ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

METU-SFL

English Proficiency Examination

A Guide for Test-takers

Sample Items and Practice Material
(for the Online Version of the Exam)

School of Foreign Languages

METU

This booklet has been prepared to familiarize the candidates with the types of tasks in the exam and provide practice material.

September 2020

EXAM ADMINISTRATION AND CONTENT

The examination will be administered in one session. The exam will last approximately 90 minutes and include the **Careful Reading, Vocabulary and Writing** parts. The points allocated to each part and the time allowed are given in Table 1.

Table 1 *METU-SFL EPE content*

Part	Questions	Points	Time
Careful Reading	20	50	50 minutes
Vocabulary	20	20	10 minutes
Writing	1 Task	30	30 minutes

SCORING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The Careful Reading and Vocabulary parts comprise multiple-choice type questions, which are machine scored. The Writing part comprises an essay type question which is manually scored by a group of experienced raters in accordance with a rating scale. The raters go through a standardization session before grading the test-takers' papers. Each paper is graded by two raters, and by a third rater if there need be.

Announcing METU-SFL EPE Scores

The scores will be announced on the date given in the Academic Calendar, on the following web page: www.dbe.metu.edu.tr/prf/. Those who would like to receive an Exam Score Report may apply to the Registrar's Office after the exam results are officially announced.

READING

The reading section of the examination tests your ability to understand written texts that are commonly encountered in academic contexts.

In this section of the examination, you are expected to demonstrate your ability to

- read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes,
- scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details,
- quickly identify the relevance of information in texts on a wide range of topics, deciding whether a close study is worthwhile,
- understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints,
- understand a wide range of vocabulary.

Careful Reading	
Reading passages	3 Long, 1 - 2 Short passages
Purposes of reading	Careful Reading
Number of questions	20 in total
Total points	50

Careful Reading	
Task	The reading texts are taken from journals, books, magazines and newspapers usually dealing with academic/semi- academic topics, written for non-specialist audience. You will read three long texts and answer 6-7 questions for each text. There will also be one or two graph reading items.
Reading skills & strategies	- Understanding main / specific ideas in a text - Understanding text organization - Recognizing significant points and arguments - Understanding problem and solution relationships - Understanding cause and effect relationships - Understanding differences and similarities between different points of view - Recognizing emphasis - Understanding the writer's reasons for saying something - Recognizing repetition, paraphrasing and parallelism between ideas - Understanding inferred meaning - Recognizing the writer's point of view - Guessing vocabulary in context - Understanding information given in visuals
Length of texts	800 - 1100 words for long passages, around 150 words for short passages (graph reading)
Number of texts	4-5
Number of questions in each text	6-7 items in long passages 1-2 graph reading items
Total number of questions	20
Question types	- Main / Specific idea questions - Text organization questions - Text function questions - Critical reading questions - Writer's tone / attitude questions - Vocabulary questions - Graph reading questions
Question formats	- Multiple Choice - Matching - Multiple Matching - Text Insertion
Weighting	2,5 points for each correct response

Main Idea / Specific Idea

Sample text 1:

> Science has learned a good deal in recent years about the habits and requirements of introverts. It has even learned, by means of brain scans, that introverts process information differently from other people. If you are behind the curve on this important matter, be reassured that you are not alone. Introverts may be common, but they are also among the most misunderstood and aggrieved groups possibly all around the world…I know. My name is Jonathan, and I am an introvert.

Sample question 1:

Choose the statement that best summarizes the paragraph.

a) Their brain scans show us that introverts handle information in a manner peculiar to themselves.
b) Although there is plenty of scientific data about introverts, the misconceptions about them make them suffer.
c) Being an introvert is so common that introverts do not need to feel alone and should be able to fit into their social environments.

Answer:

a) The idea given in this option is correct, but it is not the summary of the paragraph. The following lines in the paragraph provide more crucial information. (X)
b) This option provides the most important information in a brief manner. (√)
c) That introverts are common is mentioned in the text, but the second part of the sentence is not correct according to the paragraph. (X)

Main Idea / Specific Idea

Sample text 2:

> Mass migration has produced a giant worldwide economy all its own, which has accelerated so fast during the past few years that the figures have astounded the experts. This year, remittances – the cash that migrants send home – through banks is set to exceed $232 billion, nearly 60% higher than the number just four years ago. Of that, about $166.9 billion goes to poor countries. In many of those countries, the money from migrants has now overshot exports, and exceeds direct foreign aid from other governments since there are many people sending 40% of their income in remittances. Indeed, many experts believe that the true figure for remittances this year is probably closer to $350 billion, since migrants are estimated to send one-third of their money using unofficial methods, including taking it home by hand. That money is never reported to tax officials, and appears on no records.

Sample question 2:

Choose the most suitable heading for the paragraph.

   a) The negative effects of remittances on the receiving countries
   b) The reason for the difficulty in estimating the true figures of remittances
   c) Ways of making the most of remittances for receiving countries

Answer:

   a) There is no mention of any effect of the money sent home. (X)
   b) Whole paragraph is about the amount of money sent home, and the last two sentences make it clear why it is difficult to estimate the correct amount of remittances. (√)
   c) Making the most of remittances refers to how that money is spent in receiving countries. There is no mention of that in the text. (X)

Main Idea / Specific Idea

Sample text 3:

What is introversion? In its modern sense, the concept goes back to the 1920s and the psychologist Carl Jung. Today it is a mainstay of personality tests. Introverts are not necessarily shy. Shy people are anxious or frightened or self-criticizing in social settings; introverts generally are not. Rather, introverts are people who find other people tiring. Extroverts, on the other hand, are energized by people, and they often seem bored by themselves, in both senses of the expression. Leave an extrovert alone for two minutes and he will reach for his cell phone. In contrast, after an hour or two of being socially "on," we introverts need to turn off and recharge. It isn't a sign of depression. For introverts, to be left with our thoughts is as restorative as sleeping, as nourishing as eating. Our motto is "I'm okay, you're okay–in small doses."

