

Thời gian làm bài: 180 phút
(không kể thời gian giao đề)

I. LISTENING (5.0 points)

- *The listening section is in **FOUR** parts. The recordings of Part 1 and Part 2 will be played **ONCE** only, and the recordings of Part 3 and Part 4 will be played **TWICE**. At the start of each recording, 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. Listen to part of a conversation about ultra-processed foods ONCE and do the tasks that follow. For questions 1 – 5, decide whether each of the following statements is True (T), False (F), or Not Given (NG) according to what you hear. Write T, F, or NG in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

1. For most people worldwide, ultra-processed foods make up the bulk of daily calorie intake.
2. The consumption of ultra-processed foods is closely linked with anxiety.
3. Ultra-processed foods are formulated by companies to fulfill taste preferences.
4. Advertisements tend to go against basic foods like eggs or potatoes.
5. Foods classified as ultra-processed can still be nutritionally beneficial.

For questions 6 – 10, decide whether the following are mentioned by only one of the guests, or by both of them. In the corresponding numbered boxes provided,

Write	P	for Philippa Roxby;
	R	for Ruth Alexander;
	B	for Both of the guests.

6. Existing misconceptions about a method of food preservation
7. A degree of trade-off accepted between fresh and processed food
8. Drawbacks associated with choosing a non-industrialized alternative
9. The psychological ease with which ultra-processed food is consumed
10. Limited appeal of a wholesome option for a specific demographic

Part 2. Listen to a talk about plastic recycling ONCE and do the tasks that follow. For questions 11 – 12, choose TWO letters from A-E to indicate TWO true statements about the current situation of plastic recycling. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

- A. The presence of a recycling symbol signals that an item should be processed at a center.
- B. There exists a considerable mismatch between plastic production and recycling rates worldwide.
- C. The challenges of recycling all originate from the production process.
- D. Thermosetting polymers are the main source material of about a third of total global plastics.
- E. The process of curing results in a barrier to thermoset plastics' re-entry into the manufacturing cycle.

For questions 13 – 15, choose THREE letters from A-G to indicate THREE true statements about the problems regarding the plastics code system. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

- A. Each thermoset plastic type is often processed by its designated recycling facility.
- B. The resin identification system was originally designed to ensure consumers process their waste.
- C. Resin numbers on a plastic item do not guarantee that it can be recycled.
- D. The uniform branding of recycling symbols can make them deceptive to the average consumer.
- E. The inclusion of secondary components can prevent technically recyclable items from being reclaimed.
- F. Most companies remain oblivious to the ease of reusing when designing their packaging.
- G. High-grade plastics resin can be thermally processed a number of times before losing its material integrity.

For questions 16 – 20, write the letter A, B, C, or D in the corresponding numbered boxes provided to indicate the correct answer to each of the following questions according to what is stated or implied by the speaker.

16. Why did the plastics industry begin using ad campaigns and lobbying for resin codes?
- A. To exploit ignorance for short-term gain
 - B. To circumvent strict waste disposal regulations
 - C. To shift the waste responsibility onto consumers
 - D. To mask doubts about recycling's economic viability
17. All of the following are the challenges faced by municipal recycling programs EXCEPT _____.
- A. The increased complexity of the waste collected
 - B. The rising financial burden of waste separation
 - C. A lack of interest from consumers in participation
 - D. A downturn in global markets for recyclable scraps

18. Packaging materials account for _____ of our plastic waste.

- A. around a half
B. over a fourth
C. more than a third
D. less than a half

19. Establishing a "circular economy" for plastics would essentially necessitate _____.

- A. the curtailment of newly manufactured plastic production
 - B. large-scale transitions to biodegradable material alternatives
 - C. regulatory control of plastic at production to ensure recyclability
 - D. the retention of post-use plastics within a closed-loop recycling system
20. Which of the following is the most significant effect of replacing current resin codes?
- A. Sound purchasing decisions would serve to hold manufacturers accountable.
 - B. A full-scale transition toward compostable packaging might be made feasible.
 - C. Consumers can benefit from intuitive labels to sort their waste with greater ease.
 - D. The present financial strain placed on municipal sorting facilities may be mitigated.

Part 3. For questions 21 – 25, listen to a talk about urushiol, a common allergy, TWICE and answer each of the following questions with no more than TWO words taken from the recording. Write your answers in the corresponding spaces provided.

21. Which component of the body's defense system is accidentally activated by urushiol?

22. What conditions can microbes with molecules the body's defense system recognizes as dangerous cause?

23. What kind of chemical structure is urushiol that causes it to be mistaken for harmful fungi and bacteria?

24. What allergic reaction can occur due to the consumption of peanuts?

25. What biological function does urushiol actually serve in plants?

Part 4. *For questions 26 – 35, listen to a talk about the physics of supercooling TWICE,*

and complete the following summary with no more than ONE word taken from the recording for each space. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

Supercooling describes a state where substances remain liquid despite dropping below their standard freezing temperatures. This phenomenon holds significant potential for (26) _____, as avoiding ice formation prevents the cellular destruction that complicates the work of (27) _____ frozen spacefarer.

