

ADMITERE ÎN LICEU 2008

TESTARE LA LIMBA ENGLEZĂ PROBA ORALĂ

EXAM CARD 1

Read the following text and answer the questions:

The jumper I had been given for my birthday was too small for me, and one day while showing some friends around London, I thought it would be sensible to dash into the large department store where it had been bought and exchange it for a larger one. I told my friends to wait in the car and rushed into the store. The girl I spoke to at the counter was extremely helpful but unfortunately they had no others in my size, so I left with the original gift after putting it and the receipt for it back in my bag.

I dashed out of the store to rejoin my friends, who were still waiting in the car.

“Excuse me. Stop right there! You’d better come with us.”

Suddenly, my arms were grabbed viciously by a stern, bearded man and a surprisingly similar woman. They refused to tell me who they were or what I was accused of. I demanded to know what I had done wrong, but this was met with silence as they marched me through a side entrance to the store and to a small room upstairs.

1. Did the character enter the shop slowly or quickly?
2. Did the character exchange the gift?
3. Do you generally like the gifts you receive?
4. What things do you take into consideration when buying gifts?

EXAM CARD 2

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Aaron Spelling is said to be the richest and most successful television producer in Hollywood and, in a city famous for its wealth, his wife, Candy, is the biggest spender. They recently paid more than \$10 million for the huge house Bing Crosby used to live in. Then they had it torn down so that an even bigger, more wonderful mansion could be built. This will have a more luxurious swimming-pool, an indoor ice-skating rink and a private zoo, as well. The final bill will come to at least \$25 million. They say that a few years ago, on a typically warm Californian Christmas Eve, Candy had a huge amount of real snow delivered to the Spelling mansion and spread all over the green lawns so that their children could enjoy ‘a white Christmas’.

1. Who is Aaron Spelling?
2. What will the new mansion include?
3. What does your dream house look like?
4. Where would you like to live if you had the chance to choose?

EXAM CARD 3

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Martin and Rebecca Granger used to teach in a tough secondary school in London. Two years ago, they moved to a small cottage in Cornwall, in the extreme south-west of England. 'We got tired of trying to make kids learn things they had no interest in', Martin says. Martin's mother had died, leaving the cottage to them. 'It was in a terrible state when we came. There were leaks in the roof. There wasn't even an indoor toilet. 'Rebecca and I have rebuilt the place with our own hands'. They both say what they value most is their freedom from the rat race and the pressures of life in a big city. Only one thing really bothers them, and that is the invasion of tourists every summer.

1. Why did Martin and Rebecca move to a small cottage in Cornwall?
2. Is there anything that they don't like about Cornwall?
3. What are the advantages of living in the city?
4. Which one do you prefer: a house or a flat?

EXAM CARD 4

Read the following text and answer the questions:

How soon will it be before robots become so intelligent that they will be able to do jobs which at the moment only human beings can do, such as teaching languages or looking after patients in hospital? Some experts believe this will happen within twenty years while others disagree. One London company, UAS (Universal Automated Systems) has already developed machines that can be used as 'home-helps' for old people unable to look after themselves and who are living on their own or in special homes. These machines can now do such things as cook eggs and clean the floor, and the company says that future models will accept simple voice instructions and be controlled by a 'brain' that is the equivalent of the latest IBM microcomputer.

1. What has UAS already developed?
2. What can these machines do?
3. Do you think that robots are intelligent?
4. What is the future of robots?

EXAM CARD 5

Read the following text and answer the questions :

How soon will it be before robots become so intelligent that they will be able to do jobs which at the moment only human beings can do, such as teaching languages or looking after patients in hospital? Some experts believe this will happen within twenty years while others disagree.

The director of UAS, Mr. Henry Jeffries, believes that in the next five to ten years companies will have developed even more sophisticated robots for use in industry. By this time, it is likely that they will also have begun to sell new forms of these machines into ordinary homes. Robots could do a wide range of household tasks, such as preparing meals, washing dishes, cleaning the house and so on. By then, the price of such machines may have come down to as little as \$1,000.

- 1.What do experts believe?
- 2.Will such machines be expensive?
- 3.Will robots be capable of showing feelings?
- 4.Will the world be ruled by robots?