Sample question 3:

From the passage we understand that after socializing for some time, introverts _____.

   a) feel depressed and need sleep
   b) feel that they make people tired
   c) want to remain by themselves

Answer:
   a) Towards the end of the passage, the writer says "it isn't a sign of depression". (X)
   b) In the fourth line, the writer says that introverts find other people tiring. (X)
   c) Towards the end of the passage, the writer says that introverts need some time alone to refresh themselves. (√)

Text Organization

Sample text 4:

> The Renaissance was an important time for artists. They developed new techniques and skills. Soon people began to admire their artistry as well as the subject of the artwork. _____. A master artist could become a highly respected member of the community. He could dictate his own terms in his work and enjoy a much higher social status than a mere craftsman. And superstar artists like Michelangelo and Leonardo became famous throughout Europe, helping create the modern image of the artist as an independent creative genius.

Sample question 4:

Which of the below fits best into the blank in the paragraph?

   a) Much of the art produced during the Renaissance was commissioned by wealthy families
   b) Art historians still wonder whether the Renaissance was a cultural 'advance' from the Middle Ages
   c) By the late Renaissance, artists were no longer thought of as tradesmen

Answer:
   a) The previous sentence is about the Renaissance artists (*their artistry*) and *their* artwork. In this option, the focus point is wealthy families; therefore, it does not fit the context. (X)
   b) The content preceding and following the blank is definitely about artists and art; therefore, this option does not fit the context. (X)
   c) The sentences preceding the blank express that there was a change in people's attitudes towards artists and their art. (√)

Text Function

Sample text 5:

A In 2015, Doreetha Daniels received her associate degree in social sciences from College of the Canyon in Santa Clarita, California. But Daniels was not a typical student: She was 99 years old. In the COC press release about her graduation, Daniels indicated that she wanted to get her degree simply to better herself; her six years of school during that pursuit were a testament to her will, determination, and commitment to learning.

B Few people pursue college degrees at such an old age, or even as mid-career professionals (though statistics indicate that increasing numbers of people are pursuing college degrees at advanced ages). Some people never really liked school in the first place, sitting still at a desk for hours on end or suffering through what seemed to be impractical courses. And almost all of us have limits on our time and finances – due to kids, social organizations, work, and more – that make additional formal education impractical or impossible.

Sample question 5:

How does paragraph B relate to paragraph A?

a) It questions the motives behind Daniels' accomplishment.
b) It justifies why people like Daniels pursue education at an advanced age.
c) It explains why Daniels' case is hardly a mainstream practice.

Answer:
a) Rather than questioning Daniels' motives, paragraph B gives reasons why people do not pursue degrees at an advanced age. (X)
b) There is no justification offered in paragraph B as to why people at an advanced age do pursue education. (X)
c) Paragraph B explains the reasons why most people, unlike Daniels, do not pursue education later in life. (√)

Text organization

Sample text 6:

One challenge in developing drugs to fight brain tumors is that agents must be able to cross the blood-brain barrier, a filtering mechanism that only allows certain types of substances to enter the brain. (I) <u>It is not yet clear whether coibamide A would be able to cross the blood-brain barrier, an aspect the team plans to investigate in the future.</u> (II) <u>Marine bacteria have a potential to provide therapeutic leads with their unique chemical structures and biological activities, as illustrated by compounds such as coibamide A.</u> (III) <u>Ishmael said even if coibamide A itself cannot enter the brain or turns out to have adverse side effects, knowing its structure and mechanism of action can help researchers develop new drugs that mimic coibamide A's effects.</u>

Sample question 6:

Which underlined sentence does not fit in the paragraph?

a) (I)
b) (II)
c) (III)

Answer:
a) This sentence follows up on the previous one, explaining how the research team plan to proceed. (X)
b) Although the sentence includes a reference to Coibamide A at the end, the subject of the sentence is off-topic (marine bacteria). (√)
c) This sentence carried on the topic of crossing the blood-brain barrier and further explains how the researchers will proceed in case things go sideways. (X)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample text 7:

> Persuasion highlights the irrationality of human thinking. We may be living in a data-driven world, but that does not make people more logical. This is why the same people may regard an idea as absurd one day, and amazing the next. As Arthur Schopenhauer noted: "All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident."

Sample question 7:

Which of the following does the writer support by referring to Arthur Schopenhauer in the passage?

a) Persuasion has become easier in the data-driven world we live in.
b) The inconsistency of human reasoning reveals itself in persuasion.
c) What underlies persuasion is the tendency to think logically.

Answer:
a) There is reference to the data-driven world only to explain that it doesn't help to make people more rational. (X)
b) The stages given in Schopenhauer's words reveal the inconsistency of human thinking. (√)
c) Just the contrary, the author says persuasion is irrational. (X)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample text 8:

Dale Carnegie once noted that the only way to get someone to do something is to get that person to want to do something. Thus, all persuasion is ultimately self-persuasion. Even if I put a gun to your head, you are still free to decide what to do, albeit admittedly somewhat constrained. Scientific studies show that we are more likely to be persuaded when requests are consistent with our values, self-image, and future goals. In other words, people are easily persuaded of that which they wanted to do in the first place. As the French philosopher Blaise Pascal noted: "People are generally better persuaded by the reasons which they have themselves discovered than by those which have come into the mind of others."

Sample question 8:

Which statement is true according to the passage?

a) Outside influences play the most significant role in persuasion.
b) People are easier to persuade if the offer is in line with their ideas.
c) It is risky to try to persuade people to do things they avoid doing.

Answer:

a) This option conflicts with the ideas given in the first two lines of the passage. (X)
b) The writer states in the second half of the passage that people have a tendency to accept an idea if it is line with their own values. (√)
c) The statement might be true but there is no information about it in the passage. (X)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample text 9:

Are introverts oppressed? I would have to say so. For one thing, extroverts are over-represented in politics, a profession in which only the garrulous are really comfortable. Look at George W. Bush. Look at Bill Clinton. They seem to come fully to life only around other people. With the possible exception of Ronald Reagan, whose fabled aloofness and privateness were probably signs of a deep introverted streak, introverts are not considered "naturals" in politics. Extroverts therefore dominate public life. This is a pity. If we introverts ran the world, it would no doubt be a calmer, saner, more peaceful sort of place. As one introvert is supposed to have said, "Don't you know that four fifths of all our troubles in this life would disappear if we would just sit down and keep still?" And, "If you don't say anything, you won't be called on to repeat it." The only thing a true introvert dislikes more than talking about himself is repeating himself.

