



Proficiency

Reading and Use of English

Test 2

Time

1 hour 30 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Read the instructions for each part of the paper carefully.

Answer all the questions.

Read the instructions on the answer sheets.

Write your answers on the answer sheets. Use a pencil.

You **must** complete the answer sheets within the time limit.

There are 53 questions in this paper.

Questions **1 – 24** carry one mark.

Questions **25 – 30** carry up to two marks.

Questions **31 – 43** carry two marks.

Questions **44 – 53** carry one mark.



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Part 1

For questions 1-8, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap.

There is an example at the beginning (0).

0 A exploratory B trending C cutting edge D groundbreaking

0	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input checked="" type="radio"/> D
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The Day of the Machines

The victory of AlphaGo over humanity's best marked a **(0)** moment in artificial intelligence and game history. AlphaGo, the **(1)** of Google DeepMind, was designed to play the ancient Chinese board game Go. Known for its reliance on intuition, Go had long been considered one of the greatest challenges for AI. Unlike chess, where brute-force calculations could lead to victory, Go's vast number of possible moves made such approaches impractical, requiring a more **(2)** and creative AI approach.

In March 2016, AlphaGo faced Lee Sedol in a historic five-game match in Seoul, South Korea. Expectations were high, and many believed Lee's experience and creativity would **(3)** the AI. To everyone's astonishment, AlphaGo won the first game, showcasing unconventional strategies that **(4)** the experts. By the second game, it became clear that AlphaGo's playstyle was not only innovative but also eerily unpredictable.

AlphaGo secured victory by winning the third game, **(5)** the series with a 3-0 lead. Lee, however, mounted a valiant comeback in the fourth game, finding a weakness in AlphaGo's strategy. His win was celebrated as a reminder of human ingenuity and creativity. The final game ended in another AlphaGo victory, concluding the match with a 4-1 result.

The **(6)** of AlphaGo's success extended far beyond Go. Its achievements signalled a leap forward in AI, demonstrating how machine learning and neural networks could tackle problems involving intuition and decision-making.

AlphaGo's triumph was more than a technological milestone—it was a cultural moment that **(7)** human and machine creativity. While some viewed the victory with apprehension, fearing the rise of AI, others embraced it as a testament to human ingenuity in creating tools that could **(8)** even our own capabilities. The story of AlphaGo is not just about a machine beating a human; it is about pushing the boundaries of knowledge and redefining what is possible in the interplay between human and artificial intelligence.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 A spawn | B offspring | C brainchild | D issue |
| 2 B suggestive | B nuanced | C implied | D innate |
| 3 A outreach | B outstrip | C outrival | D outmanoeuvre |
| 4 A baffled | B swindled | C dazed | D disoriented |
| 5 A sweeping | B clinching | C prevailing | D procuring |
| 6 A implications | B results | C outcomes | D turnout |
| 7 A bracketed | B bridged | C spanned | D filled |
| 8 A surpass | B overcome | C outrun | D excel |

Part 2

For questions **9 – 16**, read the text below and think of the word which best fits each gap. Use only **one** word in each gap. There is an example at the beginning **(0)**.

Write your answers **IN CAPITAL LETTERS** on the separate answer sheet.

Example: 0

O	F																
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The Living Bridge

The history of London Bridge is a fascinating tale **(0)** engineering, commerce, and urban transformation spanning nearly two millennia. The earliest iteration of London Bridge was constructed by the Romans around 50 AD, built **(9)** timber to connect their settlement, Londinium, on the north bank of the Thames with areas to the south. This structure was replaced multiple times due to damage from fire, decay, and invasions.

By the 10th century, a new wooden bridge had been constructed, though it was repeatedly rebuilt after **(10)** damaged by Viking raids and floods. The most iconic medieval London Bridge was completed in 1209, designed by Peter de Colechurch, who made wide **(11)** of stone for durability. This bridge became a bustling hub of commerce, lined with shops, houses, and even a chapel.

Over the centuries, the medieval bridge **(12)** into disrepair. In 1831, it was replaced by a more modern stone bridge designed by John Rennie. In 1968, this structure was later **(13)** apart and sold to Robert P. McCulloch - the founder of Lake Havasu City, Arizona – who purchased the bridge in the **(14)** of attracting tourism to his new city.

The current London Bridge, completed in 1973, is a concrete and steel structure designed to accommodate the demands of modern traffic. While it the architectural splendour of its predecessors, it serves **(15)** a vital artery in the city.

