

GCE O/L English Language – Preparatory Activities

Zonal Education Office, Kalutara

1. Read the following text and answer the questions given below.

The Red Cross is an organization that was founded in the 1860s to care for soldiers who were sick or wounded in the battle field. It now works to prevent human suffering of all kinds, in peace, as well as in war. It is known by its emblem a red cross on a white background. However, in most of the countries where people are Muslims, the emblem consists of a red crescent on a white background and the organization is known as the Red Crescent. The emblem of the organization in Russia is the red Lion.

- 1 1) In which Year was the Red Cross started?
- 2 2) Why was the organization started?
- 3 3) What countries do not use the emblem, Red Cross?
- 4 4) Describe the emblems used by those countries?

2. Read the following passage and answer the questions.

The variety of life on Earth, its biological diversity, is commonly referred to as biodiversity. The number of species of plants, animals, and microorganisms, the enormous diversity of genes in these species, the different ecosystems on the planet, such as deserts, rainforests and coral reefs are all part of a biologically diverse Earth.

In some way or form, almost all cultures have recognized the importance of nature and its biological diversity for their societies and have therefore understood the need to maintain it. Yet, power, greed and politics have affected the precarious balance. For example, a larger number of plant species means a greater variety of crops; greater species diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms; and healthy ecosystems can better withstand and recover from a variety of disasters.

And so, while we dominate this planet, we still need to preserve the diversity in wildlife. Why is Biodiversity important? Does it really matter if there aren't so many species?

Biodiversity boosts ecosystem productivity where each species, no matter how small, all have an important role to play.

- i. What is meant by bio diversity?
- ii. What affected to harm the balance on the biologically diverse Earth?
- iii. Why is bio diversity important?
- iv. Find words from the passage to match the following.
 - a. Very large =
 - b. Ability to maintain / to keep going =

- c. Unfortunate event / calamity =
- d. Promote =
- e. Protect =

3. Read the following text and answer the questions that follow

Crazy competitions!

5 Ross McDermott and Andrew Owen travel round the United States. While travelling they
6 maintain a blog under the title *The American Festivals Project* where they write about **their**
7 experiences. On their tour they have come across different kinds of festivals celebrated in
8 different parts of the country. Many of these festivals are also competitions.

9 The Idiotarod is an annual race in New York City. Each team must have five people and a
10 shopping cart. **They** can decorate their carts but they can't change the wheels. All the teams
11 have to start and finish at the same place but they don't have to run on the same roads. The
12 teams can choose **their** route but the members of each team must arrive at the finish line
13 together. And they mustn't finish without the cart!

14 Mud Bowl football is similar to normal American football. The match is shorter but there are
15 two teams and a referee. The winner is the team with the most goals at the end of sixty
16 minutes. The only real difference is that the players have to play in half a metre of mud!

17 Combine harvesters are normally on farms but, for one day every summer, in the small town
18 of Hillsdale in Michigan, farmers compete against each other for a prize of \$1,500. For three
19 hours, the giant machines have to fight until only one combine harvester is still moving.

- 1) Underline the correct answer.
 1. The text is about different kinds of ...
 - a) festivals and competitions
 - b) competitions
 - c) festivals which are also competitions
 2. The race mentioned in the text is
 - a) Idiotarod
 - b) Mud Bowl football
 - c) Combine harvesters game
- 2) Answer the following questions.
 - i) What is the country mentioned in the text?

- ii) Whose experiences are given here?
- iii) What is the name of the blog?
- iv) What are the conditions of each competition??

3) What do the following refer to in the text?

- 1. their (in line 2)
- 2. They (in line 6)
- 3. their (in line 8)

4) Read the following text and complete the table. *The first one is done for you.*

Moments in space history

On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union sent Sputnik 1 into space and a new age in history began – The Space Age. The Soviets launched more Sputnik satellites in the fifties and by 1961 they had put the first man into space.

Eight years later, an American finally walked on the moon and during the early seventies the US led the Soviet Union in the space race. However, space travel was expensive and they needed to co-operate more. As a result, in 1975 astronauts from both countries flew two spacecraft and met in space. Afterwards, one astronaut said that the mission showed that the Soviet Union and America could work together.

Nearly two decades later, leaders from both countries said they had agreed on plans for a new international space station (ISS) and by the turn of the century the ISS had started orbiting the Earth. Nowadays, the ISS is used by scientists from all over the world.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, businessman Dennis Tito paid twenty million dollars and told the world he loved space as he spent eight days on the ISS. Since then, space tourism has developed with plans for regular tours and floating hotels.

And what about the next half a century? In 2009, a Russian Space Chief said Russia was planning a nuclear spaceship for Mars. In 2010, the US president Barack Obama told an audience that by the mid-2030s the US would send humans to Mars. The race for Mars has already started.

Year / Time period	Country	Event/What happened/ what will happen
1957	Soviet Union	sent Sputnik 1 into space
1961		
1969		
1975		
Two decades later		
Beginning of the 21 st century		
2010		
mid-2030s		

GCE O/L English Language – Preparatory Activities

Zonal Education Office, Kalutara

1. Fill in the blanks of the following story using the correct form of the verbs given within brackets.

Long ago there lived a tiger named Ruso. He used to cook. One day his fire 1) went (go) out. So, Ruso 2) (have) to go to the village to 3) (fetch) some fire. The people 4) (be) frightened when they 5) (see) the tiger coming. They 6) (lock) their doors. The tiger 7) (go back) to the jungle. He 8) (visit) his sister. She had a small tiger cub. 9) “..... (Go) to the village and fetch me fire”, said Ruso to his nephew. “you are so small, the villages won’t be afraid of you”. The cub started off, but on his way he played with the monkeys, slashed in pools and (10) (climb) up trees. By the time he reached the village, he (11) (forget) what his uncle wanted.

2. Complete the given description with **a/an/the**.

In my brother’s room there’s desk and two chairs. There bookcase with three shelves. His computer games and other CDs are on top shelf. He plays on them every day. There is poster of Sri Lankan cricket team on one wall. He is supporter, but he has never been to match.

3. Choose the right option and underline. *The first one is done for you.*

- 1) Children are very **noisy**. They play..... (noisy/noisily)
- 2) Sam is aman. Every day he waits for the bus..... (patient/patiently)
- 3) Good students work..... (hard/hardly)
- 4) A lion is a..... animal. It chases the game.....(wild/wildly)
- 5) Jaani has a voice. She sang at the party last Sunday. (beautifully/beautiful)

4. Complete the following note using suitable pronouns. The first one is done for you.

Dear Rashin,

I am going to Nuwara Eliya with (1) my parents next weekend. Would (2) like to join (3)? Please get permission from (4) parents and send (5) a note. (6) will be staying at my aunt's place in Nuwara Eliya.

Shashika

5. Read the text and write the underlined phrases in reported speech. *One is done for you.*

Intelligent travel blog

We ask six travellers about their favourite piece of technology. Here are their comments.

This is my 'mobile office'. These things are in my backpack.

Posted by **Ian Walker**

I can take hundreds of photos with my new camera. It has a big memory. Posted by **Sacha**

Brown

I have an old webcam, but it's OK. I can see and talk to my family at home. Posted by **Luis**

dos Santos

I can work on the train with my laptop. It has a good battery.

Posted by **Adela Law**

My phone has a fantastic video camera. I can take great videos.

Posted by **Hon Yin**

My MP3 player is small and light. It's in my bag all the time. Posted by **Adam LeBlanc**

1. Ian Walker mentioned that those things were in his backpack.
2.
.....
3.
.....
4.
.....

5.
.....