

KỶ THI CHỌN HỌC SINH GIỎI QUỐC GIA
TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THÔNG
NĂM HỌC 2024 - 2025

HỘI ĐỒNG COI THI
Tỉnh/TP/Trường ĐH

Môn thi: TIẾNG ANH
Ngày thi thứ nhất: 25/12/2024

Giám thị 1

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

Giám thị 2

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Họ và tên thí sinh:

Nam/nữ:

Ngày sinh:

Nơi sinh:

Trường:

Lớp:

Số báo danh:

Số phách
(do Hội đồng chấm thi ghi)

Chú ý:

- Thí sinh cần điền đầy đủ các mục ở phần trên. Ngoài ra, thí sinh không được ký tên hoặc dùng bất cứ ký hiệu gì để đánh dấu bài thi.
- Bài thi phải được viết bằng một loại bút, một thứ mực; không được viết bằng mực đỏ, bút chì. Không được tẩy xóa bằng bất kỳ cách nào khác ngoài việc gạch chéo lên chỗ sai.
- Thí sinh chỉ làm bài trên tập giấy bài làm được phát và không được tháo rời tập giấy này.
- Thí sinh không được ra khỏi phòng thi khi chưa hết thời gian làm bài.
- Thí sinh **KHÔNG** được sử dụng tài liệu, kể cả từ điển.
- Giám thị **KHÔNG** giải thích gì thêm.

ĐỀ THI CHÍNH THỨC

Môn thi: **TIẾNG ANH**
 Thời gian: **180** phút (không kể thời gian giao đề)
 Ngày thi thứ nhất: **25/12/2024**
 Đề thi gồm có **12** trang

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|-----------------|
| SỐ PHÁCH |
|-----------------|

- Thí sinh **KHÔNG** được sử dụng tài liệu, kể cả từ điển.
- Giám thị **KHÔNG** giải thích gì thêm.

I. LISTENING (5.0 points)

- The listening section is in **FOUR** parts. You will hear each part **TWICE**. At the beginning of each part, you will hear a sound.
- There will be a piece of music at the beginning and at the end of the listening section. You will have **TWO** minutes to check your answers at the end of the listening section.
- All the other instructions are included in the recording.

Part 1. For questions 1 – 5, listen to two friends discussing the influence of technology and social media on human interaction, and decide whether the following are mentioned by only one of the speakers, or by both of them. In the corresponding numbered boxes provided,

write **M** for the **Male** speaker;
 F for the **Female** speaker;
 B for **Both** of the speakers.

1. A personal shortcoming that can be addressed
2. An improvement made to an existing system
3. A leisure activity that has been made unnecessary
4. An existing phenomenon that has been irreversible
5. A natural ability that is being hindered

Your answers:

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. |
|----|----|----|----|----|

Part 2. For questions 6 – 10, listen to a news report on sand crisis and match each number (6 – 10) in Column I with one letter (A – J) in Column II to make a correct statement according to what is stated or implied by the speaker(s). Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

| Column I | Column II |
|-----------------------|--|
| 6. Africa | A. is having geographical features damaged and removed due to sand extraction. B. is imposing a strict prohibition on the extraction of sand from beaches and rivers. |
| 7. Sri Lanka | C. is facing risks from wild animals as a result of sand removal. D. is consuming sand at the rate of more than 37 pounds per person per day. |
| 8. The Mekong delta | E. is having rare reptiles swept away together with sand from the rivers. F. is being faced with agricultural problems due to excessive exploitation of sand. |
| 9. The United Nations | G. is facing threats from extreme weather phenomena, especially in its coastal areas. H. is exploiting and using sand in a more unregulated manner than water. |
| 10. The world | I. is proposing reducing demand for mining sand by means of reusing and recycling. J. is facing the problem of fresh water getting undrinkable due to salinisation. |

Your answers:

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. | 10. |
|----|----|----|----|-----|

Part 3. For questions 11 – 15, listen to a talk about hurricanes and write the letter A, B, C, or D in the numbered boxes provided to indicate the correct answer to each of the following questions according to what you hear.

11. Which of the following is true about Europe?
 - A. The continent receives hefty doses of wind and rain over the years.
 - B. The continent has not been struck by any hurricane for over a century.
 - C. Europe has fewer hurricanes yet more wind and rain than North America during the hurricane season.
 - D. In terms of protection against hurricanes, Europe has a geographical advantage over North America.
12. According to the speaker, a hurricane _____.
 - A. is a tropical storm formed off the coast of West Africa which travels across the Atlantic
 - B. necessitates a combination of warm water and humidity that picks up enough rotating air
 - C. is a column of rapidly rising rotating air that has picked up a great deal of warm, moist air
 - D. travels across the Atlantic from the coast of West Africa after collecting enough warm and wet air
13. Which of the following is the immediate result of the trade winds?
 - A. The hurricanes are driven to the far North over a long distance to reach Europe.
 - B. Europe has been affected by a smaller number of hurricane remnants than Florida.
 - C. Both Europe and the West Coast of the U.S. rarely experience direct hits from full-blown hurricanes.
 - D. The force of a hurricane is reduced to that of a tropical storm or even weaker when it makes a landfall.
14. All of the following cause a hurricane to waver by the time it reaches Europe EXCEPT _____.
 - A. Europe's location
 - B. the water fronts
 - C. the colder currents
 - D. subtropical jet streams
15. Which of the following can be inferred from the talk?
 - A. Given the increasingly serious global warming, Europe will no longer be safe from hurricane force storms.
 - B. By the end of the 21st century, Northern Russia will suffer from hurricane remnants even more than Ireland.
 - C. Remnants of hurricanes when landing on the Europe's shore would cause extensive damage but no casualties.
 - D. Ireland will not be stricken by any storm more powerful than Hurricane Ophelia remnants in the next 50 years.

