

(Đề thi gồm 18 trang)

ĐỀ ĐỀ XUẤT

KỶ THI CHỌN HỌC SINH GIỎI
LẦN THỨ XVII, NĂM 2026
ĐỀ THI MÔN: TIẾNG ANH – LỚP 10
Thời gian: 180 phút (không kể thời gian giao đề)

SECTION A: LISTENING (50 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. You will hear a new student, Stefan, talking to an assistant, Anna, at the Student Union about his membership. For questions 1 – 5, complete the form below by writing **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for each answer. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided on the answer sheet. (10 points)**

STUDENT UNION REGISTRATION FORM

- Name: *Stefan Unger*
- Degree programme: (1)
- Department: (2)
- Leisure activities: (3)
- Language(s) (apart from English): (4)
- Type of accommodation: Hall
- Contact number: (5)

Your answer

1	2	3	4	5
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Part 2. You will hear a radio discussion on technology in sport and decide whether the statements are true (T) or false (F). For questions 6 – 10, write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided on the answer sheet. (10 points)

6. Geoff thinks the use of cameras for refereeing decisions will add to the excitement of sport.
7. Sally enjoys the speed at which tennis is played nowadays.
8. Geoff suggests that if everyone has access to doping, then it should be acceptable.
9. Geoff says that certain banned practices should be made legal.
10. He feels that there are adequate restrictions on the use of technology in sport.

Your answer

6	7	8	9	10
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Part 3. You will hear two nutritionists, Fay Wells and George Fisher, discussing methods of food production. For questions 11 – 15, listen and choose the correct answer A, B, C or D which fits best according to what you hear. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided on the answer sheet. (10 points)

11. Looking at reports on the subject of GM foods, Fay feels _____.
A. pleased to read that the problem of food shortages is being addressed
B. surprised that the fears of the public are not allayed by them
C. frustrated by contradictory conclusions
D. critical of the scientists' methodology
12. What does George suggest about organic foods?
A. Consumers remain surprisingly poorly informed about them.
B. People need to check out the claims made about them.
C. They need to be made more attractive to meat-eaters.
D. They may become more widely affordable in future.
13. What is George's opinion of 'vertical farming'?
A. It could provide a realistic alternative to existing methods.
B. It's a highly impractical scheme dreamt up by architects.
C. It's unlikely to go much beyond the experimental stage.
D. It has the potential to reduce consumption of energy.
14. George and Fay agree that the use of nanotechnology in food production will _____.
A. reduce the need for dietary supplements
B. simplify the process of food-labelling
C. complicate things for the consumer
D. introduce potential health risks
15. In Fay's view, returning to self-sufficiency is only an option for people who _____.
A. have no need to get a return on their investment
B. are willing to accept a high level of regulation
C. reject the values of a consumer society
D. already have sufficient set-up funds

Your answer

11	12	13	14	15
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Part 4. You will listen to a recording about Mesopotamia. For questions 16-25, complete the summary by writing NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS in each gap. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided on the answer sheet. (20 points)

Situated between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (modern Iraq, Kuwait, and Syria), an *exceedingly fertile plain*, Mesopotamia, (16) _____ that shaped civilization. Due to its favorable conditions, agriculture thrived for nearly 12,000 years. Around 6,000 years ago, its settlements evolved into cities, forming competing city-states. These city-states used to be unified under the Akkadian Empire but later divided into the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. Despite (17) _____, the region flourished with monumental architecture, including palaces and (18) _____, which served as *ritual locations* for worship.

Innovations in Mesopotamia included a (19) _____, establishing the 60-second minute, 60-minute hour, and 360-degree circle and the Babylonians developed a (20) _____ *of mathematics* to map the sky. They created a 7-day week based on seven (21) _____, and divided the year into 12 months named after the (22) _____, later called the zodiac.

