

Tiếng Anh_10	KỲ THI CHỌN HỌC SINH GIỎI LẦN THỨ XVII, NĂM 2026 ĐỀ THI MÔN: TIẾNG ANH - LỚP 10 Thời gian làm bài: 180 phút (Không kể thời gian giao đề)
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I. LISTENING (50 points)

- *The listening section is in **FOUR** parts. All the recordings will be played **TWICE**. At the start of each recording, you will hear a sound.*
- *There will be 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 part of a talk about vacation jobs. For questions 1-5, complete the table below. Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS for each answer. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet.**

Vacation job	Main advantage	Main disadvantage	Recommendation
Stocktaking	1.	Tiring	2.
Office work	Air-conditioning	3.	Choose a large office
Theme park attendant	4.	Rude customers	5.

Your answers:

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	

Part 2. You will hear a talk about the diet of ancient people. For questions 6-10, decide whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F). Write T or F in the corresponding numbered boxes on our answer sheet.

- Early humans are traditionally believed to have eaten mainly large animals they hunted.
- Most of the examined potsherds contained no identifiable food remains of ancient people.
- Evidence showed that ancient people consumed both plant-based and animal-based foods.
- Ancient humans cooked whatever was available without making deliberate choices.
- Early humans may have appreciated subtle differences in flavor.

Your answers:

6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
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Part 3. You will hear a radio discussion about pets. For questions 11-15, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which fits best according to what you hear. Write your answers (A, B, C or D) in the corresponding numbered boxes on your answer sheet.

11. What's the subject of the show?
- A. Dog keeping and associated dilemmas.
 - B. Economic aspects of pet upkeep.
 - C. Various problems modern dog owners face.
 - D The evolution of dog market products.
12. What's so peculiar about the host's first dog?
- A. It was a resilient animal that required little to no attention.
 - B. Its needs made it superior to purebred dogs.
 - C. Its required little care and managed mostly on its own.
 - D. It didn't put much strain on its host's family finances.
13. What does it take to possess a dog capable of starting in exhibitions?
- A. It requires meticulous attention and maintenance.
 - B. One of the things it demands is special sustenance.
 - C. Possessing sufficient funds ensures the dog is in top condition.
 - D. Developing proper eating habits.
14. Which aspects dramatically raised the upkeep of a pet?
- A. Natural economic circumstances which raised the prices of food and other products.
 - B. Introduction of a variety of products that increase pet maintenance.
 - C. An increasing interest of various food producers to sell costlier products.
 - D. Increased prices of food and an introduction of dog vanity products.
15. What's the host's reaction to the popularity of grooming products?
- A. He sees it as something eccentric.
 - B. He is confused by the idea.

C. He is rather conservative about it.

D. It's a rather overwhelming phenomenon.

Your answers:

11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
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Part 4. *You will listen to part of a talk about Parasite cleanses. 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 on your answer sheet.*

Some wellness influencers promote alternative health practices and sell herbal supplements, despite limited scientific evidence supporting their effectiveness.

One influencer claims that most people have never been (16)_____ and recommends repeating the process several times a year. She also suggests that symptoms such as cravings, bloating, headaches, and (17)_____ may indicate the presence of parasites, adding that (18)_____ could be a clear sign of infestation.

However, medical experts express concern that such products have not been properly evaluated. One doctor explains that people should not (19)_____ and emphasises that proper testing is available. He further warns that certain substances may be harmful, potentially affecting organs such as the (20)_____.

In recent months, more individuals have contacted doctors, sometimes even sending images of what they believe to be parasites. Nevertheless, such claims are rarely supported by evidence, even when patients provide a (21)_____ for examination.

In some cases, individuals may suffer from (22)_____, a condition in which they falsely believe they are infested.

Additionally, these cleanses can cause adverse effects, including dehydration, malabsorption, and (23)_____.

Although parasitic infections do occur, they are often linked to factors such as (24)_____ or unsafe water sources.

Therefore, individuals experiencing (25)_____ are advised to seek professional medical advice.

Your answers:

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

II. GRAMMAR – VOCABULARY (40 points)

Part 1. *For questions 26 – 46, write the letter A, B, C, or D in the numbered boxes provided to indicate the correct answer to each of the following questions.*

26. Recent studies indicate that, contrary to common belief, cognitive performance _____ by moderate caffeine intake during tasks.