With their endless appetite for talk and attention, extroverts also dominate social life, so they tend to set expectations. In our extrovertist society, being outgoing is considered normal and therefore desirable, a mark of happiness, confidence, leadership. Extroverts are seen as bighearted, warm and empathic. "People person" is a compliment whereas introverts are described with words like "guarded," "loner," "reserved," "self-contained," or "private"—narrow, ungenerous words, words that suggest emotional parsimony and smallness of personality. Female introverts, I suspect, must suffer especially. In certain circles, a man can still sometimes get away with being what they used to call a strong and silent type; introverted women, lacking that alternative, are even more likely than men to be perceived as timid, withdrawn or egotistical.

Sample question 9:

It can be inferred from the passage that introverts _____ .

    a) are more likely to be seen among females with an egotistical personality
    b) may improve their social status despite others' opinions of them
    c) keep facing hardships due to the attitudes of the extroverts

Answer:
    a) In the second half of the second paragraph, there is reference to female introverts only to claim that female introverts suffer more than male introverts. (X)
    b) On the contrary, the text says, for example in politics, extroverts are overrepresented (lines 1-2). (X)
    c) In both paragraphs, there is reference to this idea, but mostly in paragraph 1, lines 6-7, paragraph 2, lines 1-6. (√)

Critical Reading Questions

Sample text 10:

No creature has a reputation more fearsome than the great white shark. Despite all we have learned about them, including how they really do not have much interest at all in eating us, movies and documentaries still show them as "machines" that do little more than "swim, attack and eat." And that's not to mention the various video games where your goal as a great white is to bite everything in sight in as little time as possible.

But what do great white sharks really do all day? It is easy for the mythology of these predators to overshadow their real biology because it is difficult to spend an extended amount of time following and observing animals that live beneath the waves and can cross entire oceans. We mostly see these sharks when they're near the surface, and, while ingenious, strategies like fitting cameras on the animals have literally been limited in scope and what can be recorded.

Thanks to some documentaries, Guadalupe Island off the coast of Mexico has become known as a great white shark hotspot. Yet, despite the abundance of sharks and observers – including cage divers – in the area, no one has seen how these sharks go about getting their meals. We have seen in these documentaries that the great white sharks of Guadalupe Island feed on the fur seals, elephant seals, and sea lions that loll about in the shallow waters there. Sharks have been seen feasting on the mammals at the surface. But we have never seen their initial strikes. Given that the waters around Guadalupe Island rapidly drop off from the shoreline, researcher Gregory Skomal and his colleagues think that the sharks are attacking their prey at depth and follow the carcass up the water column as it bobs to the surface.

Sample question 10:

It can be inferred from the passage that our knowledge of the great white sharks' behavior is limited because of _____.

a) the insufficient number of sharks
b) our inability to fit cameras onto them
c) the nature of their habitat

Answer:
   a) From the third paragraph, line 2, we understand that there are quite a number of sharks around Guadeloupe island. (X)
   b) From the second paragraph, lines 5 and 6, we understand that it is possible to fit cameras onto the sharks, though limited in number. (X)
   c) From the second paragraph, lines 2 and 3, and third paragraph, lines 6 and 7, we understand that it is hard to observe sharks when they are in deep sea. (√)

Graph Reading

Sample text 11:

The line graph sets out the unemployment rates for males and females in Brisbane in the years 1985 - 2005. The rates are clearly highly correlated over the given period. As was the case in the rest of Australia, the male unemployment rate rose dramatically from 6% to reach 12% in 1988 whereas the female unemployment rate showed a gradual increase of 1%, reaching a peak value of 10% in 1988. The unemployment rate for both genders then fell sharply until 2005, when it was reduced to a level of around 4% for females and 5% for males, the lowest levels achieved for more than two decades. This marked variation in the state of the labor market over the period provides an excellent opportunity to examine the relationship between unemployment levels and dispersion.

Sample question 11:

Which graph best illustrates the information given in the text?

a)

b)

c)

Answer:
   a) The figure shows that male unemployment rate was 6% in 1985, 12% in 1988, and 4% in 2005. However, the text says that male unemployment rate was 5% in 2005. (X)
   b) √
   c) The figure shows that female unemployment rate was 9% in 1985. It then went up to 12% showing a 3% increase. However, the text says that female unemployment rate increased only 1% to reach a peak value of 10%. (X)

READING PRACTICE: Careful Reading

Mark the alternatives that best answer the questions or complete the statements about the text.

Text I

A   "Fail at life. Go bomb yourself." Comments like this one, found on a CNN article about how women perceive themselves, are prevalent today across the internet, whether it's Facebook, Reddit, or a news website. Such behavior can range from profanity and name-calling to personal attacks, sexual harassment, or hate speech. A recent Pew Internet Survey found that four out of 10 people online have been harassed online, with far more having witnessed such behavior. Trolling has become so rampant that several websites have even resorted to completely removing comments.

B   Many believe that trolling is done by a small, vocal minority of sociopathic individuals. This belief has been reinforced not only in the media, but also in past research on trolling, which focused on interviewing these individuals. Some studies even showed that trolls have predisposing personal and biological traits, such as sadism and a propensity to seek excessive stimulation.

C   But what if all trolls aren't born trolls? What if they are ordinary people like you and me? In our research, we found that people can be influenced to troll others under the right circumstances in an online community. By analyzing 16 million comments made on CNN.com and conducting an online controlled experiment, we identified two key factors that can lead ordinary people to troll.

D   We recruited 667 participants through an online crowdsourcing platform and asked them to first take a quiz, then read an article and engage in discussion. Every participant saw the same article, but some were given a discussion that had started with comments by trolls, whereas others saw neutral comments instead. Here, trolling was defined using standard community guidelines—for example, name-calling, profanity, racism, or harassment. The quiz given beforehand was also varied, to be either easy or difficult.

E   Our analysis of comments on CNN.com helped to verify and extend these experimental observations. The first factor that seems to influence trolling is a person's mood. In our experiment, people put into negative moods were much more likely to start trolling. We also discovered that trolling ebbs and flows with the time of day and day of the week, in sync with natural human mood patterns. Trolling is most frequent late at night, and least frequent in the morning. Trolling also peaks on Monday, at the beginning of the workweek. Moreover, we discovered that a negative mood can persist beyond the events that brought about those feelings. Suppose that a person participates in a discussion where other people wrote troll comments. If that person goes on to participate in an unrelated discussion, he or she is more likely to troll in that discussion too.