EXAM CARD 6

Read the following text and answer the questions :

England shows many different faces: pulsing city life and lonely landscapes, old-fashioned customs and avant-garde culture, lovely beaches and rough mountains. For cultural sightseeing as for nightlife, London is the place that features on everyone's itinerary. It is not only Europe's biggest city (with a population of over seven million) and capital of the United Kingdom, but also the place where the country's news, politics and money are made. Within the southeast of England, along the coastline, Canterbury offers contrasting diversions. This is the richest part of the country due to its agricultural wealth and proximity to the capital. The southwest of England is another spot worth discovering. Salisbury is dominated by the elegant spire of its cathedral.

- 1.Describe London according to the text.
- 2.What other regions are worth visiting in England?
- 3.Would you like to visit London? Why?
- 4.Do you like travelling?

EXAM CARD 7

Read the following text and answer the question:

On Christmas the English enjoy beautiful Christmas music. They love to decorate Christmas trees and hang up evergreen branches. The English gift giver is called Father Christmas. He wears a long red or green robe, and leaves presents in stockings on Christmas Eve. However, the gifts are not usually opened until the following afternoon. In England the day after Christmas is called Boxing Day because boys used to go round collecting money in clay boxes. When the boxes were full, they broke them open. The traditional Christmas dinner is roast turkey with vegetables and sauces. For dessert it is rich, fruity Christmas pudding with brandy sauce, mince pies, pastry cakes filled with a mixture of chopped dried fruit.

- 1.When are gifts opened?
- 2.What does the traditional Christmas dinner consist of?
- 3.What do people in Romania do on Christmas?
- 4.Do you have a favourite holiday?

EXAM CARD 8

Read the following text and answer the question:

The king penguin is the second largest penguin. It is sometimes confused with the larger Emperor penguin. The king penguin lives on islands far to the north of the

Antarctic continent where the Emperor penguin lives. Adults are 90 cm tall and weigh about 15-16 kg. They are found on many sub-Antarctic islands including Prince Edward, South Georgia. The parents take turns bringing food to the chick every other day. The chicks grow quickly during the warm summer weather. When winter comes the parents go back to sea to feed. In the spring the parents come back and start feeding the chick again. At this time, the chicks start to grow their adult feathers and are ready to go off on their own. Raising a King penguin chick usually takes 10 to 13 months. This allows the adults to raise only 1 chick every other year.

1. When does the chick grow quickly?
2. Do King penguins have chicks every year?
3. Do you like animals?
4. Do you have a pet? If not, would you like to?

EXAM CARD 9

Read the following text and answer the questions:

What exactly is a lie? Is it anything we say which we know is untrue? Or is it something more than that? For example, suppose a friend wants to borrow some money from you. You say, 'I wish I could help you but I'm short of money myself.' In fact, you are not short of money but your friend is in the habit of not paying his debts and you don't want to hurt his feelings by reminding him of this. Is this really a lie?

According to a specialist, women are better liars than men, particularly when telling a "white lie", such as when a woman at a party tells another woman that she likes her dress when she really thinks it looks awful. However, this is only one side of the story. Other researches say that men are more likely to tell more serious lies, such as making a promise which they have no intention of fulfilling. This is the kind of lie politicians and businessmen are supposed to be particularly skilled at: the lie from which the liar hopes to profit or gain in some way.

1. Is the friend really short of money?
2. What is a 'white lie'?
3. When do you lie?
4. Can people always tell the truth?

EXAM CARD 10

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Research has been done into the way people's behaviour changes in a number of small, apparently unimportant ways when they lie. It has been found that if they are sitting down at the time, they tend to move about in their chairs more than usual. To the trained observer, they are saying, "I wish I were somewhere else now". They also tend to touch certain parts of the face more often, in particular the nose. One explanation of this may be that lying causes a slight increase in blood pressure. The tip of the nose is very sensitive to such changes and the increased pressure makes it itch.

- 1.How do people behave when they lie?
- 2.What is one explanation of such behaviour?
- 3.What is a lie?
- 4.Under what circumstances would you lie?

EXAM CARD 11

Read the following text and answer the questions:

One day in 1963, a dolphin named Elvar and a famous astronomer, Carl Sagan, were playing a little game. The astronomer was visiting an institute which was looking into the way dolphins communicate with each other. He was standing at the edge of one of the tanks where several of these highly intelligent, friendly creatures were kept. Elvar had just swum up alongside with him and had turned on his back. He wanted Sagan to scratch his stomach again, as the astronomer had done twice before. But this time Elvar was too deep in the water for Sagan to reach him. Elvar looked up at Sagan, waiting. Then, after a minute or so, the dolphin leapt up through the water into the air and made a sound just like the word 'More!'. The astonished astronomer went to the director of the institute and told him about the incident. 'Oh, yes. That's one of the words he knows', the director said, showing no surprise at all.