Throughout its history, London Bridge has been an emblem of the city's resilience and adaptability. From Roman engineering to medieval commerce and modern urban planning, it reflects London's evolution **(16)** a global metropolis, a bridge not just over the Thames but across centuries of change.

Part 3

For questions 17 – 24, read the text below. Use the word given in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the space in the same line. There is an example at the beginning (0). Write your answers **IN CAPITAL LETTERS on the separate answer sheet.**

Example: 0 E N D U R I N G

King of Monsters

The *King Kong* film series is one of the most iconic and (0) franchises in cinema history, spanning nearly a century since the original film's release in 1933. It tells the story of a giant gorilla, King Kong, who is both a monstrous force of nature and a tragic figure, (17) themes of exploitation, nature's power, and human ambition.

ENDURE

BODY

The original *King Kong* (1933), directed by Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack, introduced audiences to Skull Island, Kong's home, and the (18) battle atop the Empire State Building, cementing Kong as a cinematic icon. The film explored the tension between human greed and nature's magnificence, a theme revisited throughout the series.

CLIMAX

Subsequent adaptations and sequels followed. *Son of Kong* (1933) was a direct sequel, focusing on lighter, more (19) tones but lacked the original's impact. In 1976, Dino De Laurentiis rebooted the series with *King Kong*, directed by John Guillermin. Its sequel, *King Kong Lives* (1986), was less successful but expanded Kong's (20) with the introduction of a female Kong.

COMEDY

MYTH

Peter Jackson's *King Kong* (2005) returned to the roots of the original, expanding the story with emotional (21) and updated visual effects. The film was a critical and commercial success, capturing both Kong's ferocity and his tragic beauty.

DEEP

The series took a new direction in the 2010s with *Kong: Skull Island* (2017), part of the "MonsterVerse" franchise, which reintroduced Kong in a contemporary setting (22) other legendary creatures like Godzilla. The culmination of this shared universe came with *Godzilla vs. Kong* (2021), pitting the two titans against each other while (23) Kong's role as a reluctant protector.

ALONG

LIGHT

The *King Kong* series has evolved over decades, adapting to technological advances and shifting cultural themes. The story of Kong remains a powerful reflection of humanity's (24) with nature's wonders and its capacity for destruction.

FASCINATE

Part 4

For questions **25 – 30**, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. **Do not change the word given.** You must use between **three** and **eight** words, including the word given. Here is an example (0).

Example:

0 Do you mind if I watch you while you paint?

objection

Do you you while you paint?

0	have any objection to my watching
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Write **only** the missing words **on the separate answer sheet.**

25 Stephanie was very complimentary about what I chose to wear.

HEAPED

Stephanie of clothes.

26 The most important thing is that we consider both options.

ALL

Most up both options.

27 He has a talent for spotting a profitable business idea.

EYE

He has.....a profitable business idea.

28 The weather was so bad that they had to delay the mission.

PUT

So bad off the mission.

29 I'd say their problems have been caused by the fact they don't communicate.

DOWN

I'd of communication.

30 We were surprised to hear that Mary was pregnant.

CAME

Mary's to us.

Part 5

You are going to read an extract from a history book. For questions 31 – 36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text. Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Behind Every Great Woman...



Dennis Thatcher, often described as the quintessential English gentleman, is best known as the husband of Margaret Thatcher, the first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. While his wife held one of the most powerful positions in the world, Dennis's life and character provide a fascinating study in quiet support, humour, and the evolving role of a political consort. While his existence may have been seen by many as awkward, perhaps even frivolous, his role in the life of Margaret Thatcher – and consequently in the history of the nation – was significant.

Dennis Thatcher was born on May 10, 1915, in Lewisham, South London. The son of a successful businessman, he grew up in a comfortable middle-class environment. Educated at Mill Hill School, he showed an early aptitude for leadership and discipline. A conscientious student, he applied himself methodically to tasks while at the same time possessing an ability to think creatively, a somewhat paradoxical quality that would go on to serve him well later in life. During the Second World War he served with distinction as an officer in the Royal Artillery and later in the 4th Infantry Division. He rose to the rank of major, an achievement that earned him the lifelong nickname "Major."

When his wife Margaret became Prime Minister in 1979, Dennis Thatcher found himself in an unprecedented position as the first male spouse of a British Prime Minister. Unlike previous prime ministerial spouses, Dennis faced unique challenges due to his gender. The role of a male consort was undefined, and Dennis navigated it with a mix of discretion, humour, and traditionalism. Within a comparatively short space of time, he had made the position his own, and had successfully cast off the prejudices associated with being a male spouse to a powerful figure, commanding the respect of both his own and his wife's colleagues.

