





ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST INFORMATION BOOKLET



School of Education and Professional Studies Department: Humanities

Introduction

The Vocational Training Development Institute's (VTDI) mandate is, "to provide tertiary education and training, in order to equip graduates for a globally competitive workforce through competency-based, technologically driven programmes, guided by professionalism, integrity and teamwork."

The VTDI delivers courses which are designed to equip students with various competencies, including reading, writing and speaking, that will enable them to succeed locally and internationally, in their academic work, jobs and careers. The School of Education and Professional Studies, through its department of Humanities, has the responsibility to assess a candidate's competence in English as part of the admission process. A proficiency test is used to achieve this objective.

What is an English Proficiency Test?

This test is a tool to evaluate a candidate's level of proficiency in the use and understanding of the English language. In the case of VTDI, the test is pitched at the admission level of tertiary studies and is based on assessments of vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, sentence structure, summary writing and persuasive writing.

Why complete the Proficiency Test?

The results of the Test will determine the particular Language course which best suits the competence level of the candidate. In particular, it identifies candidates who will need specialised/additional training to reach the desired language competences of the institution. The VTDI firmly believes that a good foundation in English helps students to do well in their college courses.

Who should complete the Proficiency Test?

All candidates with a CSEC Grade 3 in English Language A or its equivalent are required to sit the Test.

What happens if the candidate is successful in the Test?

A score of 50% or more in the test will qualify the candidate to enroll in *Fundamentals of Communication* which is a first year Language course offered in all diploma and degree programmes.

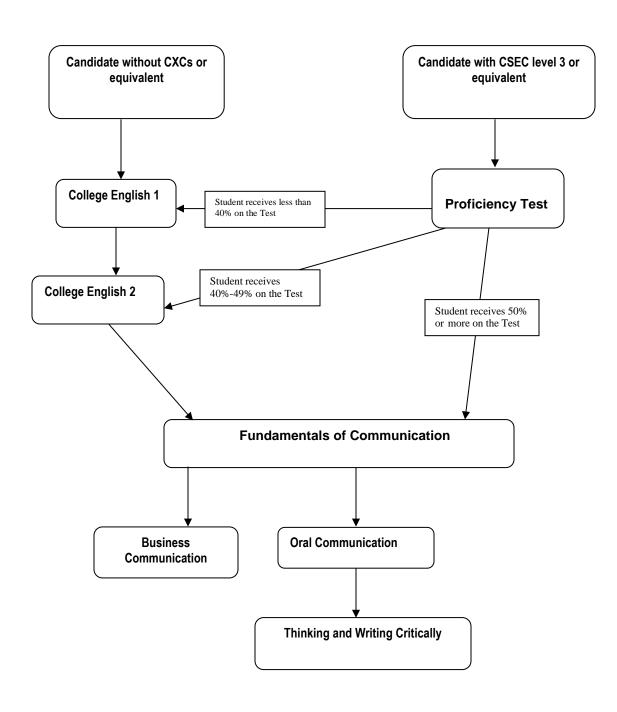
What happens if the candidate is not successful in the Test?

If the candidate receives a score of 40% - 49%, he/she is required to successfully pursue a bridging course called *College English 2* before he/she becomes eligible to do *Fundamentals of Communication*. A score of less than 40% requires that the candidate pursues two (2) bridging courses, *College English 1* and *College English 2*. A passing grade in each of these courses will qualify the candidate to proceed to *Fundamentals of Communication*.

Language and Communication Progression Courses

The following chart shows a student's progression through the language courses in programmes at the VTDI.

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION PROGRESS CHART



What is the Format of the English Proficiency Test?

The English Proficiency Test consists of two papers. Paper 1 (1 ½ hours) is a multiple choice paper which includes reading comprehension, usage inclusive of subject-verb agreement, punctuation and sentence structure. Paper 2 (2 ½ hours) is a written paper inclusive of reading comprehension, summary writing and persuasive essay. Students must achieve a score of 50% or above on each section to demonstrate minimum proficiency. Below is a sample of the format and types of questions contained in the Proficiency Test.

Sample of the English Proficiency Test Sample Paper 1

Items 1 - 5 Synonyms

Read the following passage. Choose the letter of the word which is NEAREST in meaning to the underlined words.

1

The G- SAT Examinations have a <u>pernicious</u> effect on some children because of their **2.** great demands. Students, from as early as Grade 4, begin to work <u>assiduously</u> in order to **3**. achieve success. Recreational activities are <u>curtailed</u> and hours are spent trying to

4. 5. <u>assimilate</u> knowledge. As a result of this, children frequently <u>develop</u> serious physical and psychological problems.

I. a) virile	b) harmful	c) disturbing	d) undesirable
2. a) diligently	b) thoroughly	c) consistently	d) frantically
3. a) limited	b) discouraged	c) suspended	d) abandoned
4. a) obtain	b) digest	c) absorb	d) acquire
5. a) manifest	b) endure	c) experience	d) display

Items 6 - 10 Spelling

In the following passage FIVE words have been misspelt. Identify these words and write the correctly spelt words, numbered 6-10, on the answer sheet.

Mr. Earl Brown is a repairman who specializes in repairing refridgerators, stoves and washing machines. His workshop is located in a residential area and it is not unusual to find old appliances in the yard. The residents are disgusted by this practise and have complained on many ocassions. They refuse to accommodate places of business in their community because they believe that they have a negative impact on community development. They are therefore persuing the matter in court.