- 1.What did the dolphin want Sagan to do?
- 2.What did the astronomer do after hearing a sound just like the word 'More'?
- 3.Do animals communicate?
- 4.Can we teach animals to communicate?

EXAM CARD 12

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Dolphins have bigger brains in proportion to their body size than human beings have, and it has been known for a long time that they can make a number of sounds. What is more, these sounds seem to have different functions, such as warning each other of danger. Sound travels much faster and much further in water than it does in air. That is why the parts of the brain that deal with sound are much better developed in dolphins than in humans. But can it be said that dolphins have a 'language', in the real sense of the word? Scientists don't agree on this.

- 1.What are the functions of the sounds made by dolphins?
- 2.How does sound travel?
- 3.Do you agree with the question in the text?
- 4.Do you think that dolphins are smarter than other animals?

EXAM CARD 13

Read the following text and answer the questions:

A language is not just a collection of sounds, or even words. A language has a structure, or what we call a grammar. The grammar of a language helps to give it meaning. For

example, the two questions ‘Who loves Mary?’ and ‘Who does Mary love?’ mean different things. If you stop to think about it, you will see that this difference doesn’t come from the words in the question but from the difference in structure. That is why the question ‘Can dolphins speak?’ can’t be answered until we find out if dolphins not only make sounds but also arrange them in ways which affect their meaning.

- 1.What is a language according to the text?
- 2.Where does the difference in meaning come from?
- 3.Can dolphins (or animals) speak?
- 4.Is it right for people to train animals just for entertainment?

EXAM CARD 14

Read the following text and answer the questions:

It has been a long time since I had a meal. Can you help me?, he said. There was something about his voice that sounded familiar. I gave him a few coins and he mumbled something about being grateful. As he stumbled past me, I looked at his face closely. I wondered where I had seen him before. Then it hit me. Could it possibly be...? No! Impossible, I thought. I watched him walking away. He was the same height as Rogers but looked a lot thinner than I remembered. Then, as he left the park and turned down the street, I caught sight of his face again, this time in profile. The nose was the same as Rogers’, too. I almost followed him but something made me stop. I just couldn’t be sure. But the resemblance was very close.

- 1.What sounded familiar?
- 2.Did the man look like Rogers?
- 3.Do you happen to mistake people?
- 4.How do you think this story ends?

EXAM CARD 15

Read the following text and answer the questions:

The fur trade is an issue which arouses strong feelings. On the one hand, fur farmers and sellers are fighting to be allowed to continue producing fur goods, and, on the other hand, people concerned about animal rights are trying to get the trade stopped.

The fur traders say that they do not cause unnecessary suffering to animals and that there is no difference between killing an animal for its fur and killing it for its meat. Moreover, they point out that if the trade were made illegal, hunters without licenses would cause greater suffering to animals. In addition, they claim that banning the trade would mean more unemployment and, most importantly, people would lose the freedom of choice.

- 1.Do people agree upon fur trade?
- 2.What do the fur traders say?
- 3.Do you think that people should raise animals for their fur/meat?
- 4.Do you agree with the idea of training animals to entertain people?

EXAM CARD 16

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Opponents of the fur trade take a very different view. They believe that animals do suffer unnecessarily and to prove it they have made many horrifying films. They consider that the killing of animals for their coats is luxury, while the killing of animals for meat is a necessity. These people feel that an animal has more rights to live than a human has to wear its coat. Finally, they point out that the manufacture of artificial fur could create jobs and satisfy the demands of fashion.

In conclusion, the best way to end the fur trade is to change public opinion. There are signs that the opponents of the trade are beginning to have some success. If they can maintain their progress, the trade may be stopped without having to make it illegal.

1. What do opponents of the fur trade believe?
2. Which is the best way to end the fur trade?
3. Would you join an organisation which protects animals? Why?
4. Would you become a vegetarian just to protect animals?

EXAM CARD 17

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Due to the enormous size and strength of both African and Asian elephants, it is a fact that most trainers rely on chains and fear to make them obey. Typically the process starts with an elephant being beaten into submission at a very young age. Sadly, some elephants will spend a great deal of their lives in chains. The well-known Dumbo lived 20 years in chains that ran from his tusks to his feet. In the wild, the life expectancy of elephants is generally the same as of the humans. In the circus, many elephants die prematurely from disease and the stress of confinement, for what?