The stability of supercooling relies on a battle between two physical (28) _____: the ice's interior, which favors freezing, and its surface, which requires energy to maintain and favors remaining liquid. Which of the two the triumph goes to is determined by the (29) _____ of the initial crystal. Since volume increases cubically while surface area increases quadratically, tiny crystals have proportionally massive surfaces that force them to melt back into liquid.

In super cooled water, tiny crystals appear but vanish again until one grows past a critical size, which depends on temperature. Once a crystal exceeds this size, it can grow uncontrollably and freeze everything around it. Environmental factors or physical movement can (30) _____ the transition by introducing particles larger than this threshold. A sudden mechanical (31) _____ can also force a crystal past the tipping point, leading to (32) _____ ice crystallization.

However, this process changes within extremely small, rigid vessels scaled to no more than several (33) _____ of a micrometer. In such confined spaces, the expansion of ice creates intense pressure that (34) _____ the energetic drive to freeze. Under these conditions, ice cannot form unless the container is opened, bypassing the pressure-based (35) _____.

II. READING (8.0 points)

II.1. LANGUAGE IN USE (3.0 points)

Part 1. *For questions 36 – 40, 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.*

The internet is a rich and endless source of flawed arguments. (36) _____ in non-experts dismissing expert consensus as elite conspiracy, as with climate science and vaccinations. Just because a lot of people agree about something doesn't mean there is a conspiracy. The trouble with science and mathematics in this regard is that the rules are harder to understand, so it is more difficult for non-experts to verify that the rules have been followed. (37) _____: different uses of the word "theory".

In some uses, a "theory" is just a proposed explanation for something. In science, a "theory" is an explanation that is rigorously tested according to a clear framework, and deemed to be statistically highly likely to be correct. In mathematics, though, a "theory" is a

set of results (38) _____. There is no probability involved, no evidence required, and no doubt. The doubt and questions come in when we ask how this theory models the world around us, but the results that are true inside this theory must logically be true, and mathematicians can all agree on it. (39) _____. Mathematics is, of course, not life, and logical proofs don't quite work in real life. This is because real life has much more nuance and uncertainty than the mathematical world. The mathematical world has been set up specifically to eliminate that uncertainty, but we can't just ignore that aspect of real life. Or rather, (40) _____.

(Adapted from *The Art of Logic: How to Make Sense in a World that Doesn't* by Eugenia Cheng)

36.

- A. An alarming gradual increase has been there
- C. There has been an alarming gradual increase
- B. Gradually has there been alarming an increase
- D. An increase has been gradual and alarming there

37.

- A. But a much more basic level of understanding goes back to a lack
- B. But this lack of understanding goes back to a much more basic level
- C. But the understanding goes back to a level even less basic than a lack
- D. But such understanding, or the lack of it, goes back to a just as basic level

38.

- A. which has proved itself true according to logic
- C. that is true, having been shown by logical proofs
- B. which has shown itself to be true by logical proofs
- D. that has been proved to be true according to logic

39.

- A. This is different from science, which is continually being refined and updated
- B. It is just how science is continually being refined and updated in a different way
- C. The difference is from the science that is being continually refined and updated
- D. Scientifically, the difference is from what is being refined and updated continually

40.

- A. it's there whether we ignore it or not
- B. there it is, whether we ignore it or not
- C. whether we have ignored or not, it's there
- D. it's not whether we ignore it or be there

Part 2. For questions 41 – 45, 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.

The scale of the current global hunger and malnutrition crisis is (41)____. A staggering 318 million people face crisis levels of hunger or worse next year according to WFP's 2026 Global Outlook with two simultaneous famines confirmed in parts of Gaza and Sudan – a devastating first this century. Many food crises involve multiple overlapping issues that are (42) _____. A coordinated effort across governments, financial institutions, the private sector and partners is the only way to end the global food crisis. In countries such as Somalia, the international community came together and managed to pull people back from the brink of famine in 2022.

Political and diplomatic solutions are needed to save lives and prevent the hunger catastrophe spreading even further. But it is not sufficient to (43) _____keep people alive. We must go further by addressing the underlying causes of hunger. WFP's work to build resilience, adapt to climate change, promote good nutrition and improve food systems lays the foundations of a more prosperous future for millions. However, severe funding shortfalls are forcing WFP to (44) _____ assistance and refocus efforts on the most severe needs. With persistent access constraints also hampering support, some of the most vulnerable are being left behind. Unless resources are made available and unrestricted access granted, lost lives and the (45) _____of hard-earned development gains will be the price to pay.