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F The second factor is the context of a discussion. If a discussion begins with a "troll comment", then it is twice as likely to be trolled by other participants later on, compared to a discussion that does not start with a troll comment. In fact, these troll comments can add up. The more troll comments in a discussion, the more likely that future participants will also troll the discussion. Altogether, these results show how the initial comments in a discussion set a strong, lasting precedent for later trolling.

G We wondered if, by using these two factors, we could predict when trolling would occur. Using machine-learning algorithms, we were able to forecast about 80 percent of the time whether a person was going to troll or not. Interestingly, mood and discussion context were together a much stronger indicator of trolling than identifying specific individuals as trolls. In other words, trolling is caused more by the person's environment than any inherent trait. Since trolling is situational, and ordinary people can be influenced to troll, such behavior can end up spreading from person to person. A single troll comment in a discussion—perhaps written by a person who woke up on the wrong side of the bed—can lead to worse moods among other participants, and even more troll comments elsewhere. As this negative behavior continues to propagate, trolling can end up becoming the norm in communities if left unchecked.

H Despite these sobering results, there are several ways this research can help us create better online spaces for public discussion. By understanding what leads to trolling, we can now better predict when trolling is likely to happen. This can let us identify potentially provocative discussions ahead of time and preemptively alert moderators, who can then intervene in these aggressive situations.

I Social interventions can reduce trolling. __(a)__ If we allow people to remove recently posted comments, then we may be able to minimize regret from posting in the heat of the moment. Altering the context of a discussion, by prioritizing constructive comments, can increase the perception of civility. __(b)__ Nonetheless, there is lots more work to be done to address trolling. __(c)__ It is also important to differentiate the impact of a troll comment from the author's intent: Did the troll mean to hurt others, or was he or she just trying to express a different viewpoint? This can help separate undesirable individuals from those who just need help communicating their ideas.

J When online discussions break down, it is not just sociopaths who are to blame. We are also at fault. Many "trolls" are just people like ourselves who are having a bad day. Understanding that we are responsible for both the inspiring and depressing conversations we have online is key to having more productive online discussions.

1. **How does the information in paragraph B relate to paragraph C?**

   a) Paragraph B defines trolls, and paragraph C provides evidence that is found through text analysis on CNN.com.
   b) Paragraph B presents how trolls are generally characterized, and paragraph C opposes that view.
   c) Paragraph B presents research evidence on individual troll characteristics, and paragraph C supports it by presenting experiment results.

2. **According to the author, which factors are believed to affect trolling behavior?**

   a) Time and day, and the number of participants in a discussion
   b) People's feelings and familiarity with others they communicate with
   c) People's state of mind and interaction behavior

3. **Which of the following <u>cannot</u> be concluded from paragraph G?**

   a) Online discussion boards need to be moderated.
   b) Specific conditions accelerate trolling behavior.
   c) Computed algorithms reveal best who will troll.

4. **Choose the best summary for paragraph H.**

   a) This research is useful in revealing the reasons for trolling and preparing to take action before trolling happens.
   b) The results of the research are disheartening; however, through open discussions, we may be able to prevent trolling in online spaces such as discussion boards.
   c) The research reveals that we should be more careful in online platforms and help moderators isolate those people who troll.

5. **Where in paragraph I does the following sentence belong?**

   Even just pinning a post about a community's rules to the top of discussion pages helps, as a recent experiment conducted on Reddit showed.

   a) (a)
   b) (b)
   c) (c)

6. **What is the best title for this text?**

   a) Trolls Redefined
   b) Trolling on the Rise
   c) A Troll by Nature

Text II

A   In the 1950s, the Finnish biologist Björn Kurtén noticed something unusual in the fossilized horses he was studying. When he compared the shapes of the bones of species separated by only a few generations, he could detect lots of small but significant changes. Horse species separated by millions of years, however, showed far fewer differences in their bone structure. Subsequent studies over the next half century found similar effects—organisms appeared to evolve more quickly when biologists tracked them over shorter timescales. Then, in the mid-2000s, Simon Ho, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Sydney, encountered a similar phenomenon in the genomes he was analyzing. When he calculated how quickly DNA mutations accumulated in birds over just a few thousand years, Ho found the genomes full of small mutations. This indicated a rapidly ticking evolutionary clock. But when he zoomed out and compared DNA sequences separated by millions of years, he found something very different. The evolutionary clock had slowed to a crawl.

B   Baffled by his results, Ho set to work trying to figure out what was going on. He stumbled upon Kurtén's 1959 work and realized that the differences in rates of physical change Kurtén saw also appeared in genetic sequences. His instincts as an evolutionary biologist told him that the mutation rates he was seeing in the short term were the correct ones. The genomes varied at only a few locations, and each change was as obvious as <u>a splash of paint on a white wall</u>. But if more splashes of paint appear on a wall, they will gradually conceal some of the original color beneath new layers. Similarly, evolution and natural selection write over the initial mutations that appear over short timescales. Over millions of years, an A in the DNA may become a T, but in the intervening time it may be a C or a G for a while. Ho believes that this mutational saturation is a major cause of what he calls the time-dependent rate phenomenon.

C   "Think of it like the stock market," he said. "Look at the hourly or daily fluctuations of Standard & Poor's 500 index, and it will appear wildly unstable, swinging this way and that. Zoom out, however, and the market appears much more stable as the daily shifts start to average out. In the same way, the forces of natural selection weed out the less advantageous and more deleterious mutations over time."

D   Ho's discovery of the time-dependent rate phenomenon in the genome had major implications for biologists. It meant that many of the dates they used as bookmarks when reading life's saga—everything from the first split between eukaryotes and prokaryotes billions of years ago to the re-emergence of the Ebola virus in 2014—could be wrong. "When this work came out, everyone went 'Oh. Oh, dear,'" said Rob Lanfear, an evolutionary biologist at the Australian National University in Canberra.

E	The time-dependent rate phenomenon wasn't fully appreciated at first. For one thing, it is such a large and consequential concept that biologists needed time to wrap their heads around it. But there's a bigger block: The concept has been all but impossible to use. Biologists have not been able to quantify exactly how much they should change their estimates of when things happened over the course of evolutionary history. Without a concrete way to calculate the shifts in evolutionary rates over time, scientists couldn't compare dates.

