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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE **0510/12**

Paper 1 Reading and Writing **May/June 2026**

2 hours

You must answer on the question paper.

No additional materials are needed.

INSTRUCTIONS
- Answer **all** questions.
- Use a black or dark blue pen.
- Write your name, centre number and candidate number in the boxes at the top of the page.
- Write your answer to each question in the space provided.
- Do **not** use an erasable pen. Do **not** use correction fluid or tape.
- Do **not** write on any bar codes.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION
- The total mark for this paper is 60.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

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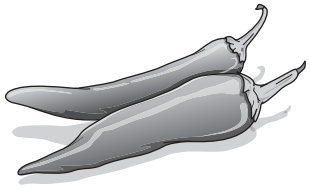
Exercise 1

Read the blog about chillies by a student called Bilal, and then answer the questions.

Bilal's blog about chillies



I love eating spicy food. So when I heard there was a TV documentary about chillies, I had to watch it. Obviously, I already knew that chillies are used by cooks in many cultures to add heat to their dishes. But I found out lots of other interesting information about chillies, including that they're used by farmers in some countries to keep elephants away from crops!

Chillies are popular around the world, and they're grown in many countries. In 2020, the biggest producer was China, producing 16.7 million tonnes. Mexico was the next biggest producer, with 2.8 million tonnes. Worldwide, the amount for that year was 36.1 million tonnes. That's a lot of chillies! I hadn't realised before that spices such as chillies were quite valuable in the past – they've even acted as a form of currency. Imagine that!

Some chillies are quite sweet-tasting, some are mild, and others can be extremely hot. I found out that the heat of chillies is commonly measured in Scoville heat units (SHU), using a scale invented by American pharmacist Wilbur Scoville in 1912. To give you an idea of the range in heat of different chillies, jalapeño chillies, which are quite sweet, can be up to 10 000 SHU. Scotch bonnet chillies, common in the Caribbean, can be up to 350 000 SHU. Having tried them, I've realised that they're my limit in terms of heat. So I can only imagine what Carolina Reaper chillies, grown in the United States, would be like – they can be up to 2.2 million SHU. But chillies aren't just for eating. I discovered that they can also help to reduce pain if you put some on your skin.

Chillies are easy to grow. Actually, the plants are really pretty, with small white flowers before the fruits develop. So I wasn't surprised to find out that dried chillies are sometimes put up as a type of decoration. I might try that! I've grown bird's eye chillies, which I've used when making Thai dishes. This year I've got some habanero chilli plants, and when the fruits are ripe I'm looking forward to trying them. But don't water the plants too much if you want the fruits to be really hot.

I've eaten chillies in all sorts of different dishes and often have some in a sauce to add to my food. What took me a while to get used to was eating sweet food made with chillies. Someone gave me some chilli jam for my birthday, and I've even made biscuits with chillies in them. Chilli-flavoured chocolate is one thing I'm really not keen on, though.

Next week, I'll post some of my favourite chilli recipes!

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Question 1

View solution

How many chillies were produced in total in 2020?

..... [1]

Question 2

View solution

What is the name of the hottest chillies that Bilal has eaten?

..... [1]

Question 3

View solution

Which type of chilli is Bilal growing at the moment?

..... [1]

Question 4

View solution

What advice does Bilal give about growing chillies?

..... [1]

Question 5

View solution

What food with chillies in it does Bilal dislike?

..... [1]

Question 6

View solution

Which ways of using chillies did Bilal learn about from the documentary?

Give **three** details.

.....

.....

..... [3]

[Total: 8]

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Exercise 2

Read the article about four young people (**A–D**) who have recently learned to drive. Then answer **Question 7(a)–(i)**.

