

SPRINGBOARD EDUCATION

ĐỀ THI LUYỆN TẬP

KỲ THI THỬ HỌC SINH GIỎI QUỐC GIA

TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THÔNG

NĂM HỌC 2025 – 2026

Môn thi: **TIẾNG ANH**
Thời gian: **180** phút (không kể thời gian giao đề)
Ngày thi: **30/02/2025**

Đề thi gồm có **19** trang

- Thí sinh **KHÔNG** được sử dụng tài liệu, kể cả từ điển.
- Giám thị **KHÔNG** giải thích gì thêm.

I. LISTENING (5.0 points)

HƯỚNG DẪN PHẦN THI NGHE HIỂU

- The listening section is in **FOUR** parts. You will hear each part **TWICE**. At the beginning of each part, you will hear a sound.
- There will be a piece of music at the beginning and at the end of the listening section. You will have **TWO** minutes to check your answers at the end of the listening section.
- All the other instructions are included in the recording.

Part 1. For question 1-5, listen to part of a discussion in which a speaker is discussing minimalism, and decide whether each of the following statements is True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG) according to what you hear. Write T, F, or NG in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

Audio - [▶ What does minimalism really mean? | A-Z of ISMs Episode 13 - BBC Ideas](#)

- Minimalism as a concept extends beyond lifestyle choices and encompasses various fields.
- The rise of minimalism in architecture directly influenced the development of minimalist music composition techniques.
- Minimalist music is characterized by complex harmonies and intricate melodies that create an impressive auditory experience.
- The philosophy of minimalism often emerges as a reaction against excess and complexity.
- Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's "less is more" philosophy was a response to the increasing complexity of urban living in the mid-20th century.

Your answers:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
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Part 2. Write NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS taken from the recording for each answer in the spaces provided.

Audio -  **How Relationships Reveal Our True Selves**

6. Which adjectives characterize the negative traits that a relationship helps us avoid?

7. How might our story appear when seen through our partners' eyes?

8. Quitting which activity illustrates human impatience in giving and receiving feedback?

9. What purpose do words like "perhaps" and "maybe" serve?

10. Given the importance of the psychological dimension in a relationship, what should we share with our partners as gently and kindly as possible?

Part 3. For questions 11–15, you will hear part of a radio phone-in programme about consumer competitions that appear in magazines or are run by shops, in which advice is given to people who regularly enter them. Write the answer A, B, C, or D in the numbered boxes provided to indicate the correct answer to each of the following questions according to what you hear.

Audio -  **Part 3.wma**

11. Why has Diana decided to call in?
 - A. She believes she has been treated unfairly.
 - B. She is hesitant to seek legal advice at this stage.
 - C. She is concerned that she may have misinterpreted an agreement.
 - D. She wishes to avoid a falling-out with her closest friend.
12. What point does Kathy make in response to Diana's situation?
 - A. It is an uncommon dilemma without a straightforward solution.
 - B. Diana should have exercised greater caution in dealing with her friend.
 - C. It is regrettable that Diana's friend has taken such a stance.
 - D. Pursuing legal action would ultimately be a decision she might regret.
13. What does Kathy say to Ron regarding the use of multiple names in competitions?
 - A. Individuals who attempt this are frequently discovered.
 - B. It can have a negative impact on the overall quality of submissions.
 - C. There are few legitimate situations in which this might be acceptable.
 - D. It is relatively rare for entrants to make such a choice.
14. What prompted Stan to call into the programme?
 - A. He was dissatisfied with how a previous complaint was addressed.

- B. He was confused by the terms and conditions of a contest.
- C. He suspected that he had received misleading or incorrect information.
- D. He sought greater transparency regarding competition outcomes.

15. What does Kathy explain to Stan about the competition he participated in?

- A. Certain elements of the instructions could be interpreted in multiple ways.
- B. The contest rules allow for outcomes that may seem unreasonable.
- C. The organisers intentionally created confusion to deceive entrants.
- D. It is the kind of competition that participants are generally advised to avoid.