Dennis famously avoided the political spotlight, preferring to remain behind the scenes. As a consequence he often faded into the background, largely overlooked by media and the public. He once quipped, "It's like being a lighthouse in the middle of a fog: you're there,

but no one notices you.” However, his influence on Margaret was profound. Friends and colleagues often noted that he was her most trusted confidant, offering unvarnished advice and emotional stability during times of political turbulence. His quiet and steady support, within the privacy of the family home, was often cited by his wife as her greatest source of strength in the many tribulations she faced as the nation’s leader.

Dennis’s public image was shaped by his dry wit and affable demeanour. He became a figure of quiet affection for the British public, who appreciated his self-deprecating humour and traditional values. Media portrayals often highlighted his love of golf, gin and tonic, and his aversion to public speaking. Yet behind this jovial exterior lay a man of considerable intelligence and loyalty.

Despite his efforts to stay out of the limelight, Dennis Thatcher was not without controversy. His wealth and business interests occasionally drew criticism, particularly from political opponents who sought to paint him as emblematic of privilege. However, these criticisms rarely gained traction, as Dennis’s modest public persona contrasted sharply with any allegations of elitism.

Dennis Thatcher passed away on June 26, 2003, at the age of 88. His death marked the end of an era for those who remembered him as an integral part of Margaret Thatcher’s remarkable political career. Those who knew him described him as a man of deep loyalty and a sharp sense of humour. While he never sought recognition, Dennis’s contributions as a supportive spouse, confidant, and private advisor were significant. His role as the first male consort of a British Prime Minister set a precedent for future political spouses, demonstrating the importance of adaptability, humour, and quiet support in the face of public scrutiny.

- 31** How does the first paragraph describe Dennis Thatcher's public role?
- A** As a trailblazer for the changing roles of men in modern society.
 - B** As an example of a dignified existence the shadow of a powerful spouse.
 - C** As an unsung hero of modern history.
 - D** As a figure of fun.
- 32** How does the text describe Dennis Thatcher's aptitudes as a student?
- A** He approached each task with determination and imagination.
 - B** He was able to make use of two converse thought processes.
 - C** He made use of an ability to visualize problems.
 - D** His determination overcame his limitations.
- 33** What great challenge did he face as the prime minister's spouse?
- A** Other men felt his position was unenviable.
 - B** He was unsure how to approach the role as a man.
 - C** He was the first of a kind.
 - D** People were quick to make negative assumptions about him.
- 34** What did he mean when he compared himself to a lighthouse in fog?
- A** His role was significant but went largely unnoticed by others.
 - B** He was a reliable presence which offered calmness in turbulent times.
 - C** He had a lonely existence which he sometimes resented.
 - D** His wife often sought his guidance in a career fraught with pitfalls .
- 35** Why were criticisms of Dennis never taken seriously.
- A** He was always able to make light of them.
 - B** His demeanor undermined their content.
 - C** He was widely liked by all classes of people.
 - D** His traditional values commanded wide respect.
- 36** How does the text define Dennis Thatcher's legacy?
- A** He showed the value of maintaining a politically neutral presence in public.
 - B** He proved that the reversal of gender roles can be achieved with success.
 - C** He set an example to be emulated for those who followed in his footsteps.
 - D** He exemplified the benefits of following a traditional lifestyle.

Part 6

You are going to read an extract from an article. Seven paragraphs have been removed from the extract. Choose from the paragraphs A – H the one which fits each gap (37 – 43). There is one extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

H.P. Lovecraft

H.P. Lovecraft (1890–1937), an American writer of weird fiction and cosmic horror, created a legacy that continues to resonate with readers and writers of speculative fiction. His early stories, such as *The Tomb* (1917) and *Dagon* (1917), showcase his fascination with antiquity and the macabre. *The Tomb* reflects his lifelong obsession with the past, as it follows a protagonist enthralled by an ancestral crypt. Meanwhile, *Dagon* introduces themes that would become hallmarks of his work: an overwhelming fear of the unknown and the insignificance of humanity in the face of incomprehensible cosmic forces. The story recounts a sailor's encounter with a monstrous sea deity, a precursor to Lovecraft's later creation, Cthulhu.