- A. is actually enhanced B. should actually enhance
C. will actually enhance D. be actually enhanced

27. Amid growing concerns about climate change, governments are implementing stricter regulations _____ industrial emissions.

- A. like reducing B. likely reducing
C. which likely reduces D. to likely reduce

28. The unexpected delay at the airport ruined what _____ a relaxing start to their honeymoon.

- A. would have otherwise been B. would just as soon be
C. would otherwise have been D. had better would have been

29. She would rather he _____ the full extent of the financial losses earlier, rather than allowing the situation to escalate beyond control.

- A. had disclosed B. closed C. close D. would close

30. Would that the committee had exercised greater diligence in reviewing the proposal, the subsequent complications _____ altogether.

- A. might have been avoided B. must have been avoided
C. should have been avoided D. can't have been avoided

31. His explanation was so _____ that even the experts struggled to understand it.

- A. obscure B. obvious C. transparent D. evident

32. The company decided to _____ the new policy after receiving negative feedback.

- A. call off B. bring up C. put through D. turn down

33. She has a tendency to _____ conclusions without considering all the facts.

- A. leap to B. jump on C. fall into D. run into

34. The proposal was rejected on the _____ that it was too expensive.

- A. basis B. grounds C. reason D. foundation

35. The politician attempted to _____ the question by talking about something else.

- A. evade B. escape C. elude D. withdraw

36. The new regulations will come into _____ next month.
A. force B. power C. strength D. action
37. The rumor quickly _____ throughout the entire office.
A. scattered B. spread C. stretched D. extended
38. He's not very reliable; he often _____ at the last minute.
A. backs out B. backs up C. backs over D. backs onto
39. After years of disagreement, the two companies finally decided to _____ and negotiate a partnership.
A. bury the hatchet B. hit the sack C. spill the beans D. bite the bullet
40. When the manager suddenly asked her to present the report, she had to _____ and speak without preparation.
A. break the ice B. play it by ear C. think on her feet D. go the extra mile
41. The scientist spoke _____ about the limitations of the study, refusing to exaggerate the results.
A. candidly B. reluctantly C. vaguely D. scarcely
42. The new policy was _____ criticized by several experts who questioned its effectiveness.
A. widely B. closely C. highly D. deeply
43. The committee reached a _____ that the proposal should be revised before approval.
A. consensus B. consequence C. compromise D. perception
44. The sudden drop in sales caused serious _____ about the company's future.
A. impressions B. remarks C. reflections D. concerns
45. _____ the considerable risks involved, the investors decided to proceed with the project.
A. Notwithstanding B. Provided C. Whereas D. Lest

Your answers:

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, write the correct form of each bracketed word in the numbered boxes provided.

46. There was an _____ sense of uncertainty in the company after the sudden resignation of its CEO. (PERVADE)
47. The act of _____ should be prohibited under any circumstances. Everyone all has equal rights to vote. (FRANCHISE)
48. His work won him _____ from the critics. (APPLAUSE)
49. His revolutionary _____ was an example to his followers. (ARDENT)
50. The government stressed it was not abandoning its tough _____ policies. (INFLATE)
51. The investor's _____ in the stock market made his partners reluctant to trust his financial decisions. (ERRATIC)
52. The professor used the experiment as an _____ of how theoretical principles operate in real-world situations. (EXAMPLE)
53. I can't waste time on such _____. (FRIVOLOUS)
54. He was always very _____ about his love affairs. (DISCRETION)
55. Thank you for being so _____. (BEAR)

Your answers:

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

Part 3. The passage below contains SIX grammatical mistakes. The first one, (0), has been identified as an example. For questions 56 – 60, UNDERLINE the remaining FIVE mistakes and WRITE YOUR CORRECTIONS in the numbered boxes provided.

People in industrialised societies spends an extraordinary amount of time watching television, averaged about three hours a day, which equals roughly half of their leisure time. Although many claim they watch simply because they enjoy it, surveys show that a large proportion of adults and teenagers feel they watch too much, and some even describe them as addicted. Research using brain-wave monitoring and experience sampling has shown that television viewing produces relaxation but also mental passivity and reduced alertness. Unlike activities such as reading, sports or hobbies, television often leaves viewers feeling not happier, or even less satisfied, once they stop watching. This paradox encourages prolonged viewing but limited rewards. Television's strong attraction may stem from the brain's "orienting response," an instinctive reaction to sudden visual or

auditory stimuli triggered by features such as cuts and movements. Heavy watchers also tend to feel more anxious and bored in unstructured situations and may rely on television as a distraction, potentially reducing creativity, concentration and participation in other activities.

