

國立清華大學外國語文學系

一百零三學年度大學甄選入學英文讀寫能力測驗試題

There are three reading passages in this exam. Please read the passages and answer the questions that follow. The answer to each question should be between 120 and 300 words. Answer the questions in your own words based on your knowledge on the topics and your personal life experience. You should finish the test within 90 minutes.

Passage A

Eight steps toward a sustainable future

By Vargo, M., & Blass, L.

We humans have unlimited appetites, but we live on a planet with limited resources. We already use more of Earth's renewable resources-such as forests, clean air, and fresh water-than nature can restore each year. And when the rate of consumption of a resource is greater than the rate at which it is replaced, the resource may become exhausted.

Today, Earth's population stands at around seven billion, and it is still growing fast. By 2050, we face the possibility of nine billion people living on the planet. As a result, the imbalance between what nature replenishes and humans consume will probably continue to grow. So how will so many more people live on Earth without exhausting the planet?

The key is sustainability-finding new and efficient ways to conserving more and consuming less-so that we do not ultimately exhaust our most valuable resources. Here are some steps to sustainability from around the world:

1. Sustainable communities

Sustainable communities are cities and towns that encourage residents to protect their local environment in ways that also reduce their impact on the larger global environments. Residents in Mbam, Senegal, for example, use solar ovens to cook food. By using solar energy instead of cutting down trees for fuel, people are saving forests for future generations. Communities in other places are using improved public transportation systems to reduce the need for cars. In Curitiba, Brazil, city buses are frequent, convenient, and efficient-so 70 percent of Curitiba's commuters use them. As a result, the city has little traffic congestion and cleaner air.

2. Safer livestock production

As meat consumption grows, so do the environmental and health consequences of producing it. For example, the animal waste that results from livestock production can cause water pollution. Moreover, livestock production that is close to urban centers can cause dangerous diseases such as avian flu. Some governments are using financial incentives to address this problem. In Bangkok, Thailand, poultry production centers that are within 62 miles of the city must pay a special tax. The goal is to encourage livestock producers to move away from the city center.

3. Renewable energy resources

The sun's energy provides a nonpolluting and renewable energy source. Harvesting that energy is an increasing trend. One method is via the use of photovoltaic cells (PVs), which convert solar energy to electricity. By the end of 2011, PVs produced 69 gigawatts of power worldwide. Germany is the world's top installer of PVs; other major solar energy producers include Spain and Japan. Another pollution-free, renewable alternative is wind power. Global wind-power capacity grew by about 27 percent in just one year-between 2006 and 2007-and it continues to grow. As of 2011, China led in wind-power production, generating over 62,000 gigawatts of wind-produced energy. The United States and Germany are also major wind-power producers.

4. Social responsible investing (SRI)

People who practice socially responsible investing (SRI) buy shares in companies that engage in activities that are beneficial to the planet, such as alternative energy production or environmentally sound waste-management practice. While SRI activity is most common in Europe and the United States, it is also growing quickly in Canada and Australia, and it is beginning to emerge in other countries, such as South Korea, Brazil, Malaysia, and South Africa.

Questions:

1. Write a summary that consists of the main ideas and supporting ideas of the reading passage. (20%)
2. Which step suggested by the author is feasible for people in Taiwan and why? (15%)
3. What other step(s) would you suggest for a sustainable future to work around the world? (15%)

Passage B

Even when people speak of higher and lower degrees of pleasure, art stares impassively* back at them; for it wishes to fly high and low and to be left in peace, so long as it can give pleasure to people. (Bertolt Brecht, A Short Organum for the Theatre)

*impassively: not feeling or showing emotion.

Question:

Discuss the ideas of art and pleasure as specified from the above passage. Do you agree with the author? You might consider using concrete examples to illustrate your point. (25%)

Passage C

Tears (1891-1892)

By Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Tears! tears! tears!
 In the night, in solitude, tears,
 On the white shore dripping, dripping, suck'd in by the sand,
 Tears, not a star shining, all dark and desolate,
 Moist tears from the eyes of a muffled head;
 O who is that ghost? that form in the dark, with tears?
 What shapeless lump is that, bent, crouch'd there on the sand?
 Streaming tears, sobbing tears, throes, choked with wild cries;
 O storm, embodied, rising, careering with swift steps along the beach!
 O wild and dismal night storm, with wind--O belching and desperate!
 O shade so sedate and decorous by day, with calm countenance and regulated pace,
 But away at night as you fly, none looking--O then the unloosen'd ocean,
 Of tears! tears! tears!

Questions:

Please interpret the poem in your own words. You may consider approaching it from any of the following aspects: What is the poem about? What kinds of images would this piece of writing bring up by paring human emotions with the physical world? Can you relate the poem to your personal experiences? You can also freely express your reading from a different perspective. (25%)