

## 111 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 experiences. This test is 100-minute long.

### PASSAGE A

[Excerpts from *In Schools, Subtle Pressure to Change Students' Grades* by David Gonzalez; The New York Times, Jul 3, 1995]

Principals and teachers around New York City say that the pressure to reassess the grades of failing students -- as a high school principal did last week -- surfaces in subtle ways.

They describe the case of Robert Durkin, the principal of Washington Irving High School in Manhattan, as an extreme case. He was removed last week for giving 17 failing seniors extra homework and permitting them to graduate. He bypassed the authority of teachers, who reported him to Board of Education officials. The same conflict ripples more gently through the rest of the school system, with teachers describing pressure from their principals and principals saying they sometimes change a grade, based on a student's appeal.

Susan Amlung, a spokeswoman for the teachers union, said some principals urged passing disruptive students for the good of the school. Other times, she said, there was concern for improving the school's image. "And sometimes, it's a money thing," she said. "Keeping kids back means stretching an already thin budget over one more student." She said that proving such instances has been difficult when dealing with nontenured teachers, who depend on their principal's approval for continued work. But the most egregious cases were eliminated after 1990, she said, when the teachers union contract was modified to stipulate that changes had to be justified in writing.

Principals of several high schools insisted that the union had overstated the severity of the problem and said they did not feel pressured to take shortcuts in boosting graduation and passing rates. "The graduation rate is what it is," Mark Orfinger, the principal of Harry S. Truman High School in the Bronx, said. "We all want to raise the graduation rate, but in terms of doing something not educationally viable, that's something I wouldn't do." Which is not to say that students who are short a few credits for graduation do not try to cajole him. In some cases, he said, he will review the student's work with the teacher, but changes are only made for students who are "within striking distance" and complete alternative assignments.

"If it's clear and unequivocal that the student has not done the work, there's nothing to be served or gained by passing," he said. "It's not the be all and end all. There's summer and night school and life goes on. The key is to explain it to the student." Frank Mickens, the principal of Boys and Girls High School in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, said he made sure his students knew what he expected of them the minute they arrived. For the last nine years -- presaging a policy recently adopted systemwide -- students have had to meet all their graduation requirements if they are to march across the stage at graduation.

Discussions between principals and teachers over failing students, he said, come too late in the semester. "Getting a grade report at the end of the year and attempting to identify those kids who have almost made it and then having discussions with the teacher to figure out how to salvage those students lives is probably a more widespread discussion than has previously been acknowledged," said Mr. Nadelstern, who has been the principal of the International High School at Fiorello H. La Guardia Community College in Queens. "Because it happens so late, I wouldn't be surprised if the teacher felt some pressure."

Ultimately, it boils down to individuals balancing the tensions between holding to a hard line on standards and having a heart for students beset by bad grades or bad luck.

● **Writing Tasks (50%)**

1. Please write a 100-word summary of the article. (15%)
2. After reading this article, do you think that the action of reviewing students' grades or even passing the students is justified AFTER students already failed to meet course requirements? Why? Please elaborate on your answer. (35%)

**PASSAGE B**

**In her 2019 book, *How to Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*, artist Jenny Odell examines the value of creative mind-wandering and suggests ways to reclaim our attention from commercial social media. Here is an excerpt from the book:**

If doing nothing requires space and time away from the unforgiving landscape of productivity, we might be tempted to conclude that the answer is to turn our backs to the world, temporarily or for good. But this response would be shortsighted. All too often, things like digital detox retreats are marketed as a kind of “life hack” for increasing productivity upon our return to work. And the impulse to say goodbye to it all, *permanently*, doesn't just neglect our responsibility to the world that we live in; it is largely unfeasible, and for good reason.

Last summer, I accidentally staged my own digital detox retreat. I was on a solitary trip to the Sierra Nevada to work on a project about the Mokelumne River, and the cabin I had booked had no cell reception and no Wi-Fi. Because I hadn't expected this to be the case, I was also unprepared: I hadn't told people I would be offline for the next few days, hadn't answered important emails, hadn't downloaded music. Alone in the cabin, it took me about twenty minutes to stop freaking out about how abruptly disconnected I felt.

But after that brief spell of panic, I was surprised to find how quickly I stopped caring. Not only that, I was fascinated with how *inert* my phone appeared as an object; it was no longer a portal to a thousand other places, a machine charged with dread and potentiality, or even a communication device. It was just a black metal rectangle, lying there as silently and matter-of-factly as a sweater or a book. Its only use was as a flashlight and a timer. With newfound peace of mind, I worked on my project unperturbed by the information and interruptions that would have otherwise lit up that tiny screen every few minutes. To be sure, it gave me a valuable new perspective on how I use technology. But as easy as it was to romanticize giving everything up and living like a hermit in this isolated cabin, I knew I eventually needed to return home, where the world waited and the real work remained to be done.

● **Writing Tasks (50%)**

1. Sum up the above passage in no more than 40 words. (15%)
2. What's your opinion on digital detox? Elaborate on your views in an essay not exceeding 250 words. (35%)