Items 11 – 12 Sentence Completion

Each sentence has one or two blank spaces. Choose the letter of the word or set of words that, when inserted in the sentence, BEST fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

11. Hoping to the dispute, negotiators proposed a compromise that they felt would					
	be to both labour and management.				
	a) enforce usefu	1	c) overcome attract	ive	
	b) end divisive		d) resolve acceptab	le	
12	12. A judgment made before all the facts are known must be called				
	a) harsh	b) deliberate	c) premature	d) sensible	

Items 13 – 14 Sentence Patterns

Choose the letter of the phrase that BEST completes each sentence.

13. The room was filled by the	e voice of a woman who seemed relating the latest
gossip.	
a) like she was	c) to be as if she was
b) that she had been	d) to have been

14. If Hugh read a book, it would certainly be a novel.			
a) were ever to	c) had possibly to		
b) had been able to	d) had ever succeeded	d to	
Items 15 – 16 Verbs/S	Subject-Verb Agreeme	nt	
Choose the letter of the word or set of words that BEST completes each sentence.			
15. By the time Josephine arri	ved, she the message.		
a) had forget b) forgot	c) has forgotten d) ha	ad forgotten	
16. They never to school, they always classes.			
a) go skipped	c) went skip		
b) went skipped	d) gone skip		
Items 17 – 18 Punctuation and Capitalization			
In each of the following sentences there may be an error in punctuation. Choose the letter of the error and if there is NO ERROR (NE) choose D.			
17. Marion, the elder of the tw	vo sisters, takes a serious app	proach to life <u>'</u> s pro	blems.
A	В	C	D.NE
18. Sita's party had everything; delicious food, lots to drink, and lively guests.			
A	В	C	D. NE

Items 19 - 20 Usage

Some of the following sentences are incorrect because of inappropriate grammar, idiom or vocabulary. No sentence contains more than ONE error. Look at the underlined sections in each sentence and if you consider that one of these is incorrect choose the appropriate letter. If the sentence is acceptable and there is NO ERROR (NE) choose D.

19. <u>Having made</u> a resolution not to argue with anyone in <u>authority</u> she agreed <u>on</u>			
A		В	
following the instruction.			
C		D. NE	
20. Write down your name and address, please, do you.			
A	ВС	D.NE	

END OF PAPER 1

^{*} Please note that the number of items/questions has been amended for the purpose of this document.

Sample Paper 2

SECTION ONE

Reading Comprehension

Read carefully the following extract and then answer ALL questions set on it.

Of all forms of pollution, noise is perhaps the most inescapable for the urban dweller. It pursues him in the privacy of his home, tails him on the street and quite often is an accompaniment of his labour. We do not begin to know the price we pay in impaired hearing, in enervation, in aggravated hostilities and nervous tension. But scientists report that, when animals are made to listen to noise, "they grow sullen, unresponsive, erratic or violent." May not the same be true of us?

It is true that tolerance of noise varies with culture and conditioning. A Swede might not be comfortable in Naples. A farmer might find a steel plant utterly intolerable. Some people seek out noise, as is evidenced by discotheques and rock music concerts, where the decibel levels have been found to be clearly dangerous. Others find the sound of the city and the market sheer music. Still others encase themselves in sound to protect against sound, thus creating more noise.

But almost all would agree that the noise of jets in take-off, the air hammer digging up streets, the unmuffled sports car or motorcycle, the roar of twenty-ton diesel trucks are an intolerable burden on our ears and whole nervous system. The lack of discriminate planning that has put airport near central cities and has intermingled industrial and residential zones has caused much trouble. Here we seem to be learning. But the prospect of sonic boom remains, and with it the danger that — apart from their impact on man — some small animals and insects which rely on their delicate hearing for survival will be badly affected.

5

10

15

20

Only recently has attention been focused on the technology of noise abatement and the design of strict and enforceable regulations. Much can be done to battle unavoidable noise. Building codes can require soundproofing in public places, and builders who construct paper-thin walls and ceilings can be penalized. In some countries successful battles have, happily, been fought and won to check the continuous playing of canned music to captivate audiences, and in some parks and playgrounds private noise is regulated. But in the last analysis, only self-discipline and respect for one's neighbours can lessen the blare of late-night radio or the wailing of transistors on public lakes and beaches.

Indeed this whole area of electronic reproduction of sound profoundly illustrates the double-edged quality of so much of man's technological inventiveness.

- 1. What is the main idea discussed by the writer in paragraph 1 of the passage? (1 mark)
- 2. (a) In the passage the writer identifies **TWO** (2) things which are responsible for noise pollution? What are these **two**(2) things (2 marks)
 - (b) Quote two (2) phrases/statements which support the writer's views? (2 marks)
- 3. How, according to the passage, can the law assist in solving noise pollution in public places? (2 marks)
- 4. ".... battles have, happily, been fought and won." (1.26). To what battles is the writer referring? (2 marks)
- 5. What "human" solution does the writer offer for noise abatement? (1 mark)
- 6. Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the context of the passage: "tails" (1.2), "canned" (1.27), "wailing" (1.30) (3 marks)
- 7. Explain in your own words the last sentence of the extract. (2 marks)

Total (15 marks)

SECTION TWO

Summary Writing

Read carefully the extract in Section One and then write a summary using no more than 100 words.

Total (28 marks)

SECTION THREE

Persuasive Writing

Choose \underline{ONE} of the following topics and write an essay of between 300-350 words.

EITHER

1. "Medical personnel and members of the security forces should be prosecuted if they go on strike". Convince an audience to **either** agree **or** disagree with this statement.

OR

"Mothers cannot father children" (Glen Tucker. Sunday Herald, 17-06-07)
 Convince an audience to either agree or disagree with Glen Tucker's opinion regarding parenting.

(25 marks)

END OF PAPER 2