Your answers:

| | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 11. | 12. | 13. | 14. | 15. |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Part 4. For questions 16 – 25, listen to part of a discussion about managing Gen Z in the workplace and complete the following summary. Write NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS taken from the recording for each space. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

The portrayal of Gen Z as (16) _____ and uncooperative is a perception that is being questioned and the guest also believes it would be unfair to look at (17) _____ such as age to make an overgeneralisation for the whole generation. The negative cases are likened to the front and back of a (18) _____, while the majority of Gen Z are described as clever, motivated, curious, and creative. In the previous generations, the term (19) "_____" was used to label individuals that could achieve (20) _____ together with a successful career and a happy family. However, Gen Z would rather try something new when seeing many of their predecessors fail to obtain these. The ideal of working hard and getting promoted at work does not seem to belong to the mindset of Gen Z, which accounts for the cases of (21) _____ or the lack of loyalty to the company reported on social media. However, according to the guest, there exist certain (22) _____ in common recruitment practices that disregard the interpersonal skills as well as (23) _____ essential for workplace achievement. This causes a significant proportion of Gen Z newcomers to fail to thrive in sales roles within their first year due to the lack of competitiveness and (24) _____ required of a salesperson. The guest concludes that it is impossible to implement uniform strategies to motivate Gen Z employees, so the first thing to do is to (25) _____ them and find ways to make them feel like part of the company.

Your answers:

| | |
|-----|-----|
| 16. | 17. |
| 18. | 19. |
| 20. | 21. |
| 22. | 23. |
| 24. | 25. |

II. READING (8.0 points)

II.1. LANGUAGE IN USE (3.0 points)

Part 1. For questions 26 – 35, read the passage below and decide which answer (A, B, C, or D) best fits each space. Write the letter A, B, C, or D in the numbered boxes provided.

Throwaway lifestyle took off in the second half of the 20th century. Disposable coffee cups, plastic stirrers, and plates (26) _____ in the bin 'improved' our lives. Global plastic production soared from 1.5 million tonnes in 1950 to nearly 200 million tonnes in 2002. Today, it has reached the 300 million tonne (27) _____. Reports of ocean garbage patches suggest that much of that plastic eventually (28) _____ in our seas. Take a boat out far enough and you will witness bottles, toy figurines, roller balls from underarm (29) _____, and thousands of plastic sandals all floating around in the sea. A project called *The Ocean Cleanup* has been testing floating platforms for collecting bigger bits of plastic, but they cannot deal with microplastics – the technical term for tiny pieces of plastic. They are so (30) _____ shredded by ocean currents that they are impossible to spot from a boat and are easily mistaken for food by sea creatures.

A recent study by Marcus Eriksen, one of the co-founders of 5 Gyres, the organisation that studies plastic pollution in the seas, reports that at least five trillion pieces of plastic, altogether (31) _____ at over 268,000 tonnes, are floating around near the surface of the sea. An incredible 92% of the pieces are microplastics. According to Eriksen, we will have to live with what is already out there. "It is going to sink, it is going to get buried, it is going to (32) _____," he says. "There is no efficient means to clean up 5 km down on the ocean floor." No one really knows (33) _____ damage all that stranded microplastic is doing, but the hope is that once it has mixed up with the sediment, it is (34) _____. Yet the clouds of microplastics (35) _____ in the water column pose a problem. The debris is easy for marine life to swallow, but the gunk that the plastics collect – such as pollutants and bacteria – is also a threat.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 26. A. having tossed | B. which could toss | C. can be tossed | D. that could be tossed |
| 27. A. mark | B. sign | C. limit | D. milestone |
| 28. A. end up | B. ends up | C. must end up | D. should be ended up |
| 29. A. antioxidants | B. antiperspirants | C. depressants | D. decongestants |
| 30. A. leanly | B. slightly | C. sparsely | D. finely |
| 31. A. weighing in | B. weighing up | C. weighing out | D. weighing down |
| 32. A. accentuate | B. fossilise | C. solidify | D. stagnate |
| 33. A. whose | B. that | C. what | D. how |
| 34. A. doing more of it | B. making more of it | C. doing less of it | D. making fewer of it |
| 35. A. twirling | B. twisting | C. swivelling | D. swirling |

Your answers:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 26. | 27. | 28. | 29. | 30. | 31. | 32. | 33. | 34. | 35. |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Part 2. For questions 36 – 40, read the passage, then fill in each of the numbered spaces with the correct form of the words given in the box. Write your answers in the numbered boxes provided. There are FOUR words that you do not need to use. The first one, (0), has been done as an example.

