

NEW இலங்கைப் பரீட்சைத் திணைக்களம்
 இலங்கைப் பரீட்சைத் திணைக்களம்
 Department of Examinations, Sri Lanka

අධ්‍යයන පොදු සහතික පත්‍ර (උසස් පෙළ) විභාගය, 2020
 கல்விப் பொதுத் தராதரப் பத்திர (உயர் தர)ப் பரீட்சை, 2020
 General Certificate of Education (Adv. Level) Examination, 2020

ஐந்திம் II
 அங்கிலம் II
 English II

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மூன்று மணித்தியாலம்
 Three hours

අමතර කියවීමේ කාලය - මිනිත්තු 10
 மேலதிக வாசிப்பு நேரம் - 10 நிமிடங்கள்
 Additional Reading Time - 10 minutes

Use the **additional reading time** to go through the question paper, select the questions you will answer, and decide which of them you will prioritise.

Instructions:

* This question paper consists of **four** questions. All questions are compulsory.

1. Write a composition on **ONE** of the following topics, paying attention to relevant facts and supporting evidence, structure, organization, coherent argument, accurate language and expression. (30 marks)

- (1) "The digital era has made libraries unnecessary."
- (2) "The cultural centre of every town should be its theatre." Do you agree?
- (3) "A global pandemic can transform human values."
- (4) Write a story that incorporates the idea "I am most alone when I am in the company of friends".
- (5) Write a review of a film that addresses ethnic or religious divisions in Sri Lanka.
- (6) Write a report on deforestation in Sri Lanka.

2. Reading comprehension and précis.

- (a) Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it. (10 marks)

- ① Hardly anyone would deny that human cultures are quite diverse, nor would they deny that this diversity means that humans of different groups experience life differently. However, language structure is not what creates this difference in experience. Culture certainly percolates into language here and there. Why would it not, since people with cultures speak language? However, language *reflects* culture – as vocabulary, naturally, and also through things like honorific levels of pronouns and geographical ways of situating oneself. But pronouns and topographical terms are, themselves, terminology in their own way. They reflect what life is like for a language's speakers.
- ② What language does not do is shape thought by itself, for instance, the meaningless gender divisions in German that make forks female, spoons male and knives something in between.... Or in terms of how people see the world's colours, or in terms of whether we think of a cat as a clump of cuteness in the same way as we see a glorious-smelling white glob as a clump of Nivea. Even if you can trick someone into revealing some **queer** little bias in a very clever and studiously artificial experiment, that weensy bias has nothing to do with anything any psychologist, anthropologist or political scientist could show us about how the people in question manage their existence.

- ③ Make no mistake: languages, like cultures, differ massively, and go far beyond the terminological features that drift into them from cultures. ... The degree of divergence is awesome indeed: languages with only a handful of verbs (many Australian languages), languages with no regular verbs (Navajo), languages where a word's meaning differs according to nine different tones you utter it in (Cantonese), languages with only ten sounds (Piraha), languages with whole sentences that you need only one word to utter (Eskimo), languages with dozens of click sounds, languages with no tense at all (Maybrat in New Guinea), languages with two hundred genders (Nasioi, again in New Guinea), languages where the only ending in the present tense is the third-person singular one (English).
- ④ But the wonder is how in all of their diversity, these languages convey the same basic humanity. The cultural aspects qualify as scattered decoration. That will sound naïve to many – until they consider what it takes to learn a language, upon which it becomes clear how ancillary the cultural aspect of language is. How much of the Spanish or Russian or Chinese you hacked your way through was “cultural”?
- ⑤ If you want to learn about how humans differ, study cultures. However, if you want insight as to what makes all humans worldwide the same, beyond genetics, there are few better places to start than how language works.

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in your answer script against the **number of the relevant question**. www.englishliteraturesrilanka.com

- (1) According to the passage, the diversity of human experience is a result of
- differences in language structure.
 - geographical differences.
 - cultural differences.
 - differences in terminology.
- (2) The writer brings in the example of Nivea in order to
- provide a contrast to the example of the cat.
 - show that language is not a deciding factor in thought.
 - use it as an example of a concrete noun in the language.
 - to show that thought is decided by language only.
- (3) The word '**queer**' in paragraph ② is closest in meaning to
- strange.
 - different.
 - exciting.
 - forbidden.
- (4) By describing experiments related to language, the writer argues that
- they fail to illustrate real-life behaviour and thought.
 - human nature as described by psychologists is similar.
 - their main purpose is changing biases in the human mind.
 - anthropologists and political scientists will find these useful.

- (5) The word '**them**' in the phrase 'drift into them' [paragraph ③] refers to
- speakers.
 - cultures.
 - terminological features.
 - languages.
- (6) The description of languages in this passage implies that
- languages are limited in their sound systems.
 - German and Nasioi are related to each other.
 - New Guinea has only two different languages.
 - people find Russian a difficult language to learn.
- (7) Which of these is **not** a function of the sentence "How much of the Spanish or Russian or Chinese you hacked your way through was "cultural"?" [paragraph ④]
- Persuading the reader that cultural aspects are more important.
 - Implying that Spanish, Russian and Chinese are cultural languages.
 - Ending the paragraph with a point that the reader will find convincing.
 - Extending the point that cultural differences are less than linguistic differences.
- (8) The author argues that we all share a basic humanity because
- language and culture are deeply connected.
 - despite cultural diversity all languages are very similar.
 - learning a language is difficult even if we understand its culture.
 - all humans worldwide are the same.
- (9) Thinking about how we learn languages will show us that
- learning about culture is an authentic part of language learning.
 - learning about culture supports language learning.
 - culture is a secondary aspect of language learning.
 - culture is a significant aspect of language learning.
- (10) The main idea of this passage is that www.englishliteraturesrilanka.com
- human languages are very diverse.
 - culture should be studied to learn about humans.
 - language structures determine how we experience life.
 - language reflects the culture of a speaker.
- (b) Write a **précis**, summarising the passage given in question 2 above, following the instructions given below. Use **your own words** as far as possible. (20 marks)
- Begin the précis on a **new sheet**. Divide your page into **5 columns**, and number the lines.
 - Write the précis within the following word range: **146—156** words.
 - State the **number of words** you have used.

