

Science Olympiad – Lower Merion Captains Tryouts 2020 2019

7) [200 points] Decode the following Baconian cipher.

BELOW EARTH A KISS BOMBS AM BOY BEARD YAHOO BASIC
 BABAA AABBB AAAA BAABA AABAA BAABB AABAA BAAAA
 W H A T E U/V E R

BANJO UNDER POINT YACHT STRIP MIGHT OFFER CREEK BOOTY
 BABBA ABBAB BAABB AAABB ABBAB AAABB ABBAB ABAAA BAABA
 Y O U/V D O D O I/J T

FATSO ASHES GRAVY AN APE
 BABAA AABAA ABABA ABABA
 W E L L

Whatever you do, do it well.

The letters are mapped as:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B

$$\begin{aligned}
 C(2) &\rightarrow 2 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 29 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow D(3) \\
 U(20) &\rightarrow 20 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 155 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow Z(25) \\
 M(12) &\rightarrow 12 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 99 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow V(21) \\
 F(5) &\rightarrow 5 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 50 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow Y(24) \\
 P(15) &\rightarrow 15 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 120 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow Q(16)
 \end{aligned}$$

The next 5 letters we know are (DZVYQ), so we will fill those in.

T	C	P	O	O	J	Y	O	T	G	T	C	F	M	P	G	R	V	Z	D	M	Y	Z	C	P	C	K	O	P	Z	F	M	S	R	E	O
I	N	A	L	L	O	F	L	I		I	N		H	A		E	M	U	C	H	F	U	N	A	N	D	L	A	U		H	T	E	R	L

Next, encode the next 5 common letters **GWYBV**.

$$\begin{aligned}
 G(6) &\rightarrow 6 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 57 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow F(5) \\
 W(22) &\rightarrow 22 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 169 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow N(13) \\
 Y(24) &\rightarrow 24 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 183 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow B(1) \\
 B(1) &\rightarrow 1 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 22 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow W(22) \\
 V(21) &\rightarrow 21 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 162 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow G(6)
 \end{aligned}$$

We know the reverse mapping of 5 more letters (FNBWG), which we can fill in.

T	C	P	O	O	J	Y	O	T	G	T	C	F	M	P	G	R	V	Z	D	M	Y	Z	C	P	C	K	O	P	Z	F	M	S	R	E	O
I	N	A	L	L	O	F	L	I	V	I	N	G	H	A	V	E	M	U	C	H	F	U	N	A	N	D	L	A	U	G	H	T	E	R	L

We will convert the remaining 5 letters **KXJQZ**.

$$\begin{aligned}
 K(10) &\rightarrow 10 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 85 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow H(7) \\
 X(23) &\rightarrow 23 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 176 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow U(20) \\
 J(9) &\rightarrow 9 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 78 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow A(0) \\
 Q(16) &\rightarrow 16 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 127 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow X(23) \\
 Z(25) &\rightarrow 25 * 7 + 15 \rightarrow 190 \text{ mod } 26 \rightarrow I(8)
 \end{aligned}$$

The remaining 5 letters we know are (HUAXI), so we will fill those in.

T	C	P	O	O	J	Y	O	T	G	T	C	F	M	P	G	R	V	Z	D	M	Y	Z	C	P	C	K	O	P	Z	F	M	S	R	E	O
I	N	A	L	L	O	F	L	I	V	I	N	G	H	A	V	E	M	U	C	H	F	U	N	A	N	D	L	A	U	G	H	T	E	R	L

The solution is now complete!

9) [250 points] The following quote needs to be encoded with the Vigenère Cipher with a keyword of **ORCHARD**

O	R	C	H	A	R	D	O	R	C	H	A	R	D	O	R	C	H	A	R	D	O	R	C	H	A	R	D	O	R	,
L	O	V	E	I	S	A	F	R	U	I	T	I	N	S	E	A	S	O	N	A	T	A	L	L	T	I	M	E	S	,
Z	F	X	L	I	J	D	T	I	W	P	T	Z	Q	G	V	C	Z	O	E	D	H	R	N	S	T	Z	P	S	J	,
C	H	A	R	D	O	R	C	H	A	R	D	O	R	C	H	A	R	D	O	R	C	H	A	R	.					
A	N	D	W	I	T	H	I	N	R	E	A	C	H	O	F	E	V	E	R	Y	H	A	N	D	.					
C	U	D	N	L	H	Y	K	U	R	V	D	Q	Y	Q	M	E	M	H	F	P	J	H	N	U	.					