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|------------|-----------|----------|
| EDGE | SHARP | ENGAGE | STIMULATE | REMARK |
| DELIGHT | INTEND | DELIBERATE | CONNECT | SEPARATE |

Gifted students often display (0) _____ cognitive abilities, problem-solving skills, and creativity long before their peers. Yet, these attributes can become a (36) _____ sword in the classroom, where the pace and difficulty of standard curricula fail to engage them. Left unchallenged, gifted students may (37) _____ entirely, resorting to disruptive behaviour or, worse, developing a disinterest in academic work altogether. This is why many parents and educators argue that specialised programmes, offering intellectual (38) _____ and a platform for growth, are crucial for these students to truly thrive.

However, critics warn of the risks posed by isolating gifted students in exclusive programmes. While these students might find a sanctuary for their intellectual pursuits, they could also face the (39) _____ consequence of social alienation. Gifted students may struggle to find peers who share their interests, leading to feelings of isolation or emotional (40) _____. Some believe that keeping them within mainstream classrooms, where they can interact with a broader range of students, not only encourages social integration but also nurtures their emotional intelligence alongside academic skills.

Your answers:

| | | |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| 0. remarkable | 36. | 37. |
| 38. | 39. | 40. |

Part 3. The passage below contains FIVE grammatical mistakes. For questions 41 – 45, UNDERLINE the mistakes and WRITE THEIR CORRECT FORMS in the numbered boxes provided. The first one has been done as an example.

Metaphysics and mathematics has crossed paths many times in history, and at various angles and energies – often, but not exclusive, to their mutual benefit. In ancient civilisations, both arts were remote to commoners, and were often practised together in sacred temples. But today their spheres have become separate, one dedicated to persuading human subjects, another to revealing truths.

The Babylonians were among the first to learn the instrumental value of mathematics. They used it to calculate the quantities of bricks required to construct edifices, and to predict the seasons and other astronomical occurrence. But because they regarded the celestial bodies as divine, mathematics came to be regarded also as an instrument of worship. Likewise, the Egyptian employed geometrical methods to construct the pyramids, and to align them with the sacred heavens. Reciprocally, the gods could use mathematics to communicate with believers, confound them to set their minds properly, or so thought Plato in interpreting the oracle’s demand that the Delians double the volume of his altar, a task beyond Greek mathematicians.

Your answers:

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| E.g. <i>have</i> | 41. | 42. | 43. | 44. | 45. |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

II.2. READING COMPREHENSION (5.0 points)

Part 1. For questions 46 – 55, read the following passage and fill in each of the numbered spaces with ONE suitable word. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

Smiles make us smile. They are (46) _____: a smile can be passed from one person to another. We are certain we understand what a smile means. It’s an (47) _____ of happiness or pleasure, easy to spot and easy to understand, and it charms us. People seem at their (48) _____ natural and spontaneous when they smile – we all know what a forced smile looks like. We smile automatically when someone points a camera at us; it’s a social and cultural reflex, and what we (49) _____ of a picture portrait. Yet the smile, like everything else, has a history. If you walk around any art gallery and look at the portraits, you’ll find very (50) _____ genuine smiles. The same is true of early photograph portraits. They were, it seems, unfashionable for a long period in the history of portraiture.

Physically, a smile (51) _____ is not complex – it comes when we contract the *zygomatic major*, a muscle in the face – but the meaning of smiles changes with the mood of the times, and can even be different for men and women in the (52) _____ culture. Still walking around the gallery, you will find more smirks than smiles. One reason for this may be that with a smile, what you see is what you get, a frozen moment of happy unselfconsciousness, and (53) _____ a smirk allows for several interpretations – condescension, flirtatiousness, boredom, and so on – in other words, it is more (54) _____ and forces a longer and deeper engagement with the painting from the (55) _____.

Your answers:

| | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 46. | 47. | 48. | 49. | 50. |
| 51. | 52. | 53. | 54. | 55. |

Part 2. Read the following passage and do the tasks that follow.

THE REINVENTION OF A BRAND

Almost everyone knows what Lego is and has probably played with it at some point in their lives. Since the company’s foundation in 1932, millions have been delighted by the interlocking bricks that can unleash the creative ideas lurking inside us, adults and children alike. Part of the attraction is in the attention to detail, which of course the customer is largely unaware of. The Danish creator, Ole Kirk Christiansen, was meticulous about ‘doing things right’, which is one of the reasons why this popular toy has stood the test of time.

However, this hasn’t always been the case. Despite its huge success during the 1970s and 1980s, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, the company’s fortunes were looking decidedly precarious. It was in debt to the tune of \$800 million, and sales were in fast decline. What had seemed inconceivable throughout the company’s history, a total and utter collapse was beginning to look like reality. What led to this unfortunate state was a series of bad decisions based on advice given by external business consultants. At this time, product diversity and business expansion were very much in fashion in all sorts of different industries and so The Lego Group had started to move into various sectors that lay well outside its expertise. It had created theme parks, and clothes and jewellery for girls, none of which were creating significant revenues so it was clearly time to get back to basics and rethink their product strategy.