(Adapted from <https://www.wfp.org>)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 41. A. grievous | B. enormous | C. monstrous | D. precarious |
| 42. A. coming to a head | B. stacking the odds | C. hanging by a hair | D. fanning the flames |
| 43. A. steadily | B. solely | C. squarely | D. sternly |
| 44. A. lean out | B. end off | C. scale back | D. level down |
| 45. A. respite | B. regression | C. repose | D. reversal |

Part 3. For questions 46 – 50, complete the passage by filling in each space with one of the words given in the box in its correct form. There are FOUR extra words, and the first one, (0), has been done as an example. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

SUSTAIN	POWER	SYMMETRY	EXTEND	CONSTITUTE
INSTANCE	REPRIEVE	VIRTUE	PROPOUND	CEASE

Since the infant of the human species enters the world cultureless, his behaviour is (0)_____influenced by the culture that surrounds him on all sides. Society preceded culture; society, conceived as the interaction of living beings, is (46) _____with life itself. Man's immediate prehuman ancestors had societies, but they did not have culture. The power and influence of culture upon the human animal just can hardly be overstated. Culture

can cause a person to die of hunger, though (47) _____ is available, because some foods are branded unclean by the culture. And it can cause a person to disembowel or shoot himself to wipe out a stain of dishonour. Among subhuman animals, death is merely the (48) _____ of the vital processes of metabolism, respiration, and so on. In the human species, however, death is also a concept; only man knows death. But culture triumphs over death and offers man eternal life. Thus, culture may deny satisfactions on the one hand while fulfilling desires on the other.

The predominant emphasis, perhaps, in studies of culture and personality has been the inquiry into the process by which the individual personality is formed as it develops under the influence of its cultural milieu and comes to (49) _____ its patterns and values. But the individual biologic organism is a significant determinant in the development of personality. The mature personality is, therefore, a function of both biologic and cultural factors, and it is (50) _____ impossible to distinguish these factors from each other and to evaluate the magnitude of each in particular cases.

0. *powerfully*

Part 4. The passage below contains SIX grammatical mistakes. The first one, (0), has been identified. For questions 51 – 55, UNDERLINE the remaining FIVE mistakes and WRITE THEIR CORRECT FORMS in the numbered boxes provided as the example (0).

Geologic formations may contain large (0) quantity of oil or gas, but have a poor flow rate due to low permeability, or with damage or clogging of the formation during drilling. This is particularly true for tight sands, shales and coalbed methane formations. Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, stimulates wells drilled into these formations, making profitable otherwise prohibitively expensive extraction. Within the past decade, the combination of hydraulic fracturing with horizon drilling has opened up shale deposits across the country and brought large-scale natural gas drilling to new regions.

The fracking process occurs after a well has been drilled and steel pipe (casing) has been inserted in the well bore. The casing is perforated within the target zones that contain oil or gas, such that when the fracturing fluid is injected into the well it flows through the perforations into the target zones. Eventually, the target formation will not be able to absorb the fluid as quick as it is being injected. Once the fractures have been created, injection ceases and the fracturing fluids begin to flow back to the surface. Materials called proppants, which were injected as a part of the frac fluid mixture, remain in the target formation to hold open the fractures. Typically, a mixture of water, proppants and chemicals is pumped into the rock or coal formation. There are, however, other ways to fracture wells. Sometimes fractures are created by injecting gases such as propane or nitrogen, and sometimes acidizing occurs simultaneously with fracturing.

0. *quantity* → *quantities*

II.2.READING COMPREHENSION (5.0 points)

Part 1. For questions 56 – 65, 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.

Movements of the body are (56) _____ about by the harmonious contraction and relaxation of selected muscles. Contraction occurs when nerve impulses are transmitted across neuromuscular junctions to the membrane covering each muscle fiber. Most muscles are not continuously contracting but are kept in a state ready to contract. The (57) _____ movement or even the intention to move results in widespread activity of the (58) _____ of the trunk and limbs.

Movements may be intrinsic to the body (59) _____ and carried out by muscles of the trunk and body cavity. Examples are those (60) _____ in breathing, swallowing, laughing, sneezing, urinating, and defecating. Such movements are largely carried out by smooth muscles of the viscera (alimentary canal and bladder, for example); they are (61) _____ by efferent sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves. Other movements relate the body to the (62) _____, either for moving or for signaling to other individuals. These are carried out by the skeletal muscles of the trunk and limbs. Skeletal muscles are attached to bones and produce (63) _____ at the joints. They are innervated by efferent motor nerves and sometimes by efferent sympathetic and parasympathetic nerves.