10) [300 points] The following quote by Martin Luther King Jr. needs to be encoded with the Affine Cipher using $a=15$ and $b=7$.

H	U	M	A	N	S	A	L	V	A	T	I	O	N	L	I	E	S	I	N	T	H	E	H	A	N	D	S	O	F
I	V	F	H	U	R	H	Q	K	H	G	X	J	U	Q	X	P	R	X	U	G	I	P	I	H	U	A	R	J	E
T	H	E	C	R	E	A	T	I	V	E	L	Y	M	A	L	A	D	J	U	S	T	E	D						
G	I	P	L	C	P	H	G	X	K	P	Q	D	F	H	Q	H	A	M	V	R	G	P	A						

How to solve

Using the given value of $a = 15$ and $b = 7$ we can calculate using the formula $a * x + b \pmod{26}$

$$H(7) \rightarrow 7 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 112 \pmod{26} \rightarrow I(8)$$

$$U(20) \rightarrow 20 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 307 \pmod{26} \rightarrow V(21)$$

$$M(12) \rightarrow 12 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 187 \pmod{26} \rightarrow F(5)$$

$$A(0) \rightarrow 0 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 7 \pmod{26} \rightarrow H(7)$$

$$N(13) \rightarrow 13 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 202 \pmod{26} \rightarrow U(20)$$

$$S(18) \rightarrow 18 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 277 \pmod{26} \rightarrow R(17)$$

We already computed for A and know that it is H

$$L(11) \rightarrow 11 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 172 \pmod{26} \rightarrow Q(16)$$

$$V(21) \rightarrow 21 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 322 \pmod{26} \rightarrow K(10)$$

We already computed for A and know that it is H

$$T(19) \rightarrow 19 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 292 \pmod{26} \rightarrow G(6)$$

$$I(8) \rightarrow 8 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 127 \pmod{26} \rightarrow X(23)$$

$$O(14) \rightarrow 14 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 217 \pmod{26} \rightarrow J(9)$$

We already computed for N and know that it is U

We already computed for L and know that it is Q

We already computed for I and know that it is X

$$E(4) \rightarrow 4 * 15 + 7 \rightarrow 67 \pmod{26} \rightarrow P(15)$$

We already computed for S and know that it is R

We already computed for I and know that it is X

We already computed for N and know that it is U

We already computed for T and know that it is G

We already computed for H and know that it is I

We already computed for E and know that it is P

We already computed for H and know that it is I

15) [250 points] Decode the following message in Baconian.

,./,..?./<.>/,/>/,..?./,..?./<./<./<./<>/<.>./,..?./,..?./..
AAAAABAAABABBBAABAAABAAAAABAABAABAABBABABAAAABBAABAA
A S P I R E T O I N S

/<.>/,/>/,..?./,..?./<./,..?./,..?./,..?./,..?./<./<./<./<>/<.>./,..?./,..?./..
ABABBBAAABAAABAAAAABAABAAAAABAABABABBABBBAAAAABAAB
P I R E B E F O R E

.?./,..?./,..?./<./<.>/<>?./,..?./<./,..?./,..?./,..?./..
ABAAAABAAAABAABABABABBBAABAAABAAAAABAA
W E E X P I R E

Aspire to inspire before we expire.

The A letters are represented by ',./' and the B letters by '<>?'

16) [400 points] Solve the following Spanish aristocrat.

YEDTRL RGWGDW DBNL, ILRL GB ETJXGMWL YLTWSJMD SDMD
CUANDO DESEAS ALGO, TODO EL UNIVERSO CONSPIRA PARA

HEG MGDBJYGW IEW WEGCLW.
QUE REALICES TUS SUEÑOS.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	Ñ	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Frequency		3	1	7	5		8	1	2	3		7	4	1				3	2	3			8	1	3		
Replacement	H	L	Ñ	A	U	K	E	Q	T	I	B	O	R	G	Y	M	X	J	D	P	N	W	Z	S	V	C	F

Translation: *When you want something, the whole universe conspires to make your wish come true.*

U H E/ R L D

At this point in time, 4 ciphertext characters still need to be mapped. With xx unknown, looking at unknowns which are next to x which would result in three in a row, we find the sequence 61 where we know that 6 ends with x which means that 1 cannot be xx, so we can eliminate that possibility. Also, we find the sequence 97 where we know that 7 starts with x which means that 9 cannot be xx, so we can eliminate that possibility.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
—	••	—	•-	—	•x	x•	-•	—
-x		-x		-x				-x
x-		x-		x-				x-
		xx		xx				