Your answers:

0. spends -> spend	56.
57.	58.
59.	60.

III. READING (60 points)

Part 1. *For questions 61 – 70, read the passage below and decide which answer (A, B, C, or D) best fits each space. Write the letter A, B, C, or D in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.*

Tropical butterflies are striking symbols of rainforest biodiversity because of their remarkable colours and patterns. Early naturalists discovered that while some colours attract mates, others (61)_____ as warning signals to predators, indicating that the butterflies are poisonous. This defence leads to mimicry, (62)_____ different species share similar patterns. Groups of species that imitate the same warning pattern are known as mimicry rings. (63)_____, classical theory predicted that only one mimicry ring should exist in a single area because predators would learn to avoid one pattern. The presence of multiple rings in the same region therefore created a (64)_____ scientific puzzle.

To investigate this, George Beccaloni studied butterflies in Ecuador, a (65)_____ diverse area of the Amazon basin. He focused on ithomiine butterflies, which are well known for their bright colours, toxicity and complex mimicry relationships. These butterflies often participate in Müllerian mimicry, where poisonous species resemble each other for (66)_____ protection, while non-poisonous species may benefit through Batesian mimicry by imitating toxic models.

One explanation for the existence of multiple mimicry rings suggested that species flying (67)_____ similar heights in the forest canopy evolved similar appearances. Although initially sceptical, Beccaloni's detailed field observations confirmed that different mimicry rings tended to occupy distinct flight heights. For instance, some species flew near the forest (68)_____ while others preferred higher levels of the canopy.

Although the (69)_____ between these layers were not rigid, each group showed a clear preference for certain altitudes. Beccaloni then proposed that this pattern might be (70)_____ to the location of larval food plants, which could influence where adult butterflies live and fly within the forest.

(Adapted from <https://mini-ielts.com/reading>)

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|
| 61. A. operate | B. function | C. perform | D. represent |
| 62. A. which | B. where | C. that | D. why |
| 63. A. Moreover | B. Likewise | C. Accordingly | D. However |
| 64. A. principal | B. cardinal | C. major | D. paramount |
| 65. A. completely | B. entirely | C. highly | D. absolutely |
| 66. A. distant | B. partial | C. interactive | D. mutual |
| 67. A. in | B. on | C. up | D. at |
| 68. A. floor | B. area | C. ceiling | D. window |
| 69. A. boundaries | B. borders | C. frontlines | D. edges |
| 70. A. associated | B. combined | C. led | D. linked |

Your answers:

61.	62.	63.	64.	65.	66.	67.	68.	69.	70.
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Part 2. For questions 71 – 80, read the following passage and fill in each of the numbered spaces with ONE suitable word. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

Extraordinary memory feats often appear to (71)_____ the result of natural talent, yet research suggests they rely mainly on learned techniques. At the World Memory Championships in Oxford, contestants complete demanding tasks such as memorising long poems, large (72)_____ of numbers and dozens of faces. Despite these impressive performances, most competitors have average memories according to scientific testing. Their success comes from strategies that take (73)_____ of how the brain processes information.

Studies comparing memory champions with (74)_____ individuals show that their brains do not possess exceptional general (75)_____ abilities. However, brain scans reveal that when they memorise information, they activate regions (76)_____ with visual imagery and spatial navigation. This reflects the strategies they use to convert abstract material into memorable images. For (77)_____, some competitors associate playing cards with specific people, actions and objects, then arrange these images along a familiar mental route. During recall, they mentally travel (78)_____ this route and reconstruct the information.

This approach is known as the method of loci, a technique that dates back to ancient Greece and relies on the brain's strong ability to remember places and visual scenes. Evidence from psychological studies suggests that (79)_____ sufficient practice and appropriate techniques, ordinary individuals can significantly improve their memory capacity, indicating that exceptional memory is largely a trainable skill rather than an (80)_____ gift.

(Adapted from <https://mini-ielts.com/reading>)

Your answers:

71.	72.	73.
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74.	75.	76.
77.	78.	79.
80.		

Part 3. For questions 81 – 90, write A, B, C, or D in the corresponding numbered boxes provided to indicate the answer which fits best according to what is stated or implied in the passage.