Your answers:

11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
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Part 4. For questions 16–25, listen to part of a talk about journalism, and complete the following summary. Write NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS taken from the recording for each blank. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

Audio - [▶ What is the future of journalism? | A-Z of ISMs Episode 10 - BBC Ideas](#)

Journalism, a product of modern history, is molded by the politics of its environment. The importance of knowledge, the freedom of expression, and the societal benefit of reliable information are the basis of this notion. From the advent of (16) _____ and photography to the digital era with social media and the internet, technological innovations have driven its evolution.

Historically, journalism has transformed from medieval scribes recording taxes to (17) _____ in coffee shops engaging in political battles, and then to (18) _____ utilizing trains and telephones to disseminate news. Instances where journalism exposes difficult truths include the coming to light of the Holocaust as well as (19) _____.

The landscape of journalism is rapidly changing. (20) _____ now generate bot journalism, while citizens broadcast news via their phones. Algorithms crafted by tech behemoths influence the flow of news, resulting in (21) _____ that is often (22) _____. This has left the public confused about what to trust and uncertain about the truth, exacerbating fears of online bias and conflict.

In this era, (23) _____ and unscrupulous people with shared vested interests exploit the term "fake news" to undermine journalists and mislead the public, thereby underscoring the need for (24) _____. The digital age presents an opportunity for journalism to reinvent itself, utilizing modern gadgets like (25) _____.

Your answers:

16.	17.
18.	19.
20.	21.
22.	23.
24.	25.

II. LEXICO – GRAMMAR (2.0 points)

Part 1. For questions 26–35, write the letter A, B, C, or D in the numbered boxes provided to indicate the correct answer to each of the following questions.

26. He simplified the explanation of this theory into _____ terms so that it could easily be understood.
A. amateur's B. layman's C. specialist's D. expert's
27. His dream of becoming a famous actor was merely a _____ - there was no chance he would ever succeed.
A. cosmos B. corridor C. chimera D. capacity
28. Despite being unelected, senior civil servants often exert significant influence over government decisions, operating quietly within _____.
A. the pillars of society B. the corridors of power
C. the chambers of commerce D. the wheels of justice
29. His so-called scientific theories are the _____ of fantasy - there is no way they can be proved.
A. material B. stuff C. substance D. fabric
30. The criminal was so clever at disguising himself that it took the police months to _____ him down.
A. track B. search C. trace D. bring
31. I was _____ when I heard that the MP for Burnham had been arrested for fraud.
A. levelled B. floored C. hurled D. stupefied
32. It is not even _____ possible that this popular TV series will be taken off the air.
A. distantly B. considerably C. plausibly D. remotely
33. He didn't mean to be offensive; it was quite an _____ remark.
A. innocuous B. inaugural C. integral D. insidious
34. Despite the dangers and harsh terrain, _____ who attempted the climb spoke of its breathtaking beauty.
A. many a mountaineers B. much mountaineers
C. many a mountaineer D. many of mountaineers
35. The _____ of the river were so steep that they had to row for several miles before they could go ashore.
A. banks B. coasts C. streams D. ports

Your answers:

26.	27.	28.	29.	30.
31.	32.	33.	34.	35.

Part 2. For questions 36–40, write the correct form of each bracketed word in the numbered space provided in the column on the right to complete the passage. The first one has been done as an example.

In an era defined by boundless access and _____ (36. **CONNECT**), one might assume that the proliferation of choices equates to greater freedom and satisfaction. Paradoxically, the surfeit of options—once a symbol of affluence and autonomy—now often precipitates anxiety, paralysis, and discontent. Psychologists have coined this phenomenon the "paradox of choice," contending that while a certain degree of variety is liberating, an overabundance can be deeply _____ (37. **PRODUCE**).

Modern consumers, inundated by a deluge of alternatives, frequently find themselves ensnared in a cycle of incessant comparison. From selecting a health insurance plan to choosing a toothpaste brand, each decision is fraught with the fear of _____ (38. **OPTIMIZE**) choice. The resultant cognitive overload not only hampers decisiveness but can also engender chronic dissatisfaction, as individuals ruminate over the imagined superiority of the options they eschewed.

This tendency is exacerbated by the performative nature of contemporary life, wherein individuals feel compelled to curate every decision—be it mundane or momentous—as part of a personal brand. Social media platforms, rife with curated perfection, amplify the stakes of choice-making, insinuating that every selection is a _____ (39. **REFER**) on one's taste, intelligence, or success.