Based on that information we can map the cipher text as:

2 6 1 3 1 7 9 7 6 1 7 7 2 5 3 2 2 7 5 2 6 2 9 3 4 8 7 8 6
 ●●●x x• x●●x x●x●●● ●●●●x● ●●●x●● ●--●x●-●●x

S I E L

6 9 7 2 6 2 9 6 1 6 2 6 7 3 4 6 6 9 3 1 3 4 6 6 7 4 6
 ●x x●●●●x●● ●x ●x●●●xx● ●-●x●x ●-●x●xx●●-●x

E H S / E E/ F

2 3 8 5 4 9 6 8 6 9 3 6 4 9 6 2 9 6 1 6 2 8 7 4 7 8 6
 ●● -• ●- ●x-●●x ●x●- ●x●● ●x ●x●●-●x●●-x●-●●x

D F U L

9 7 2 6 4 9 6 7 3 4 2 7 8 6 9 7 2 6 6 9 2 6 4 9 6 1 4
 x●●●●x●- ●xx● ●-●●x●-●●x x●●●●x●x ●●●x●- ●x ●-

H / L H E

7 4 7 9 7 2 5 2 9 6 9 7 2 6 6 7 1 9 1 7 8 7 8 6 8 6
 x●●-x● x●●● ●● ●x x●●●●x●xx● x●-●x●-●●x-●●x

U H E/ R L D

At this point in time, 4 ciphertext characters still need to be mapped. Since 1 has several options we simply try them and look at the first word or two to see if it makes sense. Trying — for 1 gives us a chunk: GFUL. Trying -x for 1 gives us a chunk: STTETITESTHEBITPLETHINTESERETTRREFINKNDTEANINTEFULTHANELLTHEBANTAUETSDNTHEAMRLD. Trying x- for 1 gives us a chunk: S TTETITESTHEBITPLETHINNSERETTRREFINKNDTEANINNFULTHANELLTHEBANKUETSDNTHEETTRLD. Which means we know that 1 must map to —

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
—	••	-x	•-	-x	•x	x•	-•	-x
		x-		x-				x-
		xx		xx				

Based on that information we can map the cipher text as:

2 6 1 3 1 7 9 7 6 1 7 7 2 5 3 2 2 7 5 2 6 2 9 3 4 8 7 8 6
 ●●●x-- --x● x●●x--x●x●●● ●●●●x● ●●●x●● ●--●x●-●●x

S I M E L

6 9 7 2 6 2 9 6 1 6 2 6 7 3 4 6 6 9 3 1 3 4 6 6 7 4 6
 ●x x●●●●x●● ●x--●x●●●xx● ●-●x●x -- ●-●x●xx●●-●x
E H G S / E E/ F

2 3 8 5 4 9 6 8 6 9 3 6 4 9 6 2 9 6 1 6 2 8 7 4 7 8 6
 ●● -● ●- ●x-●●x ●x-● ●x●● ●x--●x●●-●x●●-x●-●●x
D G F U L

9 7 2 6 4 9 6 7 3 4 2 7 8 6 9 7 2 6 6 9 2 6 4 9 6 1 4
 x●●●●x●- ●xx● ●-●●x●-●●x x●●●●x●x ●●x●- ●x--●-
H / L H E Q

7 4 7 9 7 2 5 2 9 6 9 7 2 6 6 7 1 9 1 7 8 7 8 6 8 6
 x●●-x● x●●● ●● ●x x●●●●x●xx●-- --x●-●x●-●●x-●●x
U H E/ R L D

At this point in time, 3 ciphertext characters still need to be mapped. Since 3 has several options we simply try them and look at the first word or two to see if it makes sense. Trying -x for 3 gives us a chunk: **SOMETIMESTHESIMPLETHINGSAREMOREFUNANDMEANINGFULTHANALLTHEBANQUETSINTHEWORLD**. Trying x- for 3 gives us a chunk: **LETHINGSECETOCEFIGANDTNANINGFULTHANE**. Trying xx for 3 gives us a chunk: **SMMETIMESHESITPLETHINGSERETMREFINANDTEANINGFULTHANELLTHEBANQUETSINTHEWORLD**. Which means we know that 3 must map to -x. Eliminating -x as an option for 9 means that 9 must be x-. Eliminating x- as an option for 5 means that 5 must be xx.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
—	●●	-x	●-	xx	●x	x●	-●	x-

