

English Exam
Grade 11 S / 90 minutes
February 18th, 2014

Reading Comprehension: (30 pts)

Read the text and then answer the questions in your OWN WORDS.

The Other Population Crisis

A It is an unquestioned principle that has dominated international thinking for decades: we live in an overcrowded world teeming with billions of humans who are destined to suffocate our cities and squeeze our planet of its precious resources. Our species is inexorably wrecking Earth: flooding valleys, cutting down forests and destroying the habitats of animals and plants faster than scientists can classify them. Our future is destined to be nasty, brutish, and cramped.

B Or is it? Now, it seems, population analysts have suddenly started to question the 'self-evident' truth that we are destined eventually to drown under our own weight. While accepting that populations will continue to rise, they point out that this rise will not be nearly as steep or as long-lasting as was once feared. They even claim they can envisage the day when world population numbers will peak and begin to decline.

C As evidence, statisticians point to a simple, stark fact: people are having fewer and fewer children. In the 1970s, global fertility rates stood at about six children per woman. Today the average is 2.9 and falling. Such a rate will still see the world's population increase to nine billion by 2050, a rise of fifty per cent on today's figure. That is not good news for the planet, but it is far less alarming than the projections of fifteen billion that were once being made. More to the point, statisticians predict that after 2050 the number of humans will go down. Such trends raise two key questions. Why has the rise in world populations started to die out so dramatically? And what will be the consequences of this decline?

D Answers to the first question depend largely on locality. In Europe, for example, couples will have only one or two children when they might have had three or four in the past. There are various reasons for this. Women now have their own career options, and are no longer considered failures if they do not marry and produce children in their twenties or thirties. This has taken a substantial number out of the pool of potential mothers. In addition, parents have aspirations for their offspring, choices not available to past generations but which cost money, for example, higher education and travel. These and other pressures have reduced the average birth rate in European

countries to 1.4 per couple. Given that a country needs a birth rate of 2.1 to maintain its numbers. It is clear to see that in the long term there will be fewer Europeans.

E The causes of declining numbers in other countries are more varied and more alarming. Russia's population is dropping by almost 750,000 people a year. The causes are alcoholism, breakdown of the public health service, and industrial pollution that has had a disastrous effect on men's fertility. In China, the state enforces quotas of offspring numbers, and it is expected that its population will peak at 1.5 billion by 2019 then go into steep decline. Some analysts suggest the country could lose twenty to thirty per cent of its population every generation. There is also the exodus from the countryside, a trek happening across the globe. Soon half the world's population will have urban homes. But in cities, children become a cost rather than an asset for helping to work the land, and again pressures mount for people to cut the size of their families.

F The impact of all this is harder to gauge. In Europe, demographers forecast a major drop in the numbers who will work and earn money, while the population of older people — who need support and help — will soar. So, the urging by a British politician that it is the patriotic duty of women to have children makes sense. There will be no workforce if people do not have children. At present the median age of people is twenty-six; within a hundred years, if current trends continue, that will have doubled. More and more old people will have to be supported by fewer and fewer young people! In China, the problem is worse. Most young Chinese adults have no brothers or sisters and face the prospect of having to care for two parents and four grandparents on their own. Pensions and incomes are simply not able to rise fast enough to deal with the crisis.

G There are people who cling to the hope that it is possible to have a vibrant economy without a growing population, but mainstream economists are pessimistic. On the other hand, it is clear that reduced human numbers can only be good for the planet in the long term. Until we halt, the spread of our own species, the destruction of the last great wildernesses, such as the Amazon, will continue. Just after the last Ice Age, there were only a few hundred thousand humans on Earth. Since then the population has grown ten thousand fold. Such a growth rate and our imperfect attempts to control it are bound to lead us into an uncertain future.

1- Find words in the text that mean the same as: (8 pts)

Inevitably, surely (A): **Inexorably**

Destroying (A): **wrecking**

Cruel (A): **brutish**

To think as possible, to imagine (B): **envisage**

Plain and clear (C): **stark**

Considerable (D): **substantial**

To increase (E): **mount**

Destined (G): **bound to**

2- **Are these statements True (T) or False (F)? Answer then justify quoting the text.**

(5 pts)

1- Some analysts believe that people must be very alarmed about population growth.

False: (p.B) they point out that this rise will not be nearly as steep as once feared

2- The decline of the world population is witnessed in all countries.

False: (p. D) answers to the first question depend largely on locality

3- Most people are opting for a life in the countryside.

False: (p. E) the exodus from the countryside, a trek happening across the globe

4- In particular countries, the elderly will become a burden on the young.

True: (p.F) More and more people will have to be supported by fewer and fewer young people.

5- According to some, economic prosperity can be achieved regardless of the number of people.

6- True: (p.G) Cling to the hope that it is possible to have a vibrant economy without a growing population

3- **Explain the following statements from the text: (2 pts)**

- “drown under your own weight (B)”

We are growing so much in number that the earth will be unable to sustain life.

- “a trek happening across the globe (E)”

**The fact that some people are moving from rural to urban areas is widespread/
international**

- 4- Why is the writer pessimistic about the future of our planet in paragraph one? (3 pts)**

The writer is pessimistic because we are multiplying in number at an alarming rate and because we are the cause of a lot of problems/issues like deforestation/ inundations/destruction of biodiversity

- 5- According to the text, why is the number of people in the world declining? Include in your answer 4 reasons at least. (4 pts)**

In Europe: fewer children per family, working mothers, future projects for their offsprings that require families to be well-off.