Learning to drive

Four young people's experiences of learning to drive

A Shin

I applied for my learner's driving licence as soon as I could – that's 17 in my country – though apparently, in some parts of the world you're allowed to start at the age of 15. I couldn't believe it when I found that out – lucky them! Anyway, after I received my learner's licence, I didn't actually start having lessons for several months. It wasn't that I didn't feel ready for it, it just took me a while to find the right instructor. I spoke to three or four before I found one who I felt comfortable with. I had 20 lessons in all, which is about average. And apart from trying to park on a hill, I actually found that I picked it up immediately – both the practical side of it and the theory. I guess that's because my dad's always chatted to me about cars and driving.

B Ania

I learned to drive last year, when I was 18. I could've done it the year before, but just felt that I had too much to do at the time. And in fact, looking back, it's a good thing I waited for a while. My dad taught both of my sisters to drive, and I thought he might want to teach me too, but he actually suggested that I find an instructor instead. My friend recommended a man who had taught her. He was so calm and patient with me, which was fortunate as I was very unsure to begin with. And some of the rules of the road seemed so complicated – things like the distance you need to stop safely – they took me quite a while to get used to. But now, I love driving!

C Vlad

I grew up on a farm, and every now and then one of the workers would let me drive their car in the fields. So, nobody was surprised when I asked my dad if I could do a one-week driving course when I was 17 – that was the earliest I could do it by law. He agreed, and as my birthday was at the start of the summer holidays, I didn't waste any time! I thought I'd find it really easy, and maybe was a bit over-confident – perhaps I wouldn't have been if I'd waited a year or two. The reality was that although I knew how to operate the car well enough and could do things like reversing and turning the car around, driving safely on the road was another matter. So I ended up having weekly lessons for the next four months before I passed my test!

D Hikma

As soon as I was old enough, my dad offered to teach me to drive, but I turned him down as I thought it would be too much of a responsibility for him. Besides, I lived in a big city then with good public transport. Cars are expensive too – I couldn't see the point of spending all that money on something I didn't need. Then, after I graduated from university, I got a job in a smaller town and realised that having a car would be a good thing. I thought it would take me a while to learn, so I was pleasantly surprised that I passed my test within six months of starting. I actually think that being a bit older was a plus. It's made me think that 17-year-olds aren't ready to be in charge of a car – perhaps they shouldn't be allowed to drive until they're 18.

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For each statement, write the correct letter, A, B, C or D, on the line.

Question 7

View solution

Which person …

(a) decided against being taught to drive by a family member? ..... [1]

View solution

(b) was surprised at the age you can learn to drive in some countries? ..... [1]

View solution

(c) started driving lessons as soon as it was legally possible to do so? ..... [1]

View solution

(d) struggled to learn some of the necessary theory about driving? ..... [1]

View solution

(e) took longer to learn to drive than they had initially expected? ..... [1]

View solution

(f) found one particular movement difficult to learn? ..... [1]

View solution

(g) believes the minimum age for learning to drive ought to be higher? ..... [1]

View solution

(h) lacked confidence when they started learning to drive? ..... [1]

(i) suggests that they started learning to drive when they were too young? ..... [1]

[Total: 9]

View solution

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Exercise 3

Read the article about an actor called Alex Morgano, and then complete the notes.

Alex Morgano – actor

Journalist Mary Adeoye talks to Alex Morgano about his love of the theatre

Currently starring in *The Shortest Night*, a hugely popular play based on the novel of the same name, Alex is taking time out to talk to me about his acting, how he prepares for it, and The Letterbox, the theatre where he's performing for the next two weeks. I point out that it's a much smaller theatre than many of the more famous venues he's familiar with. 'Oh, the size doesn't matter to me,' he says. 'I'm happy on stage wherever I am. But in this place, you feel close to the audience, and that's a real plus.'

We're talking in the theatre's own café, situated on the top floor of the building, with fantastic views of the city in all directions. Alex points towards a small green area in the south. 'I live just beyond that park!' He explains that he's really enjoying the fact that he can walk to the theatre from his home. 'I admit that I got a taxi today though – otherwise I'd have been horribly late for this interview!'

