderers began to tell, after the table was cleared and the sugar-cane rum gave way to the homely red wine, were not credible, either then or for several hundred years to come.

"These fellows tell about sheep with tails that weigh 30 pounds!

They say people in Cathay dig up stones for fuel, and the Tatars have houses as big as palaces that they haul about on wheels.

And they found a mountain of salt, saw people mining a liquid that would burn and wool that wouldn't, and they beheld snakes 30 feet long!"

"Yes," chimed in the wise little accountant with the quill behind his ear. "And one of them says they drink their wine hot in Cathay, and it goes to a man's head quick as lightning; their stories sound as if they brought some back."

"But if you would hear a tall tale," advised the pork dealer, "get the young chap to tell you about this great Doge, or Khan, he calls him, who has a million soldiers, and a million acres in his park, and a million retainers, and a million or so of everything! He is so great only 12 men may talk to him; but, if you believe Marco, he takes in this stranger, makes him an ambassador and a governor of a city, and then sends him around his country to report what else he has a million of!"

Read the extract for questions 1-6.

- A tall tale is**
(a) credible. (b) plausible.
(c) convincing. (d) unbelievable.
- What would 'a liquid that would burn' be?**
(a) asbestos (b) coal
(c) oil (d) fire wood
- The Polo's faces were**
(a) pale and wrinkled. (b) tanned and smooth.
(c) wan and ashen. (d) leathery and creased.
- What does the wise little accountant imply in his comment about the Polo's?**
(a) The Polo's stories were incredible.
(b) The Polo's must have been drinking to make up such stories.
(c) The Polo's had some interesting tales to tell.
(d) The Polo's had changed the course of history.
- A hyperbole is an exaggeration. For example, an army of ants went through our kitchen. An example of a hyperbole is suggested in the words said by**
(a) Marco Polo. (b) the accountant.
(c) the pork dealer. (d) the Khan.
- What made Marco Polo famous?**
(a) His book.
(b) Meeting the Khan.
(c) His journeys through Asia.
(d) His strange homecoming.

Read the extract on the right for questions 7-9.

- Why did the Polo's rip open their garments?**
(a) To prove their identity and what they said was true.
(b) To show their audience the precious stones.
(c) To boast about their wealth.
(d) To display what the Khan had given them.
- What is implied by the words "All had been stitched up so artfully in their clothing that they could travel without suspicion."**
(a) They were skilled at sewing.
(b) They wanted to avoid carrying a cumbersome load.
(c) They needed to hide the precious stones.
(d) They were suspects of a crime.
- What had the Khan originally given them?**
(a) diamonds (b) rubies
(c) emeralds (d) gold

When all had finished eating the servants were sent from the room, the doors were bolted, and the trio went to dress. They emerged in the ragged and worn attire in which they had come ashore. Then, to the astonishment of the company, they proceeded to rip these garments along the seams and welts, and there poured forth on the table vast quantities of precious stones, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and huge diamonds. All had been stitched up so artfully in their clothing that they could travel without suspicion.

This display served at least to establish the identity of the Polo's. Marco's simple explanation of how he obtained them, by exchanging the cumbersome gold Kublai Khan had given him for a more compact form of wealth, was not so readily believed.