Every movement of the body has to be (64) _____ for force, speed, and position. These aspects of movement are continuously reported to the central nervous system by receptors sensitive to position, posture, equilibrium, and internal conditions of the body. These receptors are called proprioceptors, and those proprioceptors that keep a(n) (65) _____ report on the position of limbs are the muscle spindles and tendon organs.

(Adapted from <https://www.britannica.com>)

Part 2. For questions 66 – 72, rearrange the following paragraphs from A-H in order to make a complete and meaningful passage. Write your answers (A-H) in the corresponding numbered boxes provided. The first one, (0), has been done as an example.

A. Optimism is normal, but some fortunate people are more optimistic than the rest of us. If you are genetically endowed with an optimistic bias, you hardly need to be told that you are a lucky person – you already feel fortunate. If you were allowed one wish for your child, seriously consider wishing him or her optimism.

B. A study of people who exaggerate their expected life span beyond actuarial predictions showed that they work longer hours, are more likely to remarry after divorce, and are more prone to bet on individual stocks. Of course, the blessings of optimism are offered only to individuals who are only mildly biased and who are able to “accentuate the positive” without losing track of reality.

C. The evidence suggests that an optimistic bias plays a role – sometimes the dominant role

– whenever individuals or institutions voluntarily take on significant risks. More often than not, risk takers underestimate the odds they face, and do invest sufficient effort to find out what the odds are.

D. Their self-confidence is reinforced by the admiration of others. This reasoning leads to a hypothesis: the people who have the greatest influence on the lives of others are likely to be optimistic and overconfident, and to take more risks than they realize.

E. Because they misread the risks, optimistic entrepreneurs often believe they are prudent, even when they are not. Their confidence in their future success sustains a positive mood that helps them obtain resources from others, raise the morale of their employees, and enhance their prospects of prevailing. When action is needed, optimism, even of the mildly delusional variety, may be a good thing.

F. Optimistic individuals play a disproportionate role in shaping our lives. Their decisions make a difference; they are the inventors, the entrepreneurs, the political and military leaders – not average people. They got to where they are by seeking challenges and taking risks. They are talented and they have been lucky, almost certainly luckier than they acknowledge.

G. They are probably optimistic by temperament; a survey of founders of small businesses concluded that entrepreneurs are more sanguine than midlevel managers about life in general. Their experiences of success have confirmed their faith in their judgment and in their ability to control events.

H. Optimists are normally cheerful and happy, and therefore popular; they are resilient in adapting to failures and hardships, their chances of clinical depression are reduced, their immune system is stronger, they take better care of their health, they feel healthier than others and are in fact likely to live longer.

(Adapted from *Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman)

0. A

Part 3. Read the following passage and do the tasks that follow.

WHY ARE WE VIOLENT?

A. William Shakespeare's Hamlet proclaimed, "What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!" Hamlet's point was that humans are a remarkable species, though Hamlet himself has lost all appreciation for mankind. Perhaps what makes us even more remarkable is that we have the seemingly infinite capacity to achieve great things, and yet our history is filled with violence toward one another. How can we dedicate countless hours to matters of art, science, and other sophisticated pursuits and still commit acts of murder or wage globe-spanning wars? It's a complex problem. One answer may be that we're not as separate from other animals as we imagine. It's dangerous to ascribe traits to other species – we run the risk of anthropomorphizing animals and assuming

the reasons they behave a certain way are the same as our own. But in general, it seems that animal behavior is the product of instinct, emotion, and reason. Some animals demonstrate a greater aptitude for reasoning than others. Humans are at the top of that list. But that doesn't mean all our decisions are based upon cold, calculating rationality. Neuroscientist Antonio Damasio's research indicates that emotions play an important role in decision making. While we are not slaves to our emotions, they still play an important part in how we behave.

B. There's a branch of science called evolutionary biology that suggests many, if not most, of our behaviors come to us from our prehistoric ancestors. By killing, our ancestors removed rivals and ensured the survival of their offspring. In other words, we're violent because all the peaceful ancestors to humans were killed off by the violent ones. This view is by no means universal. Scientists from different disciplines have criticized evolutionary biology, saying that it oversimplifies human behavior and serves as a genetic excuse for bad behavior. While there is scientific consensus that the human brain is the product of evolution, there's a gap between those who think our brains are in Stone Age mode and those who say the brain is much more flexible than evolutionary biologists admit. One counterargument to evolutionary biology states that our minds are adaptive and evolve far faster than evolutionary biology can explain. Differences in cultures around the world suggest there is no universal human nature – the environment and our adaptation to it mean that each culture has its own unique nature. On a superficial level, it seems like the explanation for why we kill boils down to another nature-versus-nurture argument. The nature side suggests that we are inherently a violent species, and it should come as no surprise that we sometimes kill one another. The nurture side says that we are an adaptive species and that our environments – including everything from family structure to political influences – shape our behaviors. The truth is probably that we're a product of both. Ignoring one set of influences while concentrating on the other is missing the story.