37

The Cthulhu Mythos, perhaps Lovecraft's most enduring contribution to literature, is a shared universe centred around ancient, godlike entities and forbidden knowledge. The mythos is rooted in the idea that the universe is vast, indifferent, and populated by beings whose motives and existence are beyond human comprehension. Central to this mythos are the Great Old Ones, extra-terrestrial entities that once ruled Earth and now lie dormant. The seminal story *The Call of Cthulhu* (1928) introduces the titular entity, a vast, tentacled being that sleeps

beneath the Pacific Ocean.

38

Perhaps lesser-known, Lovecraft's Dream Cycle stories offer a more fantastical exploration of his imagination. These tales, influenced by the works of Lord Dunsany, delve into a parallel dimension known as the Dreamlands, accessible through dreams and inhabited by both wondrous and horrifying entities.

39

While the Dream Cycle stories are less overtly horrific than the Cthulhu Mythos, they share similar themes of human vulnerability and the existence of forces beyond comprehension. The Dreamlands represent both an escape and a peril, a realm where beauty and terror coexist.

Lovecraft's works are united by a set of recurring themes and motifs that distinguish his brand of horror. Among these, and central to Lovecraft's philosophy, is the idea that humanity is insignificant in the grand scheme of the universe. His characters often grapple with the realization that their understanding of reality is limited, and that vast, uncaring forces govern existence.

40

Central to this unsettling incertitude is the use of otherworldly entities and places which often defy conventional understanding, using phrases like "non-Euclidean geometry" to convey their alien nature. This technique reinforces the sense of unease and disorientation.

Ambiguity is another hallmark of Lovecraft's technique. By leaving much to the reader's imagination, he allows the horror to exist in the mind, where it can be most effective. His descriptions of entities and events often rely on suggestion rather than explicit detail, heightening the sense of dread.

Lovecraft's works have not escaped criticism. His prose style, characterized by excessive adjectives and repetitive phrasing, is polarizing. Additionally, his xenophobic and racist views, which permeate some of his stories, have sparked significant debate. While these attitudes reflect the prejudices of his time, they remain a troubling aspect of his legacy.

In popular culture, references to Lovecraft's creations abound. The Cthulhu Mythos has appeared in films, video games, and tabletop RPGs like *Call of Cthulhu*. His influence extends to modern filmmakers like Guillermo del Toro and authors such as Stephen King, who acknowledged Lovecraft as a foundational influence on his work.

While his legacy is not without flaws, his impact on literature and popular culture remains profound. Lovecraft's stories remind us of the fragility of human understanding and the enduring power of the unknown to inspire both fear and wonder.

A

The first of these, a novella, follows Randolph Carter, a recurring protagonist, on a quest to find a mysterious and beautiful city glimpsed in his sleep. Along the way, Carter encounters bizarre landscapes, ancient gods, and sinister creatures, showcasing Lovecraft's ability to create surreal and evocative settings.

B

Further to this, Lovecraft's writing is marked by a distinctive style that enhances the atmosphere of his stories. His use of archaic language and elaborate descriptions creates a sense of timelessness and otherworldliness. He frequently employs a framing narrative, presenting his stories as second-hand accounts or recovered manuscripts to lend them an air of authenticity.

C

The psychological toll of encountering the incomprehensible is a frequent element in Lovecraft's stories. His narrators often struggle to convey their experiences, adding an element of ambiguity and leaving much to the reader's imagination.

D

These works reveal the initial emergence of Lovecraft's distinctive voice, heavily influenced by Edgar Allan Poe and Lord Dunsany. His prose, often criticized for its verbosity and archaic style, serves to immerse readers in an alien and terrifying world. Lovecraft's use of unreliable narrators and fragmented storytelling enhances the sense of mystery and unease.

E

The narrative, presented through fragmented accounts and second-hand reports, epitomizes Lovecraft's technique of building dread through suggestion rather than direct confrontation. The story's famous opening line, "The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents," encapsulates Lovecraft's philosophy of cosmic horror.

F

The works of H.P. Lovecraft continue to captivate and unsettle readers nearly a century after their publication. His ability to evoke cosmic dread and create a universe teeming with ancient, incomprehensible forces set him apart as a master of weird fiction.

G

His detractors notwithstanding, Lovecraft's influence on speculative fiction is undeniable. His creation of a shared mythos has inspired writers like August Derleth, who coined the term "Cthulhu Mythos," and later authors such as Ramsey Campbell, Caitlín R. Kiernan, and Neil Gaiman. Lovecraft's themes and stylistic innovations have shaped the genres of horror, science fiction, and fantasy.