Perhaps their most influential innovation was (23) _____, a writing system to record laws of Hammurabi, forming a (24) _____. However, Mesopotamia's success led to its (25) _____ because of outside envy; in 539 BC, the Persian king Cyrus conquered the wealthy Babylon, and Mesopotamia became part of foreign empires. Though it faded into history, Mesopotamia's contributions to literacy, law, math, and astronomy remain foundational to modern civilization.

Your answer

16	21
17	22
18	23
19	24
20	25

SECTION B: LEXICO-GRAMMAR (40 points)

Part 1. For questions 26-45, choose the best option A, B, C, or D to complete the following sentences. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet. (20 points)

26. It's not advisable to buy goods from street vendors - there's a good chance you'll be _____.

- A. scraped by B. paid off C. forked out D. ripped off

27. The sample was small and unscientific. _____, the interviews could have formed the basis for an informative newspaper article.

- A. Namely B. Even so C. On top of that D. And above all

28. As a society, we have an obligation to offer guidelines to establish global responsibility and _____ to meet local or regional aspirations.

- A. no laughing matter B. by the same token
C. thick and fast D. in common with

29. The thief put on the expensive boots and, with _____ air, walked calmly out of the shop!
- A. a malicious B. a churlish C. a nonchalant D. an anxious
30. Amy is nice, but she can be quite _____ and we sometimes have to bring her down a peg or two!
- A. open-minded B. bad-tempered C. quick-witted D. big-headed
31. Michael would rather Kate _____ against the new urban development project during last night's rally.
- A. hadn't spoken out B. weren't speaking out
C. wouldn't speak out D. didn't speak out
32. Don't you remember Jack? Here, let me show you a photo of him. Maybe that will _____ your memory.
- A. jog B. commit C. access D. recall
33. The contract you signed with the owners says that it's illegal to _____ your apartment, so you can't rent it out to anyone else.
- A. refurbish B. sublet C. furnish D. evict
34. A writing system known as Linear A was used in ancient Greece, but its meaning remains a mystery as experts have not yet _____ it.
- A. transfered B. translated C. encoded D. deciphered
35. I hope the weather _____ a bit later today - I'm fed up with sitting inside looking at the rain.
- A. blows over B. breaks through C. holds off D. brightens up
36. Team leaders need to be _____; they need to have the skills to make things happen rather than waiting for things to happen and then reacting to them.
- A. proactive B. receptive C. creased D. high-powered
37. I'm spending this week showing my _____ the ropes - I'm sure she'll be a great team leader.
- A. predecessor B. successor C. executive D. supervisor
38. The advertising agency has decided to _____ its payroll services in an effort to cut costs.
- A. prioritise B. disclose C. outsource D. classify
39. Most academic articles bounce around from topic to topic, really without _____, but informative.
- A. let or hindrance B. rhyme or reason
C. hell or high water D. common or garden
40. Major lay-offs at technology companies make their employees fear that they will join the _____ queue any day now.
- A. bust B. sag C. dole D. slip
41. It was only when Rita was predisposed by the gang _____ to commit crime.
- A. agreed she B. that she agreed C. then she agreed D. did she agree

42. - I was late because I got caught in traffic.

- _____, lateness will not be tolerated in this office.

A. Be that as it may B. Then so be it C. If need be D. Whatever it may be

43. This instruction manual is _____ as I had expected it to be. I don't understand anything!

A. not as helpfully B. not nearly as helpful

C. a little less helpful D. quite as helpful

44. We were _____ starving by the time we got back to the campsite after our eight-hour hike through the valley.

A. virtually B. very C. rather D. absolutely

45. _____, he was determined to continue to climb up the mountain.

A. However tired B. As he might feel tired

C. He felt very tired though D. Tired as he might feel

Your answer

26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45

Part 2. For questions 46-55, fill each gap with the correct form of the word in brackets.

Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet. (10 points)

46. If you're looking for a destination which is off the beaten track, then nowhere could be better than the _____ island of Palawan in the Philippines. (FAR)

47. Students on their gap year are usually travelling on a _____, so they often stay in cheap guesthouses or youth hostels. (SHOE)

48. Instead of just _____ your fate, why not do something to change it? (MOAN)

49. The team's logo was _____ across their shirts, and it became a symbol of pride for both the players and the fans. (BLAZE)

50. The _____, alone on the desolate island, soon learned to depend on his own resourcefulness for survival. (CAST)

51. The election campaign exposed _____ who avoided taking a clear position on controversial policies. (FENCE)

52. The junior staff spoke _____ to the CEO, aware of the strict hierarchy within the organization. (DEFER)

53. Although the evidence against him was overwhelming, he remained _____ when in the dock, staring the victims in the face. (REPENT)

54. The sound was so faint that it was _____ to most of the others on the jungle expedition, but for George it was loud and clear. (PERCEIVE)

55. There was a lack of staff, so the _____ team was unable to keep up with their opponents. (MAN)

Your answer

46	51
47	52
48	53
49	54
50	55

Part 3: The passage below contains 5 mistakes. For question 56 to 60, UNDERLINE the mistakes and **WRITE YOUR CORRECTIONS in the numbered space provided. (10 points)**

Line	Shopping Addiction
1	If you shop and spend compulsively, you are not alone. An estimation 8-16% of
2	British adults struggle to control their obsession with shopping. The stereotype
3	which research seems to back up, is that more women than men are affected.
4	However, when gadgets, sports equipment and computer accessories/software
5	are taken into account, compulsive buying is just as prevalent among men and
6	just as problem.
7	Those who find it easy to control their spending habits tend to view shopping
8	addiction in a humorous light. Sadly, the reality is far from comical. Shopping
9	addicts can't say 'no' to the desire for immediate gratification and, as a
10	consequence, they let the rest of their lives fall behind. Many shopaholics get
11	themselves into crippling debt as a result of their addiction, and jeopardise key
12	relationships in their lives because they are unable to control their purchasing
13	urges.
14	What, then, drives buying under such circumstances? For many shopaholics,
15	shopping is a means of alleviating negative emotion, such as worry, anxiety,
16	sadness and loneliness. It provides an escape from those feelings if only for a
17	short time. For shopaholics, it's usually not even about the acquisition of the
18	item itself. It's purely about the rush - the elevating mood and sense of
19	excitement they get when buying it. By the time they get home, most
20	shopaholics aren't even interested in the item they bought anymore.

Your answer

	Line	Error	Correction
56			
57			
58			
59			

SECTION C: READING (60 points)

Part 1. For questions 61-70, read the following passage and decide which option (A, B, C, or D) best fits each gap. Write your answers in corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet. (10 points)

Mother Nature's wildest children have, over millions of years, (61)_____ some extraordinary abilities. Now mankind is (62)_____ some of these to solve problems that have (63)_____ scientists for years. Tony Brennan was working on ways to stop naval ships gathering sea algae and barnacles when he got an unexpected (64)_____ from one of the deadliest species known to man – sharks. Sharks have a unique property that means sea algae or barnacles can't get a (65)_____ on their skin. That's because their skin consists of a series of teeth-like scales that allow them to glide through the ocean depths without collecting material that might slow them down. Tony wondered whether shark skin could (66)_____ other organisms like the kind of bacteria that causes over 100,000 hospital infections in the USA every year. Well, it (67)_____ that Tony was right and his research has led one company called, Sharklet, to produce a coating that keeps light switches, door handles and other frequently used surfaces in hospitals (68)_____. However, no matter how satisfied mankind might feel about its inventions and level of technological (69)_____, it should never forget that Mother Nature is a first-class (70)_____ in her own right.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| 61. A. enhanced | B. cultivated | C. nurtured | D. advanced |
| 62. A. exploiting | B. applying | C. initiating | D. imposing |
| 63. A. baffled | B. disturbed | C. inhibited | D. stupefied |
| 64. A. intuition | B. wisdom | C. perception | D. insight |
| 65. A. embrace | B. grip | C. grasp | D. catch |
| 66. A. defy | B. repel | C. reject | D. decline |
| 67. A. turns out | B. makes out | C. comes up | D. shows up |
| 68. A. pasteurised | B. antiseptic | C. germ-free | D. antibacterial |
| 69. A. capacity | B. competence | C. proficiency | D. faculty |
| 70. A. originator | B. Inventor | C. pioneer | D. innovator |