3. Read the following passage and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible. (20 marks)

The Track in the Middle of the Forest

The most ferocious bears live deep in the heart of the taiga¹.

Not a single one has ever been hunted.

Hunters know they are very dangerous, they say the bears think, like men, and that is why they never go near them, in the heart of the taiga. They are frightened, are aware of the dangers of paths that never end, of tracks that fork time and again until the man who dares penetrate so far finds himself turning in circles, sometimes in spirals, until the time comes when he dares not move until a rescue party reaches him. That is the taiga; no one wants to risk going in, the only way to enter the taiga is by cutting, burning and destroying it. Even so the taiga wins out.

They say that those who get lost in the taiga pray and believe their prayers will save them, but not so. God is great, but the taiga is even greater, and they can pray as fervently as they curse, howl and rage, the taiga is deaf to their words, and that is why hunters can't even agree to go in too deep, they hesitate, argue, curse, but always retreat to the outer fringe of trees. The most ferocious bears are deep inside, men who changed into bears, and that is why they are so vicious, because they are evil like men and think like men, their instinct is not an animal's, is not what an animal is born with, but a mixture of the viciousness of men and the cruelty of animals, they are wild beasts but it is said that when they look at you, it is as if they are thinking hard, and their eyes are glinting.

Once, before they had built the villages that surround the taiga, many, many years ago, there was a party of beaters that went into the taiga to hunt for skins. Everyone knew that what they really wanted were the skins of the bears who live in the centre of the forest, legends abounded about the thickness and value of these skins....

They trekked for days and days. They say the hunters watched their supplies run out, and that day after day, for far too long, they only ate birds they could catch and the mushrooms that grew all around. Weeks went by and the hunters continued their trek further into the forest, penetrating deeper and deeper inside. Their beards were long and their hair matted. They hadn't washed for days and their clothes were filthy from sleeping in the open, from walking through mud and thickets, from the blood of the animals they had killed in order to eat. They stank of forest, of dry leaves and flattened plants, of sweat and of the smoke from the fires they lit each night to keep warm. And they went even further into the taiga, even on days when the mist hid the sun, further in, even though they were lost, and didn't know where they were going. And they kept losing items of clothing and had to wrap up in non-cured skins of animals they were killing with knives, spears and bows, because their powder had got wet and they had thrown their guns away, along with the lead ammunition that had weighed too much ...

And finally, to communicate with each other, and because they were afraid of the bears, who couldn't be far away, they mimicked the screech of owls and the hisses of wild cats, and almost stopped speaking. They decided to light no more fires so the animals couldn't detect their presence and ate raw meat.www.englishliteraturesrilanka.com

By the time they finally saw the bears, they were crawling on all fours, wore the skins of other animals, had turned wild, stank and were filthy. The bears sniffed and encircled them but did no harm: there was no difference between them. The hunters didn't recognize each other and thought the bears were other hunters and hunters were bears.

But that is only a fable, because nobody ever emerged from the taiga to say what really happened. That is why men are afraid to enter the taiga, because within every forest there is a track that will lead them inside, into its heart.

Adapted from a translation of a short story published in Russian 1922 by Jossef Bergchenko

¹Taiga is the largest type of forest on the Earth. The word taiga comes from Turkish and it means "coniferous forests". These forests represent the largest, oldest and snowiest type of land territory, covering extremely large areas in Northern Russia, mostly Siberia.

- (1) What role does the taiga play in this story? Provide examples to support your answer. (04 marks)
- (2) What is the main literary device used to bring out the taiga's fearsome quality? Illustrate this with at least **two** examples. (05 marks)
- (3) How is the passing of time conveyed in this story? Refer to language as well as imagery in your explanation. (03 marks)
- (4) What does the phrase "But that is only a fable" convey to you? Who says these words? (03 marks)
- (5) At the end of the story, are the bears human or the humans bears? What would be the difference? www.englishliteraturesrilanka.com (05 marks)

4. Read the following poem and answer the questions given below it, using **your own words** as far as possible. (20 marks)

Death is not New

Every city is ours
And all are kin
Good and evil do not come from others
Pain and its relief are no different
Death too is not new
We do not rejoice when life seems sweet
Nor do we cry it's bitter when troubled
For this we know from the discerning:
As frail craft caught in rivers crashing down rocks
Swollen with cold rain pouring
Through skies split by lightning,
Our lives too
Are tossed around by the fates.
We do not therefore praise the mighty for their rise
Even less do we disdain the lowly.

(Translated from a 2000-year old Tamil poem)

- (1) Why is 'every city ours' and 'all [our] kin'? Support your answer with close reference to the poem. (03 marks)
- (2) What does the poet mean by the following lines? (04 marks)

Good and evil do not come from others
Pain and its relief are no different
- (3) According to the poet, what insight has been learned from perceptive persons? (03 marks)
- (4) In your view, how effective is the central simile of the poem? (05 marks)
- (5) What, in your view, is the main idea of the poem? (05 marks)