In Russia, alcoholism, breakdown of public health services / pollution affecting men's fertility

In China, the state restricts the number of children per family.

All over the world, the tendency to prefer urban areas to rural ones.

- 6- What crisis does the title "The Other Population Crisis" refer to? Justify quoting the text. (3 pts)**

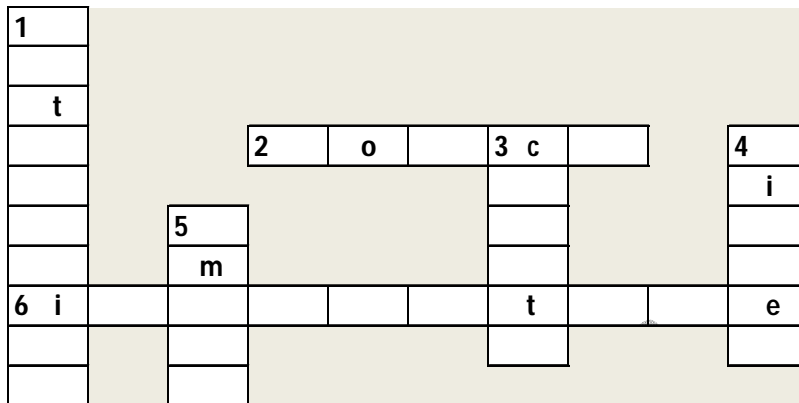
The other population crisis refers to a reverse effect: while people are worried about population growth, some predict an ageing population because of lower birth rates in most countries and longer life expectancies.

- 7- To what extent do you agree with the writer's conclusion expressed at the end of the text? (80 words) (5 pts)**

Personal

Vocabulary and Grammar: (35 pts)

1- Complete the crossword: (6 pts)



ACROSS

2. To illegally hunt **Poach**

6. Of vital importance; crucial **Imperative**

DOWN

1. The state of a species no longer existing **Extinction**

3. Clever at achieving one's aims by indirect or deceitful methods **Crafty**

4. Wood prepared for use in building and carpentry **Timber**

5. Enough or more than enough; plentiful **Ample**

2- Cross the odd word out: (3 pts)

- a- Core Fault Crust **Orbit**
- b- Shed **Squander** Discharge Dispose of
- c- Shatter Disintegrate Decay **Dismantle**
- d- Lush Fertile **Barren** Dense
- e- Wipe out **Sustain** Annihilate Degenerate
- f- Bonanza Diversity **Staunch** Abundance

3- Complete the sentences with words from the box. (10 pts)

replenish	erosion	droughts	fumes	exhausts	hoard
exploit	landfill	sewage	repercussions	avert	
perilous	vulnerable	bleak	curb	impending	
disparities	stem	cluster	contaminated		

- 1- Safe disposal of **sewage** is a good measure to **avert** ecological disasters.
- 2- **Fumes** from car **exhausts** and factories pollute the air.
- 3- It is unthinkable to create a **landfill** in a residential area.
- 4- It is imperative for governments to try to **exploit** new sources of energy to face the **impending** crisis so as not to reach a **bleak** future.
- 5- Our planet is now weak and **vulnerable** due to a **cluster** of problems such as **contaminated** water supplies, soil **erosion** and severe **droughts**,
- 6- The **disparities** in the levels of development between countries **stem** from political, social and economic factors.
- 7- It is vital we **curb** population growth and try to **replenish** fossil fuels reserves in order to avoid catastrophic **repercussions** in the future.
- 8- It is common for people to **hoard** food and different supplies in **perilous** times.

4- Rewrite the following sentences starting with the word(s) given: (12 pts)

1. John wouldn't be in trouble if Mark hadn't convinced him to cheat.
Had Mark not convinced John to cheat, john wouldn't be in trouble.
2. They only realized the gravity of the situation when they couldn't find the keys.
Only when they couldn't find the keys did they realize the gravity of the situation.
3. She was always confident about her skills to become a talented writer.
At no time did she have any doubts about her skills to become a talented writer.
4. They have never been able to understand their children.
Never have they been able to understand their children.
5. The Indian guru is extremely optimistic; he always looks at the bright side of things.
So optimistic is the Indian guru that he always looks at the bright side of things.

6. It is high time you told the truth about the incident.

If I were you, I would tell the truth.

7. The spectators didn't only cheer during the game; they also came up with a special dance.

Not only did the spectators cheer, but they also came up with a special dance.

8. After Mary left her apartment, she noticed she had forgotten to bring her briefcase.

Hardly had Mary left (did ... leave) her apartment when she noticed she had forgotten to bring her briefcase.

9. He must be informed about the new product.

It is vital he be informed about the new product.

10. I hope he leaves before dark.

It is desirable he leave before dark.

11. I wanted Amy to hand in her homework that week.

I insisted Amy hand in her homework that week.

12. My suggestion is that they buy more safety gears for the adventure.

I suggest they buy more safety gears for the adventure.

5- Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets: (4 pts)

1- I have always vowed **to stay** (stay) true to my vocation.

2- In order not to give up, one needs **to be reminded** (remind) by friends and family of the importance of success.

3- We always let our students **drink** (drink) during long exams.

4- Diana yearned **to reach** (reach) her destination on time.

5- Never postpone **doing** (do) what ought to be done today.

6- He stopped **to admire** (admire) the beauty of the landscape.

7- I am sure the thief didn't come in through the window, I remember **locking** (lock) it.

8- I intend **to leave** (to leave) my country as soon as I have a chance.

Good Luck!