

Preparing for the Exam

READING

Higher Tier

Q1. What do you learn from the article about...?

(8 marks)



Unit 1: Non-Fiction

Summarising Content

1 Tick one or more options to complete the sentence below:

In the exam your task will be to...

- A read the non-fiction texts and write a commentary on them.
- B read the non-fiction texts and answer questions on them.
- C read the non-fiction texts and produce a new text on the same theme.
- D skim read the non-fiction texts before producing your own versions.

Re-presenting Material

2 Read the passage opposite and then answer the questions that follow.

a) What is changing about old age according to paragraph one? Answer using a direct quotation.

b) Paraphrase the information in paragraph two.

c) Summarise the final paragraph.

The New Oldies

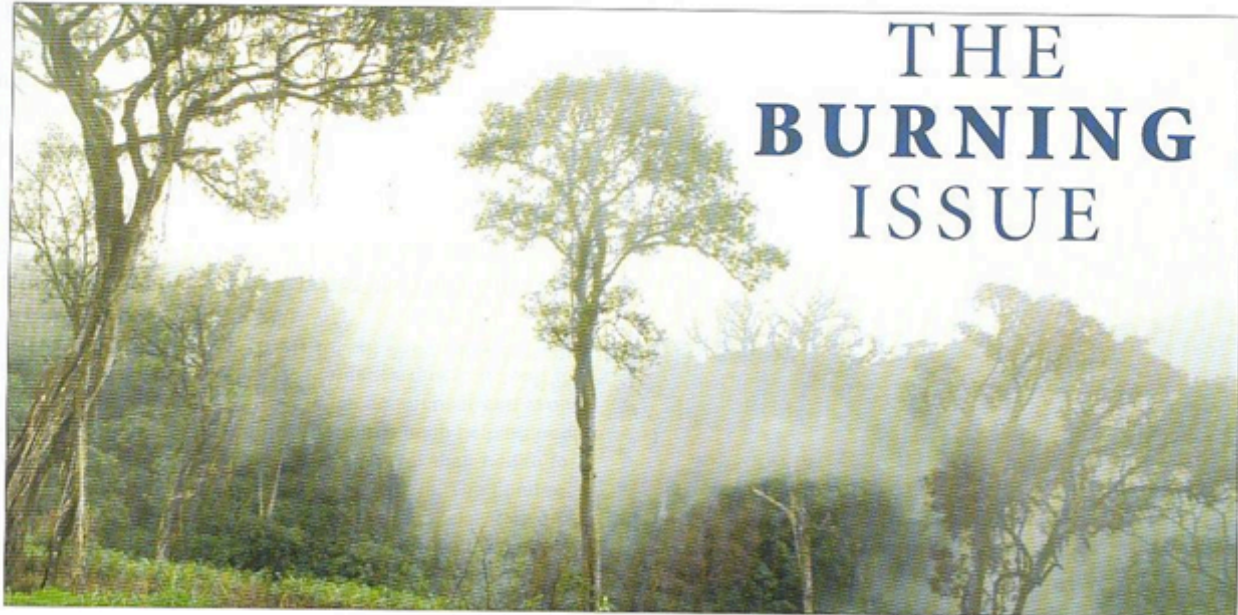
A major problem with modern western civilisation is that too many people are living for too long. On top of this they are having fewer and fewer children. The effect of these two processes is to place a greater and greater burden on the smaller numbers of children that are born. In the next few years these children will be working to maintain an ever growing number of retirees.

In the past, people who retired at 60 or 65 seemed to be content to fade into the background but some of the new old people, at least, will have plenty of money and will be prepared to make their views known. The grey pound, as it is known, will affect what kind of investments are made and even the kinds of things that will be found in shops.

The new oldies will also be less willing to admit their age and, in fact, they will be much fitter and healthier than previous generations; the number of people living to a hundred increases every year. Don't expect traditional nice little old ladies who like knitting; you are more likely to run into loud old ladies who like dancing.