H

Serving as a foundation to these works is the ubiquitous presence of an unseen power, which contributes to the dread the reader feels. It is a technique that has marked his works through the ages and which many writers have subsequently employed to achieve a visceral terror in the heart of the reader.

Part 7

You are going to read an extract from a book on theatre history. For questions **44-53**, choose from the sections **(A-E)**. The sections may be chosen more than once.

Theatre of Professional Artists

An Introduction to the Italian Art Form of Commedia dell'arte



A

One of the most significant achievements of Commedia dell'Arte lies in its innovation within the theatrical arts. Emerging during a time when theatre was largely associated with religious or aristocratic patronage, Commedia offered a form of entertainment that was both accessible and adaptable. Performed in public squares and marketplaces, it was a theatre for the people, bridging the gap between performers and audiences. This democratization of theatre was ground-breaking, allowing common people to engage with art in ways previously limited to the elite. At a time when social and class restrictions were endemic, this brave and refreshing brand of theatre gave ordinary people a much longed for opportunity to see both themselves and their overlords represented in performance, which in turn gave way to the breaking of the ultimate taboo: the ability to poke fun at one's betters.

B

The use of improvisation was another ground-breaking feature. Rather than being beholden to the playwright, Commedia actors developed performances around a loose scenario, crafting their dialogue and actions in real-time. This not only showcased the performers' ingenuity but also allowed for a dynamic interplay with the audience. Actors could respond to current events, social issues, or audience reactions, creating a fluid and interactive theatrical experience. This quality of adaptability ensured that Commedia dell'Arte remained topical. Moreover, the use of stock characters like Arlecchino, Colombina, and Pantalone established archetypes that resonated universally. These exaggerated personas represented broad human traits such as greed, lust, wit, and folly, making them instantly recognizable and relatable. The universality of these archetypes allowed Commedia to transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, influencing practitioners further afield.

C

Exquisite it may be, but neither does Commedia remain unblemished under the bright lights of scrutiny. One of the most significant criticisms of the art form is its reliance on stereotypes. While the use of stock characters provided accessibility and humour, it also perpetuated reductive and often problematic representations. Characters like Pantalone, the miserly old man, or Il Capitano, the cowardly braggart, often reinforced societal norms or biases without challenging them. In modern contexts, these stereotypes can feel outdated, limiting the form's ability to resonate with contemporary audiences. In addition, Commedia is criticized for often revolving around similar themes: thwarted love, mistaken identities, or schemes to acquire wealth. While these plots were effective for improvisational humour, they lacked the depth and variety necessary to sustain prolonged engagement.

D

Its limitations notwithstanding, Commedia dell'Arte has left an indelible mark on modern performance art. Its emphasis on physicality and improvisation laid the groundwork for traditions like mime, clowning, and improvisational theatre. Many contemporary theatre practitioners view Commedia as a foundational tool for instruction, as it develops skills in movement, timing, and audience interaction, despite its context as historical medium. The archetypes of Commedia characters also live on in popular culture. Characters like Harlequin and Pierrot have become iconic figures in art, literature, and film and even the slapstick clowning of early silent films owes a debt to Commedia. There is also, for some, an underlying menace to aspects of Commedia. Perhaps this disquiet lurks in the incongruity of exaggerated caricatures and the shrouding of human features behind the grotesque. It is but a short step from the comedic to the nightmarish, as our own relationships to clowns will attest.

E

In our own age, many theatre practitioners have found ways to reinterpret and adapt Commedia for modern contexts. By subverting traditional archetypes or integrating contemporary themes, directors and performers can breathe new life into the form, reflecting modern societal dynamics while retaining its core principles of humour and improvisation. Another avenue for revitalizing Commedia lies in its improvisational nature. The rise of improv comedy troupes and interactive theatre owes much to the traditions of Commedia. By embracing its spirit of spontaneity and audience engagement, performers can create experiences that are fresh, dynamic, and deeply personal.

In which section are the following mentioned?

The desire of the common people to mock those in authority.	44.....
The failure of Commedia to resonate long-term with audiences.	45.....
How Commedia avoided becoming stale and irrelevant.	46.....
Commedia's capacity for broad appeal	47.....
The rebellious nature of the Commedia art form	48.....
An unintended reaction to Commedia's imagery	49....
A tendency to rely on lazy caricatures	50.....
The potential of Commedia to educate	51.....
The benefits of blending facets of Commedia with other genres	52.....
A focus on visual comedy	53.....