1. How does the process of training elephants start?
2. Why do elephants in the circus die prematurely?
3. How would you answer the question at the end of the fragment?
4. Should people train animals for entertainment?

EXAM CARD 18

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Established in 1872, Yellowstone National Park is America's first national park. Located in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho, it is home to a large variety of wildlife including grizzly bears, wolves, bison and elk. Preserved within Yellowstone National Park are Old Faithful and a collection of the world's most extraordinary geysers and hot springs, and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. Snow is common in spring and fall. At any time of year, be prepared for sudden changes as Yellowstone's weather is very unpredictable.

- 1.What is Yellowstone home to?
- 2.What is Yellowstone's weather like?
- 3.Would you like to visit Yellowstone?
- 4.Should animals in danger be kept in natural reserves?

EXAM CARD 19

Read the following text and answer the questions:

William (Bill) Gates is chairman of Microsoft Corporation, the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that can help people and businesses realize their full potential.

In his junior year, Gates left Harvard to devote his energies to Microsoft, a company he had begun in 1975 with his childhood friend Paul Allen. Guided by a belief that the computer would be a valuable tool on every office desktop and in every home, they began developing software for personal computers. Gates' vision for personal computing has been central to the success of Microsoft and the software industry.

1. What did Gates do when he was young?
2. What was Gates' vision?
3. How much time do you spend on your computer?
4. What is the future of computers?

EXAM CARD 20

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Investment in education benefits the individual, society, and the world as a whole. Broad-based education of good quality is among the most powerful instruments known to reduce poverty and inequality. With proven benefits for personal health, it also strengthens nations' economic health by laying the foundation for sustained economic growth. For individuals and nations, it is key to creating, applying, and spreading knowledge- and thus to the development of dynamic, globally competitive economies. And it is fundamental for the construction of democratic societies.

1. What is education?
2. What is education fundamental for?
3. Is everybody entitled to education?
4. Do people ever stop learning?

EXAM CARD 21

Read the following text and answer the questions:

London has a population of 7.7 million which is very cosmopolitan with a wide range of peoples, cultures and religions, speaking over 300 different languages, mixing their culture, traditions, music, festivals and many others. London has five international airports and a large port. London is a major tourist destination and one of the world's remarkable and exciting cities, with iconic landmarks including the Houses of Parliament,

Tower Bridge, the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace and the London Eye amongst its many attractions, along with famous institutions such as the British Museum and the National Gallery. It has something to offer every type of traveller.

1. Which sights of London are mentioned in the text?
2. How is the population characterised?
3. Would you like to visit London? Why?
4. Have you ever been abroad? If not, where would you like to go?

EXAM CARD 22

Read the text and answer the questions:

Making a film is a very complicated process. Most films start as an idea. It might be in the director's mind, or in the writer's mind, but wherever it comes from, it's the producer who needs convincing. The producer is a businessman who finds the money to make the film. He decides who is going to be responsible for making the film: the director. This is an important decision, since the director is the person who will be in charge of the whole cast and crew. People feel strongly about actors and a film has to have the right ones if it is to draw people in the cinemas. Auditions and screen tests might be held to make the final decisions and rehearsals will begin. The locations are also important, so they have to be chosen carefully. The film will be storyboarded and special effects planned. Then, the actual shooting may start.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. Why do actors have to be selected carefully?
3. What do you think happens during the actual shooting?
4. What kind of films do you enjoy watching?

EXAM CARD 23

Read the text and answer the questions:

A. Many people think this is an easy job, in fact it can get very tiring and lonely. You're often away from your family for long periods of time – maybe two or three weeks, if you have to go to Germany or somewhere. That can be difficult. I love it, though. I like being on the road behind the wheel, and being able to look down on all the cars. But it's a pain when you have to unload all the boxes at the end of the journey. Still, it's all part of the job.

B. I used to work for a tabloid, but now I work for a more serious newspaper. I generally write two or three pieces a day. You really have to keep up with current affairs in this job, though. I'm often going to press conferences and interviewing politicians and famous people, so I have to know what questions to ask. The most satisfying thing is seeing my name in print above a story.

