PART 1: READING (two exercises)

EXERCISE A: Read the following text and answer the multiple choice questions.

If my memory serves me well, even in primary school, I had a vivid imagination and would often come up with entertaining short stories. Certainly by the time I entered high school, I had begun toying with the idea of going into journalism. Ironically, although I took journalism at university, I fell into travel writing quite by accident. I was the chief editor of the student newspaper at the time. Somebody came up with the bright idea of doing a travel feature and I was offered free rail tickets in Europe for the summer in return for a series of articles on the places I visited. The pieces I wrote actually won me an award for best student travel writer of the year! And from that point on, there was no looking back.

The early acclaim my articles had received gave me confidence. What quickly became clear, however, was the gap between writing a few articles as a student and making ends meet as a travel writer. Like most budding travel writers, I earned next to nothing in my first year. Despite what one might call the perks of the profession – an occasional offer of free accommodation or a meal on the house (the latter being frowned upon by publishers because declaring yourself as a travel writer invites favourable treatment) – the fact is that until you have established yourself and found interested publishers, you spend far more than you earn. I had to eat into my savings to cover expenses.

My initial attempts at having my articles published were unsuccessful. Luckily, after rejecting yet another piece of mine, one kind publisher gave me some sound advice. “Take a look at what’s happening in travel writing,” he said. “Your articles are just too old-fashioned.” Curious as to what he meant, I threw out my old guidebooks and began reading all the latest travel blogs, Internet sites and travel magazines I could get my hands on. He was right – my writing style was hopelessly out of touch.

Travel writing had changed dramatically and I hadn’t kept track. It probably started with the shift in the kind of people who travel. If in the past only the wealthy could consider travelling for pleasure, today, the typical tourist may be anyone from the millionaire on his yacht to the back-packing student. This means that guidebooks now supply a much broader range of details and information
to satisfy the needs of the ever-increasing variety of travellers.

The more I read, the more I realised that in order to succeed I had to find a niche – my own particular area of expertise – in this huge market. Gradually, I became aware of the increasing number of “specialty” travel writers, who focused on specific groups of tourists and their particular interests and needs. I’ve always been a bit of an adventurer and loved the idea of exploring out-of-the-way places. I began to write articles aimed at the seasoned traveller who has seen the best-known tourist sights and is looking for a novel experience off the beaten track. Slowly but surely, I found my own voice as a writer, and my new articles were greeted with enthusiasm.

Today, I can safely say that I find my career rewarding. But it’s definitely not for everyone. Those of you who see travel writing as glamorous may be disappointed. A travel writer must be prepared to spend days of relentless sightseeing – far more than any normal tourist would take on, and not all of it interesting. Copying down rail and bus itineraries is essential, but hardly inspiring. Finally, at the end of an exhausting day, you have to sit down and write an organized and informative account of your experiences – which may take you into the early hours of the morning. In fact, systematic writing is the key to success – you have to sit down and write at least 2,000 words a day to perfect your technique. And if you’re willing to take on that kind of commitment, travel writing can be very fulfilling. I have been at it for six years now, and wouldn’t trade it for a nine-to-five desk job, no matter how well-paid!

1. When the writer says she began ‘toying with the idea of’ going into journalism, she means
   A. she didn’t consider journalism a serious career.
   B. that being a journalist was a childhood ambition.
   C. she was considering journalism as a possibility.

2. What surprised the writer about her new career as a travel writer?
   A. She was not able to earn a living.
   B. She didn’t have to pay for hotels or meals.
   C. It was a year before she got anything published.

3. The writer gives the example of travel blogs (line 37) to illustrate
   A. a typical Internet travel site.
   B. how travel writing had developed.
   C. a good source of travel information.

4. One reason for the recent developments in travel writing was
   A. the greater number of well-to-do travellers.
   B. the increase in the number of tourists.
   C. the growing diversity of tourists.
5 According to the writer, which event influenced her choice of career most?
   A. discovering her ability as a child
   B. winning a travel writing award
   C. the advice of a publisher

6 What did the writer learn after doing her research?
   A. facts about unusual destinations
   B. where her particular talents lay
   C. what modern tourists are looking for

7 In appealing to travel writers, the main purpose of the last paragraph is to
   A. warn them that such exciting jobs involve long hours.
   B. remind writers to include lots of practical details.
   C. emphasise the importance of the quality of their writing.