Although the café offers a very tempting range of snacks and light meals, Alex doesn't order anything. He explains that one of his routines is to eat a sandwich one hour before the play begins. This is one of the things he never fails to do – it's just enough for him. Many actors do particular things before they go on stage, and Alex is no exception. 'In my dressing room, I say the first few words from the play out loud. I've never forgotten my lines so far and can't help wondering if it would all go terribly wrong if I didn't do this!'

One of the theatre managers passes our table and smiles. 'The staff are so friendly here,' says Alex, before offering to show me around the building. We wander downstairs, then around the space behind the stage where preparations for the show this evening are just beginning. Everyone is chatting, and there's laughter everywhere as they get on with their business. But just around the corner, Alex's dressing room is very quiet. 'That's what I appreciate most, really – and not every theatre is like this. We're lucky here!', he says. 'I need to stay away from the other actors until the last moment. It's not that I'm unfriendly – far from it. It's just another one of those habits I have when I'm in a play.' He goes on to explain that in his dressing room, he will spend half an hour stretching. 'I'm quite flexible, but even so, it's something I have to do before each show,' he tells me. Some actors like to sing a song or do other voice exercises to get ready for their performance. Alex, however, does something different, and that is to close his eyes for ten seconds. 'Then,' he says with a smile, 'I'm ready!'

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Imagine you are going to give a talk about Alex Morgano to your classmates.

Use words from the article to help you write some notes.

Make short notes under each heading.

View solution

Question 8

Specific things that Alex always does before a show starts:

- .....
- .....
- .....
- ..... [4]

View solution

Question 9

Reasons why Alex likes the theatre he's working in now:

- .....
- .....
- ..... [3]

[Total: 7]

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Exercise 4

Read the article about an activity called cheerleading, and then answer the questions.

Cheerleading

by Daniel Hart



Recently, a friend of mine said she had just joined a cheerleading group. Rather than being curious about it, I must admit my immediate reaction was to laugh. 'Isn't that what high-school students do in America to support their sports team?' I asked. I imagined her dancing around the side of a baseball pitch with a group of others, all wearing matching costumes in the team's colours, cheering and shouting encouragement to the players – hardly the sort of thing I'm interested in. My friend patiently explained that there's far more to cheerleading than that.

So what did she tell me? Firstly, it's no longer just for entertainment and to encourage a sports team, but has developed into something that requires a high degree of training and skill. She also told me she had been looking into the history of cheerleading and pointed out that it was originally an all-male activity, something which didn't change until the 1940s. I later looked up cheerleading online and found out that soon afterwards, it started to become popular in countries around the world. I was fascinated!

Cheerleading may soon become an Olympic sport. There are national cheerleading organisations in around 120 different countries and approximately 10 million athletes around the world, many of whom take part in competitions. In 2004, the International Cheer Union became the global governing body for cheerleading. This offers training for coaches, which is particularly important for countries where cheerleading is less common. The International Olympic Committee recognised cheerleading as a sport in 2021, and for this reason it may well be included in the Olympics in the future.

The name for the most common type of competitive cheerleading these days is All Star Cheer. I watched some recordings of teams performing – two and a half minutes of incredibly athletic and daring movements. The scoring system seemed familiar, from what I already knew about gymnastics. The teams are judged on the difficulty of what they do, how well they do it, how creative they are and the overall level of entertainment. But what I hadn't expected is that some teams have just a handful of members, while others involve over 30. I must say I found them all incredible to watch.

A performance consists of various elements, which are known as stunts, pyramids, group tumbles, jumps and dance breaks, though not necessarily in this order. Stunts are when a group of two or more individuals lift another cheerleader into the air. A larger group can create a kind of human pyramid in this way. Group tumbles refers to everyone doing gymnastic-type movements, like standing upside down on their hands, or rolling over the ground forwards or backwards. Dance breaks are always very high-energy parts of a routine and are often performed to hip-hop music.

When the group performs a stunt or pyramid, one or more team members climb up onto the shoulders of others, and then sometimes jump up several metres into the air as if they are flying. Those standing on the ground are known as the base, and the ones who jump into the air are called flyers. Although the flyers really attract your attention, the fact is that they rely completely on the strength and ability of the base, and the team is in fact performing as a whole. With regard to getting hurt though, it's not so equal – it's clearly riskier for flyers.