1. What jobs do the people have?
2. What is difficult for the person in text A?

3. Which is, in your opinion, the most rewarding job?
4. Which of the two jobs would you choose and why?

EXAM CARD 24

Read the text and answer the questions:

A. I spend about half of the time in my office, and the other half in court. I don't have customers. I have clients. They come to me with legal problems and I represent them. It's a very demanding job, because you feel responsible for what happens to your clients, but it's also very satisfying. I was once able to persuade the police they'd made a mistake arresting my client. It's a great feeling helping people when they're in trouble.

B. People think we're boring and old-fashioned, but it's not true at all. Where we work, it's often lively and interesting and, these days, people don't have to whisper all the time. Kids are welcome, too. I adore literature, and I think we provide a very valuable service to the public. People can borrow books from us which they would never be able to afford to buy themselves.

1. What jobs do the people have?
2. What is special about the job in text B?
3. Which is, in your opinion, the most demanding job?
4. Which of the two jobs would you choose and why?

EXAM CARD 25

Read the text and answer the questions:

When I took the job, I wasn't prepared for the way I would be treated by the supervisors. It was worse than being at school. There were about twenty interviewers like myself, each sitting in a small, dark booth with an ancient computer and dirty telephone. The booths were around the walls of the fifth floor of a concrete office block, and the supervisors sat in the middle of the room, listening in to all of our telephone interviews. We weren't allowed to talk to each other, and if we took more than about two seconds from ending one phone call and starting the other, they would shout at us to hurry up and get on with our jobs. We even had to ask for permission to go to the toilet. I'll always remember that feeling of despair when I would look at my watch thinking, "It must be nearly time for the break", only to find that there was another hour or so.

1. How can you describe the young man's workplace?
2. How did he feel when he realized it wasn't time for the break yet?
3. Would you like this kind of work? Give reasons why/why not.
4. Why are people so eager to get a break in school or at work?

EXAM CARD 26

Read the text and answer the questions:

Student social life revolves around the Student Union, which is the large yellow building opposite the library. Inside, you will find a number of shops, bars and food outlets, as

well as a launderette, two banks and a travel agent. As a student at Alcot, you are automatically a member of the Union. This entitles you to use all the facilities and to vote in the Union elections and meetings. In addition, you are free to join any of the university clubs and societies and attend Union-organised events such as pop concerts and discos. See *The Alcot Excalibur*, the free weekly student newspaper, for further information regarding upcoming Union events. Regarding your course of studies, you will receive a letter inviting you to attend a welcome meeting for new students. If you have any problems, issues or concerns directly related to the fact that you are a non-British citizen, these can be referred to the International Office.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. Which do you think is the most important facility of the campus?
3. If you were a student at Alcot, what problems might you encounter as a non-British citizen?
4. How do you imagine life at university?

EXAM CARD 27

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Why are some scientists so keen to clone human cells? First of all, it's important to understand that cloning human cells does not necessarily mean that you make a new human being. Scientists believe that in the future we will be able to clone human organs such as the heart, liver and kidneys which we will be able to use in transplant operations. They also think that cloning will help us get rid of genetic diseases and will allow infertile couples to have children. However, most scientists are against human cloning at present because they argue it is not safe. Nowadays, we do not have the technology to safely clone humans. But what if we are able to solve the safety issues? Will human cloning be acceptable then? Many politicians and religious leaders say no.

1. What are the two positions concerning the issues of human cloning?
2. Why would, according to the text, cloning be a good idea?
3. Why do you think politicians and religious leaders object to cloning?
4. What is your opinion about cloning?

EXAM CARD 28

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Finally the day arrives and we get to the airport in plenty of time. Once at the airport, we check in. We find the right desk, get rid of the bags and go through to the departure lounge. Somewhere around here I can finally think about relaxing. Everything is somebody else's problem. If there's something wrong with the plane, the pilot can worry about it. And so begin two weeks of relaxation. For those two weeks, whenever I hear the word I look around as if it refers to someone else. I ignore any question that begins with "Where's my...". The funny thing is that they always find it anyway. The only thing I worry about is which book I'm going to take to the pool. He follows a ball around a course, they do whatever kids do these days and I become myself again for a short while.

1. Who is the character in the text?
2. Why is the character different from some other people around?
3. What do you feel frustrated about?
4. What are your favourite ways of unwinding?