Concerns about the future availability of oil have intensified as experts debate how close the world is to reaching the limits of global oil production. At a recent meeting in London, members of the Oil Depletion Analysis Centre (ODAC) presented data suggesting that the world may soon approach a critical shortage of oil. Prominent geologists, including Colin Campbell, argued that governments, energy companies and many academics have underestimated the seriousness of the issue. According to these analysts, the global peak in oil production may occur very soon, raising concerns about future supply.

While almost everyone agrees that oil is a finite resource that will eventually be exhausted, the key question concerns when production will begin to decline significantly. This debate often refers to the theory proposed by the geologist M. King Hubbert in 1956. Hubbert predicted that oil production in the United States would reach its highest point around the early 1970s before entering a gradual decline. Although his prediction was initially criticised, it later proved accurate when American oil production peaked and began to fall after 1970. Hubbert's model suggested that production in any region tends to follow a bell-shaped curve: it rises rapidly when new reserves are discovered and easily exploited, then slows and declines as fields become depleted and extraction becomes more difficult and expensive.

Inspired by Hubbert's success, some modern geologists have attempted to apply his model to global oil production. Analysts such as Colin Campbell and Kenneth Deffeyes believe the global peak could occur in the near future. However, this view is strongly challenged by more optimistic forecasts. Studies by the United States Geological Survey and the International Energy Agency suggest that existing reserves will be sufficient to meet global demand for several decades. Some industry leaders even claim that oil supplies could last another seventy years.

The history of oil forecasting shows that predictions have often been unreliable. Since the oil crises of the 1970s, many experts have repeatedly predicted severe shortages and dramatic price increases that failed to materialise. Economist Michael Lynch argues that these forecasting errors often result from flawed assumptions. In particular, he criticises models that rely on fixed estimates of the total amount of recoverable oil. In reality, this figure can change over time as

improvements in technology, knowledge and infrastructure allow companies to extract oil that was previously considered inaccessible.

Technological innovation therefore plays a crucial role in determining the future of global oil supplies. Pessimistic analysts believe that most technological breakthroughs have already been achieved and that further improvements will have limited impact. In contrast, technological optimists argue that major advances are still possible. At present, only about one third of the oil contained in known reservoirs can be extracted, but new techniques may significantly increase this recovery rate.

The oil industry has repeatedly demonstrated its capacity for innovation, particularly when faced with economic or political pressures. For example, the nationalisation of oil resources in the 1970s forced companies to develop reserves in challenging locations such as the North Sea and Alaska. These efforts reduced the cost of finding and producing oil over time. Nevertheless, many existing oil fields are ageing and declining rapidly, which means that enormous investments will be required to maintain global supply. According to the International Energy Agency, oil companies may need to invest around one trillion dollars in new production projects outside OPEC countries during the next decade to offset declining output and meet growing global demand.

(Adapted from <https://mini-ielts.com/reading>)

81. What was the main concern expressed by members of ODAC?

- A. Oil prices are rising too quickly.
- B. Governments are producing too much oil.
- C. The world may soon face a serious shortage of oil.
- D. Oil consumption is decreasing globally.

82. What issue is considered more difficult than determining whether oil will run out?

- A. Discovering new oil fields
- B. Identifying when oil production will start to decline
- C. Reducing global demand for oil
- D. Controlling oil prices

83. What did M. King Hubbert predict in 1956?

- A. Oil production would increase indefinitely.
- B. Oil consumption would fall rapidly after 2000.

- C. U.S. oil production would peak and then decline.
- D. Oil would soon be replaced by alternative energy sources.

84. What does Hubbert's model suggest about oil production?

- A. It follows a constant growth pattern.
- B. It gradually decreases from the beginning.
- C. It follows a bell-shaped curve.
- D. It fluctuates unpredictably.

85. Why do some modern geologists believe a global oil peak may occur soon?

- A. Global demand for oil is decreasing.
- B. They apply Hubbert's model to global oil production.
- C. Governments are limiting oil extraction.
- D. Oil companies are reducing exploration activities.

86. How do organisations such as the US Geological Survey and the IEA differ from the pessimistic view?

- A. They believe oil reserves will last much longer.
- B. They argue that oil demand will disappear soon.
- C. They claim oil production has already peaked.
- D. They predict the end of the oil industry.

87. What does the history of oil forecasting reveal?

- A. Predictions have usually been highly accurate.
- B. Forecasts have often been overly pessimistic.
- C. Oil prices have remained stable.
- D. Oil production has always declined steadily.