C. For most people, killing another person, or many other people, isn't a trivial matter. But there are times when one person ends the life of another that seem to defy reason. A person with antisocial personality disorder feels no empathy toward others. This psychological designation includes people we call psychopaths and sociopaths. They feel very little emotion at all and may seek out dangerous or thrilling situations to get an emotional response. While they may recognize right from wrong, they may not care about the distinction. Knowing right from wrong is important in the legal world. It separates sane people from the insane. An insane person, by legal definition, is one incapable of distinguishing reality from fantasy or is unable to control his or her own actions. Whether antisocial personality disorder is chiefly an inherited trait or the result of environmental influences is a matter of debate. It's likely a product of both, and not all individuals who suffer from antisocial personality disorder will display violent tendencies. But the lack of empathy and the drive to seek out thrills can lead to violent confrontations. Many serial

killers and mass murderers fall into this designation – they kill because they lack the inhibitions and empathy the rest of us possess.

D. What about acts of genocide? According to a hypothesis posed by Ervin Staub, genocide is a result of a combination of environmental hardships and psychological coping. Staub suggests that when times are hard, people look for an excuse or scapegoat. Wiping out a subsection of the population as being responsible for the hardship the community experiences is a way to cope with the hardship, even though the solution and problem aren't necessarily connected in reality. Staub points out that this process is complicated and takes time – it's generally not a spontaneous reaction. For the rest of us, since our decisions are based upon both emotions and reason, we can sometimes favor one over the other. In emotionally charged situations, we may allow ourselves to act impulsively, ignoring rationality. These so-called crimes of passion can happen between people with strong emotional bonds. Common motives include jealousy, revenge, fear, and anger. The act of killing may be spontaneous or premeditated. Depending upon the circumstances, the killer may be charged with murder or manslaughter, or could be exonerated if the court finds the killer acted in self-defense. The killer may claim that the crime of passion was an act of temporary insanity – a condition that's difficult to prove in court. Humans kill because we're not dispassionate, robotic beings. We have wants and needs and possess the ability to pursue them. We may never fully understand the reasons behind our behavior, but as we learn more, we may discover ways to improve ourselves and make murder a thing of the past.

(Adapted from <https://science.howstuffworks.com>)

For questions 73 – 79, 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.

73. Humanity's intellectual sophistication is incompatible with its historical propensity for violence.
74. The distinction between humans and animals is a matter of degree rather than the mere presence of logic.
75. Seen from the perspective of evolutionary biology, the violence of modern humans is attributable to a lack of competitiveness inherent in peace-oriented ancestors.
76. Despite consensus of the scientific community on the origin of the human brain, disagreement persists over whether it is evolutionarily fixed or highly adaptable.
77. The development of antisocial personality disorder is a testament to the dynamics between genetic inheritance and environmental factors.
78. In Staub's account, the selection of a scapegoat during times of crisis is grounded in the existent threats.
79. The severity of legal charges in crimes of passion is contingent on the emotional or situational variables of the act.

For questions 80 – 87, 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. Which section ____?

- 80. discusses violent behaviour as a multi-layered response to perceived threats
- 81. acknowledges evolutionary influences while rejecting claims of behavioural rigidity
- 82. identifies a subset of individuals for whom moral recognition fails to rein in behaviour
- 83. warns about the methodological errors arising from category transference across species
- 84. interprets human behaviour as an emergent outcome that goes beyond a single governing faculty
- 85. addresses the unresolved disputes regarding the explanatory power of two theoretical approaches
- 86. conceptualises violence as arising not from unprompted reflex but from cumulative social processes
- 87. suggests that the absence of affective restraint can undermine conventional mechanisms of self-regulation

Part 4. Read the following passage and do the tasks that follow.

THE INSATIABLE MIND

1. When we compare human desire with animal desire, we find many extraordinary differences. The animal tends to eat with his stomach, and the man with his brain. When the animal's stomach is full, he stops eating, but the man is never sure when to stop. When he has eaten as much as his belly can take, he still feels empty; he still feels an urge for further gratification. This is largely due to anxiety, to the knowledge that a constant supply of food is uncertain. Therefore, eat as much as you can while you can. It is due, also, to the knowledge that, in an insecure world, pleasure is uncertain. Therefore the immediate pleasure of eating must be exploited to the full, even though it does violence to the digestion.
2. Human desire tends to be insatiable. We are so anxious for pleasure that we can never get enough of it. We stimulate our sense organs until they become insensitive, so that if pleasure is to continue, they must have stronger and stronger stimulants. [I] The brain is in pursuit of happiness, and because the brain is much more concerned about the future than the present, it conceives happiness as the guarantee of an indefinitely long future of pleasures. Yet the brain also knows that it does not have an indefinitely long future, so that, to be happy, it must try to crowd all the pleasures of Paradise and eternity into the span of a few years.
3. This is why modern civilization is in almost every respect a **vicious circle**. It is insatiably hungry because its way of life condemns it to perpetual frustration. As we have seen, the root of this frustration is that we live for the future, and the future is an abstraction, a