Yet, amidst this cacophony of alternatives, a _____ (40. **CURRENT**) is emerging. Some advocate for "voluntary simplicity," an ethos that valorizes intentionality over abundance. By embracing fewer, more meaningful choices, adherents claim to reclaim a sense of agency and inner peace long obfuscated by excess.

Ultimately, the question arises: is it the quantity of choices that liberates us—or the wisdom to discern which ones truly matter.

Your answers:

36. _____

37. _____

38. _____

39. _____

40. _____

Part 3. The passage below contains 05 grammatical mistakes. For questions 41–45, UNDERLINE the mistakes and WRITE YOUR CORRECTIONS in the numbered space provided in the column on the right. The first one has been done as an example.

As many, the jury's still up on whether mobile phones can be dangerous to human health. For others, the safety hazards of radiation emanating from mobile phones is clear: a wide array of health problems, including cancer.

There are now billions of mobile phone users in the world. The mobile phone industry insists its products pose absolutely no threat to consumers. However, those researchers who speak out against this wisdom say there's virtually no doubt mobile phones can contribute to the development of conditions like depression, diabetes, cancer, heart irregularities and impair fertility. You don't know who to believe but want to err on the side of caution? Then, follow the advice experts give will minimise your exposure to electromagnetic radiation.

Just switch your mobile off whenever you can. As long as it's on, its radiation is emitting, somewhat intermittent.

Your answers:

E.g. As -> For

41. _____

42. _____

43. _____

44. _____

45. _____

III. READING (5.0 points)

Part 1. For questions 46–55, read the passage and fill in each of the following numbered blanks with ONE suitable word. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

In a world increasingly dominated by digital filters and curated realities, the pursuit of perfection has (46) _____ from a personal ambition into a cultural expectation. Social media, in particular, has amplified this phenomenon, encouraging individuals to present an idealized version of their lives that often bears little resemblance (47) _____ reality.

Perfectionism, once regarded as a harmless drive for excellence, is now being re-examined through a more critical lens. Psychologists warn that it is (48) _____ longer a benign trait, but rather a potentially debilitating mindset that fosters anxiety, procrastination, and burnout. Many individuals struggle to complete tasks (49) _____ fear that their work will fall short of an impossible standard.

This relentless drive can be traced, in part, to societal pressures. People are often conditioned to conflate worth with achievement, to the (50) _____ that failure is not viewed as a stepping stone, but as a definitive verdict on one's character. In such a climate, mistakes are not just learning opportunities—they are liabilities to be (51) _____ at all costs.

Ironically, the more one strives for flawlessness, the more one becomes susceptible to feelings of inadequacy. The gap (52) _____ who we are and who we believe we ought to be becomes a source of chronic discontent.

A growing number of voices now advocate for a shift in perspective: from perfection to progress, from comparison to compassion. (53) _____ embracing imperfection, we reclaim the freedom to grow, fail, and try again—without shame.

After all, it is often (54) _____ our flaws and stumbles that we forge authenticity. The pursuit of perfection may be seductive, (55) _____ it is in our humanity that we are most compelling.

Your answers:

46.	47.	48.	49.	50.
51.	52.	53.	54.	55.

Part 2. Read the following passage and do the tasks that follow.

The Concept of Childhood in Western Societies

The historical understanding of childhood has sparked considerable academic interest, especially following the publication of *Centuries of Childhood* (1960) by French historian Philippe Ariès. In this influential work, Ariès controversially argued that the notion of “childhood” as a distinct stage of life is not timeless, but rather a relatively modern social construct.

One of the most contested issues in the history of childhood is whether the concept itself is a recent invention. Ariès proposed that, in Medieval Western Europe (up to the late 15th century), children were perceived as miniature adults, embodying adult-like intellect and temperament. His analysis of medieval diaries and visual depictions suggested there was little social differentiation between children and adults, especially in terms of work and recreation. However, Ariès emphasized that this did not equate to a lack of affection or concern. The concept of childhood, in his view, was rooted not in love for children, but in an awareness of their developmental distinctiveness from adults.