88. According to Michael Lynch, why have many oil forecasts been incorrect?

- A. Forecasters ignored economic factors.
- B. They relied on fixed estimates of recoverable oil.
- C. Oil companies provided misleading information.
- D. Oil consumption was underestimated.

89. Why is technological innovation important for future oil supply?

- A. It can increase the amount of oil that can be extracted.
 - B. It can reduce the demand for oil.
 - C. It eliminates the need for new oil fields.
 - D. It lowers the price of alternative energy.
90. According to the International Energy Agency, what is necessary to maintain global oil supply?
- A. Reducing oil consumption worldwide
 - B. Discovering completely new energy sources
 - C. Investing heavily in new oil production projects
 - D. Increasing oil imports from OPEC countries

Answers:

81.	82.	83.	84.	85.	86.	87.	88.	89.	90.
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Part 4. Read the following passage and do the tasks that follow.

Natural pesticide in India

A dramatic story about cotton farmers in India shows how destructive pesticides can be for people and the environment; and why today's agriculture is so dependent on pesticides. This story also shows that it's possible to stop using chemical pesticides without losing a crop to ravaging insects, and it explains how to do it.

The story began about 30 years ago, a handful of families migrated from the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, southeast India, into Punukula, a community of around 900 people farming plots of between two and 10 acres. The outsiders from Guntur brought cotton-culture with them. Cotton wooed farmers by promising to bring in more hard cash than the mixed crops they were already growing to eat and sell: millet, sorghum, groundnuts, pigeon peas, mung beans, chili and rice. But raising cotton meant using pesticides and fertilizers – until then a mystery to the mostly illiterate farmers of the community. When cotton production started spreading through Andhra Pradesh state. The high value of cotton made it an exceptionally attractive crop, but growing cotton required chemical fertilizers and pesticides. As most of the farmers were poor, illiterate, and without previous experience using agricultural chemicals, they were forced to rely on local, small-scale agricultural dealers for advice. The dealers sold them seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides on credit and also guaranteed the purchase of their crop. The dealers themselves had little technical knowledge about pesticides. They merely passed on promotional information from multinational chemical companies that supplied their products.

At first, cotton yields were high, and expenses for pesticides were low because cotton pests had not yet moved in. The farmers had never earned so much! But within a few years, cotton pests like bollworms and aphids plagued the fields, and the farmers saw how rapid insect evolution can be. Repeated spraying killed off the weaker pests, but left the ones most resistant to pesticides to multiply. As pesticide resistance mounted, the farmers had to apply more and more of the pesticides to get the same results. At the same time, the pesticides killed off birds, wasps, beetles, spiders, and other predators that had once provided natural control of pest insects. Without these predators, the pests could destroy the entire crop if pesticides were not used. Eventually, farmers were sometimes having to spray their cotton as frequently as two times a week. They were really hooked!

The villagers were hesitant, but one of Punukula's village elders decided to risk trying the natural methods instead of pesticides. His son had collapsed with acute pesticide poisoning and survived but the hospital bill was staggering. SECURE's staff coached this villager on how to protect his cotton crop by using a toolkit of natural methods that India's Center for Sustainable Agriculture put together in collaboration with scientists at Andhra Pradesh's state university. They called the toolkit "Non-Pesticide Management" – or "NPM."

The most important resource in the NPM toolkit was the neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*) which is common throughout much of India. Neem tree is a broad-leaved evergreen tree related to mahogany. It protects itself against insects by producing a multitude of natural pesticides that work in a variety of ways: with an arsenal of chemical defenses that repel egg-laying, interfere with insect growth, and most important, disrupt the ability of crop-eating insects to sense their food.

In fact, neem has been used traditionally in India to protect stored grains from insects and to produce soaps, skin lotions, and other health products. To protect crops from insects, neem seeds are simply ground into a powder that is soaked overnight in water. The solution is then sprayed onto the crop. Another preparation, neem cake, can be mixed into the soil to kill pests and diseases in the soil, and it doubles as an organic fertilizer high in nitrogen. Neem trees grow locally, so the only "cost" is the labor to prepare neem for application to fields.