rational inference from experience, which exists only for the brain. The “primary consciousness,” the basic mind which knows reality rather than ideas about it, does not know the future. It lives completely in the present and perceives nothing more than what is at this moment. The ingenious brain, however, looks at that part of present experience called memory, and by studying it is able to make predictions. These predictions are, relatively, so accurate and reliable that the future assumes a high degree of reality—so high that the present loses its value. But the future is still not here, and cannot become a part of experienced reality until it is present. [III] Since what we know of the future is made up of purely abstract and logical elements—inferences, guesses, deductions—it cannot be eaten, felt, smelled, seen, heard, or otherwise enjoyed. To pursue it is to pursue a constantly retreating phantom, and the faster you chase it, the faster it runs ahead.

4. Thus, the **brainy economy** designed to produce this happiness is a fantastic vicious circle which must either manufacture more and more pleasures or collapse—providing constant titillation of the ears, eyes, and nerve ends with incessant streams of almost inescapable noise and visual distractions. The perfect “subject” for the aims of this economy is the person who continuously itches his ears with the radio, preferably using the portable kind which can go with him at all hours and in all places. His eyes flit without rest from television screen, to newspaper, to magazine, keeping him in a sort of no-way-out fever pitch through a series of teasing glimpses of sensuous surfaces, interspersed with such restorers of sensitivity—shock treatments—as “human interest” shots of criminals, mangled bodies, wrecked airplanes, prize fights, and burning buildings. The literature or discourse that goes along with this is similarly manufactured to tease without satisfaction, to replace every partial gratification with a new desire. [III]
5. For this stream of stimulants is designed to produce cravings for more and more of the same, though louder and faster, and these cravings drive us to do work which is of no interest save for the money it pays—to buy more lavish radios, sleeker automobiles, glossier magazines, and better television sets, all of which will somehow conspire to persuade us that happiness lies just around the corner if we will buy one more. [IV] Despite the immense hubbub and nervous strain, we are convinced that sleep is a waste of valuable time and continue to chase these fantasies far into the night. Animals spend much of their time dozing and idling pleasantly, but, because life is short, human beings must cram into the years the highest possible amount of consciousness, alertness, and chronic insomnia so as to be sure not to miss the last fragment of startling pleasure.
6. It isn’t that the people who submit to this kind of thing are immoral. It isn’t that the people who provide it are wicked exploiters; most of them are of the same mind as the exploited, if only on a more expensive horse in this sorry-go-round. The real trouble is that they are all totally frustrated, for trying to please the brain is like trying to **drink through your ears**. Thus, they are increasingly incapable of real pleasure, insensitive to

the most acute and subtle joys of life, which are in fact extremely common and simple. The vague, nebulous, and insatiable character of brainy desire makes it particularly hard to come down to earth—to be material and real. Generally speaking, the civilized man does not know what he wants. He works for success, fame, a happy marriage, fun, to help other people, or to be a

“real person.” But these are not real wants because they are not actual things. They are the by-products, the flavors and atmospheres of real things—shadows which have no existence apart from some substance.

(Adapted from *The Wisdom of Insecurity: A Message for an Age of Anxiety* by Alan W. Watts)

For questions 88 – 94, 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.

88. In paragraph 1, the writer primarily aims to _____.
A. remark that human biology is fundamentally flawed compared to animals
B. explain the evolutionary advantages of human anxiety regarding food sources
C. condemn the gluttony of modern man in comparison to the temperance of animals
D. suggest that uncertainty shapes human responses to pleasure more than instinct does
89. Why does the author emphasize the brain’s focus on the future in paragraph 2?
A. To show how pleasure loses effectiveness through repeated sensory stimulation
B. To contrast future-oriented thinking with immediate awareness of present experience
C. To explain how anticipation transforms desire into an endless and self-expanding pursuit
D. To argue that rational elements interfere with the body’s natural regulatory mechanisms of desire
90. The **vicious circle** in paragraph 3 can mostly be traced back to _____.
A. the pursuit of future satisfaction that continually negates present fulfillment
B. the dependence on economic expansion to perpetuate immediate contentment
C. the unresolved conflict between instinctive bodily needs and rational expectations
D. the interaction between memory-based prediction and immediate sensory experience
91. Which of the following is most likely a consequence of the reliance on a **brainy economy**?
A. A steady dulling of bodily sensitivity caused by excessive sensory exposure
B. The substitution of genuine satisfaction with repetitive and escalating stimulation
C. The increasing dependence on technological means to organize daily experience
D. Heightened sensory stimulation accompanied by gradually declining emotional fulfillment
92. The description of modern media consumption mainly serves to _____.
A. illustrate how desire is sustained through cycles of marginally fulfilled satisfaction
B. demonstrate the unavoidable effects of overstimulation in contemporary urban life

- C. contrast artificial pleasures with more natural and spontaneous forms of enjoyment
- D. expose the deliberate manipulation of consumers by commercial economic interests

93. What does the author mean by linking pleasing the brain to trying to **drink through your ears** in the last paragraph?