F	Recently, Aris Katzourakis, a paleovirologist at the University of Oxford, has taken the time-dependent rate phenomenon and applied it to the evolution of viruses. In doing so, he has not only pushed back the origin of certain classes of retroviruses to around half a billion years ago—long before the first animals moved from the seas to terra firma—he has also developed a mathematical model that can be used to account for the time-dependent rate phenomenon, providing biologists with much more accurate dates for evolutionary events.

G	Other scientists are excited by the prospect. "It's like Einstein's theory of relativity, but for viruses," said Sebastián Duchêne, a computational evolutionary biologist at the University of Melbourne. The time-dependent rate phenomenon says that the speed of an organism's evolution will depend on the time frame over which the observer is looking at it. And as with relativity, researchers can now calculate by how much.

7. **What is the function of paragraph A?**

   a) It explains unexpected findings regarding the development of a rare animal species.
   b) It introduces similar research findings by two biologists from different countries.
   c) It shows how the understanding of the evolutionary process varied in two decades.

8. **Why does the writer use the phrase "a splash of paint on a white wall" in paragraph B?**

   a) To help the reader recognize the significance of short-term mutation rates
   b) To help the reader see the similarity between mutation and natural selection
   c) To help the reader understand the causes of different mutation rates

9. **According to paragraph E, what is true about biologists' reactions to the time-dependent rate phenomenon?**

   a) They did not think it was such a significant find.
   b) They tried to challenge the idea with further research.
   c) They felt they needed a method to put it into practice.

10. **Which of the following could be the best title for this text?**

   a) Evolution and time: New evolutionary evidence creates a conflict
   b) DNA mutations may have been overrated, new research finds
   c) Evolution is slower than it looks, faster than you think

Match statements (11-13) with a scientist (a-e). There are more names than you need.

|	
11. He introduced a new concept that greatly altered the existing literature of evolution. _____	a. Aris Katzourakis
	b. Björn Kurtén
12. His work enabled the putting of time-dependent rate phenomenon to practical use. _____	c. Rob Lanfear
	d. Sebastián Duchêne
13. His work focused on the physical make-up of fossils belonging to an animal species. _____	e. Simon Ho

CAREFUL READING: Graph reading

14. Chose the graph that best illustrates the description given below.

The bar graph shows the technological trends which will have the greatest impact on companies worldwide 10 years from now, as of 2018. Around 41% of both developer and chief executive respondents indicated that artificial intelligence (AI) is the technical trend that will have the greatest impact on their companies within the next decade. The second most influential technology trend will be the Internet of Things (IoT) according to both respondent groups, though chosen for only about half of the time in comparison to AI. In the third place was Virtual Assistants (VA) for the Chief Executives (close to 25%) and Machine Learning (ML) for developers (around 18%). Chief executives, unlike developers, did not believe ML to be a viable trend in the next decade at all.

a)

b)

c)
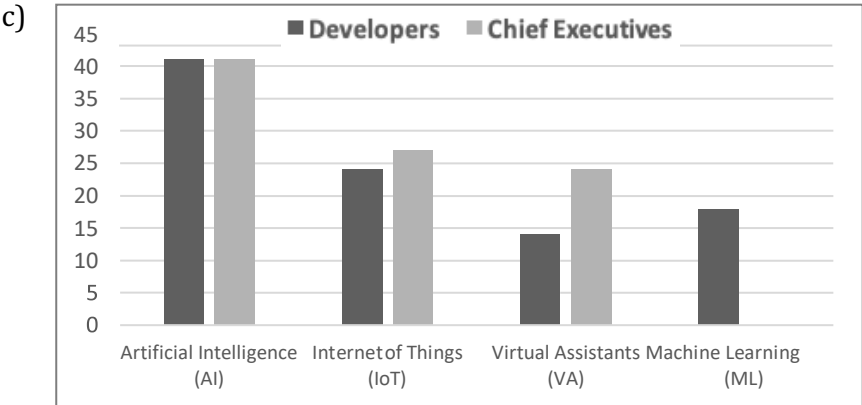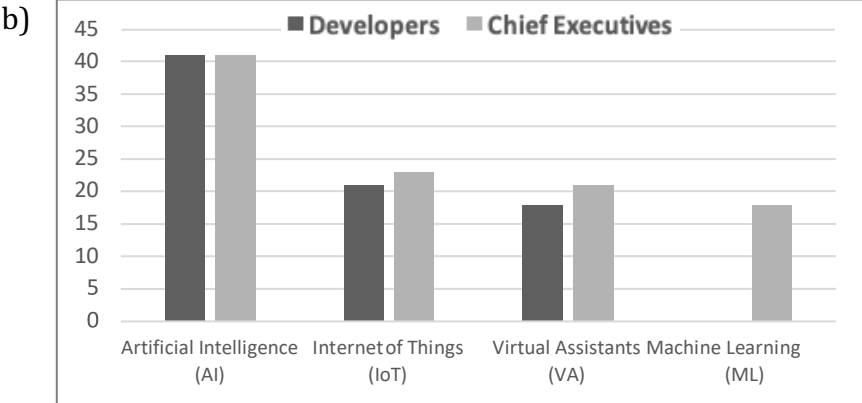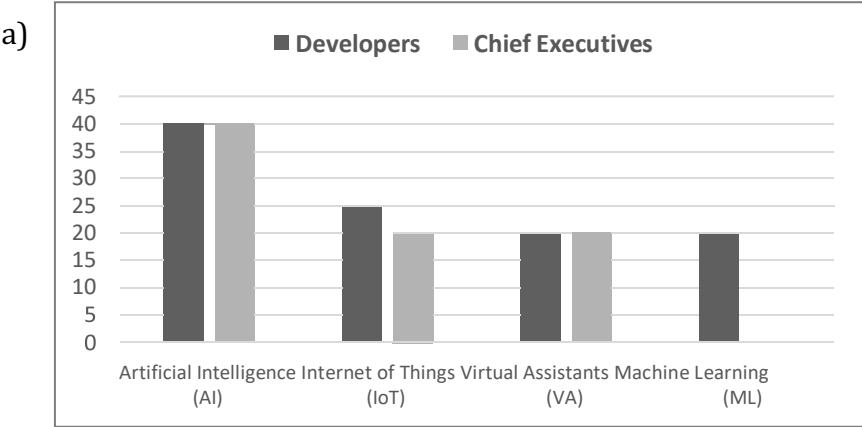
15. Chose the graph that best illustrates the description given below.