Practice Text 1



Deforestation was the burning issue of the nineties, but since it has slipped from the news headlines, it also seems to have slipped from people's consciousness. This really does seem like a case of out of sight, out of mind and that actually will be the case for trees if deforestation continues at the rate it is at the moment. Despite the efforts of charities like Rainforest Concern, the public seems bored with this problem and instead focuses on whatever global disaster is stealing the headlines – the potential threat of war, most likely. With around 17 million hectares of forest being destroyed each year (an area larger than Great Britain and Ireland) the public should not be so complacent.

Deforestation causes all manner of problems, not just the obvious or well-publicised ones of loss of air quality or the extinction of a multitude of species. It is a well-cited fact that the equatorial rainforests are home to a huge variety of species of animals, birds, plants and insects that are not found anywhere else in the world. These are only the species that we are aware of. Some parts of the forest are so dense that there may be many more species that are as yet undiscovered.

Ironically, if deforestation continues these species will not remain undiscovered for long; they will be discovered and then made extinct almost straight away.

The forests are home to people as well as birds and animals. Some 350 million people worldwide rely on the forests for food, shelter and fuel. Many of these are tribes that have lived in the forests for centuries, or even millennia, and their knowledge of the forests is being lost almost as quickly as the trees themselves. These tribes-people are aware of natural remedies for many illnesses and ailments, which we in the so-called developed world could utilise. Deforestation causes many physical problems too. Soil erosion, watershed destabilisation and an imbalance in the global climate are all potential problems caused by deforestation.

So what can be done? Instead of using slash and burn methods of forestry, we should rely on sustainable forests made up of trees that grow and mature quickly and easily. Only if we do this, can we hope to preserve our forests – and our planet – for future generations.

What do you learn from the article about the issue of deforestation in Britain? (8 marks)



Unit 1: Non-Fiction

Practice Response 1

One thing I learn is that _____

This suggests/shows/reveals _____

It makes me think _____

Another thing I learn is _____

Overall _____



For band 3 and above you need to INTERPRET the information given and put it into your own words. Think about SUMMARISING at the end.



Practice Text 2

Living on thin ice

Simon Garfield

Not so long ago polar bears were a symbol of cold, but these days they are a symbol of warmth. The traditional threats to the polar bear – hunting, toxic waste, offshore drilling – have been overshadowed by a new one: the ice around them is melting, and we are to blame.

This new threat is not new, of course – about as new as deforestation. But two things have put the polar bears on top of the vanishing ice, where they pose as the latest poster animals in a distinguished parade of endangered pandas, gorillas, dolphins and whales. At the end of December the US Fish and Wildlife Service was considering adding the polar bear to its list of threatened species.

Then, at the beginning of February, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change delivered its damning verdict on rising temperatures and disappearing sea ice, and polar bears had even more reasons to feel loved. Six hundred scientists attempted to dismiss all lingering cynicism about global warming, and to pin the blame on its human perpetrators. The reality is now stark and quantifiable, they stated, and in some areas the devastation is irreversible: we are already too late, for example, to avert the effects of the recent rises in sea levels. The news is particularly bad for polar bears, for the earlier melting of spring ice and the later formation of autumn ice has an immediate impact on their ability to feed. In some areas there is evidence that sea ice breaks up three weeks earlier than it did 30 years ago.



The polar bear has traditionally been an adaptable creature. But, though it may receive a little sustenance from birds' eggs, it cannot survive without large supplies of seal meat and blubber, and for its kill it must be on or near sea ice. And the problem is broader still. Polar bears may be feeding on fewer seals not just because of melting sea ice; the seals may be declining because they aren't finding enough fish, and the fish aren't finding sufficient krill, and the krill aren't finding the algae.