Your answer

61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
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Part 2. For questions 71-80, fill each of the blanks with ONE suitable word. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet. (10 points)

BLUE WHALES

The blue whale is the largest animal on earth by considerable measure. In fact, the blue whale is believed to be the largest animal (71) _____ to have lived – dwarfing even the biggest dinosaur. Surprisingly, despite growing to an incredible 33.5 meters in length, these

shy, gentle creatures of the deep are notoriously difficult to find and (72) _____ is known about them. What is known, however, is a tragedy. In the 20th century, industrial whaling nearly wiped (73) _____ these beautiful giants. Whalers slaughtered some 250,000 blue whales, with the result that, at most, only 10,000 (74) _____ today and the population is not expected to recover. Thankfully, blue whales may no longer be targeted by whalers. Disastrously, though, they face an equally sinister man-made (75) _____: noise pollution. To humans, the world beneath the waves may seem like a quiet place. To the blue whale, it is anything (76) _____. Modern shipping, military sonar activity, seismic surveying and undersea mining have made the ocean a deafening place. The (77) _____ world literally thunders with the thrash of ship propellers, the scream of ship engines, the hammer of oil drills, the thump of military sonars and the crash of seismic ships. Blue whales use (78) _____ to communicate, navigate and, crucially, find mates. A blue whale that was born in 1940 would have been able to communicate with another over a 1,000 mile distance. Today, it can only communicate over a 100 mile distance. Noise pollution means that blue whales are struggling to find mates (79) _____ the vast ocean waters. This could only have a devastating effect on their already dangerously (80) _____ numbers.

Your answer

71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80

Part 3. For questions 81-90, read the following passage and circle the best answer to each of the following questions. Write your answers A, B, C, or D in corresponding numbered boxes provided on your answer sheet. (15 points)

PAST FLUVIAL ACTIVITY ON MARS

Photographic evidence suggests that liquid water once existed in great quantity on the surface of Mars. Two types of flow features are seen: runoff channels and outflow channels. Runoff channels are found in the southern highlands. These flow features are extensive systems – sometimes hundreds of kilometers in total length – of interconnecting, twisting channels that seem to merge into larger, wider channels. They bear a strong resemblance to river systems on Earth, and geologists think that they are dried-up beds of long-gone rivers that once carried rainfall on Mars from the mountains down into the valleys. Runoff channels on Mars speak of a time 4 billion years ago (the age of the Martian highlands), when the atmosphere was thicker, the surface warmer, and liquid water widespread.

Outflow channels are probably relics of catastrophic flooding on Mars long ago. [A] They appear only in equatorial regions and generally do not form extensive interconnected networks. [B] Instead, they are probably the paths taken by huge volumes of water draining from the southern highlands into the northern plains. [C] The onrushing water arising from these flash floods likely also formed the odd teardrop-shaped “islands” (resembling the **diminutive** versions seen in the wet sand of our beaches at low tide) that have been found on

the plains close to the ends of the outflow channels. [D] Judging from the width and depth of the channels, the flow rates must have been truly enormous – perhaps as much as a hundred times greater than the 105 tons per second carried by the great Amazon river. Flooding shaped the outflow channels approximately 3 billion years ago, about the same time as the northern volcanic plains formed.