- A. Intellectual satisfaction is biologically impossible without the appropriate stimulations.
- B. Ambitions are framed in abstract ideals that are fundamentally misaligned with satisfaction.
- C. Delusional thinking is the vehicle for accomplishing satisfaction instead of tangible experience.
- D. Modern humans fail to understand the process through which emotional satisfaction is produced.

94. Where in the passage does the following sentence best fit?

In self-defense the body gets ill from the strain, but the brain wants to go on and on.

- A. [I]
- B. [II]
- C. [III]
- D. [IV]

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.

Modern society operates as a self-defeating loop, driven by deep-seated (95) _____. This tension arises because mental abstractions are prioritized over tangible reality. While the brain excels at analyzing memories to forecast what lies ahead, these predictions are like a(n) (96) _____ that lack sensory substance. The current moment, then, is devalued in favor of a future that remains forever out of reach. Economic structures exploit such a psychological gap by means of a range of (97) _____. People are bombarded by superficial imagery and shocking news, (98) _____ artificial stimulants designed to provoke desire rather than provide fulfillment.

This culture transforms individuals into restless consumers who perform uninspiring work just to fund the next hollow distraction. Ultimately, this frantic pace robs humanity of the capacity to appreciate simple joys. Restorative rest is traded to experience even the remnants of (99) _____, yet satisfaction remains elusive. As the (100) _____ is geared toward fuzzy concepts like status or success rather than concrete experiences, the connection to the physical world dissolves and society is left incapable of recognizing the very happiness it claims to seek.

Part 5. In the passage below, five paragraphs have been removed. For questions 101 – 105, read the passage and choose from paragraphs A-G the one which fits each gap. There are TWO extra paragraphs which you do not need to use. Write the letters A-G in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

SILENCING THE LAMBS

When animism was the dominant belief system, human norms and values had to take into consideration the outlook and interests of a multitude of other beings, such as animals, plants, fairies and ghosts. For example, a forager band in the Ganges Valley may have established a rule forbidding people to cut down a particularly large fig tree, lest the fig-tree spirit become angry and take revenge. Another forager band living in the Indus Valley may have forbidden people from hunting white-tailed foxes, because a white-tailed fox once revealed to a wise old woman where the band might find precious obsidian. Such religions tended to be very local in outlook, and to emphasise the unique features of specific locations, climates and phenomena.

101 _____

The people of the Indus did not bother to send missionaries to the Ganges to convince locals not to hunt white-tailed foxes. The Agricultural Revolution seems to have been accompanied by a religious revolution. Hunter-gatherers picked and pursued wild plants and animals, which could be seen as equal in status to *Homo sapiens*. The fact that man hunted sheep did not make sheep inferior to man, just as the fact that tigers hunted man did not make man inferior to tigers.

102 _____

This, however, created a big problem. Farmers may have desired absolute control of their sheep, but they knew perfectly well that their control was limited. They could lock the sheep in pens, castrate rams and selectively breed ewes, yet they could not ensure that the ewes conceived and gave birth to healthy lambs, nor could they prevent the eruption of deadly epidemics. How then to safeguard the fecundity of the flocks?

103 _____

Much of ancient mythology is in fact a legal contract in which humans promise everlasting devotion to the gods in exchange for mastery over plants and animals – the first chapters of the book of *Genesis* are a prime example. For thousands of years after the Agricultural Revolution, religious liturgy consisted mainly of humans sacrificing lambs, wine and cakes to divine powers, who in exchange promised abundant harvests and fecund flocks.

104 _____

But once kingdoms and trade networks expanded, people needed to contact entities whose power and authority encompassed a whole kingdom or an entire trade basin. The attempt to answer these needs led to the appearance of polytheistic religions (from the Greek: *poly* = many, *theos* = god). These religions understood the world to be controlled by a group of powerful gods, such as the fertility goddess, the rain god and the war god. Humans could appeal to these gods and the gods might, if they received devotions and sacrifices, deign to bring rain, victory and health.

105 _____

Yet the greatest impact of the rise of great gods was not on sheep or demons, but upon the

status of *Homo sapiens*. Animists thought that humans were just one of many creatures inhabiting the world. Polytheists, on the other hand, increasingly saw the world as a reflection of the relationship between gods and humans. Our prayers, our sacrifices, our sins and our good deeds determined the fate of the entire ecosystem.