In order to do this, the newly appointed CEO set about rebuilding the organisation. Business operations were streamlined, and many things were scaled back such as staff and the product ranges. In addition, the company sold all the extras that were not a core part of the business, which meant that it was able to return to its roots. This renewed focus chimed well with the company’s motto, created by the founder, Christiansen, and which is carved into a plaque at the Lego Museum in Billund in Denmark: ‘Only the best is good enough’. This idea of focusing on strengths and not expanding into unknown areas is a key feature of the thinking in Danish business culture, and the mentality of

The Lego Group is that the company is about engineering good-quality products for play, and they should not stray from this focus.

By returning to the original ethos, the company was able to put emphasis on renewed energy in the brand and become financially stable. Over a decade later the results were clear to see, and they were extremely positive. In 2017 the company was voted the number one toy brand in many countries. It reported sales of over £600 million that year, and the turnaround was seen as amazing, one of the most impressive success stories in commercial history. The change in the company's fortunes has been analysed extensively by business experts fascinated by such a momentous financial turnaround ever since. Countless books have been written about it and many other large brands have analysed The Lego Group's approach to see how it can help their businesses. One of the fundamental approaches taken by the Danish company is based on forging partnerships that allow collaboration on innovative projects while at the same time remaining true to their principles of doing what they do best.

In recent years The Lego Group has worked with quite a diverse set of companies in order to innovate, and an example of this is the collaboration with Lucasfilm, the production company behind the Star Wars films. In 1999 the Lego Star Wars franchise was launched at a toy fair in New York and it became instantly popular. The partnership worked well for both companies and paved the way for further innovative Lego Group partnerships. One of the most successful of these was with NASA, the American space agency. The two organisations participated in a robotics competition during the 1990s, which was a big hit among the participants and the organisations' relationship has remained strong ever since. This is partly because The Lego Group is deeply interested in how children play and learn, and also because NASA has a long history of being involved in educational projects for young people. Both want to encourage children to develop an interest in science and engineering through fun.

A team from The Lego Group travels extensively and engages with children and parents to develop a better understanding of what kinds of toys children like and dislike. By observing children interacting with toys and each other, the company can target its products more effectively, which is how the team learned more about marketing to girls, a sector that had previously eluded them. The Lego Group has never targeted its products on just one gender. However, historically, its popularity has been overwhelmingly enjoyed by boys. They love the mini figures of people and don't much care how realistic they are. Girls, on the other hand, need to be able to identify with model people. Apparently, this does not happen with the traditional figures, which is why, after several years of market research, a set of figures aimed at girls was developed.

The company became extremely successful and sales skyrocketed in a short space of time. This attention to detail shows how serious The Lego Group is about understanding play. In fact, the company thinks that it is important enough to have set up a sister company to study child development as well as partnering with the children's charity UNICEF and financing the first Professor of Play at Cambridge University in the UK. Focusing on what customers like and want has proven to be useful in a variety of ways. In what could be called one of the first attempts at crowd sourcing, The Lego Group got its fans and customers to vote on designs and even suggest ideas for new products. Ideas that went on to be commissioned earned 1% of sales for the people that had suggested them – a great way to build customer engagement.

Innovation has been key to maintaining customers' interest, too, as can be seen in the Lego movies and the adult architecture range, and also in the new kids' social media platform, which allows children too young to partake in other social networking platforms to share their designs safely online. These extensions into cinema, adult play and technology seem to represent the final pieces of a huge jigsaw puzzle for a complete learning and creativity system by one company.

For questions 56 – 61, decide whether each of the following statements is True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG). Write T, F, or NG in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

- 56. The company's meticulously designed toys are in customers' favour, which explains why its products enjoy lasting popularity.
- 57. The company's failure at the beginning of the 21st century stemmed from its attempt to keep up with the contemporary business trend.
- 58. When creating the company's motto, The Lego Group founder, Christiansen, was inspired by the Danish business mindset.
- 59. The amazing financial turnaround of the company has benefited many other large brands, serving as a typical case of analysis for commercial success.
- 60. Both The Lego Group and NASA have a long history of being engaged in educational activities for children.
- 61. Part of the market's preference for Lego figures that are miniatures of real people has prompted the company to develop an unconventional Lego set.

Your answers:

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|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 56. | 57. | 58. | 59. | 60. | 61. |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|

For questions 62 – 69, read the summary and fill in each space with NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS taken from the passage. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

Founded in 1932, The Lego Group, has made a name for itself with its toys of (62) _____ which have aroused creativity of customers of all ages. Having come to grief due to being ill-advised by external consultants, the company started to recover by going back to its (63) _____ of focusing on what it does best rather than investing in (64) _____. In recent years, The Lego Group has developed its products through (65) _____ – the results of the extensive collaboration between the company and a range of corporates. Furthermore, extensive market research allows the company not only to gain a further insight into what its customers (66) _____ but also to learn how to target the products at girls, despite the enormous (67) _____ it has already gained among boys. In its initiative of (68) _____, the company also calls for new ideas from fans and customers and offers incentives to the chosen ones. Also, customers who are too young can now securely (69) _____ via a platform exclusively set up for them by the company.