8 Which best sums up the writer’s attitude towards her profession?
   A. It requires years of training to become a professional.
   B. Financially it is more rewarding than an office job.
   C. Despite the problems, it is well worth pursuing it.

Text 2: Language.

Read the text below and choose the correct word to fill in the gaps from the ones provided below:

Language is communication among human beings that is characterised by the use of arbitrary spoken or written symbols with agreed-upon meanings. More broadly, language may be defined as communication in general; it is regarded by some linguists as a form of knowledge, that is, of thought or cognition.

Approaches to Language
Language can be studied from at least two (9) …… of view: its use or its structure. Language use is the concern of scholars in many fields, among them literature, communications, speech and rhetoric, sociology, political science, and psychology. Examined in studies of language use are what humans say, what they say they are thinking, and what they mean by what they write and say to one another. Included are content analysis and criticism of literature, studies of the history and changes of meaning of words, and descriptions of the social (10) …… that determine what appropriate speech behaviour is. The fields of speech and rhetoric include studies of the ways in which language can influence behaviour. For literary specialists, language (11) ……of words arranged to produce a logical or harmonious effect. For lexicographers, it is an inventory of vocabulary, including the meanings, origins, and histories of words. Language is also the particular way words are (12) …… and combined that is characteristic of an individual, a group, or a literary genre.
Language structure is the concern of linguistics. Within the field of linguistics the definition of language vary, and linguists differ in approach according to the definition they use. Those who study language as written communication are interested in the structure of what they call "text" - how sentences and their parts are organised into wholes - and concerned with how one language can be accurately translated into another. In the field of machine translation, computers handle the vast amount of needed for such studies. Comparative linguists seek to identify families of languages descended from a common ancestor.

Structural and descriptive linguists view spoken language as having a hierarchical structure of three levels: sounds, sound combinations (such as words), and word combinations (sentences). At the phonemic level, sounds are analysed; at the morphemic level, the combination of sounds into meaningful units of speech (morphemes, that is, words or word-building units) is described; and at the syntactic level, the combination of words in sentences and clauses is the structure.

Linguists who define language as knowledge are transformational generative grammarians. They study the nature of the human capacity to acquire language and the language acquisition process.

Animal and Human Communication
The study of language as a means of expression or communication includes the study of gestures and sounds. Considering that animals gesture and make sounds, do animals as well as humans have language? It seems clear that many species communicate; human as distinct from animal communication, has been characterised by some scholars as in having the following seven features: Human languages have separate, interrelated systems of grammar and of sound and gesture. They allow new things to be communicated all the time. Humans make a distinction between the content that is communicated and their labels for that content. In human communication, spoken language is interchangeable with language that is heard. Human languages are used for special purposes; intent lies behind what is communicated. What is communicated can refer to the past and the future. Human language is learned by children adults and is passed down from generation to generation.

Some recent research in teaching American Sign Language (AMESLAN) to primates indicates, however, that a number of these features may not be uniquely human. Nonetheless, it seems safe to say that although language as a system of communication is not human, human language has unique characteristics. Humans string together discrete signs and units of grammar to form an infinite set of never-before heard, thought, read, or signed sentences. Infants who have not been taught grammar form their own rules of language by using their linguistic ability together with input from the speech community into which they are born.

For human language to be possible, certain factors are necessary. These factors are physiological (the body must be capable of producing the sounds of speech), grammatical (the speech must have structure); and semantic (the mind must be capable of dealing with the meanings of what is spoken).
PART 2: USE OF ENGLISH. Choose the right option.

21. He …… basketball in three national teams before the age of 20.
   a. have played           b. had played           c. was playing

22. If Mark had not dropped out of college, I’m sure they …… him the job.
   a. will offer           b. would have offered    c. offer

23. He constructed amazing homes from old vehicles. These two homes …… to be believed!
   a. have to be saw       b. has to be seen       c. have to be seen

24. Only individuals …… are on the committee can make a proposal.
   a. whose               b. when                  c. who

25. …… your children …… that people they’re talking to online may not be who they say they are.
   a. get/understand      b. get/understood        c. get/to understand

PART 3: WRITING. (two exercises)

A: Write an e-mail to your friend about an emergency situation you have experienced, such as an accident or a natural disaster. Include the description, how you coped with it and what you regret not having done. 175 to 200 words.

B: Choose ONE of the following topics and write a well-structured essay of about 175 to 200 words. You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling.

OPTION 1: Should developing countries concentrate on improving industrial skills or should they promote education first?

OPTION 2: Should people bank online? Discuss.