EXAM CARD 29

Read the text and answer the following question:

In a new direction, the six o'clock news moves to a later slot and its place is taken by the new sitcom, *A bird in the Hand*. This programme, together with *Pop Pick*, the show that brings you the latest from the music world, makes TV12 the place for early evening family entertainment. *On our mind* is our new feedback programme where you, the viewers, give the opinions on what you see. We haven't forgotten the kids in our new schedule and they'll be thrilled at the return of that old favourite, *Captain Power*. Teenagers will also love our new series of *Rivington Groove*, the soap that deals with the problems they're facing in real life. Its responsible approach has been praised by the critics, and the ratings just keep going up. The Wonder Channel is coming on air this March. From *Mind Matters* to *TechnoTalk*, we bring you all the latest news from the worlds of science and technology.

1. How many new programmes are mentioned in the text?
2. What are the programmes designed for people under 18?
3. Why do you think some programmes are moved to other dates and times?
4. What is your favourite programme and why?

EXAM CARD 30

Read the text and answer the following question:

When it comes to things like regional and global climate, you have to think big. It's no good comparing this spring to last spring and deciding that the end of the world is near because all your daffodils have died of frostbite. It's no good just looking at decades. We can't really even consider permanent climatic change throughout our lifetime. Any competent meteorologist will tell you that we have to see how the weather - average temperature, rainfall, number of sunny days, inches of snowfall, rains, all sorts of meteorological phenomena - changes over hundred and thousands, even millions of years. It's only that that gives a clear indication of what is really happening to the world's climate.

1. What is the difference between a change in the weather and a change in the climate?
2. Why aren't meteorologists worried about climatic change?
3. What is global warming?
4. What do people have to do in order to prevent climate change?

EXAM CARD 31

Read the text and answer the following questions:

In truth, we don't know what the real situation is with regard to global climate change. It's too early to tell. Of course, we do have some records that go back hundreds of years, but most of our reliable recording methods were only introduced in the 19th and 20th centuries. What we have to do is keep taking accurate measurements, make predictions on those measurements and constantly alter those predictions based on what happens tomorrow. What we must avoid at all costs is to blindly accept all the rubbish that's spoken on the subject. It comes from a point of ignorance and is frequently not based on fact. Just because it is said in the newspaper doesn't make it true, even if your everyday experience tells you that it is true.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. Do you agree or disagree with it? Give reasons for your choice.
3. What are the causes of global climate change?
4. What are the consequences of global climate change?

EXAM CARD 32

Read the text and answer the following questions:

It's not often that such programmes get me shouting at the TV, but last night's *Rainforest Realities* (8.30 PM, CBC2) really made me angry. It's not that I don't care about the destruction of the world's rainforests – I do. It's not that I don't believe we in the West need to be made aware of what's happening in South America – we do. It's not that there shouldn't be a programme analyzing the situation – there should. But *Rainforest Realities* was the worst kind of lazy, ignorant, tabloid journalist stating "facts" with no evidence to back them up, drawing conclusions which were questionable, and using shock tactics which were, frankly, disgraceful. It didn't do the cause any favours. After the fairly typical beginning with shots of a peaceful, natural rainforest scene, we're told "FACT – One hectare is deforested for 1,000 dollars of timber. Once the trees are gone, they're gone forever."

1. What type of programme is presented in the text?
2. What is the writer's attitude towards the programme?
3. What is your idea about cutting down rainforests?
4. Why are rainforests cut down?

EXAM CARD 33

Read the text and answer the following questions:

We do live in the Technological Age. We mustn't forget, though, that mankind has been searching for technological solutions to problems ever since primitive man picked up a piece of stone and used it to dig or cut. Later, we invented a lot of other things. The motivation behind most of mankind's advances has generally been need. Necessity is the mother of invention, they say, and it certainly had proved to be throughout the history of mankind. We need the wheel, we needed the plough, we need ships, we needed buildings. So human creativity and inventiveness created them. What perhaps is different in the age

in which we live now is that, with one or two exceptions, we don't invent because we need to. We invent because we can.

- 1.What is the main idea of the text?
- 2.What is the Technological Age?
- 3.What is your opinion about the last sentence of the text?
- 4.What is, in your opinion, the most beneficial invention of the 20th century?

EXAM CARD 34

Read the text and answer the following questions:

"The salary's actually not as bad as it used to be," says Diana Walker. "I can live quite comfortably on it. Of course it helps that I live with my boyfriend, but even if I didn't, I think I'd be okay. It would be a nightmare if I lived in London, though. They just don't earn enough there to be able to pay a decent rent, let alone get a mortgage. Luckily, house prices aren't that bad where we are." Angela Pickering isn't so content. "If you consider the work we do- and it is extremely demanding, and the hours are long- then we really ought to be getting paid more. I know a lot of dedicated nurses who've had to leave the profession in the past five years because they just couldn't afford to keep working. That's a shame." "There's no doubt," says Bruce Dickinson, "that nurses are slowly being given more responsibility."