Based on that information we can map the cipher text as:

2 6 1 3 1 7 9 7 6 1 7 7 2 5 3 2 2 7 5 2 6 2 9 3 4 8 7 8 6
 ●●●x---x--x●x-x●●x--x●x●●●xx-x●●●●x●xx●●●x●●x--x●--●x●-●●x
S O M E T I M E S / T H E/ S I M P L

6 9 7 2 6 2 9 6 1 6 2 6 7 3 4 6 6 9 3 1 3 4 6 6 7 4 6
 ●xx-x●●●●x●●x-●x--●x●●●xx●-x●-●x●xx--x---x●-●x●xx●●-●x
E/ T H I N G S / A R E/ M O R E/ F

2 3 8 5 4 9 6 8 6 9 3 6 4 9 6 2 9 6 1 6 2 8 7 4 7 8 6
 ●●-x-●xx●-x-●x-●●xx--x●x●-x-●x●●x-●x--●x●●-●x●●-x●-●●x
U N / A N D / M E A N I N G F U L

9 7 2 6 4 9 6 7 3 4 2 7 8 6 9 7 2 6 6 9 2 6 4 9 6 1 4
 x-x●●●●x●-x-●xx●-x●-●●x●-●●xx-x●●●●x●xx-●●●x●-x-●x--●-
T H A N / A L L / T H E/ B A N Q

7 4 7 9 7 2 5 2 9 6 9 7 2 6 6 7 1 9 1 7 8 7 8 6 8 6
 x●●-x●x-x●●●●xx●●x-●xx-x●●●●x●xx●--x---x●-●x●-●●x-●●x
U E T S / I N / T H E/ W O R L D

Now that we have mapped all the ciphertext characters, the decoded morse code is the answer:

$$\begin{pmatrix} D & O \\ O & R \end{pmatrix} * \begin{pmatrix} S \\ M \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 3 & 14 \\ 14 & 17 \end{pmatrix} * \begin{pmatrix} 18 \\ 12 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 3 * 18 + 14 * 12 \\ 14 * 18 + 17 * 12 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 222 \\ 456 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 14 \\ 14 \end{pmatrix} \pmod{26} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} O \\ O \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} D & O \\ O & R \end{pmatrix} * \begin{pmatrix} I \\ L \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 3 & 14 \\ 14 & 17 \end{pmatrix} * \begin{pmatrix} 8 \\ 11 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 3 * 8 + 14 * 11 \\ 14 * 8 + 17 * 11 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 178 \\ 299 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 22 \\ 13 \end{pmatrix} \pmod{26} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} W \\ N \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} D & O \\ O & R \end{pmatrix} * \begin{pmatrix} E \\ Z \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 3 & 14 \\ 14 & 17 \end{pmatrix} * \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ 25 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 3 * 4 + 14 * 25 \\ 14 * 4 + 17 * 25 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 362 \\ 481 \end{pmatrix} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} 24 \\ 13 \end{pmatrix} \pmod{26} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} Y \\ N \end{pmatrix}$$

20) [450 points] Solve the following Spanish aristocrat.

PU TLC FJX FTÑUK NCLC, XJ NDTXOC, XJ OU OCXOU. PU
TE AMO SIN SABER COMO, NI CUANDO, NI DE DONDE. TE

TLC OJKUNPTLUXPU FJX GKCÑSULTF XJ CKWDSSC; TFJ PU
AMO DIRECTAMENTE SIN PROBLEMAS NI ORGULLO; ASI TE

TLC GCKVDU XC FU TLTK OU CPKT LTXUKT: FJXC TFJ OU
AMO PORQUE NO SE AMAR DE OTRA MANERA: SINO ASI DE

UFPU LCOC UX VDU XC FCA XJ UKUF, PTX NUKNT VDU PD
ESTE MODO EN QUE NO SOY NI ERES, TAN CERCA QUE TU

LTXC FCÑKU LJ GUNEC UF LJT, PTX NUKNT VDU FU NJUKKTX
MANO SOBRE MI PECHO ES MIA, TAN CERCA QUE SE CIERRAN

PDF CMCF NCX LJ FDUXC.
TUS OJOS CON MI SUENO.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	Ñ	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Frequency	1		25	9	1	17	3			14	14	13	1	10	3	8	11			3	21	31	4	1	20		
Replacement	Y	Z	O	U	H	S	P	V	X	I	R	M	J	C	B	D	T	W	Ñ	L	A	E	Q	G	N	F	K