There are thought to be between 20,000 and 25,000 polar bears in the world and most scientists believe global warming poses a critical threat to their long-term survival. After years of hesitancy, there is now a sense of urgency. Soon, the US Fish and Wildlife Service will hold the second of its public hearings on whether the polar bear should be officially regarded as a threatened species. But it may be too late. To some extent the fate of the polar bear is already fixed and it may not recover from our devastating impact on its Arctic environment.

What do you learn from Simon Garfield's article about the concerns for polar bears? (8 marks)



Practice Text 3

At the Heart of the World's Greatest Marathon

In 1996, Flora became the sponsor of the London Marathon creating a partnership which has proven to be one of the most successful in the history of British sporting events.

The Flora London Marathon is now recognised as the greatest city-centre marathon in the world; not only by the runners and media, but by the organisers of the other leading marathons worldwide. It boasts the largest number of entrants. It also has a very strong elite field, lining up current and past Olympic and world champions alongside world record holders. But, at the heart of the day can be found the 30,000+ amateur, club and fun runners who make London such a unique and memorable occasion.

Each year thousands of participants run to raise money for their favoured charities, many wearing weird, wonderful, and often cumbersome fancy-dress outfits, ensuring that their marathon is the ultimate, albeit intensely personal, challenge. It is estimated that since the first London Marathon was staged in 1981 over £150m has been raised for charity.

So why does the relationship continue to be such a phenomenal success?

The 2003 event will be Flora's eighth year as sponsor, and it is a partnership which has

flourished due to a good fit between sponsor and event. Flora has been helping people to look after their health for over 30 years. The London Marathon is widely seen as the nation's favourite healthy event. Both Flora and the London Marathon are keen to ensure the event is inclusive, for anyone and everyone.

Central to Flora's communication over the last few years has been the importance of promoting heart health. The Flora London Marathon brings to life the healthy heart message to participants, spectators, family and friends alike; demonstrates the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle and the importance of maintaining a healthy heart by combining sensible diet with exercise.

The London Marathon serves as an inspiration to us all. For those of you who have been armchair spectators in the past, why not take up the challenge and apply for the 2003 event? If you feel the Marathon distance is beyond you, use it as inspiration to create your own personal sporting or fitness challenge and take your first steps towards a longer, healthier and happier lifestyle.



Not only do we believe the Flora London Marathon is the greatest, but, judging from quotes and feedback from the 2002 race, so does everyone else!

BBC Grandstand commentary

"... you run out of things to say, just absolutely astounding ... the Flora London Marathon is top of the tree. Others such as New York and Chicago have had claims to be the world's best marathon, but they can't come close to this."

Paula Radcliffe – 2002 women's champion

"I can already imagine the noise of the crowds in London on April 14th. That is when I will fulfil one of my childhood dreams and take part in the Flora London Marathon."

Simon Barnes – the Times Sports Columnist of The Year

"The need for adventure bites hard, but Cape Horn and Everest are incompatible with the mortgage, the marriage, the school run, a sensible CV and a nice sofa. Have no fear the London Marathon is there ... the London Marathon is not Everest, but it is better than being cooped up and safer than finding the source of the Nile. This is not the real Ulysses, but it beats the hell out of stagnation."

Letter to The Times

"... the London Marathon gave us competition, endeavour, human achievement, world records and personal triumphs."