- 1.What is the text about?
- 2.Why is the job of a nurse demanding?
- 3.Do you think a nurse's job is rewarding? Why/Why not?
- 4.Which of the three opinions do you agree with and why?

EXAM CARD 35

Read the text and answer the following questions:

Since people first realized that they could travel faster from one place to another using a means of transport rather than walking, they have developed an amazing number of ways of getting around. From camels to the space shuttle, from horses to jets, we love to travel. Carts pulled by horses once took people to the market and now people drive to supermarkets in their cars. Boats first took people out to fish and now submarines float deep beneath the waves with huge cruise ships and stylish sailboats above them. People first flew in hot-air balloons and now they fly into space aboard rockets. We also use means of transport to move goods and materials from one area to another. People move from one place to another every day to work. From the poorest person going home by donkey to the richest going home by limousine, people's lives are dependent on many different means of transport.

- 1.What is the main idea of the text?
- 2.What are the oldest forms of transport mentioned in the text?
- 3.What other use of means of transport is not mentioned in the text?
- 4.What is your favorite means of transport and why?

EXAM CARD 36

Read the text and answer the following questions:

Although the private ownership of cars has steadily increased as it has become more affordable, there is still a demand for public transport. The cost of a new car has fallen in real terms so that now it is cheaper than ever to own one. Nevertheless, a minority of the population will never be in a position to do without public transport for even the shortest journey. Successive governments, under pressure from middle class car-owning voters, have poured money into the building of new roads and the widening of existing ones. Better facilities for drivers have tended to attract more drivers. The result is overcrowding on an overstretched and expensive road system. Now governments are faced with huge bills and dissatisfied voters who resent paying taxes for a poor service.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. What has led to greater use of private vehicles, according to the text?
3. Which means of transport do you prefer and why- public or private?
4. Should cars be banned on certain days or in certain areas for environmental purposes? Why/ Why not?

EXAM CARD 37

Read the following text and answer the questions:

When people travel to other towns, the problem might be eased by getting them to park on the outskirts of town. Buses could be provided to take them into the center. These park and ride schemes are increasingly popular and early results from large scale studies seem positive. At Southerton, for example, a council-funded scheme led to a 15% drop in city traffic over five months. What the council found, though, was that the measure proved somewhat unpopular with shops and retail outlets in the areas outside the center. Many of these places relied on passing traffic for some of their trade. As the number of people driving past dropped, so did incomes. It was discovered that visitors found it more difficult to get around without their cars and so they were not stopping on their way into the city center.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. Why did sales drop?
3. What is your opinion of such measures taken by city council?
4. Would you object to having to leave your car on the outskirts of, say, London? Why/Why not?

EXAM CARD 38

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Making car driving expensive is another way of making sure that people use public transport more. Road taxes and tolls on roads to pay for repairs tend to mean that people use their cars less. Fining drivers who are in areas where cars have been banned can tend to encourage them to leave their car behind. There is one point that has to be got

right for any solution to succeed. If you expect people to give up the habits of a lifetime, we must give them an alternative they can depend on. Constant delays, unannounced changes to the timetable and sudden cancellations all discourage people from using public transport. People will only see it as a real option if the buses and trains are on time. Education about the threat posed to the environment by our driving culture will prove vital.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. In what condition would people agree to change their lifestyle?
3. What do you think is the most efficient of the methods proposed in the text and why?
4. Why are such measures taken?

EXAM CARD 39

Read the following text and answer the questions:

A. There must be hundreds of fashion shows every year in London. If you ask me, it's all a waste of time, energy and money. It's just rich people who have nothing to do. Don't they know that there are people starving all over the world while they're looking at clothes? **B.** I paid 300 euros for these trainers. They've got special soles and they're the same as David Beckham wears. You can get them black or white as well. It's worth paying a bit more to get the right pair. **C.** Jeans are everywhere now. When I was younger you didn't see them so much. Even politicians wear them sometimes. As far as I am concerned, they're not really the idea of smart clothes. Skirts and dresses are more my style.