(Adapted from *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* by Yuval Noah Harari)

Missing paragraphs:

- A. Nobody plotted the Agricultural Revolution or sought human dependence on cereal cultivation. A series of trivial decisions aimed mostly at filling a few stomachs and gaining a little security had the cumulative effect of forcing ancient foragers to spend their days carrying water buckets under a scorching sun. The Agricultural Revolution was the turning point where *Sapiens* cast off its intimate symbiosis with nature and sprinted towards greed and alienation.
- B. Animism did not entirely disappear at the advent of polytheism. Demons, fairies, ghosts, holy rocks, holy springs and holy trees remained an integral part of almost all polytheist religions. These spirits were far less important than the great gods, but for the mundane needs of many ordinary people, they were good enough. While the king in his capital city sacrificed dozens of fat rams to the great war god, praying for victory over the barbarians, the peasant in his hut lit a candle to the fig-tree fairy, praying that she help cure his sick son.
- C. Most foragers spent their entire lives within an area of no more than a thousand square kilometres. In order to survive, the inhabitants of a particular valley needed to understand the super-human order that regulated their valley, and to adjust their behaviour accordingly. It was pointless to try to convince the inhabitants of some distant valley to follow the same rules.
- D. The Agricultural Revolution initially had a far smaller impact on the status of other members of the animist system, such as rocks, springs, ghosts and demons. However, these too gradually lost status in favour of the new gods. As long as people lived their entire lives within limited territories of a few hundred square kilometres, most of their needs could be met by local spirits.
- E. Polytheism has very strong logic behind it, and in order to understand its inner logic you have to grasp the central idea that led polytheists to believe in the existence of many gods. Polytheism does not necessarily dispute the existence of a single power or law governing the entire universe. In fact, most polytheist and even animist religions recognised such a supreme power that stands behind all the different gods, demons and holy rocks.
- F. A leading theory about the origin of the gods argues that gods gained importance because they offered a solution to this problem. Gods such as the fertility goddess, the sky god and the god of medicine took centre stage when plants and animals lost their

ability to speak, and the gods' main role was to mediate between humans and the mute plants and animals.

- G. Beings communicated with one another directly and negotiated the rules governing their shared habitat. In contrast, farmers owned and manipulated plants and animals, and could hardly degrade themselves by negotiating with their possessions. Hence the first religious effect of the Agricultural Revolution was to turn plants and animals from equal members of a spiritual round table into property.

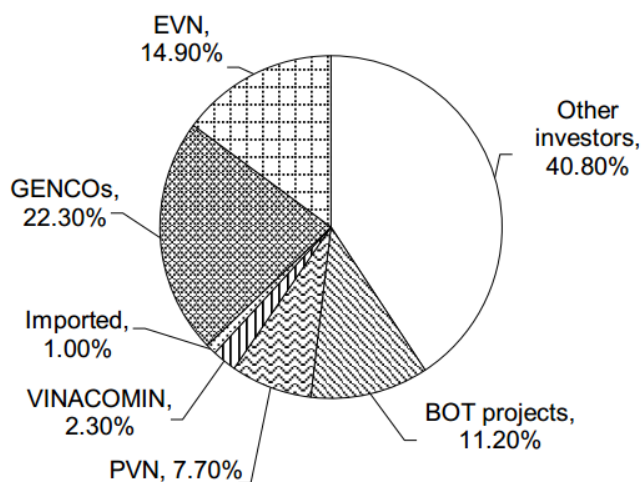
III. WRITING (5.0 points)

Part 1. *The table below gives information about Vietnam's total power generation and import output by the end of 2023 and 2024 while the pie chart presents its structure of power source by ownership in 2023.*

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

*In million kWh

Source type	2023	2024
Hydropower	80,904	88,723
Coal-fired thermal power	129,577	152,775
Gas turbine	26,315	21,827
Oil-fired thermal power	1,267	175
Imported	4,191	5,144
Wind power	11,367	12,747
Solar power	25,702	25,862
Biomass power	853	1032
Other sources	453	446



(Adapted from <https://en.evn.com.vn>)

Part 2. *Write an essay of at least 300 words on the following topic.*

"Digital nomadism" refers to a lifestyle where individuals leverage technology to work remotely while traveling the globe, often staying in short-term rentals or co-living spaces. This trend has seen a significant rise as high-speed internet and remote-work policies become the global standard.

Some argue that digital nomadism is a liberating movement that boosts personal productivity and broadens horizons. Many others maintain that this lifestyle gives rise to a lack of community investment and social aloofness. Another line of thought highlights the psychological toll of constant movement, arguing that it can eventually culminate in a fragmented sense of identity.

Which view(s) do you agree with? Provide specific reasons and examples to support your answer.