This graph shows the results of a survey on the most popular online activities among teenagers in Germany in 2017, broken down by gender. During the survey period, it was found that teenage boys and girls displayed differences in their use of online activities, the major differences being found in communication and gaming. Teenage boys reported that their online activity time was almost equally divided between communication, gaming, and entertainment. Information search was the least popular activity with 11%. On the other hand, teenage girls showed a higher preference for communication, which took almost 45% of their time online. The second most popular activity for teenage girls was entertainment by 33%, followed by information search (12%), and gaming (9%).
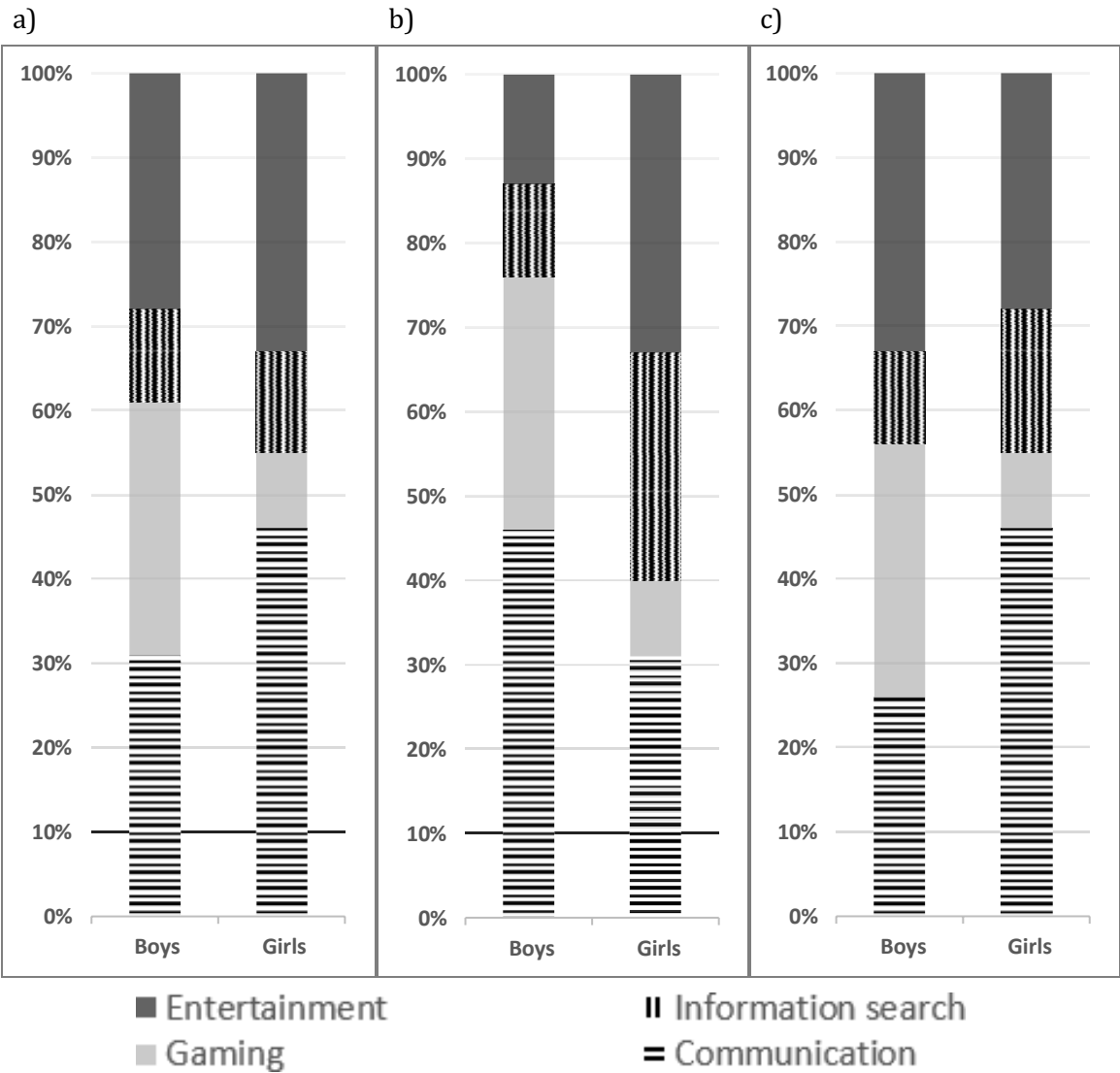
Reading Practice Answers:

1. B

2. C

3. C

4. A

5. B

6. A

7. B

8. A

9. C

10. C

11. E

12. A

13. B

14. C

15. A

VOCABULARY

This section of the examination tests your ability to recognize words that are commonly used in texts for general audience and entry-level academic texts. Each question requires you to select the best alternative that is closest in meaning to, or provides the correct definition of the given word. There are 20 questions in this section, worth a total of 20 points (1 point for each item).

How to prepare for the Vocabulary Section

What Vocabulary?

In academic studies, for adequate comprehension of texts, you need to understand between 95% and 98% of the words in the text (Laufer, 1989[1]; Nation, 2006[2]; Schmitt et al., 2011[3]). This would require knowledge of 8,000 – 9,000 word families (Nation, 2006[2]). The knowledge of the 2,800 Core General English Words listed in the *New General Service List* (NGSL) and 960 Academic Words listed in the *New Academic Word List* (NAWL), both of which are available online, helps you understand about 92% of the texts. This implies that the more you expand your vocabulary knowledge, the more easily you will be able to understand written and spoken texts used in academic studies.

How to Study?

A language user should bear in mind that vocabulary learning is incremental, i.e. it happens gradually and in time. Also, it is well-established that learning words requires several exposures, that is, words "need to be met many times in order to be learned" (Schmitt, 2010: 20-21[4]). Paying special attention to the unknown words in the texts you read or listen to and keeping a record of those words could help improve your vocabulary knowledge.