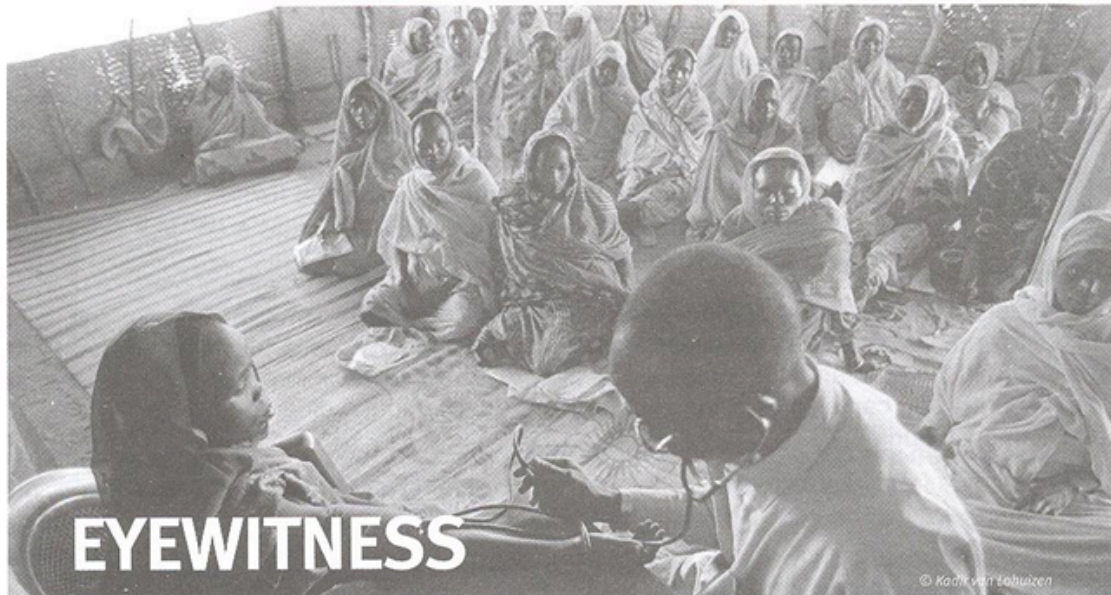
The Times

"London can pride itself on having created a world-class sporting event in the guise of the classic British street party."

What do you learn from the article about the London Marathon? (8 marks)



Practice Text 4



Meriel Rosser from the UK has volunteered for MSF in many countries around the world, but she just can't help returning to Sudan. Here she describes the ongoing crisis in Darfur. Although media coverage of the region has declined, the situation has still not improved for the millions of people caught up in the conflict there.

MSF volunteer Meriel Rosser delivers a message from the frontline.

"It is 2.20 am and 34 degrees C... Welcome to Khartoum!" I seem to be attached to a piece of elastic that keeps bouncing me back to Sudan since my first stint here some three years ago. Then I was in charge of MSF's work treating the deadly disease kala azar (also known as visceral leishmaniasis) in Gedaref state in the east of the country.

Now I'm in the west in Darfur, where the fighting that has been going on here over the last three years has had

terrible consequences for the people.

I'm based in Muhajariya, a heartland of the Sudan Liberation Army. MSF is trying to meet some of the huge needs that have arisen because people have fled their homes and because basic necessities like water and sanitation and especially medical services are so limited. During the time we have worked in Darfur we have been providing nutritional support to malnourished children and running a field hospital carrying out surgery for Caesarean sections, as well as injuries related to the ongoing violence, such as gunshot wounds. We also run clinics where we provide primary health care and see people affected by diarrhoea, fever and, at the moment, a lot of malaria.

Darfur is a tough place to work, and the medical needs remain enormous. Violence against civilians continues and people are forced to flee their homes repeatedly. Getting enough food and other humanitarian support is a continuous battle.

We have dealt with births, deaths (always too many, but we know there are many more we save), reports of

Dengue fever in the next state, rabies cases around Darfur... the challenges are endless. Although it's not easy, I do sometimes look around and think that I'm lucky to be in a position to experience this – the beautiful smiling faces of children, the graceful herders on their camels and the waves from people going about their everyday business. And I'm even luckier to be part of an organisation that can really do something to help the most vulnerable.

We are able to do that because people like you support our work. You allow us to react quickly and independently. I am continually amazed at just how much we can do thanks to you.

"Just because Darfur is not in the news as much as it was a year or so ago does not mean that the situation for individuals living the nightmare has improved at all."

Meriel Rosser, MSF volunteer, Darfur, Sudan

(Above image) April 4, 2006: Kalma camp, Darfur, women patiently wait to be seen by an MSF doctor. The health of women is a particular concern because they have to shoulder the burden of taking care of huge families without resources or support. This leaves many exhausted and vulnerable to illness.