Historically, children fulfilled functional roles within the household economy. In medieval times, even very young children contributed through chores; by the 16th century, those as young as nine were often placed in domestic service or apprenticeships. The onset of industrialisation in the 18th and 19th centuries intensified this trend, as factories, mines, and workshops demanded a large, inexpensive labour force—often fulfilled by children. Social reformers soon questioned whether such laborious conditions were detrimental to children’s physical and psychological development, prompting more systematic studies on the matter.

Gradually, reform movements led to legal protections. In Britain, the Factory Act of 1833 marked a significant shift, establishing both legal restrictions on child labour and the introduction of “half-time schools” for working children. While these changes were meaningful, attendance remained inconsistent, and many children left school by age ten. Nevertheless, the perception of childhood began to shift. Children were increasingly viewed not as economic assets but as individuals undergoing a prolonged phase of dependency and learning. Work became secondary to schooling and play—once privileges of the wealthy, now seen as essential to all.

By the late 19th century, schooling had become central to the very definition of childhood in Britain. With compulsory education expanding, school life began to dominate children’s daily routines. The classroom came to represent a space where moral character and intellectual discipline were cultivated, separating children from the adult world of labour. Education extended its reach beyond the school day, through homework, extracurriculars, and growing expectations for parental involvement.

The emergence of mass schooling, urbanisation, and child welfare movements posed fresh challenges. Increasingly, children were seen as a group with unique developmental needs, best understood in terms of age-related stages. Educators and psychologists alike sought tools to assess children’s abilities, predict potential, and tailor instruction accordingly. Today, this age-based approach continues to influence how institutions categorize and support children’s growth and learning.

For questions 56-62, decide whether the following statements are True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG). Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

56. Philippe Ariès believed children performed different tasks than adults during the Middle Ages.
57. Children who worked in medieval times were often unloved by their families.
58. Some reformers suspected that excessive labour could harm children’s development.
59. Trade unions were the main drivers of child labour reform in the 19th century.
60. Half-time schools in the 1840s ensured widespread access to education for working children.
61. In the 20th century, full-time schooling became legally compulsory for all children.
62. Today, age plays a central role in how children’s needs are identified and managed.

For questions 63-68, answer the questions below using NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from the passage.

63. What historical subject gained prominence after Ariès’s work was published?

64. What phrase did Ariès use to describe how medieval society perceived children?

65. What major force drove the need for child labour during the 18th and 19th centuries?

66. What piece of legislation marked a turning point in Britain's protection of children?

67. What two things became key aspects of everyday life for all children in the 19th century?

68. Where did children spend most of their structured time during the school day?

Part 3. In the passage below, seven paragraphs have been removed. For questions 69-75, read the passage and choose from paragraphs A-H the one which fits each gap. There is ONE extra paragraph which you do not need to use. Write the letters A-H in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

There is little dispute that a university education yields substantial economic rewards. On average, degree holders earn significantly more over their lifetimes than those without a tertiary qualification, and their unemployment rates tend to be approximately half as high. In the United States, some studies suggest that obtaining a university degree nearly doubles lifetime earnings.

69

Similarly, it cannot be the sole metric by which we assess the value of a university experience. Take, for example, Amy—a high-achieving graduate from a top-tier business school who joined a prestigious Wall Street investment firm, facilitating billion-dollar transactions on a global scale. By the standards of market-driven evaluation, Amy was the epitome of educational success, hitting the ground running.

70

She thrived in this high-pressure environment and earned glowing performance reviews. Her compensation packages were generous and climbing, and she was poised for swift advancement. Yet, despite all the trappings of success, she began to detect a void—something intangible and entirely unrelated to income or institutional recognition.

71

Her formal education had certainly trained her to excel professionally, but not to derive a sense of purpose from her work. She observed that many colleagues, despite their impressive résumés and lifestyles, were fundamentally dissatisfied. Lavish salaries and luxury items had done little to mask their disillusionment. When confronted, they would often concede their unhappiness but rationalise it with comments like, “Of course I hate my job, but I can’t walk away. The money is just too good.”

72

Nonetheless, the trade-off proved worthwhile. She now engages in work that she finds genuinely meaningful—offering care and compassion to patients in need. From a financial perspective, her decision may appear ruinous. Yet from a human standpoint, it has been deeply enriching.

73

This narrative underscores a vital truth: the ultimate value of university is not merely to generate a workforce suited to the unforgiving realities of the global marketplace.