Moreover, knowledge of derivations of words could help expand your vocabulary knowledge. To illustrate, when you learn the word *nation*, you can note down its derivations (*national*, *nationally*, *nationalism*, *international* etc.). Knowledge of polysemous words (words with more than one meaning) could also help improve your vocabulary knowledge. To illustrate, when you learn the word *chip*, you can note down that it could mean a *chip* of wood, a computer *chip* or a potato *chip* (Schmitt, 2010[4]).

There are numerous resources on vocabulary and vocabulary development online which you can refer to. Three of them are given below:

> www.englishprofile.org,
> www.newgeneralservicelist.org, and
> phave-dictionary.englishup.me/faq/index.html.

---

[1] Laufer, B. (1989). What percentage of text-lexis is essential for comprehension? In C. Lauren & M. Nordman (Eds.), *Special language: From humans to thinking machines* (pp. 316–323). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

[2] Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, *63*, 59–82.

[3] Schmitt, N, Jiang, X. & Grabe, W. (2011). The percentage of words known in a text and reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, *95*, 26-43.

[4] Schmitt, N. (2010). *Researching vocabulary: A vocabulary research manual*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

For each item, mark the alternative that is closest in meaning to, or gives the correct definition of the given word.

1. **PHENOMENAL**
    a. complicated
    b. abstract
    c. acceptable
    d. extraordinary
    e. functional

2. **BREAKTHROUGH**
    a. an important new discovery
    b. a change in or to something
    c. the beginning of something
    d. a sudden or violent increase in activity
    e. the act of entering a building illegally and by force

3. **DETERMINATION**
    a. the act of taking part in an activity or event
    b. the ability to keep increasing, or developing
    c. the act of delaying something that must be done
    d. the quality of trying to do something even when it is difficult
    e. the feeling of having a positive opinion of someone or something

4. **OFFENSE**
    a. prospect
    b. secret
    c. status
    d. insurance
    e. crime

5. **WELFARE**
    a. a long metal weapon
    b. a public notice or advertisement
    c. health and happiness
    d. rank or level in society
    e. an area of land that is controlled by a government

6. **BRING ABOUT**
    a. prove
    b. determine
    c. stop
    d. understand
    e. cause

7. **PUT OFF**
    a. try to find more information about something
    b. prevent someone from reaching their full potential
    c. drop something on the ground
    d. arrange to do something at a later time
    e. return something to its original owner

8. **SPECIMEN**
    a. construction
    b. sample
    c. requirement
    d. institution
    e. characteristic

9. **INFERIOR**
    a. different from anyone or anything else
    b. lower in rank, status, or quality
    c. lacking one or more parts
    d. not happening very often
    e. difficult to believe

10. **GRADUALLY**
    a. regularly
    b. actively
    c. highly
    d. slowly
    e. quietly

Vocabulary Practice Answers

1. D
2. A
3. D
4. E
5. C
6. E
7. D
8. B
9. B
10. D

WRITING TASK

In this section, test takers are expected to write a text of about 150 words based on a given situation. The objectives of this section are to assess test-takers' ability to

- write a coherent and well-organized text appropriate in style and content to the given situation,
- use a variety of sentence structures correctly,
- use an expanded range of vocabulary that relates to the given topic, and
- use correct punctuation, capitalization and spelling.

How to proceed with the writing task

Read the given situation or the prompt, and note the key words. Think what you know about the topic given. The instructions will include some ideas that you can use in your response. You are free to use the ideas provided for you, or your own ideas.

- **Do not list** the ideas one after the other.
- You should **expand and build on** the main ideas, using **correct and varied sentence structures**, and **appropriate and varied vocabulary**.

Expected response format and features

The instructions of the writing task provide information on the format of your response. In general, there are no strict rules as to the layout of your response, except that it should be a connected text; i.e. either in paragraph or essay format. The expected length is about 150 words. Responses that exceed the word limit by about 25% (more than 190 words) will lose one point.

Rating

The weighting of the task is 30 points. The following criteria are used in rating.

Rhetoric

In their response, the test taker

- addresses all requirements of the task appropriately (rhetorical structure, word limit, number of points, register),
- fully develops the topic (expands on the topic, presents ideas logically and without digression), and
- organizes and presents the ideas in a coherent manner.

Language Use

In their response, the test taker

- displays accurate use of a wide range of sentence structures,
- displays appropriacy and variety in word choice, and
- has good control of the mechanics of language (punctuation, capitalization and spelling).

A response that does not address the requirements of the task deserves zero points for Writing.

WRITING TASK PRACTICE 1

> ## SHARE YOUR IDEAS WITH US!
>
> Dear Students
>
> The university administration has decided to make improvements to the student cafeteria, and you are invited to suggest which specific aspects of the cafeteria you think need improvement. Your suggestions will appear on the cafeteria webpage.
>
> Thank you!
>
> Cafeteria Administration

In a paragraph of about 150 words, respond to the announcement above, explaining which **<u>two areas</u>** should be improved to better serve the students by giving reasons. You can use the following or your own ideas.

- meals (price, variety, etc.)
- services (number of employees, service hours, etc.)
- physical conditions (hygiene, tables and chairs, etc.)

Your response will be evaluated based on your ability to

- develop and expand on ideas to produce a fluent and well-connected text
- use a wide range of sentence structures and vocabulary correctly and appropriately.

Sample response - 1

> *I can make two suggestions to improve the student cafeteria: one is about the meals and the second is about the dining area. First, the variety of the meals can be improved. We are often offered the same menu for twice or three times a week, which makes it uninviting. I would like to see more variety on the menus, and also that fresh ingredients be used in cooking rather than frozen vegetables or frozen meat. In addition, vegetarian students' needs can also be catered for and more vegetable courses can be added. Second, the dinning area needs to be improved. As it is, it looks dull due to the worn-out furniture and fluoresent lights. Moreover, the number of tables is not enough. The tables and chairs need to be renovated and their number needs to be increased. In addition, modern lighting can be installed to make this area more attractive. I believe, these improvements will uplift employees' morale as well as the students'.*
>
> *(164 words)*

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

➢ appropriately addresses the task
➢ sufficiently develops both ideas (in a balanced manner)
➢ has a slightly irrelevant concluding sentence (inclusion of the employees)
➢ has an appropriate register (semi-formal for posting on a website)

Language Use

➢ uses a range of simple, compound and complex sentence structures correctly
➢ uses a range of vocabulary correctly
➢ contains two spelling mistakes (***dinning*** instead of **dining** and ***fluoresent*** instead of **fluorescent**)

Grading: This paper deserves a total grade of 10 points.

