

一百零四學年度大學甄選入學英文讀寫能力測驗試題

Read the following two passages and complete the writing tasks in your own words. You are encouraged to draw on your knowledge of the topics and your personal experience. This test is 90-minute long.

PASSAGE A

[Excerpted from "How to write with style " by Kurt Vonnegut]

Newspaper reporters and technical writers are trained to reveal almost nothing about themselves in their writing. This makes them freaks in the world of writers, since almost all of the other ink-stained wretches in that world reveal a lot about themselves to readers. We call these revelations, accidental and intentional, elements of style. These revelations tell us as readers what sort of person it is with whom we are spending time. Does the writer sound ignorant or informed, stupid or bright, crooked or honest, humorless or playful—? And on and on. [...] The most damning revelation you can make about yourself is that you do not know what is interesting and what is not. Don't you yourself like or dislike writers mainly for what they choose to show or make you think about? Did you ever admire an empty-headed writer for his or her mastery of the language? No. So your own winning style must begin with ideas in your head.

- **Find a subject you care about.** Find a subject you care about and which you in your heart feel others should care about. It is this genuine caring, and not your games with language, which will be the most compelling and seductive element in your style. I am not urging you to write a novel, by the way—although I would not be sorry if you wrote one, provided you genuinely cared about something. A petition to the mayor about a pothole in front of your house or a love letter to the girl next door will do.
- **Keep it simple.** As for your use of language: Remember that two great masters of language, William Shakespeare and James Joyce, wrote sentences which were almost childlike when their subjects were most profound. "To be or not to be?" asks Shakespeare's Hamlet. The longest word is three letters long. Joyce, when he was frisky, could put together a sentence as intricate and as glittering as a necklace for Cleopatra, but my favorite sentence in his short story "Eveline" is this one: "She was tired." At that point in the story, no other words could break the heart of a reader as those three words do. [...]

- **Sound like yourself.** The writing style which is most natural for you is bound to echo speech you heard when a child. English was Conrad's third language, and much that seems piquant in his use of English was no doubt colored by his first language, which was Polish. [...] No matter what your first language, you should treasure it all your life. If it happens not to be standard English, and if it shows itself when you write standard English, the result is usually delightful, like a very pretty girl with one eye that is green and one that is blue. I myself find that I trust my own writing most, and others seem to trust it most, too, when I sound most like a person from Indianapolis, which is what I am. [...]
- **Say what you mean.** I understand now that all those antique essays and stories with which I was to compare my own work were not magnificent for their datedness or foreignness, but for saying precisely what their authors meant them to say. My teachers wished me to write accurately, always selecting the most effective words, and relating the words to one another unambiguously, rigidly, like parts of a machine. The teachers did not want to turn me into an Englishman after all. They hoped that I would become understandable — and therefore understood. And there went my dream of doing with words what Pablo Picasso did with paint or what any number of jazz idols did with music. If I broke all the rules of punctuation, had words mean whatever I wanted them to mean, and strung them together higgledy-piggledy, I would simply not be understood. So you, too, had better avoid Picasso-style or jazz-style writing, if you have something worth saying and wish to be understood.

Writing task (Please write a paragraph of at least 150 words to respond to each question)

1. Explain what Vonnegut meant by "style". (25%)
2. Which of Vonnegut's rules speaks to you the most? Explain.(25%)

PASSAGE B

[Excerpted from "The Writer As Worker" by Carlos Bulosan]

Why should I write about labor unions and their struggle? Because a writer is also a worker. He writes stories, for example, and sells them or tries to sell them. They are products of his brain. They are commodities. Then again, a writer is also a citizen; and as citizen he must safeguard his civil rights and liberties. Life is a collective work and also a social reality. Therefore the writer must participate with his fellow man in the struggle to protect, to brighten, to fulfill life. Otherwise he has no meaning — a nothing.

Now culture being a social product, I firmly believe that any work of art should have a

social function---to beautify, to glorify, to dignify man. This assertion has always been true, and it applies to all social systems. But always art is in the hands of the dominant class---which wields its power to perpetuate its supremacy and existence. Since any social system is forced to change to another by concrete economic forces, its art changes also to be charged, reshaped, and revitalized by the new conditions. Thus, if the writer has any significance, it should write about the world in which he lives: interpret his time and envision the future through his knowledge of historical reality.

And these are times that demand of the writer to declare his positive stand — his supreme sacrifice — on the question of war or peace, life or death. The writer who sides with and gives his voice to democracy and progress is a real writer, because he writes to protect man and restore his dignity. He writes so that this will be a world of mutual cooperation, mutual protection, mutual love; so that darkness, ignorance, brutality, exploitation of man by another, and deceit will be purged from the face of the earth.

Writing task (50%)

What is the role and responsibility of the writer according to Carlos Bulosan? Do you share his point of view or disagree with him? Is there anything else which you want to emphasize in talking about the role and responsibility of the writer? Consider these questions and write a short essay (250-350 words) in which you develop your own thoughts on the role and responsibility of the writer, with Bulosan's main idea and your agreements and disagreements with him being indicated.