74

Of course, such financial realities cannot be ignored. In the United States, student debt can be crippling. The average 2012 graduate left university nearly \$30,000 in debt, with some medical graduates owing over \$300,000. No student or parent begins this journey expecting unemployment or underemployment.

75

Indeed, while our careers consume much of our adult lives, we also seek fulfilment in unpaid endeavours: raising children, cultivating friendships, exploring creative passions, and pursuing meaningful causes. At its best, higher education does not simply prepare us for the labour market—it helps us explore what it means to live well and fully.

Missing Paragraphs:

A.	Yet that is precisely what Amy chose to do. She returned to school and began studying medicine. The decision came at a steep price—more than ten years of her life and hundreds of thousands of dollars in tuition and lost income.
B.	However, there are significant limitations to viewing university education purely through the lens of economic return. While employment outcomes matter, they are hardly the only factors that make a life well lived.
C.	Graduate job placement rates, average starting salaries, and long-term earning potential are certainly relevant. These metrics are practical, even necessary—but they offer an incomplete picture.
D.	In truth, higher education was never intended to be an elite pursuit. It was designed to foster

	civic engagement, ethical responsibility, and cultural literacy.
E.	Every day presented her with intellectually demanding tasks—complex financial modelling, strategic decision-making, and high-level communication. Her business education had prepared her well for the technical demands of the job.
F.	This story reveals a deeper insight about the purpose of higher education. At its core, university should help individuals discern their values and reflect on the kind of contribution they wish to make in the world.
G.	At its finest, education is transformative. It pushes us to question assumptions, refine our identities, and develop practices that give life depth and significance.
H.	Her colleagues' frustrations were palpable. Though well-dressed and well-compensated, they expressed quiet misery. Their lives looked successful on paper, but felt empty in reality.

Part 4. For questions 76-85, read a passage on the *Decameron* and write *A, B, C* or *D* in the corresponding numbered boxes provided to indicate the correct answer which fits best according to what is stated or implied in the text.

Could Short-Form Video Rival the Traditional Cinema?

Alongside its meteoric rise in popularity, my own fascination with YouTube has intensified into a near-compulsive preoccupation. Entire evenings—originally earmarked for focused writing—are frequently derailed by an irresistible urge to open a browser, from which the path to YouTube is inevitable. And who can blame me? Whether crudely improvised or remarkably polished, the finest of these short-form films possess an unfiltered immediacy and authenticity largely absent from cinema or television.

As internet consumption begins to eclipse traditional TV viewing for a growing portion of the population, it's not implausible to imagine that this grassroots mode of filmmaking might evolve into a formidable rival to conventional cinema. Indeed, a number of contemporary directors have begun embracing a visual aesthetic inspired by YouTube—marked by unembellished, static shots with a deadpan, surveillance-like detachment—reflecting the sensibilities of a digital generation.

Surprisingly, cinema itself has flirted with some of YouTube's stylistic trademarks. The viral success of *The Blair Witch Project*, for instance, was amplified by an internet campaign that blurred fiction and reality, suggesting—albeit falsely—that the horror depicted was genuine. Similarly, numerous “confessional” YouTube vlogs have turned out to be meticulously scripted performances. In an earlier era, some documentaries shared YouTube's participatory ethos, as subjects filmed themselves and relied on

professionals to shape the final product. Today, such storytellers would likely bypass traditional intermediaries and upload their work directly to YouTube.

Perhaps the most striking convergence between cinema and YouTube lies in the use of the continuous shot—a lingering, impartial gaze that neither edits nor interprets. The most compelling YouTube content is rarely scripted or polished; rather, it is the raw, uninterrupted footage that captivates, precisely because it unfolds in real time. From quiet domestic incidents to dramatic global events, these long takes are both mesmerising and unnerving.

Many filmmakers have attempted to replicate this hypnotic and often unsettling aesthetic. But arguably, what they overlook is YouTube’s accidental genius—its unintentional comedy. Some of the most extraordinary clips are the result of pure happenstance. Take, for example, security camera footage from a crowded bar, in which a woman suddenly vanishes through a trapdoor left open behind her. The framing is impeccable, the timing perfect—Buster Keaton himself could not have orchestrated it better. The spontaneity and precision of such moments are virtually impossible to manufacture.

Another element where YouTube diverges sharply from traditional cinema is in the immediacy of its feedback mechanisms. Each video is subject to open ratings and unfiltered commentary. Unlike formal film criticism, which dissects performance, plot, and production values, YouTube viewers focus on simple metrics: Was it entertaining? Would you watch it again? Would you share it? The reviewing process is as democratic and candid as the content itself.

At its best, YouTube embodies a kind of amateur ethos that liberates it from the narrative conventions and aesthetic norms of commercial cinema. Its allure lies not just in the content, but in the participatory nature of its consumption. Viewers become curators and distributors, shaping the platform as much as the creators do. Unless the cinema world is willing to learn from this collaborative, decentralised model, it risks becoming increasingly irrelevant.

76. What does the writer express about his relationship with YouTube in the opening paragraph?

- A. He finds it enhances his productivity while working.
- B. He consciously chooses it over mainstream cinema.
- C. He finds himself repeatedly distracted by its appeal.
- D. He values the brevity of its video content.

77. Why does the writer believe YouTube may rival traditional cinema?

- A. It captures moments when people are unaware they’re being filmed.
- B. It reflects a shift in how people engage with visual media.
- C. It requires less time commitment than conventional films.

D. It provides a platform for real people to share authentic stories.

78. In the context of paragraph one, what is the meaning of *unfiltered immediacy*?

- A. direct
- B. surreal
- C. expertly produced
- D. enchanting

79. What similarity does the writer draw between cinema and YouTube in paragraph three?

- A. Both produce compelling horror content.
- B. Both often feature actor-directors.
- C. Both rely on viral marketing techniques.
- D. Both blur the line between fiction and authenticity.

80. What is the closest synonym for *lingering gaze* in paragraph four?

- A. pressed
- B. terrorised
- C. forced
- D. coerced

81. What is the closest meaning of *unnerving* in paragraph five?

- A. impressive
- B. unsettling
- C. helpful
- D. overpowering

82. What makes the continuous shot so powerful, according to the writer?

- A. Its events unfold without manipulation or commentary.
- B. It works equally well in all storytelling contexts.
- C. It exposes behind-the-scenes action.
- D. It replicates how human vision operates.

83. Why does the writer describe the CCTV footage in the bar?

- A. To show how YouTube sources content from unexpected places.
- B. To illustrate how genuine humour is often impossible to stage.
- C. To argue that comedy is best when it's candid and unedited.
- D. To compare YouTube slapstick with classic silent films.

84. Why are questions used in paragraph six?

- A. To critique how formal film reviews are written.
- B. To highlight the straightforward nature of viewer feedback.
- C. To propose better metrics for film analysis.
- D. To show the variety of online opinions.

85. What does the writer conclude about YouTube's appeal?

- A. It attracts a vast and growing audience.
- B. It succeeds due to its boundary-pushing content.
- C. It surpasses cinema in artistic quality.
- D. It empowers audiences to shape what is seen and shared.

Part 5. The passage below consists of five paragraphs (A-E). For questions 86-95, read the passage and do the tasks that follow. Write your answers in the corresponding numbered boxes provided.

Prairie Fever: Aristocrats on the American Frontier

A.

The peculiar phenomenon of British aristocrats establishing enclaves in the American West during the 19th century represents one of the more eccentric chapters in the broader narrative of U.S. immigration. This intriguing saga is brought to life in *Prairie Fever*, a compelling work by BBC documentary veteran Peter Pagnamenta. Enticed by romanticised portrayals of the untamed frontier—through the writings of James Fennimore Cooper and the legendary escapades of figures like Wild Bill Hickok—these upper-class émigrés sought not merely to witness America, but to remake it in their own image. In outposts bearing familiar names such as Runnymede and Victoria, they endeavoured to create bastions of Britishness, determined that at least one corner of the vast American prairie would remain forever England.

B.

The influx began in the 1830s, led by adventurous sportsmen and thrill-seekers. Among them was Sir William Stewart, a Scottish veteran of Waterloo, who spent seven years journeying through the Rockies, consorting with mountain men, and surviving encounters with bears and Native tribes. His associate, Charles Murray—scion of the Earl of Dunmore—briefly cohabited with the Pawnee and endured the indignity of having his dog consumed by his hosts. He redeemed himself, however, by triumphing in rock-throwing contests thanks to his Highland Games training. Unfortunately, few of their successors exhibited such adaptability. Many aristocrats treated local customs with undisguised disdain. Sir George Gore epitomised such arrogance, undertaking a lavish, \$100,000 hunting tour from Missouri that allegedly decimated over 6,000 buffalo, severely jeopardising Indigenous food supplies. Their palpable air of superiority eventually drew widespread American resentment.

C.

By the 1870s, the locals' grievances extended beyond mere snobbery—the British now aspired to settle permanently. Recognising the untapped potential of the West, Britain's upper classes increasingly dispatched their less fortunate younger sons to seek fortune and relevance in Kansas and Iowa. America, eager for settlers to cultivate its prairie states, welcomed them enthusiastically. The British press followed this emigration with interest: *The Times* lauded the colonists' cheerful demeanor and purposeful lives. Yet shrewder commentators observed a fundamental incompatibility: the newcomers failed to internalise the

American work ethic. Farming, for them, was subordinate to leisure and sport—a mindset that would prove costly.

D.

The American interior was already a mosaic of ethnic enclaves—communities of Danes, Germans, and others coalescing around shared heritage. In 1873, George Grant, a Scottish gentleman farmer, envisioned a colony of British gentry in Kansas, restricted to those possessing no less than £2,000 and granted a full square mile of land each. The settlement—patriotically named Victoria—was romanticised as a ‘Second Eden’. However, the reality of frontier life swiftly dismantled such illusions. With punishing heat, long droughts, and relentless grasshopper plagues, the pampered aristocrats—many of whom had never held a plough—struggled to survive. Though mocked by locals as “remittance men” (a nod to their dependence on family allowances), the colonists persisted with surprising resolve.

E.

Ultimately, most of these noble ventures ended in failure, and many of the disillusioned gentry returned home. However, it was their foray into large-scale ranching that irrevocably soured American tolerance. Drawn by the prospect of vast profits, affluent British investors began acquiring enormous swathes of land—one individual alone amassing 1.75 million acres and 100,000 cattle. What had once seemed quaintly aristocratic now appeared threatening. American politicians exploited growing xenophobia, stoking fears that the British were monopolising frontier wealth. Allegations even emerged that some landowners referred to their ranch hands as “cow-servants.” In response, Congress enacted the Alien Land Act, limiting foreign ownership to 5,000 acres and formally ending Britain’s prairie experiment.

Adapted from Đề Đề Xuất DHBB 2023 - Chuyên Sơn La

In which sections are the following mentioned?

Your answers:

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| • the settlers failed to embrace the American value of industriousness? | 86. _____ |
| • the settlers’ intention to recreate British customs and culture in a foreign land? | 87. _____ |
| • class exclusivity was deliberately engineered into one specific settlement? | 88. _____ |
| • some colonists remained economically dependent on family support? | 89. _____ |
| • a cultural clash in which a settler’s expectations were clearly violated? | 90. _____ |
| • the settlers’ increasing wealth triggered political backlash? | 91. _____ |
| • America offered a practical solution to a British social dilemma? | 92. _____ |
| • a report that offered a naively optimistic portrayal of colonial life? | 93. _____ |
| • the settlers’ romantic notions were shattered by harsh realities? | 94. _____ |
| • the contemptuous attitude that many British newcomers had towards locals? | 95. _____ |

IV. WRITING (6.0 points)

Part 1. Read the following extract and use your own words to summarise it. Your summary should be between 100 and 120 words.

In the 1960s, researcher John Calhoun placed a population of rats in a confined environment and observed how their social structure rapidly deteriorated. The rats exhibited extreme behavioural pathology—violence, sexual coercion, and eventually cannibalism. Calhoun dubbed this collapse the “behavioural sink.”

The term quickly gained traction. Commentators began drawing parallels between the rats’ descent and human society, likening inner-city conditions and politically charged riots to overcrowded rodent colonies. In 1970, science writer Robert Ardrey warned that voluntary human crowding could drive civilization toward either anarchy or authoritarianism. The supposed psychological toll of dense living soon became a cornerstone of popular theories on aggression.