Sample response - 2

> *Student cafeteria should improve in mainly two ways to serve better to students in the university.*
>
> *Firstly, the serving time periods are insufficient. For lunch, it serves meals between 12:00 – 13:30. For supper it serves between 17:00 – 18:30. This is far less than the needed time needed for students to have their meals. The serving time period must be longer than that in order to provide food for this many students in METU campus.*
>
> *Secondly, the physical conditions of the cafeteria should be improved it is a small building and in winter it doesn't provide enough protection for its users. The line always floodes outside to solve this problem an arrangement should be done to the line. Or another cafeteria must be built.*
>
> *In conclusion, the administration must work on the cafeteria to make the students well-fed, comfortable and happy.*
>
> *(140 words)*

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

➢ appropriately addresses the task
➢ displays limited idea development (the second point)
➢ has an appropriate register (semi-formal for posting on a website)

Language Use

➢ uses a limited range of simple, compound and complex sentence structures correctly
➢ contains problems in sentence formation (e.g. ***cafeteria should improve***) and mostly simple sentences
➢ contains a few instances of wrong word choice (***needed*** repeated in one sentence, ***users***, ***floodes***)
➢ has some punctuation mistakes

Grading: This paper deserves a total grade of 6.

Sample response - 3

> *School cafeteria is good and cheap for students but it can be better with improvements in two areas. Firstly, meals aren't tasty and various. They should be cooked well in particularly meats and chickens. Moreover, there aren't various meals for vegan students. Because of this, they find hard to eat at the student cafeteria. Secondly service of the student cafeteria is not good. Due to lack of enough employees, there are long lines at the cafeteria in everyday. Furthermore service hours are too short for one student to get your meal in that long lines. Therefore students either arrive the cafeteria too early or they eat their meals in another place. Finally, the university administration can improve the physical conditions. The hygiene of cutlery is not reassuring. In conclusion, these problems should be fixed because students are bored of these problems.*
>
> *(141 words)*

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

- ➢ addresses the task
- ➢ has an appropriate register (semi-formal for posting on a website)
- ➢ displays limited idea development (includes three points instead of two, and the points need some more elaboration)
- ➢ is partly incoherent
- ➢ has a partly inappropriate concluding sentence

Language Use

- ➢ uses a limited range of simple and compound sentences
- ➢ lacks complex sentences
- ➢ has problems in word choice/use (***particularly, various, reassuring***)
- ➢ has some punctuation mistakes

Grading: This paper deserves a total grade of 4.

WRITING TASK PRACTICE 2

One of your professors has given a lecture on the features of a healthy city. Below are some of the points mentioned in the lecture.

- ➢ healthy physical environment (recreational areas, quality of buildings, etc.)
- ➢ sufficient educational opportunities (schools at all levels, etc.)
- ➢ easy access to health services (sufficient number of health professionals, etc.)

Your professor has asked you to discuss the features of a healthy city that you find most important.

In a paragraph of about 150 words, explain which **two** features of a healthy city you find most important. You can use the ideas mentioned by the professor or your own ideas.

Your response will be evaluated based on your ability to

- - develop and expand on ideas to produce a fluent and well-connected text
- - use a wide range of sentence structures and vocabulary correctly and appropriately.

Sample response - 1

> *There are two features that make a city 'healthy city'. The first feature is a healthy physical environment; that is, having green areas for recreation and good infrastructure. The residents of a city need green areas for a healthy life. The green areas, i.e. parks, lakes, etc, provide opportunities for people to do sports, get clean air, and socialize. A good infrastructure, i.e. good roads, and buildings, are also important in offering a healthy way of life. There will be less accidents and health problems due to the construction of houses, or offices. The second important feature is having educational opportunities. In every neighborhood, there should be schools for all levels. In such a case, students will not need to travel to far away parts of the city to get to their schools. If they will easily access their schools on foot or by bikes, they will not waste time commuting, they will not risk being in the traffic, and they will not be tired before they start their lessons. I believe that this is very important for achieving a high standard in education. In conclusion, the physical environment as well as educational opportunities are important features that make a city healthy.*
>
> *(202 words)*

Feedback to the

response: Rhetoric

➢ addresses most requirements of the task (longer than the expected word limit)
➢ uses simple and compound sentence structures correctly
➢ has an appropriate register (formal)
➢ displays coherence problems (e.g. the last sentence explaining the second feature contains an irrelevant idea)

Language Use

➢ displays a good range of vocabulary use (***infrastructure, socialize, residents, commuting***)
➢ contains a few language errors: e.g. error in if-clause (***If they will easily access***...); a S-V agreement problem (***A good infrastructure ... are..***)

Grading: This paper deserves a total grade of 8.

Sample response - 2

A healthy city can be defined as a place where healthy people live. For a healthy city there are two important features. First one is a healthy physical environment. There will be recreational areas where people could have calm rest or walk their pets. This areas are green with trees, and grasses. Having green in the city is essential for planning architecture of the city. So it becomes an artistic and organized city. Secondly, sufficient educational opportunities is important because education effects our lifes directly. When the people are educated, for example, your neighbor, your grocer, everyone's life will be higher quality. There will be few problems with other people, and everyone will be healthy and happy. To sum up, we should have a healthy physical environment and educational opportunities for everyone to have a healthy city.

(137 words)

Feedback to the response:

Rhetoric

➢ addresses the task
➢ displays limited topic development (insufficient explanations and weak connection between ideas)
➢ displays jumpiness and irrelevance in the organization of ideas

Language Use

➢ displays control in forming simple sentences
➢ contains a faulty complex sentence (***There will be recreational areas …***)
➢ displays a S-V agreement problem (***sufficient educational opportunities is …***)
➢ contains spelling mistakes (***lifes, effects***)

Grading: This paper deserves a total grade of 5.

SOURCES

British Council
Harvard Business Review
Journal of Urban Affairs
Nationalgeographic.com
Statistics Denmark
theconversation.com
Time Magazine
Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu
Upliftconnect.com
www.amara.org
www.americanscientist.org
www.ijapsa.com
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