I can't wait to see my friend having a go at cheerleading. But one thing's for sure – I'm not going to try it myself!

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For each question, choose the correct answer, A, B or C, and put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

View solution

Question 10

When his friend first mentioned taking up cheerleading, the writer

A understood what it would involve. ☐

B failed to be impressed by the idea. ☐

C thought it would be entertaining to watch. ☐

[1]

View solution

Question 11

What did the writer learn from his friend about the history of cheerleading?

A where it began ☐

B when women started to take part ☐

C how long people have been doing it ☐

[1]

View solution

Question 12

The writer says that cheerleading could become an Olympic sport because

A national contests already attract much attention. ☐

B there are already enough official coaches. ☐

C it has already been officially accepted as a sport. ☐

[1]

View solution

Question 13

What was the writer surprised to discover about the type of cheerleading known as All Star Cheer?

A The teams can vary in size. ☐

B The performances are usually the same length. ☐

C Marks are awarded for several different aspects. ☐

[1]

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Question 14

View solution

What is the writer doing in the fifth paragraph?

A describing his favourite type of performance ☐

B defining various parts of a performance ☐

C stating the order of the parts of a performance ☐

[1]

Question 15

View solution

What does the writer say about the team members called flyers?

A They have to be stronger than the others. ☐

B They are the most important people in the group. ☐

C They are more likely to be injured. ☐

[1]

[Total: 6]

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Turn over

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Exercise 5

View solution

Question 16



You and your family recently visited a very special place for the first time.

Write an email to a friend about visiting this special place.

In your email you should:

- say why you all went there
- explain how you all got there
- describe what it was like there.

Write about **120 to 160** words.

You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your email and up to 9 marks for the language used.

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[15]

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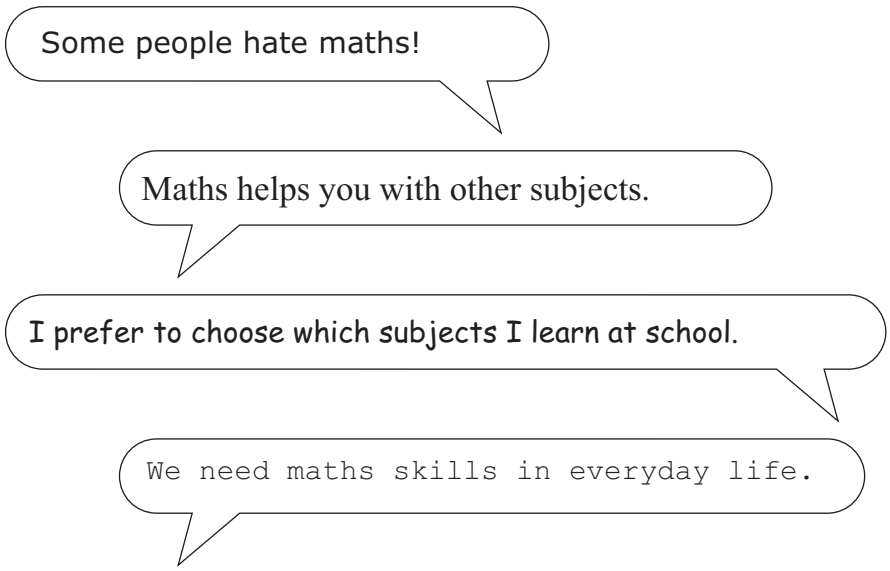
Exercise 6

View solution

Question 17

In class, you have been discussing whether maths should be a compulsory school subject – one which all students must study. Now your teacher has asked you to write an essay about this.

Here are some comments:



Now write an essay for your teacher, giving your opinions.

The comments may give you some ideas and you should also use some ideas of your own.

Write about **120 to 160** words.

You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your essay and up to 9 marks for the language used.

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[15]

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