

Classe a346 – prove di lingua

ù1. In the following text some lexical items have been removed and replaced with blanks. In each blank, write the item that you think should go there. Lexical items can consist of 1-3 words. The first item has been filled in for you as an example. (15 pt.)

The (0) word “boondoggle”, Michael Grunwald points out, was (1)_____ back in the days of the original New Deal, to describe “make-work” bits of arts and craft paid for by the government at a price that was out of all proportion to their actual value.

This is not necessarily a (2)_____ thing. In times of economic (3)_____, when normal patterns of consumption and investment are frozen, prodigal government spending can sometimes be the only way to break the vicious circle of (4)_____ demand and shrinking employment. Value for money, paradoxically, can sometimes be an unaffordable luxury. To sum up John Maynard Keynes, it can even make sense to bury money in bottles, so that miners, and the suppliers of their pickaxes and overalls, and those who sell food and materials to those suppliers can, in turn, (5)_____ from the circulation of money that they dig up. Mr. Grunwald’s new book is the story of what was arguably the greatest boondoggle in history and the politics that surrounded it, both before and since.

Barack Obama’s \$787 billion stimulus package, enacted within a month of his taking office in January 2009, (6)_____ to about 4% of America’s GDP. In the Depression of the 1930s, the biggest stimulus in any year of Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal amounted to only about 1.5% of GDP. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, as Mr. Obama’s bill was formally (7)_____, was a tale that grew in the telling. In the months (8)_____ to the election in November 2008, the economy entered virtual free-fall. The severity of the downturn surprised the participants, but long before he was elected, Mr. Obama knew that he faced a crisis of 1930s proportions.

Mr. Grunwald’s book does a meticulous job, casting much new light on the advance thinking of Mr. Obama’s team, both before the election and, especially, during the long transition. In the last quarter of 2008, the final three months of the Bush era, the American economy (9)_____ by an astonishing 8.9%. By early 2009 job losses (10)_____ 800,000 a month. The size of the policy response grew too. An early plan, calculated at \$300 billion, grew, long before inauguration day, to around \$800 billion. And that, as Mr. Grunwald makes clear, was very much at the low end of what Mr. Obama’s economists (11)_____ was required.

One thing that may surprise readers not fully (12)_____ with the grisly nature of political sausage-making is the degree of cynicism that surrounded the passing of the Recovery Act. It was naive of Mr. Obama to expect the Republicans to play ball. But because he needed to win at least a couple of their votes in the Senate to break the threat of a filibuster, he tried hard to court them. Mr. Grunwald (13)_____ in shocking detail how the Republican leadership decided early and wholeheartedly not to co-operate with the new president. So deep was their opposition that they even (14)_____ things that they supposedly supported, such as the Recovery Act’s deep tax cuts and its emphasis on infrastructure.

As cynical as this may have been, it made political sense. If the stimulus succeeded, Mr. Obama would get all the (15)_____. If it failed, the Republicans could portray themselves as having been on the side of fiscal prudence. Since then, the economy has stubbornly refused to (16)_____ at anything beyond an anaemic rate. Many Republican economists, such as the respected Mark Zandi, who advised John McCain in his contest with Mr. Obama, agree that without it, things would have been even worse. But the problem is that it did not work well enough. As a result, the Republicans triumphed at the mid-term vote and Mr. Obama’s ratings are now uncomfortably low as he struggles for re-election.

2. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must insert in the second sentence between three and eight words, including the word given. (8pt.)

Example:

Nobody is forcing you to go there

obligation

You *are under no obligation* to go there (four words inserted)

1. Peter was last heard of two weeks ago

contact

Nobody two weeks.

2. Although his leg was hurting, he carried on playing.

fact

In spite leg was hurting, he carried on playing.

3. It looks as if he has made a mistake in the application.

filled

He seems incorrectly.

4. You can usually trust John to do a good job.

rely

One a good job.

5. I can't see her finding the job too difficult.

ought

She too difficult.

6. I doubt if he will ever do better than that.

chance

There's improve on that.

7. Maybe I could have helped you.

possible

Maybe help you.

8. You can only become fluent in a language if you live where it's spoken

achieve

Only by fluency in a language.

3. Provide a synonym or a paraphrase for the underlined words in the following sentences. (7pt.)

1. A good example of mutually¹ beneficial symbiosis is the clownfish and the sea anemone; the clownfish receives protection from its enemies and in exchange feeds the anemone by gathering² nutrients and leaving nutritional waste³ on its tentacles.
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
2. Whenever David invites a girl out to dinner, they go Dutch⁴.
4. _____
3. Surely you didn't walk all the way from Rome to Paris. That's a tall story⁵.
5. _____
4. Given the substantial cutbacks in social welfare funding, plans for the new initiative to curb⁶ homelessness must be stifled.
6. _____
5. Because the test has been deemed inaccurate, the findings we obtained are inconclusive⁷.
7. _____
6. Unless something is done to curtail⁸ the emission of harmful greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere, the earth may have to accept a future of global warming.
8. _____
7. The escaped robbers suddenly hightailed it for the woods⁹.
9. _____
8. The expedition was fraught with¹⁰ misfortune: it rained every day, someone broke their ankle and sickness plagued the crew from day one.
10. _____
9. Towards the end of the first semester of junior year Sarah was inundated with¹¹ work; she had to write two papers, take five exams and give an oral presentation.

11. _____

10. The people who started up the new dot-com ended up stone broke¹².

12. _____

11. Skepticism is a belief that all beliefs can be proved false; thus, to avoid the frustration¹³ of being wrong, it is best to believe nothing.

13. _____

12. This week has been a roller coaster¹⁴.

14. _____