The first farmer's trial with NPM was a complete success! His harvest was as good as the harvests of farmers that were using pesticides, and he earned much more because he did not spend a single rupee on pesticides. Inspired by this success, 20 farmers tried NPM the next year. SECURE posted two well-trained staff in Punukula to teach and help everyone in the village, and the village women put pressure on their husbands to stop using toxic chemicals. Families that were no longer exposing themselves to pesticides began to feel much better, and the rapid improvement in income, health, and general wellbeing quickly sold everyone on

the value of NPM. By 2000, all the farmers in Punukula were using NPM, not only for cotton but for their other crops as well.

The suicide epidemic came to an end. And with the cash, health, and energy that returned when they stopped poisoning themselves with pesticides, the villagers were inspired to start more community and business projects. The women of Punukula created a new source of income by collecting, grinding, and selling neem seeds for NPM in other villages. The villagers rescued their indentured children and gave them special six-month “catch-up,” courses to return to school.

Fighting against pesticides, and winning, increased village solidarity, self-confidence, and optimism about the future. When dealers tried to punish NPM users by paying less for NPM cotton, the farmers united to form a marketing cooperative that found fairer prices elsewhere. The leadership and collaboration skills that the citizens of Punukula developed in the NPM struggle have helped them to take on other challenges, like water purification, building a cotton gin to add value to the cotton before they sell it, and convincing the state government to support NPM over the objection of multi-national pesticide corporations.

(Adapted from <https://mini-ielts.com/reading>)

For questions 91 – 94, decide whether each of the following statements is True (T), False (F), or Not Given (NG). Write T, F, or NG in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

91. Cotton in Andhra Pradesh state could really bring more income to the local farmers than traditional farming.

92. The majority of farmers had used agricultural pesticides before 30 years ago.

93. The yield of cotton is relatively lower than that of other agricultural crops.

94. The farmers didn't realize the spread of the pests was so fast.

Your answers:

91.	92.	93.	94.
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For questions 95 – 100, complete the summary with no more than TWO words taken from the passage for each space. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

The Making of pesticide protecting crops against insects

The broad-leaved neem tree was chosen. It is a fast-growing and (95)_____ tree and produces an amount of (96)_____ for itself that can be effective like insects repellent. Firstly, neem seeds need to be crushed into (97)_____ form, which is left behind (98)_____ in water. Then we need to spray the solution onto the crop. A special (99)_____ is used when mixing with soil in order to eliminate bugs and

bacteria, and its effect (100)_____ when it adds the level of nitrogen in this organic fertilizer meanwhile.

Your answers:

95.	96.
97.	98.
99.	100.

Part 5. For questions 101 – 110, choose from the sections (A-D). The sections may be selected more than once. Write the letter A, B, C, or D in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

A. The ability to distinguish between larger and smaller quantities is considered one of the most fundamental numerical skills. According to psychologist Elizabeth Brannon, humans perform this task with remarkable ease, provided the difference between quantities is sufficiently large. However, researchers have long wondered whether this capacity is uniquely human or shared with other species. Experiments comparing humans and animals suggest that the latter may possess surprisingly similar abilities. In one study, rhesus monkeys and university students were briefly shown two sets of geometric objects on a computer screen and asked to identify which set contained more items. Both groups succeeded at the task, but their patterns of error revealed an important similarity. When the difference between the two quantities was small, both monkeys and humans made more mistakes. In other words, their performance depended on the ratio between the sets rather than the absolute number of objects. Brannon's team concluded that the cognitive process used by humans closely resembles that of monkeys. The results suggest that the basic mechanism for estimating quantity may have deep evolutionary roots, shared by humans and other primates rather than representing a uniquely human skill.

B. Interestingly, this ratio-based system for evaluating numbers is not limited to mammals such as primates. Research indicates that other animal groups also rely on similar mechanisms. Psychologist Claudia Uller and her colleagues investigated the numerical abilities of salamanders by presenting them with two transparent tubes, each containing a different number of fruit flies. Because the flies served as food, the salamanders were expected to move toward the tube containing more prey if they could recognize the difference in quantity. The results showed that salamanders could successfully distinguish between tubes holding 8 and 16 flies, but they struggled when the numbers were closer together, such as 3 and 4 or 4 and 6. This suggests that the animals could discriminate between numbers only when the larger quantity was at least twice as large as the smaller one. However, the salamanders displayed a different pattern when dealing with very small numbers. They could easily tell the difference between 1 and 2 flies or between 2 and 3 flies. This indicates that animals may rely on two separate

numerical systems: a precise system for identifying small numbers and an approximate system for comparing larger quantities.