1. What is the main idea of the texts?
2. What is person C like?
3. Which person do you feel closer and why?
4. Which person you do not agree with at all and why?

EXAM CARD 40

Read the following text and answer the questions:

The fur fashion industry is in poor health. The campaigns that started in the 1980s have had their effect and in the US alone the number of fur farms fell by over 50% from 1987 to 1997. In a move that is bound to be a waste of effort, the fur industry has tried to rebuild by using the slogan "fur is back". However, a loss of profits and an uncertain future mean that there are far fewer people working in the fur industry today. The number of manufacturers in the US has fallen from 797 in 1972 to fewer than 200. This trend will continue. We still need to be careful, though. Many people who will never consider buying are doing so without knowing it. Clothes designers are aware of the bad image fur has with many people. Some of them have taken the sensible decision not to work with fur. Those that still encourage this cruel trade are forced to find ways to disguise fur.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. Why do many people buy fur without knowing it?

3. Why does the text mention the word “cruel” in connection with trade?
4. What is your opinion about wearing fur?

EXAM CARD 41

Read the following text and answer the questions:

The number of animals suffering around the world for the fur trade has fallen by about twenty-seven million over the last decade. The people working against the industry can be proud of what they have achieved. Employment in this area of the economy has fallen to only about 600 workers. Many of them are looking for other jobs. Most of them realise that their industry has no future. Some of them have taken the brave decision to leave because they recognize the cruelty around them. The increase in sales of furs in the US does not mean that “fur is back”. At a time when the rest of the economy is growing quickly, sales of fur grew by a tiny 1.6% last year. This figure, even if it is correct, is a clear sign that people are moving away from fur. Thankfully, the industry is dying around the world.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. Why does the writer admire the people who leave the fur industry?
3. Why do you think the fur industry is dying?
4. Where in the world would it be acceptable for people to wear fur?

EXAM CARD 42

Read the following text and answer the questions:

It's December 31st, New Year's Eve in Scotland. It's the time when the Scots celebrate the arrival of the new year. People usually have parties in their houses. They send invitations to friends and decorate their houses with colourful balloons and banners saying “Happy New Year”. They also buy drinks and prepare delicious food. On the evening of December 31st people dress in their best clothes and go to parties. They dance, eat and have fun. When the clock strikes twelve everyone shouts “Happy New Year!”. They all join hands and sing a traditional Scottish song, “Auld Lange Syne”. This song tells us to forget the bad things and all be friends. Then everybody kisses each other and they all have a glass of Scotch whisky. People often set off magnificent fireworks in the streets too. Soon after midnight people visit their friends and neighbours. The first man to enter a house brings good luck with him. New Year's Eve is wonderful. Everyone has fun and feels happy. It's a perfect way to welcome the new year.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. What does the song “Auld Lange Syne” mean?
3. What do you think is special about celebrating New Year's Eve in Scotland?
4. Which is the Romanian tradition of celebrating New Year's Eve that you most admire?

EXAM CARD 43

Read the following text and answer the questions:

Check your bicycle regularly. If you check the lights, brakes and tyres, you will be safer. Always wear light-coloured clothes at night. If you wear dark clothes, drivers can't see you. Always wear a helmet when you ride your bicycle. If you wear a helmet, you won't hurt your head in case of an accident. Never carry anything on the handlebars. If you have bags on the handlebars, you can't ride your bicycle properly. Make sure you give clear hand signal when you want to turn left or right. If you signal, car drivers will know where you are going. Do not ride your bicycle on the pavement. If you ride on the pavement, you will cause problems for pedestrians.

- 1.What is the main idea of the text?
- 2.Why mustn't you carry bags on the handlebars?
- 3.Which do you think are the most important rules for the bikers?
- 4.What other rules do you know of?

EXAM CARD 44

Read the following text and answer the questions:

It was around midnight and there was a full moon over the lake. The sky was clear and the stars were shining brightly. The night seemed to be full of magic and mystery. Freddy and Pam had decided to go night-fishing. As they were rowing to the middle of the lake they saw a huge black shape in the water. Freddy had brought a torch with him so he pointed it at the strange thing. Then, suddenly, it disappeared under the surface. Before they could do anything, something pushed the boat into the air from below. The next thing they knew they were in the water. Pam held on to there, not even their boat! They felt really puzzled about what had happened.

- 1.What is the text about?
- 2.What is the atmosphere of the text?
- 3.What do you think was in the water?
- 4.What would you do if you were Freddy or Pam?