Yet extrapolating directly from rodents to humans is a substantial leap. For instance, comparing homicide rates with population density across nations reveals no clear correlation. Among developed free-market countries, the United States has one of the highest per capita murder rates—despite its relatively low population density.

To examine how other primates respond to crowding, we compared rhesus monkeys confined to small cages with those roaming freely on Morgan Island, South Carolina. We also observed chimpanzees in indoor enclosures versus large, forested islands. Contrary to expectations, no consistent crowding effects emerged. In fact, primates in confined spaces often became more social, increasing grooming behaviours—likely as a means to preempt conflict. Nonhuman primates are, it turns out, highly skilled at managing tension and maintaining group harmony.

This suggests that crowding alone may not be the root of social breakdown. The real issue—both for rats and humans—appears to be resource distribution. In Calhoun’s experiments, violence was concentrated around limited food sources. For human societies, the greater concern should not be population density, but sustainability and equitable access to resources.

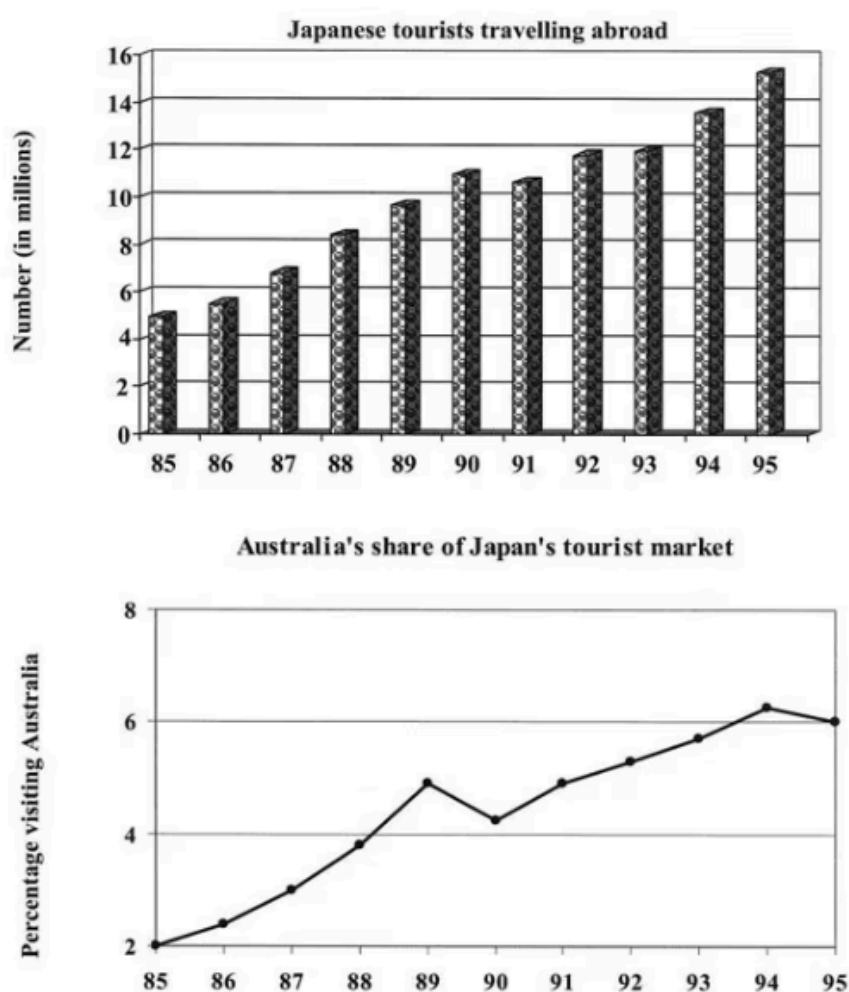
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Part 2. The charts below show the number of Japanese tourists travelling abroad between 1985 and 1995 and Australia's share of the Japanese tourist market.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant. You should write about 150 words.



Part 3. Write an essay of about 350 words on the following topic.

Online communities often "cancel" public figures for past actions or statements. Supporters view this as holding people accountable; critics argue it stifles dialogue and growth.

Is cancel culture a form of social justice or a threat to free expression?

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(You may write overleaf if you need more space.)

- GOOD LUCK, AND DO NOT CRY -

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