C. Evidence for this dual-system theory also comes from research on mosquitofish, small fish that instinctively prefer to swim in the largest possible group for protection. Scientists at the University of Padova studied this behavior by presenting fish with groups of potential shoal-mates of different sizes. The researchers observed that mosquitofish could reliably choose between groups of three and four fish, but they did not show a clear preference between groups of four and five. Further experiments revealed that the fish could compare quantities up to sixteen individuals, but only when the ratio between the groups was greater than two to one. This pattern closely resembles the results seen in salamanders and primates, suggesting that even relatively simple animals possess both approximate and precise numerical systems. Nevertheless, some researchers remain skeptical. Critics argue that animals might not truly be assessing number but instead responding to other visual cues, such as the total surface area, brightness, or movement of the groups they observe. To address this concern, scientists designed additional experiments in which mosquitofish were presented not with other fish but with geometric shapes arranged so that factors like size and brightness were identical across groups. Even under these controlled conditions, the fish consistently distinguished between sets of two and three objects. Such findings strengthen the argument that animals are responding to numerical information rather than unrelated visual features.

D. Even more primitive organisms appear capable of similar feats, suggesting that numerical sensitivity may be widespread across the animal kingdom. Entomologist Jürgen Tautz conducted experiments with honeybees to test whether insects possess basic counting abilities. In his study, bees flew down a corridor that led to two chambers. One chamber contained sugar water, which served as a reward, while the other was empty. Each chamber was marked with a different number of geometric shapes, ranging from two to six. Over time, the bees learned to associate a specific number of shapes with the chamber containing the reward. Remarkably, they could correctly identify numbers up to four shapes, although they struggled when the numbers increased to five or six. However, an important question remains: are these abilities learned through training, or are animals born with them? Experiments with newly hatched chicks provide compelling evidence for the latter possibility. Only three or four days after birth, chicks already show numerical awareness. Because they prefer to stay close to their siblings, they naturally move toward larger groups of familiar objects. In one experiment, researchers showed chicks two groups of small paper balls, which the chicks had previously imprinted on as if they were companions. After hiding the groups behind screens and rearranging the numbers, the researchers revealed them again. To choose correctly, the chicks had to perform a simple calculation to

determine which side now contained the larger group of “companions.” Without any training, the chicks consistently moved toward the larger quantity, performing significantly better than chance. Such results suggest that basic numerical abilities may be innate and may have evolved because they provide clear survival advantages. For example, animals searching for food must choose trees with more fruit or flowers with more nectar, while others may use numerical cues to detect intruders or manage reproduction. Female coots, for instance, appear able to estimate the number of eggs in their nests and adjust their behavior if an intruder adds extra eggs. Although the precise evolutionary origins of numerical cognition remain uncertain, studying a wide range of species with consistent experimental methods may eventually reveal how the ability to understand numbers first emerged in the natural world.

(Adapted from <https://mini-ielts.com/reading>)

Which section mentions...

- 101. experiments testing salamanders’ ability to recognize quantities using fruit flies as food?
- 102. the fundamental numerical skill of distinguishing larger vs. smaller quantities?
- 103. findings that salamanders succeed only when the ratio between numbers is large enough?
- 104. research comparing humans and rhesus monkeys?
- 105. studies on mosquitofish choosing larger shoals?
- 106. evidence that both rely on ratio-based quantity estimation and show similar error patterns?
- 107. evidence that honeybees can learn to associate numbers with rewards?
- 108. confirmation that fish also rely on ratio-based quantity discrimination?
- 109. evidence that animals may use two systems for number processing?
- 110. experiments showing newly hatched chicks can perform simple arithmetic without training?

Your answers:

101.	102.	103.	104.	105.	106.	107.	108.	109.	110.
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IV. Writing (50 points)

Part 1. *The table below shows the number of international students from five countries in 2019 and 2021, together with the percentage change over the period.*

Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant. You should write between 150 and 200 words.

Country	Number of Students (2019)	Number of Students (2021)	Percentage Change (2019–2021)
China	1,070,000	1,000,000	-6.5%
India	490,000	508,000	+3.7%
Vietnam	130,000	132,000	+1.5%
Germany	120,000	122,000	+1.7%
South Korea	108,000	105,000	-2.8%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and Our World in Data (latest available data).

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines, typical of primary school writing paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

(You may write overleaf if you need more space)

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