Your answers:

| | |
|-----|-----|
| 62. | 63. |
| 64. | 65. |
| 66. | 67. |
| 68. | 69. |

Part 3. In the passage below, six paragraphs have been removed. For questions 70 – 75, read the passage and choose from paragraphs A – G the one which fits each gap. There is ONE extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Write the letters A – G in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

LIVING WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Powerful artificial intelligence (AI) needs to be reliably aligned with human values, but does this mean AI will eventually have to police those values?

This has been the decade of AI, with one astonishing feat after another. A chess-playing AI that can defeat not only all human chess players, but also all previous human-programmed chess machines, after learning the game in just four hours? That's yesterday's news, what's next?

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If so, there's little reason to think it will stop there. Machines will be free of many of the physical constraints on human intelligence. Our brains run at slow biochemical processing speeds on the power of a light bulb, and their size is restricted by the dimensions of the human birth canal. It is remarkable what they accomplish, given these handicaps. But they may be as far from the physical limits of thought as our eyes are from the incredibly powerful Webb Space Telescope.

71

But the more powerful AI becomes, the more important it will be to specify its goals with great care. Folklore is full of tales of people who ask for the wrong thing, with disastrous consequences – King Midas, for example, might have wished that everything he touched turned to gold, but didn't really intend this to apply to his breakfast. So, we need to create powerful AI machines that are 'human-friendly' – that have goals reliably aligned with our own values. One thing that makes this task difficult is that we are far from reliably human-friendly ourselves. We do many terrible things to each other and to many other creatures with whom we share the planet. If superintelligent machines don't do a lot better than us, we'll be in deep trouble. We'll have powerful new intelligence amplifying the dark sides of our own fallible natures.

72

However, there are two big problems with this utopian vision. One is how we get the machines started on the journey, the other is what it would mean to reach this destination. The 'getting started' problem is that we need to tell the machines what they're looking for with sufficient clarity that we can be confident they will find it – whatever 'it' actually turns out to be.

73

As for the 'destination' problem, we might, by putting ourselves in the hands of these moral guides and gatekeepers, be sacrificing our own autonomy – an important part of what makes us human. Machines who are better than us at sticking to the moral high ground may be expected to discourage some of the lapses we presently take for granted. We might lose our freedom to discriminate in favour of our own communities, for example.

74

These issues might seem far-fetched, but they are to some extent already here. AI already has some input into how resources are used in our National Health Service (NHS) here in the UK, for example. If it was given a greater role, it might do so much more efficiently than humans can manage, and act in the interests of taxpayers and those who use the health system. However, we'd be depriving some humans (e.g. senior doctors) of the control they presently enjoy. Since we'd want to ensure that people are treated equally and that policies are fair, the goals of AI would need to be specified correctly.

Both general intelligence and moral reasoning are often thought to be uniquely human capacities. However, safety seems to require that we think of them as a package: if we are to give general intelligence to machines, we'll need to give them moral authority, too. And where exactly would that leave human beings? All the more reason to think about the destination now, and to be careful about what we wish for.

Missing paragraphs:

- A. Loss of freedom to behave badly isn't always a bad thing, of course: denying ourselves the freedom to put children to work in factories, or to smoke in restaurants are signs of progress. But are we ready for ethical silicon police limiting our options? They might be so good at doing it that we won't notice them; but few of us are likely to welcome such a future.
- B. For safety's sake, then, we want the machines to be ethically as well as cognitively superhuman. We want them to aim for the moral high ground, not for the troughs in which many of us spend some of our time. Luckily they'll be smart enough for the job. If there are routes to the moral high ground, they'll be better than us at finding them, and steering us in the right direction.
- C. Once machines are better than us at designing even smarter machines, progress towards these limits could accelerate. What would this mean for us? Could we ensure a safe and worthwhile coexistence with such machines? On the plus side, AI is already useful and profitable for many things, and super AI might be expected to be super useful and super profitable.
- D. We are creating a world where information takes forms and moves with speeds unimaginable just a few decades ago. Every gain in technology demands minds capable of accommodating the change, and the changed mind reshapes the world even more.
- E. We have a new powerful technology to deal with – itself, literally, a new way of thinking. For our own safety, we need to point these new thinkers in the right direction, and get them to act well for us. It is not yet clear whether this is possible, but if it is, it will require a cooperative spirit, and a willingness to set aside self-interest.
- F. True, these prodigious accomplishments are all in so-called narrow AI, where machines perform highly specialised tasks. But many experts believe this restriction is very temporary. By mid-century, we may have artificial general intelligence (AGI) – machines that can achieve human-level performance on the full range of tasks that we ourselves can tackle.
- G. This won't be easy, given that we are tribal creatures and conflicted about the ideals ourselves. We often ignore the suffering of strangers, and even contribute to it, at least indirectly. How then, do we point machines in the direction of something better?