Some scientists speculate that Mars may have enjoyed an extended early period during which rivers, lakes, and perhaps even oceans adorned its surface. A 2003 Mars Global Surveyor image shows what mission specialists think may be a delta – a fan-shaped network of channels and sediments where a river once flowed into a larger body of water, in this case a lake filling a crater in the southern highlands. Other researchers go even further, suggesting that the data provide evidence for large open expanses of water on the early Martian surface. A computer-generated view of the Martian north polar region shows the extent of what may have been an ancient ocean covering much of the northern lowlands. The Hellas Basin, which measures some 3,000 kilometers across and has a floor that lies nearly 9 kilometers below the basin’s rim, is another candidate for an ancient Martian sea.

These ideas remain controversial. Proponents point to features such as the terraced “beaches” shown in one image, which could conceivably have been left behind as a lake or ocean evaporated and the shoreline receded. **But detractors maintain that the terraces could also have been created by geological activity, perhaps related to the geologic forces that depressed the Northern Hemisphere far below the level of the south, in which case they have nothing whatever to do with Martian water.** Furthermore, Mars Global Surveyor data released in 2003 seem to indicate that the Martian surface contains too few carbonate rock layers – layers containing compounds of carbon and oxygen – that should have been formed in abundance in an ancient ocean. Their absence supports the picture of a cold, dry Mars that never experienced the extended mild period required to form lakes and oceans. However, more recent data imply that at least some parts of the planet did in fact experience long periods in the past during which liquid water existed on the surface.

Aside from some small-scale gullies (channels) found since 2000, which are inconclusive, astronomers have no direct evidence for liquid water anywhere on the surface of Mars today, and the amount of water vapor in the Martian atmosphere is tiny. Yet even setting aside the unproven hints of ancient oceans, the extent of the **outflow** channels suggests that a huge total volume of water existed on Mars in the past. Where did all the water go? The answer may be that virtually all the water on Mars is now locked in the permafrost layer under the surface, with more contained in the planet’s polar caps.

(Adapted from Astronomy Today by Eric Chaisson and Steve McMillan.)

81. What does the discussion in paragraph 1 of runoff channels in the southern highlands suggest about Mars?

- A. Mars once possessed an atmosphere less dense than its present one.
- B. Parts of Mars were once subject to significant precipitation.
- C. Martian river networks may once have exceeded those on Earth in scale.

D. Martian rivers appear to have started drying out roughly four billion years ago.

82. The word “**diminutive**” in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

- A. gigantic B. monumental C. multiple D. miniature

83. In paragraph 2 of the passage, there is a missing sentence. Where would the following sentence best fit?

These landscape features differ from runoff channels in a number of ways.

- A. [A] B. [B] C. [C] D. [D]

84. In paragraph 2, why does the author include the information that 105 tons of water flow through the Amazon River per second?

A. To illustrate the scientific evidence utilized by researchers to determine the approximate time period during which Mars’ outflow channels were formed.

B. To underscore the immense magnitude of water believed to have surged through the Martian outflow channels.

C. To suggest that catastrophic flash floods on Mars may have possessed sufficient force to generate distinctive tear-shaped landforms.

D. To contend that the immense power of Martian floodwaters was capable of reshaping the northern volcanic plains.

85. All of the following questions about geological features on Mars are answered in paragraph 3 EXCEPT:

A. Which regions of Mars are believed to have once been submerged beneath a vast ocean?

B. According to mission scientists, where is the river responsible for forming the delta thought to have ultimately discharged its waters?

C. Roughly how many Martian craters do mission scientists estimate may have previously functioned as water-filled lakes?

D. During which era in Mars’ geological history do certain scientists hypothesize that the planet may have contained extensive bodies of water?

86. What can be inferred from paragraph 3 about liquid water on Mars?

A. If ancient oceans ever existed on Mars’ surface, it is likely that the water in them has evaporated by now.

B. Small-scale gullies on Mars provide convincing evidence that liquid water existed on Mars in the recent past.

C. The small amount of water vapor in the Martian atmosphere suggests that there has never been liquid water on Mars.

D. If there is any liquid water at all on Mars’ surface today, its quantity is much smaller than the amount that likely existed there in the past.

87. The word “**outflow**” in the passage is opposite in meaning to _____.

- A. accumulation B. drainage C. replica D. influx

88. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the underlined sentence in the passage?

A. However, critics contend that geological processes may account for the water linked to the terraces.

B. However, critics claim that the terraces may be attributable to geological forces in Mars' Northern Hemisphere rather than to water in the southern regions.

C. However, critics argue that the terraces were likely produced by geological activity rather than by water.

D. However, critics argue that geological forces lowered the Northern Hemisphere so far beneath the southern regions that water could not have produced the terraces.

89. According to paragraph 4, what do the 2003 Global Survey or data suggest about Mars?

A. Mars' climate may have been unfavorable for the development of large bodies of water.

B. Liquid water may have persisted on certain regions of the Martian surface for extended periods.

C. The oceans that once existed on Mars may have disappeared during intervals of cold and dry conditions.

D. The ancient oceans of Mars likely contained only limited quantities of carbon.

90. All of the following sentences best complete the introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage “**There is much debate concerning whether Mars once had water.**” EXCEPT:

A. Although some researchers contend that Mars may once have harbored vast oceans, others challenge this assertion, citing a lack of conclusive evidence or proposing alternative interpretations of the available data.

B. The runoff and outflow channels on Mars appear to have transported a substantially greater volume of water and to have developed far more extensive networks than those associated with river systems on Earth.

C. The large-scale and distinctive nature of Mars' runoff and outflow channels strongly suggests that immense quantities of liquid water once flowed across the planet's surface.

D. At present, there is scant evidence of liquid water on Mars, and it is widely presumed that any water that once existed there now remains frozen beneath the planet's surface.

Your answer

81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
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Part 4. For questions 91-100, read the passage and do the following tasks. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet. (15 points)

CROP CIRCLES

The crop circle phenomenon has puzzled and mystified humanity for many years. The designs just appear, placed carefully in fields of food grains. Some are larger than football fields and highly complex in design and construction. Others are smaller and more primitive. We call them crop circles, but many of them are not circular. Some are elongated abstract designs, a few resemble insects or other known forms, and some are mixtures of lines, circles,

and other shapes melded into intricate patterns. Most become visible overnight, though it has been claimed that a few have appeared within a half-hour in broad daylight.

Crop circles have appeared all over the world. About 10,000 instances from various countries have been reported in recent years. The first modern rash of crop circles appeared in Australia in December of 1973. A strange circular imprint appeared in a wheat field near Wokurna, a community southeast of Adelaide. Soon seven swirled circles up to 14 feet in diameter appeared in an oatfield nearby. In December of 1989, an amazing set of circles, ranging from a few inches to a few feet in diameter appeared in the wheat belt west of Melbourne. As many as 90 crop circles were found. The best documented and largest modern spread of crop circles began in southern England during the summer of 1980. By the end of 1988, 112 new circles had been formed. At that time circles were being reported worldwide, 305 by the end of 1989. The total grew to an outstanding 1000 newly-formed circles in 1990. In 1991, 200 to 300 circles were reported. Crop circles have been documented in over 30 countries, including Canada, the former Soviet Union, Japan and the United States.

Nine out of ten circles remained simple with broken stems flattened to the ground and swirled. The stalks around the circles remained completely erect. But over the years, crop circles have become much more geometrically intricate. Patterns involved multiple circles, bars, triangles, rings, and spurs. Pictorial imagery also appeared. Reliable eyewitnesses have reported seeing unusual lights and hearing unidentifiable sounds while on an early-morning walk in the countryside where a crop circle showed later that day. High-pitched, warbling noises have been recorded at the site of some crop circles. On several occasions a strange glow or a darker colouring has been seen in the sky over a crop circle. And in more than one instance, the electrical power of small planes flying overhead has been cut off abruptly. While the causal energies do not seem to harm animals, or even insects as far as we can tell, wild creatures tend to avoid the circles. Flocks of birds have been seen to split apart and fly around the perimeter rather than go directly over a crop circle formation.

Researchers have spent a great deal of time investigating different aspects of crop circles. They try to detect traces of human involvement in the circle-making, test the area of the circle itself for geophysical anomalies, and analyze the field's grain both from within and outside the circles, searching for differences.

Dr. W. C. Levengood of BLT Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has analyzed many grain samples and confirmed, time after time, significant changes at the cellular level of crop circle plants. The plants from the circles have elongated cells and blown-out growth nodes. Seeds from the circle plants often show accelerated growth rates when they are sown, and in some instances, quite different-looking plants result. In many instances it appears that a vortex-like energy causes the plants to swirl down, flattening the design into the land. Whatever this energy is, it does not generally inhibit the plants' growth. They continue to show normal response to the sun, raising upward over several days following the appearance of the circle. Michael Chorost of Duke University found occasions of short-lived radionuclides in the top layer of soil in some of the formations. A British government

laboratory found diminished nitrogen and decreased nematode populations as well as decreased water content in the soil of a formation. Researchers have discovered other anomalies as well, such as curious embedded magnetic particles and charred tissue. Some of the plant stalks within the circles show evidence of being exposed to rapid microwave heating.

Scientists have attempted to explain crop circles as a result of natural processes. One popular theory, accepted by many mainstream scientists and academics, is known as ‘Plasma Vortex Theory’. Developed by Dr. Terence Mearden, it theorizes that electrified air (plasma), on the side of hills, becomes mini-tornadoes and screws down onto the ground, creating the circles. The theory also holds that the electrified air would cause a light to appear above the circle and therefore account for UFO sightings. Although this theory still has considerable support it has come under fire because of the highly intricate and complex crop circle patterns that have appeared since 1991. Another theory is that the circles are all hoaxes or practical jokes. Major support came to this theory when, on September 9, 1991, two Englishmen claimed to have created approximately 250 crop circles. However, those circles were more ragged than others, and many were already suspect. It is irrational to believe that all crop circles are faked for publicity or other reasons. Many crop circles appeared long before the phenomenon gained large recognition from the public and press. Too many circles and patterns are formed each year in too many countries for them to have been hoaxes. Many crop circles show strange mathematical traits when analyzed.

The crop circle phenomenon is an enigma. Many dollars have been spent by researchers and their associations in an attempt to find a solution to this intriguing puzzle which will continue to haunt humanity until an explanation is found.

(Adapted from articles on crop circles published in scientific and popular science sources.)

For questions 91-95, decide whether each of the following statements is Yes (Y), No (N) or Not Given (NG). Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet.

91. Crop circles are reported to occur exclusively in wheat fields.

92. There has never been any documented evidence of crop circles appearing in tropical regions.

93. The highest number of reported crop circle incidents within a single year was recorded in 1990.

94. The configurations of crop circles have grown progressively more intricate over time.

95. It is widely asserted that all crop circles are the result of deliberate human fabrication.

Your answers:

91	92	93	94	95
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For questions 96-100, use the information in the passage to match one scientist (A-C) with each area of study listed below. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet.

A. Dr. Mearden

B. Dr. Levengood C. Michael Chorost

- 96. documented observations of luminous phenomena associated with crop circles
- 97. alterations in the structural composition of soil within crop circle formations
- 98. accelerated germination and growth rates of seeds originating from crop circles
- 99. the presence of electrical charges in the atmosphere surrounding crop circles
- 100. modifications in the cellular structure of plants discovered within crop circles

Your answers:

96	97	98	99	100
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Part 5. For questions 101-110, read the following article about trainers and choose from the people (A-E). The people may be chosen more than once. Write the letter A, B, C, D, or E in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet. (10 points)

THE UNEXPECTED ALLURE OF DESIGNER TRAINERS

A ALEX

As an American, they'll always be sneakers to me and I'm afraid to say that social media is responsible for my obsession with, or – as I prefer to call it – *appreciation* of limited edition designs. Despite the widespread belief that the intertwining of basketball with hip-hop and breakdancing is behind this phenomenon, social media had far more impact in terms of collectability. Granted the roots lie in 1970s American street culture but it was actually post 2010 with the rise of online images and internet commerce that things really took off. One day as I was idly scrolling through my feed, my attention was grabbed by these amazing custom designed sneakers, I'd never seen such eye-catching designs and I immediately bought them, ignoring their somewhat eyewatering price tag, and since then I've never looked back.

B SOFIA

Image is fundamental to the world of advertising and as an advertising executive, my employer has high expectations of me to look the part, especially since it's something that affects a client's perception of expertise. Regarding suits, I find understated classics more appropriate than designer gear, but trainers are a whole other story. Quality is first and foremost, something sturdy made from durable materials because I'm on my feet all day long, but that's not to say that design isn't a factor. Scouring the internet for lesser-known brands gives me the opportunity to make a statement with my footwear. While I acknowledge that this attitude is always going to incur substantial financial outlay, I see it as an investment and it's not as though I've built up a huge collection – just a select few pairs.

C LIAM

It must have been at the beginning of the 2010s when I won my first online auction for a pair of limited-edition trainers. The impulsive nature of my purchase took me somewhat by surprise, but as soon as I spotted them online I knew I had to own them. Their design was unlike anything I'd laid eyes on previously and therefore the compliments and envious glances I received from colleagues, friends and strangers alike came as little surprise. Until then, I'd been oblivious of this 'trainers as collectors' items' trend, one that's often based on celebrity endorsement. Gradually, it dawned on me that selling them could have earned me several times more than I paid, but I wanted to show them off so wore them to death, I kept a close eye on the resale market noticing the incredible markup in some cases and later set up what ultimately turned out to be a reasonably profitable side hustle.

D HANA

Whilst at fashion school, I did an internship with a designer specialising in sports footwear, the leading name at the time, and so a great placement. His designs were extraordinary; radical and flamboyant to the point of being slightly garish at times, but nevertheless they were snapped up by celebrities eager to ditch their swanky designer heels for something comfortable yet stylish. To my utter surprise, at the end of the internship I was given a pair. I couldn't believe my luck and after a matter of days I realised that their comfort was second to none and this was where my career path lay. I managed to land a job as a junior designer in an up-and-coming footwear studio, where I've worked on all sorts of innovative designs and my own style has gone from strength to strength.

E DANIEL

Running a boutique footwear store means I have to keep up to date with my clients' shifting tastes and the boom in designer trainer sales some years ago made me take a more favourable position. Where once heels were the go-to shoe for office wear, sales have declined so much so that it doesn't make any financial sense to maintain a large stock. Replacing them with a selective, but high-quality set of designer trainer brands has done wonders for the business. Clients can also order custom-made designs from a couple of our suppliers, which is great as it creates loyalty and repeats business. The sector is pretty cut-throat these days and it pays dividends to stay abreast of all the emerging players on the scene as well as what's trending online among customers.

Which person mentions ...

- 101.** the universally enthusiastic reception accorded to a particular pair of designer trainers
- 102.** the consequences of having reconsidered the significance of trainers in their life
- 103.** a pragmatic perspective on the excessive amounts of money spent on trainers
- 104.** an experience that ultimately proved decisive in shaping their career path
- 105.** an account of behaviour that ran counter to their usual habits

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Part 2: Essay writing (30 points)

“Successful sports professionals can earn a great deal more money than people in other important professions.” Some people think this is fully justified while others think it is unfair. Discuss both these views and give your opinion.

Write an essay of about 300 words to answer the above question. Give reasons and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience to support your answer. Write your answer on your answer sheet.

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