ENGLISH CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER 1026588

To help MSF with a monthly donation, please go to www.uk.msf.org/support

EMC2

What do you learn from Meriel Rosser about the work the MSF do? (8 marks)



Practice Text 5

An Open Road To Death

Imagine a place where hundreds of motorbikes can race on public roads with absolutely no speed limit, and no need for special licences or training. For some it will sound like heaven, a dream opportunity to test their machines and reflexes without being hassled by the police. For others it will sound like a nightmare.

The surprise is that however far-fetched it might seem, it actually exists. Despite numerous deaths and growing controversy, it also has the full approval of the authorities.

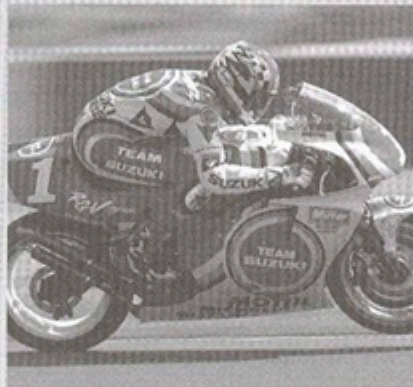
Last weekend an estimated 40,000 people flocked to the Isle of Man for Mad Sunday, a day in the middle of the TT road race series in which anybody, however poorly trained, can get on the circuit and drive at speeds of up to 150mph.

Exciting as this might sound, nearly 200 people have been killed on this 37-mile circuit since the TT races began in 1907. So how wise can it be to allow novices to race without speed restrictions on roads with unforgiving obstacles such as telegraph poles, postboxes and sheer rock faces?

So what chance is there of an incident-free day for the thousands of riders – most with little or no experience of high-speed riding – who blast their way along the island's twisting mountain roads? From our vantage point at the Bungalow, high up on the mountain section of the course, we watch a stream of motorcyclists speeding by. Some riders are displaying L-plates, and others are carrying children as pillion passengers. In the TT festival's worst year, 1993, 10 lives were lost. Compare this with the progress made in reducing overall motor sport casualties in recent years.

Edmund King, executive director of the RAC Foundation, says: 'When you get to the stage where there's a risk of dying in order to have a bit of fun, then the wisdom of doing it must be questioned.

Simon Potter
watches amateur motorcyclists
risk all on the Isle of Man's
Mad Sunday.



There are safer ways to have fun on two wheels, or indeed on four wheels.'

Police say they have made the course safer. A seemingly obvious step has been taken – the course has been made one-way instead of having cars, or even trucks, driving along it in the opposite direction. This followed a number of head-on collisions, brought about mostly by foreign riders forgetting which side of the road they should be on.

There have been other safety improvements. There are fat air cushions and straw bales on as many hazards as possible, an array of temporary speed limits and a high-profile police presence to ensure compliance with speed limits where they exist. Many of the island's 500 miles of roads have no limit.

Not surprisingly, Mad Sunday participants are

delighted the event exists. Pete McConnell from Scotland says: 'Imagine going to watch a Formula One race, then streaming onto the track next day for a blat.'

Traffic policeman Keith Kinrade is on duty throughout the day, ready to respond to any emergency. 'Mad Sunday is unique,' he says. 'Today it's going well, the majority of people are behaving themselves. That's all we want.'

Across at Noble's hospital, for which 'high-velocity trauma' injuries are a key area of expertise, casualty teams stand by ready to deal with any riders who are brought in. By lunchtime there have been mercifully few incidents, but suddenly the police radio crackles into life.

A colleague announces a crash at Creg Ny Baa, a point on the course notorious for unseating even the most skilled riders. Today's smash sounds serious; the rider is unconscious, the police say he needs oxygen. An ambulance is on its way.