Your answers:

| | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 70. | 71. | 72. | 73. | 74. | 75. |
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Part 4. For questions 76 – 85, read the following passage and write A, B, C, or D in the corresponding numbered boxes provided to indicate the correct answer which fits best according to what is stated or implied in the text.

1. It is widely acknowledged that grammar has played a central role in language teaching. Syllabus design and a wide diversity of approaches to language teaching have relied on this assumption, namely, the fundamental role of grammar in second- or foreign-language learning. In spite of the tremendous impact that recent communicative approaches have had on the way we should tackle language in general, there seems to be a deeply ingrained belief that grammar is, or should be, the teacher's and learner's main concern and goal. A lot of second- or foreign-language learners the world over have definitely been exposed to this philosophy of teaching and, notwithstanding the degree of linguistic competence that most of them have attained, it is only when they come in contact with other speakers that **the unvarnished truth** dawns on them: linguistic competence is only a vehicle for mastering a language.
2. So, what does it mean to "know and speak a language"? There are several factors that we have to take into consideration in answering this question. Let us consider three main variables that are of consequence and vital importance: *grammatical competence*, *communicative competence*, and *language proficiency*. **[A]** The main exponent of grammatical competence is the eminent linguist Noam Chomsky, who believed that knowing a language is tantamount to knowing "one's grammar," i.e., the ability to form and comprehend "grammatically correct" sentences. In other words, grammatical competence has to do with grammatical rules stipulating the correct usage, formulation, and construction of words and phrases; with grammatical categories, such as subject, complement, and so on; in short, with the ability to create *propositions*. For instance, when one says ***The table is black***, we have an example of a proposition, since this sentence consists of a subject, a verb, and a complement. It is a complete sentence conveying a complete meaning about a particular state of affairs, in juxtaposition with the sentence *The table is*, which is incomplete, or ***The table are black***, which is ungrammatical. A teacher adhering to a strict grammar-oriented approach to language teaching is likely to devote a lot of time to teaching grammatical rules, *describing* language in terms of tenses, syntax, semantics, and lexis, and *prescribing* the correct usage, although everyday life and experience have given the lie to the efficacy of this approach.

Furthermore, grammar-oriented approaches have even led to significant misunderstandings and “misnomers,” as in the case of assigning the term *tense* to progressive or perfect *aspect*.

3. **The punctilious teacher**, as I usually say, who sticks to the plan and complies with grammar and clear-cut rules, seems to overlook the circumstances under which the target-language is spoken – for instance, the reasons for applying a communicative strategy instead of another. [B] Knowing, for example, that *What I want is a cigarette* is a correct English sentence, or *to give him the cold shoulder* means “to shun him,” is not what communication and “knowing a language” are all about. Different situations require different *styles*. We use formal language when talking to our employers; we tend to be informal when addressing our parents or friends; we talk to children more slowly, trying to make our speech comprehensible enough for them. The innumerable sentences that may be permissible in the grammatical system of a language may not be potential *utterances* when it comes to communication. *A cigarette is what I want* may be a grammatically correct sentence, but it is highly unlikely that there will ever be any circumstances under which this sentence will be relegated to the status of an utterance.
 4. Obviously, communicative competence is related to the *how, when, and why* of language use. It is the ability to adjust our language behaviour to the various circumstances and social situations that we normally face in the course of our lives. [C] Knowing a language means knowing the communicative and social strategies appropriate in every single circumstance of interaction; knowing when and how to make requests, apologies, invitations, and so forth; when and how to broach or avoid a topic (topic-avoidance strategies); most importantly, knowing when and how to *interpret* all these speech acts, in order to avoid misunderstandings. For instance, a second- or foreign-language student should know that utterances such as ***Can you pass the salt?*** or ***It's cold in here*** are not mere questions and statements, respectively. The former is not to be interpreted as a question referring to the hearer's ability to perform the act described, but as an indirect *directive* requesting the performance of the act, whereas the latter is not to be thought of as an utterance describing a certain state of affairs, but one that should almost always be regarded as a *hint*, thus implicitly requesting the addressee to, say, close the window or to fetch a blanket.
 5. [D] The degree to which a learner has acquired grammatical and communicative or sociolinguistic competence and the skill with which he/she taps into this knowledge for real-life purposes refers to our third variable: *language proficiency* – a term that encompasses the previous two. Language proficiency extends to cover every single aspect of *language awareness* and all that this entails; it has less to do with competence than with *performance*. When we say that a second- or foreign-language learner is proficient, we mean that he/she is, more or less, *fluent* in the target language. However, fluency may be adversely affected by such factors as fatigue, apprehension, disease, and others. At any rate, language proficiency is the end-product of language learning; this is what everybody aims at and assessment is predicated upon. This discrepancy, though, between grammar-oriented approaches to language teaching and the kind of language proficiency which we have dilated upon and undoubtedly forms the core of language testing is somewhat unwieldy and inexplicable.
 6. How can we go about focusing on grammar when our chief concern is to help students become competent speakers who will be able to hold their own in every situation? How can we limit ourselves to teaching tenses and constructions, doing nothing to help our students cope with language in its social context? Herein lies the role of literature in language teaching as a means of giving insights into the culture of the target language. Stripping language of its cultural distinctiveness may lead to unprecedented errors and misunderstandings making inroads into communication. What we could glean from this brief discussion is the fact that grammar does not constitute a valid approach to the development of language proficiency. Grammar should always be sensitive and amenable to all those culture-specific assumptions underpinning language and communication, and it is not necessarily conducive to language proficiency.
76. The phrase **the unvarnished truth** suggests that second- or foreign-language learners _____.
- A. discover the limitations of acquiring linguistic competence alone
 - B. feel substantially more confident in their grammatical knowledge
 - C. realise learning grammar alone is unnecessary for communication
 - D. understand linguistic competence is more important than they thought
77. The author implies that Noam Chomsky's belief is _____.
- A. not popular
 - B. not comprehensive
 - C. well-grounded
 - D. long-held
78. Why does the author mention ***The table is black*** and ***The table are black*** in paragraph 2?
- A. To highlight the role of semantics over grammar
 - B. To argue that grammar rules sometimes confuse learners
 - C. To illustrate how grammar rules are essential for learning a language
 - D. To demonstrate that grammatical competence focuses on correctness
79. The author mentions **The punctilious teacher** to _____.
- A. emphasise the importance of adhering to grammatical rules
 - B. highlight how teachers adapt their lessons to individual learners
 - C. support traditional teaching methods focusing on grammatical accuracy
 - D. criticise teachers who prioritise grammar rules over their real-life application

80. What can be inferred from paragraph 3?
- Language learners must prioritise formal language styles.
 - Informal speech is more effective in most real-life situations.
 - Social appropriateness is as crucial as grammatical accuracy.
 - Communication success primarily depends on grammatical precision.
81. Why does the author mention ***Can you pass the salt?*** and ***It's cold in here*** in paragraph 4?
- To argue against the necessity of learning polite requests
 - To highlight the importance of understanding indirect speech acts
 - To illustrate how grammatical competence prevents misunderstandings
 - To show how sociolinguistic knowledge develops through grammar rules
82. What can be inferred from the author's discussion of language proficiency?
- Fluency plays a decisive role in guaranteeing successful communication.
 - Language proficiency focuses more on written accuracy than spoken fluency.
 - Grammatical competence proves much more important than communicative competence.
 - Language proficiency is a balance between grammatical knowledge and communication skills.
83. Separating language from its cultural uniqueness is likely to _____.
- cause communication errors and misinterpretations to take place
 - make language learning more accessible for non-native speakers
 - enhance communication efficiency by removing misunderstandings
 - sacrifice the universal nature of language structures for the sake of diversity
84. With which of the following does the author mostly agree?
- Acquiring grammar rules is at the heart of achieving language proficiency.
 - Mastering grammar rules can facilitate learners' comprehension of literary works.
 - Strict adherence to grammar rules may disregard the practical aspects of communication.
 - Intensive learning of grammar rules is of no consequence to achieving language proficiency.
85. Which of the following square brackets [A], [B], [C], or [D] best indicates where in the passage the sentence "***A significant component of communicative competence is what has been called sociolinguistic or pragmatic competence.***" can be inserted?
- A. [A] B. [B] C. [C] D. [D]

Your answers:

| | | | | | | | | | |
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| 76. | 77. | 78. | 79. | 80. | 81. | 82. | 83. | 84. | 85. |
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Part 5. For questions 86 – 95, read the following passage and choose from the sections (A – E). The sections may be selected more than once. Write the letter A, B, C, D, or E in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF WATER SCARCITY

- A.** Despite 70% of the world's surface being covered with water, less than 3% of that is actually drinkable and, based on factors ranging from agricultural practices to climate change and daily habits, water scarcity is fast becoming a serious problem in many countries around the globe. The problem of scarcity – in other words, having insufficient water – is categorised as being physical (happening in places where supply cannot meet demand) or economic (occurring in areas that have plenty of water but don't have good management systems). Broadly speaking, the causes of water scarcity are related to the rapid rise of the global population and the associated issues that this has brought, and the predictions in many parts of the world are that the population will continue to rise for several decades. This suggests that rather than lamenting the journey to this point, we would be better off focusing on solutions, especially given that the causes have been written about extensively and are very well understood, which is not the case for the solutions.
- B.** Solutions for water scarcity should primarily be context-specific if they are to work, and must include experts, organisations and charities that can provide insight into the particular challenges. For example, there is no point in poorer nations engaging expert engineers from overseas to help with the infrastructure for water management systems if the resulting system is not affordable or able to withstand the climatic conditions of the region. Too often collaborations on projects like this turn into vanity projects for the foreign companies in much the same way as high-end commercial projects, such as the building of a luxury hotel or impressive bridge. Workable solutions will need to understand the influences of geology, the environment and the influences of local culture to be successful and will likely be a combination of technology and a change in human behaviour. One immediate approach is to provide incentives for people to upgrade more old-fashioned machines to water-efficient ones, such as toilets and showers that use considerably less water. Another is to adjust the cost based on consumption by installing water meters in homes, something that has not been widely reported in the press. It appears that there is little incentive for governments to encourage uptake among households as any change would negatively affect voters on low incomes and families.

- C. A better alternative to punishing such bad consumer behaviour is for governments to invest in educating their populations. For example, many are unaware of the amount of water used to produce the food we consume. The meat industry is a case in point in which vast quantities of water are required, yet the general public is largely ignorant of this. Education on water conservation methods should come from a commitment to ensuring people have the relevant scientific evidence presented to them, otherwise they will be unable to make informed decisions. There is already enough fake science floating around on the internet and it is important not to add to it.
- D. An additional approach that is well worth thinking about is tackling the problem through multiple small lifestyles changes rather than national or international projects. After all, the situation affects millions of people, so anything that ordinary people can do without disrupting their lives too much would be a bonus. Research from behavioural science has shown that when people have to opt into a system, the likelihood of their doing so is reduced because of the increased effort involved. Rainwater collection for uses such as cleaning and washing clothes is an example of a small change. It is both low-cost and easily implementable since local councils could supply households with containers, allowing them to begin water conservation immediately.
- E. We must also remember that better management of the environment plays a large part in maintaining the water supplies on the planet. There are certain ecosystems, such as forests, marshes and wetlands, that naturally process, collect and filter water, and preserving these natural systems is essential. Unfortunately, the practices of many commercial industries are at odds with conservation strategies for these ecosystems and so continue to be widespread. Making laws to protect these natural systems is another cost-effective way to change both attitudes and behaviour to water, and it's high time that governments stepped up and took control of the situation if we are to succeed in protecting our most precious resource.

In which section are the following mentioned?

- 86. Political factors have a role to play.
- 87. There is a lack of relevant literature.
- 88. Interdisciplinary insights are needed.
- 89. Digital literacy proves to be important.
- 90. A subtle link exists that few recognise.
- 91. An ongoing conflict needs to be resolved.
- 92. Analogies are made among joint programmes.
- 93. Solutions that don't cost the earth are preferred.
- 94. National leaders are expected to play their parts.
- 95. Individuals are reluctant to take action in collective efforts.

Your answers:

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|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 86. | 87. | 88. | 89. | 90. | 91. | 92. | 93. | 94. | 95. |
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III. WRITING (5.0 points)

Part 1. Read the following extract and use your own words to summarise it. Your summary should be between 120 and 150 words.

Einstein supposedly said that if the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, man would only have four years to live. This may be an exaggeration, and he also probably did not actually say it, but it is true that if the bees disappear, they will take much of our ecosystem with them. Indeed, it is a serious issue that, last winter 33% of all the honeybee colonies in the US died, which is double the acceptable natural amount, and entomologists are warning that we are getting dangerously close to the point where we do not have enough bees to meet our country's pollination demands.

Honeybees actually pollinate 80% of all the flowering crops in the US which works out to be a third of everything we eat. Bees pollinate 90% of our apples, our cherries, our tangerines. They are responsible for all of our almonds. They pollinate 50% of our soy beans. In the long term, it could begin to affect the beef and dairy industries because bees are responsible for 60% of our alfalfa, and that could make us run dangerously low on feed for cattle.

We have been tracking the bee colony collapse for a few years now, and we have not really been able to figure out why it is happening. The EU have voted to ban three different pesticides called neonicotinoids, which are supposedly causing bees to die, but those pesticides came into play in 1990, and the colony collapse technically started in the 80s.

Bees are often transported long distances to pollinate crops in other areas, and there is a theory that it causes stress on their immune systems and exposes them to pathogens that are not normally in their environment, making their colonies collapse, but the ones that are not moved are also collapsing. Then, this does not entirely hold up, and a recently released study suggests that a major problem is when honey is harvested from a bee colony, their food supply is usually replaced with corn syrup. The fact is when bees make honey from local plants, there are chemicals and enzymes in those plants that help the bee immune system protect them from the environment. However, although corn syrup obviously does not have those enzymes, not all beekeepers feed their bee colonies corn syrup.

Then, what is doing this? A report has suggested that all these terrible things are working together to destroy the bee colony. Entomologists are saying that this is systemic, and we need to take multiple actions to either ban or limit pesticides, keep bees in their home environments, and keep their food supply healthy. This must be done fast because this March the California almond crop almost did not happen because there were barely enough bees, which is a warning sign that this problem is about to hit critical mass: the bees are dying, the fields will be low, and we will be fighting each other for tangerines!

Part 2. Write an essay of at least 300 words on the following topic.

One's true happiness should derive from their own achievements that benefit others.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Provide specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

A series of horizontal dotted lines spanning the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting or writing.

(You may write overleaf if you need more space.)

Great appreciation to authors of published works of which adaptations have been made in this test paper!

- THE END -