WSE PRE-WRITING / WRITING PROGRESS TEST—SAMPLE TASKS

SECTION I

Read the following excerpt and answer these questions. **Justify your answers.**

1. What type of audience is it addressed to?
2. What is the writer's purpose?

A radar is an electromagnetic system for the detection and location of objects. It operates by transmitting a particular type of waveform, a pulse-modulated sine wave for example, and detects the nature of the echo signal. Radar is used to extend the capability of one's sense for observing the environment, especially the sense of vision.

The value of radar lies not in being a substitute for the eye, but in doing what the eye cannot do. Radar cannot resolve detail as well as the eye, nor is it capable of recognizing the "color" of objects to the degree of sophistication of which the eye is capable. However, radar can be designed to see through those conditions impervious to normal human vision such as darkness, haze, fog, rain and snow. In addition, radar has the advantage of being able to measure the distance or range to the object. This is probably the most important attribute.

1. Laypeople. Importance of justification: approach to content (level of specialization), vocabulary, other specific features. Use of general layperson's point of view to help him/her to understand the function of a technological device. More specifically, it compares the radar with human vision to describe the function of radar (technical accuracy adapted to audience). Use of some technical vocabulary (transmit, waveform, pulse-modulated sine wave), but not jargon.
2. To explain what a radar is by/and describing its function

SECTION II

Read the following outline carefully. Do you think it will be effective for structuring and unity purposes? Improve this outline, and try to suggest some pattern of development that can help you re-arrange (and modify) the sub-topics. You can also narrow down the subject for clarity.

The Internet

I. Introduction
II. Privacy loss
III. Security concerns
IV. Quantity of information
V. Personal information on social networks
VI. Viruses
VII. Hackers
VIII. Inadequate, illegal information

This is actually a brainstorming, since it is a random list of keywords. The general topic can be "Disadvantages of the Internet Today". Pattern: listing. Improvements include selecting and grouping contents, using correct format and notation: more than one level to indicate contents and sub-contents. Selection and grouping could be based on some general topics: *Privacy loss, security concerns, difficulty to manage large amounts of information.* These would include sub-topics, and other topics could be left out for coherence and balance.

Example:

1. Introduction

2. Internet main services and what they offer

    2.1 WWW

    2.2 Email

    2.3 Social networks

    2.4 Communication applications

3. Disadvantages of the Internet (its services): information management

    3.1 Handling a huge amount of information to find the necessary data

    3.2 Piracy (copyright violations), plagiarism

4. Disadvantages of the Internet (its services): irivacy and security

    4.1 Privacy loss and consequences

    4.2 Security concerns and consequences

5. Conclusion

SECTION III

Read the following paragraph and explain how coherence has been achieved.

> *Digital television has been a great improvement and its advantages over analog television are remarkable. Firstly, reception is better overall, even in the case that both have optimum reception. Secondly, it is easier to obtain a perfect digital picture, whereas in analog TV, definition is technically limited. Finally, many more channels can fit on the digital transmission, which constitutes one of the most attractive features of digital TV. Altogether, the advantages of digital TV make it a better entertainment experience for users.*

The pattern that provides the general organization of the paragraph is listing. The advantages of digital television are listed, and the corresponding connectors are used: firstly, secondly, finally. In addition, as the topic sentence tells the reader, these advantages focus on a comparison

SECTION IV

Supply the appropriate connectors for the blanks. Do not use *and, or, but*, and do not use connectors more than twice.

An electric current is defined as the flow or movement of free electrons through a conductor. **(1) Since / As / Because** current can be both measured and controlled, it is a tremendously important source of energy in the modern world. In the early days of experimentation with electricity, **(2) since / as / because** the nature of the phenomenon was not well understood, it was thought that electric current flowed in the same way as water. **(3) Therefore / Thus / Consequently / ...**, many terms referring to electricity are the same as those used to describe the movement of water; **(4) For example,** the term *current flow* was used erroneously in the nineteenth century. Nowadays, the term *electron flow*, indicating the movement of electrons from the negative to the positive pole, is generally used **(5) instead**. Another example to illustrate this point can be found in the name given to the force that generates a flow of electricity, which is sometimes called pressure, like the pressure that causes water to flow. A more accurate term is *electromotive force*, usually abbreviated *emf*. The electromotive force is measured in *volts*, abbreviated with the letter *v*, and named after the Italian scientist Alessandro Volta. A further example can be mentioned. The strength of a current—**(6) that is,** the rate at which electrons move through a conductor—varies. The number of electrons flowing per second is measured in *amperes*, abbreviated *amp* and named for a French scientist, André Ampère. Different conductors allow the current to flow at different rates. The degree to which they impede, or act against, the flow of current is called *resistance*. Three excellent conductors of electricity are silver, copper, and aluminium. **(7) Although / Though / Even though** silver has a lower resistance than copper, the latter is used for electric wires **(8) because / since / as** it is cheaper than the former. **(9) However / Nevertheless /...**, **(10) since / as / because** copper has become rarer and more expensive, aluminium has come into use for wiring purposes **(11) although / though / even though** it has a slightly higher resistance than copper.

SECTION V
With the sentences below, write ONE paragraph that conforms to the topic below. Write an appropriate topic sentence and make sure your paragraph is coherent

Topic: Definition of plotters and the general operation of two main types

1. Plotters are special-purpose output devices.
2. They are used to reproduce hard-copy drawings.
3. Examples of these drawings are bar charts, engineering drawings, maps and even three-dimensional illustrations.
4. There are two types of plotters: flatbed and drum.
5. The flatbed plotter is also called a table plotter.
6. In the flatbed plotter, the paper is held stable.
7. Pens of different colours move about on the surface.
8. The pens are controlled by a computer program.
9. Some flatbed plotters are quite large.

10. In the drum plotter, the pens are held stationary.
11. The paper is rolled on a drum.
12. Both types are capable of producing accurate drawings very quickly.

Plotters are special-purpose output devices that are used to reproduce hard-copy drawings such as bar charts, engineering drawings, maps and even three-dimensional illustrations. There are two types of plotters: flatbed and drum. In the flatbed plotter, also called a table plotter, the paper is held stable while pens of different colours move about on the surface. The pens are controlled by a computer program. These operation features make flatbed plotters quite large. On the contrary, in the drum plotter, the pens are held stationary while the paper is rolled on a drum. In general, both types of plotters are capable of producing accurate drawings very quickly.

SECTION VI
This is the skeleton for a text on "Flextime". Body paragraphs are not fully developed, but the writer has decided to work on inter-paragraph coherence at this stage. Underline the *thesis statement* and provide transitions as appropriate.

Flextime

Introduction   One of the most important changes that management has made in industry in recent years is the scheduling of flexible work hours for their employees. Workers are given the option of choosing when they will work. This allows them more leisure time for family and fun. Flextime has obvious advantages for both workers and management although it may not be practical in all types of businesses.

Transition   The first advantage is increased production per work hour. (+supporting sentences)

Transition   In addition, factory workers are happier.   (+supporting sentences)

Transition   Besides increased production and workers' satisfaction, factory managers report that absenteeism has declined. (+ supporting sentences)

Transition   However, it is not as advantageous in all types of businesses. (+supporting sentences)

Conclusion   To summarize, flextime has resulted in increased production and happier workers who are less likely to miss work and it works well in manufacturing and retail industries. It works less well in service industries such as the restaurant and health care industries.

Synonyms are also good, of course

VOCABULARY

- flextime: *a system of working in which people work a set number of hours within a fixed period of time, but can change the time they start or finish work*
- decline: *go down*