David Cretney, the Isle of Man tourism minister, is in favour of keeping Mad Sunday. 'I am continually lobbied by those who support an all-island speed limit, but my feeling is that we should focus on anyone who drives or rides dangerously,' he says.

Banning Mad Sunday would effectively require a closure of every island road, say the local authorities. They don't seem to consider enforcing a sensible speed limit.

Eugen Soboda, a German traffic policeman, is helping to deal with any incidents involving German riders. He watches with a pained expression. 'Skill levels here today have been crazy, bad and low,' he says. 'This could never happen in Germany. They would stop it within one minute.'

What do you learn from Simon Potter's article about the issues and concerns about 'Mad Sunday'? (8 marks)



Practice Text 6

Hands off our teenagers!

Katy Guest

It's not fair. Nobody understands. Life as a teenager is rubbish. They didn't ask to be born. And last week, like so many others, proved to be a pretty depressing one for Britain's teenagers. They were pilloried, degraded, let down and attacked. Oh, and now it turns out that they're dying out. You can't really blame them for sulking.

First came a report from the Children's Society, which claimed that lazy British teenagers don't do their chores: 35 per cent of 11-to-16 year-olds have never cooked a meal, it said and 92 per cent have not done the household shopping. More than three-quarters have never loaded a washing machine. (I suspect that they also tried asking men over 50 how many had ever loaded a washing machine, but it took too long to explain to them what a washing machine was.)

So, parents are keeping their offspring in a state of near-total dependence, which means that they'll never stand a chance of looking after themselves. But, as it happens, that might not really be a problem. Another report last week revealed that the average age of a first-time buyer who has not had parental help with a deposit to buy a home is 38. Today's teenagers are never going to be able to leave home anyway, so why should they bother to learn how to cook lasagne or wash their own socks?

After the "emergency" Budget, it seems that they won't be able to go to university, either. Institutions have warned that tuition fees are likely to go up and that student numbers will fall dramatically as nobody can afford higher education any more. If there's one thing to get a child through years of parental nagging and a mind-bending school workload it is the distant promise of three-plus years of drinking, dossing and dressing up in ludicrous tailcoats for a night on the rampage with Boris and Gideon and some other little oik from St Paul's. That, and the odd cheese toastie. But for today's teenagers, even managing the Breville is all a bit much, we now know. Is there nothing left to live for?

The Noughties, so promisingly named, have turned out to be the Not-muches. So it's no surprise to read that the 15-24 age group is set to decrease by five per cent over the next five years, apparently as a result of late 1970s "baby slumpers" growing up all evangelical about contraception and having fewer children. Those who are left might as well go to their bedrooms and slam the doors now. There's no point looking for sympathy. Nobody, literally nobody, cares.

What do you learn from the article about the issues facing teenagers in Britain? (8 marks)



Unit 1: Non-Fiction

Mark Criteria

Band 4 'perceptive, detailed' 7 - 8 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> offers evidence that the article is fully understood<input type="checkbox"/> shows a detailed engagement with the text<input type="checkbox"/> makes perceptive connections and comments about people, places and events<input type="checkbox"/> offers appropriate quotations or references to support understanding
Band 3 'clear, relevant' 5-6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> shows clear evidence that the text is understood<input type="checkbox"/> shows clear engagement with the text<input type="checkbox"/> may interpret the text and make connections between people, places and events<input type="checkbox"/> offers relevant quotations or references to support understanding
Band 2 'some, attempts' 3-4 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> some evidence that the text is understood<input type="checkbox"/> attempts to engage with the text<input type="checkbox"/> makes some reference to the places, people and events in the text<input type="checkbox"/> offers some relevant references or quotation to support what has been understood
Band 1 'limited' 1-2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> limited evidence that the text is understood<input type="checkbox"/> limited engagement with the text<input type="checkbox"/> limited reference to the places, people and events in the text
0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> nothing worthy of credit

Identify TWO things you do well in your responses:





Set ONE target that would improve your response to this type of question: