

南京航空航天大学

## 二〇〇五年硕士研究生入学考试试题

考试科目: 基础英语

说明: 答案一律写在答题纸上, 写在试卷上无效

## I. Vocabulary (35 points)

A. Directions: There are 15 incomplete sentences in this part. For each sentence there are four choices marked A, B, C, and D. Choose the ONE that best completes the sentence. (15 points)

1. When a lawyer \_\_\_\_\_ a case, he or she tries to prove that the person who is on trial is guilty.  
A. propagates    B. profiles    C. prosecutes    D. proclaims
2. Speaking is more difficult than writing, so you cannot expect to \_\_\_\_\_ up with this one month intensive course.  
A. break    B. brush    C. bridge    D. bring
3. Folk sayings \_\_\_\_\_ us into the complex and subtle values that characterize the culture into which we are born.  
A. initiate    B. alleviate    C. compress    D. originate
4. The poster was written in letters big enough to be \_\_\_\_\_ across the room.  
A. eligible    B. ineligible    C. illegible    D. legible
5. It was discovered that eighteenth-century rural dwellers lived in much better conditions than their modern \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. counterfeits    B. countermarks    C. counterfoils    D. counterparts
6. When all fellow passengers finally \_\_\_\_\_ to bed, I crept up again to the deserted deck and slipped into the swimming pool.  
A. dispersed    B. displaced    C. dispatched    D. disposed
7. As I viewed the withered crops and \_\_\_\_\_ cattle I realized how serious the drought had been.  
A. emancipated    B. emaciated    C. emanated    D. embellished
8. The previous regime was riddled with corruption, and government officials were able to flout the law with seeming \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. disparity    B. permeation    C. impunity    D. restitution
9. The conditions in which these refugees have been living for over two years are reported to be unimaginably \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. squalid    B. sterile    C. turbid    D. turgid
10. Sometimes the \_\_\_\_\_ of family life get too much for her and she has to take some time away.  
A. bustles    B. rustles    C. hustles    D. hassles
11. It was reported that frequent flooding eventually \_\_\_\_\_ all traces of the community that



used to live in the valley.

- A. depopulated    B. obliterated    C. confiscated    D. respiration
12. The authorities gave the order that all passengers should be \_\_\_\_\_, for security reasons, before they were allowed to board the plane.
- A. budged    B. stashed    C. frisked    D. probed
13. In the eyes of many scholars, nationalization is a word which is neither very \_\_\_\_\_ nor free from ambiguity.
- A. felicitous    B. conducive    C. deleterious    D. inhibitive
14. The sender can specify whether the money is to be \_\_\_\_\_ in local currency, but he or she will not receive confirmation of the money's receipt.
- A. allayed    B. procured    C. remitted    D. disbursed
15. MasterCard holders are \_\_\_\_\_ to similar services, but fewer banks and ATMs honor MasterCard's.
- A. relegated    B. entitled    C. deposed    D. licensed

B. Directions: Guess the meanings of the underlined words in the following sentences. (10 points)

1. There was, for a time, pandemonium, like a big scene in an opera being played backwards on a gramophone.
2. A city was built, destroyed, and rebuilt a number of times in the same place. Each time the city was rebuilt approximately on top of its predecessor, therefore, after being rebuilt several times, the city was actually situated on a hill.
3. When you do get into the box, you are half asphyxiated by stale, unventilated air, flavored with cheap face-powder and chain-smoking.
4. It was our first night on the ship. Feeling tired after a long, uneventful day at sea, I returned to my cabin, lay down on my berth, and quickly fell asleep.
5. It is estimated that 80 percent of the world's seafood comes from marine harvests.
6. No one can describe that ululating sound, the crying of the loons, and no one who has heard it can ever forget it.
7. From the shelf above him, the old man took down a phial, a small glass bottle used to keep liquids, and he placed it on the table in front of him.
8. Still another question involved the prizefighter's manager; did he rush his boy into the fight without adequate time to recuperate from the precious one.
9. Experts were eager to learn more about the excavation that was uncovering a new chapter in ancient history. Their knowledge of the city to that point had been scant.
10. By the time you have begun your conversation your back is chilled by the cold looks of somebody who is fidgiting to take your place.

C. Directions: Replace the underlined words in the following sentences with simple, everyday words or expressions. (10 points)

1. "Vicious viridian" I say, not to be outdone.
2. Some of the berries at the bottom of the pail were squashed.
3. *The New York Times* felt that the work would "accelerate the deterioration" of the language.



4. The old man chuckled in amusement while reading the lyric poem.
5. She talked a blue streak over the sweet potatoes.
6. I am not more sanguinary than my neighbor and I should welcome the discovery of safeguards.
7. Younger brothers and sisters of the war generation now began to imitate the manners of their elders and play with the toys of vulgar rebellion.
8. Its habits are too uncouth for it to respond to humane treatment.
9. The whole they have set upon thin, preposterous brick piers.
10. I remember a time when every artist thought he owed it to himself to turn his back on the Eiffel Tower, as a protest against the architectural blasphemy.

## II. Cloze (25 points)

- A. Fill in each of the following blanks with a suitable word in its proper form and write down the required word in the numbered space in the answer sheet. (15 points)

Large animals that inhabit the desert have evolved a number of adaptations for reducing the effects of extreme heat. One 1 is to be light in color, and to reflect rather than 2 the Sun's rays. Desert mammals also depart from the normal mammalian 3 of maintaining a constant body temperature. Instead of trying to keep 4 the body temperature deep inside the body, 5 would involve the expenditure of water and energy, desert mammals allow their temperatures to rise to 6 would normally be fever height, and temperatures as 7 as 46 degrees Celsius have been measured 8 Grant's gazelles. The overheated 9 then cools down during the cold desert 10, and indeed the temperature may fall unusually 11 by dawn, as low as 34 degrees Celsius in the camel. This is an advantage since the 12 of the first few hours of daylight is absorbed in 13 up the body, and an excessive buildup of heat does not begin 14 well into the day.

15 strategy of large desert animals is to tolerate the loss of body water to a point that would be 16 for non-adapted animals. The camel can 17 up to 30 percent of its body weight as water without harm to itself, 18 human beings die after losing only 12 to 13 percent of 19 body weight. An 20 important adaptation is the ability to replenish this water 21 at one drink. Desert animals can 22 prodigious volumes in a short time, and camels have been 23 to drink over 100 liters in a few minutes. A very dehydrated person, on the 24 hand, cannot drink enough water to rehydrate at 25 session, because the human stomach is not 26 big and because a too rapid dilution of the body fluids causes death 27 water intoxication. The 28 of water loss is of obvious advantage in the desert, 29 animals do not have to remain near the water hole but 30 obtain food from grazing sparse and far-flung pastures. Desert-adapted mammals have the further ability to feed normally when extremely dehydrated, it is a common experience in people that appetite is lost even under conditions of moderate thirst.

- B. Fill in each blank with a proper word from the following box. Change its form if necessary and write down the required word in the numbered space in the answer sheet. (10 points)

Example: "Brutality revolts the sensibilities of \_\_\_\_\_ people!" (civilize)

The required form of the given word for the blank is civilized.



comeliness virtue felicity corrupt otherwise marvel be dissolute labor favor spirit than  
high four strangeness beautiful neither decent blush express trifler feature examine  
divers but

VIRTUE is like a rich stone, best plain set; and surely 1 is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate 2; and that hath rather dignity of presence than beauty of aspect. Neither is it almost seen, that very beautiful persons are 3 of great virtue; as if nature 4 rather busy not to err, than in 5 to produce excellency. And therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great 6; and study rather behavior 7 virtue. But this holds not always: for Augustus Cæsar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Bel of France, Edward the 8 of England, Alcibiades of Athens, Ismael the Sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits; and yet the most 9 men of their times. In beauty, that of 10 is more than that of color; and that of 11 and gracious motion more than that of favor. That is the best part of beauty, which a picture cannot 12; nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty that hath not some 13 in the proportion. A man cannot tell whether Apelles or Albert Durer were the more 14; whereof the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions; the other, by taking the best parts out of 15 faces, to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody 16 the painter that made them. Not but I think a painter may make a better face than ever was; but he must do it by a kind of 17 (as a musician that maketh an excellent air in (music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that if you examine them part by part, you shall find never a good; and yet altogether do well. If it be true that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no 18 though persons in years seem many times more amiable; *pulchrorum autumnus pulcher* [beautiful persons have a beautiful autumn]; for no youth can be comely but by pardon, and considering the youth as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer fruits, which are easy to 19, and cannot last; and for the most part it makes a 20 youth, and an age a little out of countenance; but yet certainly again, if it light well, it maketh virtue shine, and vices blush.

### III. Error correction (20 points)

Directions: There are twenty mistakes in the following passage. You are required to underline or mark the mistakes and get them corrected. Be sure to write down the correct form in the numbered space in the answer sheet.

Example: "Wordsworth is said to have √ most fascinating voice!" the

The need for surgical operation, especially an emergency operation, almost always comes as a severe shock to the patient and his family. Despite of modern advances, most people still have a irrational fear of hospitals and anesthetics. Patients do not often believe them really need surgery — cutting into a part of the body as opposing to treatment with drugs. In the early years of this century there had little specialization in

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surgery. A good surgeon was possible of performing almost every operation which had been devised up to that time. Today the situation is different. Operations are now carried out that were not even dreamed fifty years ago. The heart can be safely opened and its valves repaired. Clogged blood vessels can be cleaned out, and broken ones mended and replaced. A lung, the whole stomach, or even part of the brain can be removed and still permit the patient live a comfortable and satisfactory life. However, not each surgeon wants to or is qualified to carry out every type of modern operation.

The scope of surgery has increased remarkably in this century. Its safety has increased too. Deaths from most operations are about 20% of they were in 1910 and surgery has been extended in many directions, for example, to certain type of birth defects in new born babies, and at the other end of the scale to life-saving operations for the patients who are in eighties. The hospital stay after surgery has been shortened to as much as a week for most major operations. Most patients are out of bed on the day after an operation and be back at work in two or three weeks.

#### IV. Paraphrase (20 points)

1. The words spat forth with sudden savagery, all pretense of blandness gone.
2. She washed us in a river of make-believe, and burned us with a lot of knowledge we didn't necessarily need to know.
3. The rather arresting spectacle of little old Japan adrift amid beige concrete skyscrapers is the very symbol of the incessant struggle between the kimono and the miniskirt.
4. Like good looks and money, quickness passed her by.
5. Goldsmith and others concede that there is a dark side to all these bright dreams.
6. The universalization imperative of technology is irresistible.
7. They believe that only pain is intellectual, only evil interesting.
8. Englishness seems a poor shadowy show.
9. She looked a mess, a real slattern, dressed any old how.
10. He is a bent Pickwick in blue uniform.

#### V. Reading Comprehension (50 points)

Directions:

Each of the passages below is followed by some questions. For each question there are four or five answers marked [A], [B], [C], [D] or [E]. Read the passages carefully and choose the best answer to each of the questions.

_____	6	_____
_____	7	_____
_____	8	_____
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_____	11	_____
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_____	13	_____
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_____	17	_____
_____	18	_____
_____	19	_____
_____	20	_____



## Passage 1

Our society is consumer oriented. To keep the wheels of industry turning, we manufacture consumer goods in endless quantities, and in the process are rapidly exhausting our natural resources. But this is only half the problem. What do we do with manufactured products when they worn out? They must be disposed of, but how and where? Unsightly junkyards full of rusting automobiles already surround every city in the nation. There isn't room for much more waste, and yet the factories grind on. They cannot stop because everyone wants a job. Our standard of living, one of the highest in the world, requires the consumption of manufactured products in ever-increasing amounts. Man, about to be buried in his own waste, is caught in a vicious cycle. "Stop the world, I want to get off" is the way a popular song puts man's dilemma.

It wasn't always like this. Only 100 years ago man lived in harmony with nature. There weren't so many people then and their wants were fewer. Whatever wastes were produced could be absorbed by nature and were soon covered over. Today this harmonious relationship is threatened by man's lack of foresight and planning, and by his carelessness and greed.

Pollution is a "dirty" word. It comes in many forms. We see it, smell it, drink it and stumble through it. We literally live in and breathe pollution, and, not surprisingly, it is beginning to threaten our health, our happiness, and our very civilization.

Once we thought of pollution as meaning simply smog. But air pollution, while it is still the most dangerous, is only one type of contamination among several which attack the most basic life function.

Through the uncontrolled use of insecticide, man has polluted the land, killing the wildlife. By dumping sewage and chemicals into rivers and lakes, we have contaminated our drinking water. We are polluting the oceans, too, killing the fish and thereby depriving ourselves of an invaluable food supply.

Part of the problem is our exploding population. More and more people produce more wastes. But this problem is intensified by our "throw-away" technology. Each year Americans dispose of 7 million autos, 20 million tons of waste paper, 25 million pounds of toothpaste tubes and 48 million cans. It is no longer fashionable to reuse anything. Soon we will wear clothing made of paper: "Wear it once and throw it away" will be the slogan of the fashion conscious.

Where is this all to end? Are we turning the world into a gigantic dump, or is there hope that we can solve the pollution problem? Fortunately, solutions are in sight. A few of them are positively ingenious.

Take the problem of discarded automobiles, for instance. Each year over 40,000 of them are abandoned in New York City alone. Eventually the discards end up in a junkyard. But cars are too bulky to ship as scrap to a steel mill. They must first be flattened. This is done in a giant compressor that can reduce a Cadillac to the size of a television set in a matter of minutes. Any leftover scrap metal is mixed with concrete and made into exceptionally strong bricks that are used in buildings and bridges. Man's ingenuity has come to his rescue.

What about water pollution? More and more cities are building sewage-treatment plants. Instead of underground pipes to a giant tank where the water is separated from the solid material, purified, and returned for reuse to the community water supply, the solid material called sludge, is converted into fertilizer. The sludge can also be made into bricks.

Controlling air pollution is another crucial objective. Without air, man can only live five



minutes, so pure air is a must. Here the wrongdoer is the automobile. Where there is a concentration of automobiles, as in our big cities, air pollution is severe. It is important to see that our cars are equipped with pollution-control devices. Such devices effectively reduce the harmful gases emitted from the engine.

Can we eliminate pollution altogether? Probably not. Modern man pollutes with everything he does, so total elimination would require drastic measures. Every power plant would have to shut down. Industries would have to close. We would have to leave all our automobiles in the garage. Every bus and truck and airplane would have to stop running. There would be no way to bring food to the cities. There would be no heat and no light. Under these conditions, our population would die in a short time.

Since such a drastic solution is impossible, we must employ determined public action. We can reduce pollution, even if we can't eliminate it altogether. But everyone must do his part. Check your car to see if the pollution-control device is working. Reduce your use of electricity. Is air conditioning really necessary? Don't dump garbage or other waste on the land or in the water. We can have a clean world, or we can do nothing. The choice is up to you.

1. The version of the pop song shows that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. the earth is stuffed with different kinds of products made by men
  - B. human beings can hardly stand the deteriorating environment on the earth
  - C. human beings starve for the exploration of more living places on the other planets
  - D. what is manufactured is so limited that human beings have to find other ways to support themselves
2. The suggestion of "clothing made of paper" is intended to show \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. new product can be developed from recycled materials
  - B. paper clothing will be less expensive
  - C. paper clothes will be the future fad
  - D. the idea of recycling is out of date
3. We can infer from the passage that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. we had better limit the speed of economic development
  - B. human beings have always been in severe conflict with their environment
  - C. to some extent the economic progress is made at the cost of the environment
  - D. realizing the serious consequence of pollution, we still have few ideas as to how to control it
4. The purpose of the author in writing this article is to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. advocate throw-away technology
  - B. accelerate economic development
  - C. take due account of pollution problems
  - D. long for the improvement of product quality
5. The tone of the passage is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. serious
  - B. neutral
  - C. informative
  - D. argumentative



## Passage 2

Four general conditions seem to be necessary for the accumulation of recoverable quantities of petroleum: (1) strata containing organic matter to provide sources for petroleum formation, since oil is probably formed by the decomposition of marine organisms; (2) rocks with openings to serve as porous reservoirs for organic matter which has been buried; (3) impermeable layers of rock on top of the reservoir rocks to prevent the escape of crude oil; and (4) suitable elevated structural features to allow the oil, water, and gas to separate. Anticlines, faults, unconformities, domes, salt or sulphur plugs, buried coral reefs and additional stratigraphic traps are structural features which may include oil if the first three prerequisites are also met.

Petroleum is a mixture of hydrocarbons formed as tiny marine animals are covered by mud, silt and sand. The sand and mud, which were deposited on the shore of ancient seas, then were subject to the pressures of other deposits above them and turned into sandstone and shale. The marine organic matter held in the sand and mud slowly turned into crude oil. More organic matter is preserved in fine sediments because they were generally deposited in deep, quiet water. Petroleum often accumulates in shale, but oil cannot ordinarily be extracted in commercial quantities from shale because it is not porous enough to furnish an adequate reservoir for easy recovery. Therefore, petroleum is more commonly pumped from petroleum bearing porous sandstone and limestone known as petroliferous beds.

Petroleum fields and reserve areas are irregularly distributed throughout the world. Irregular distribution of petroleum from place to place and economic differences have combined to produce an interesting contrast between major producing areas and regions with great reserves. For example, about one-half of the world's estimated petroleum reserves lie in the Near East (often referred to as the Middle East or Mid East), in Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrein, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Neutral Zones, and Turkey. However, these combined countries normally produce about one-fourth of the world's output. Unstable political conditions, inaccessible locations, lack of capital and technical know-how, a restrictive climate environment, among other handicaps, have combined to reduce potential output. The true significance of the Near East in the petroleum industry lies not only in present production but also in the great reserves yet to be developed.

The United States is both the largest producer and largest consumer of petroleum. The Mid-Continent Province, which includes much of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Southeastern New Mexico produces almost one-half of the United States output. Other important petroleum-producing districts include: the Gulf Coast Province of Texas and Louisiana, the California Province, the Rocky Mountain Province, the Illinois-Indiana Province, the Appalachian Province, the Lima, Ohio Province, and the Michigan Province. Some authors consider the Permian Basin of West Texas and New Mexico as a separate petroleum province.

Venezuela normally ranks second to the United States in petroleum production. Most of its production occurs around the shores of Lake Maracaibo, although recent discoveries near the mouth and middle course of the Orinoco River are important. Former Soviet Russia is the third ranking producer of petroleum. Its oil production is concentrated on the western slopes of the Caspian Sea near Baku and Grozny, and near Ufa in the Volga River Valley and on the western slopes of the Ural Mountains. Iran, Iraq, Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrein, Qatar, the Neutral Zone and Turkey together produce about one-fourth of the world's petroleum. Most of the remainder of the world's oil is produced in Indonesia, Mexico, and Romania. Many other countries produce smaller



amounts, but they are generally insignificant in their overall contribution to the world oil picture.

6. Petroliferous beds\_\_\_\_\_
  - A. are composed of shale
  - B. are usually made of sandstone and limestone
  - C. contain marine life
  - D. are uniformly distributed throughout the world
7. The output of the Middle East countries has been limited by all of the following EXCEPT\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. lack of trained engineers
  - B. lack of shipping facilities
  - C. the hot climate
  - D. shale deposits
8. Lake Maracaibo's oil reserves\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. are inferior to the oil deposits near the Orinoco River
  - B. make Venezuela a greater oil producer than the Middle East countries
  - C. make Venezuela independent of the United States
  - D. are being depleted
9. Petroleum is created by\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. manufacture of hydrocarbons
  - B. decomposition of marine life
  - C. impermeable layers of rocks
  - D. the separation of oil, water, and gas
10. Sandstone is created by\_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. pressure
  - B. volcanic action
  - C. earthquakes
  - D. impermeable layers

### Passage 3

The biggest problem facing Chile as it promotes itself as a tourist destination to be reckoned with, is that it is at the end of the earth. It is too far south to be a convenient stop on the way to anywhere else and is much farther than a relatively cheap half-day's flight away from the big tourist markets, unlike Mexico, for example.

Chile, therefore, is having to fight hard to attract tourists, to convince travelers that it is worth coming halfway round the world to visit. But it is succeeding, not only in existing markets like the USA and Western Europe but in new territories, in particular the Far East. Markets closer to home, however, are not being forgotten. More than 50% of visitors to Chile still come from its nearest neighbour, Argentina, where the cost of living is much higher.

Like all South American countries, Chile sees tourism as a valuable earner of foreign currency, although it has been far more serious than most in promoting its image abroad. Relatively stable politically within the region, it has benefited from the problems suffered in other areas. In Peru, guerrilla warfare in recent years has dealt a heavy blow to the tourist industry and



fear of street crime in Brazil has reduced the attraction of Rio de Janeiro as a dream destination for foreigners.

More than 150,000 people are directly involved in Chile's tourist sector, an industry which earns the country more than US\$ 950 million each year. The state-run National Tourism Service, in partnership with a number of private companies, is currently running a world-wide campaign, taking part in trade fairs and international events to attract visitors to Chile.

Chile's great strength as a tourist destination is its geographical diversity. From the parched Atacama Desert in the north to the Antarctic snowfields of the south, it is more than 5,000 km long. With the Pacific on one side and the Andean mountains on the other, Chile boasts natural attractions. Its beaches are not up to Caribbean standards but resorts such as Vina del Mar are generally clean and unspoilt and have a high standard of services.

But the trump card is the Andes mountain range. There are a number of excellent ski resorts within one hour's drive of the capital, Santiago, and the national parks in the south are home to rare animal and plant species. The parks already attract specialist visitors, including mountaineers, who come to climb the technically difficult peaks, and fishermen, lured by the salmon and trout in the region's rivers.

However, infrastructural development in these areas is limited. The ski resorts do not have as many lifts as their European counterparts and the poor quality of roads in the south means that only the most determined travellers see the best of the national parks.

Air links between Chile and the rest of the world are, at present, relatively poor. While Chile's two largest airlines have extensive networks within South America. They operate only a small number of routes to the United States and Europe, while services to Asia are almost non-existent.

Internal transport links are being improved and luxury hotels are being built in one of its national parks. Nor is development being restricted to the Andes. Easter Island and Chile's Antarctic Territory are also on the list of areas where the Government believes it can create tourist markets.

But the rush to open hitherto inaccessible areas to mass tourism is not being welcomed by everyone. Indigenous and environmental groups, including Greenpeace, say that many parts of the Andes will suffer if they become over-developed. There is a genuine fear that areas of Chile will suffer the cultural destruction witnessed in Mexico and European resorts.

The policy of opening up Antarctica to tourism is also politically sensitive. Chile already has permanent settlements on the ice and many people see the decision to allow tourists there as a political move, enhancing Santiago's territorial claim over part of Antarctica.

The Chilean Government has promised to respect the environment as it seeks to bring tourism to these areas. But there are immense commercial pressures to exploit the country's tourism potential. The Government will have to monitor developments closely if it is genuinely concerned in creating a balanced, controlled industry and if the price of an increasingly lucrative tourist market is not going to mean the loss of many of Chile's natural riches.

11. Chile is disadvantaged in the promotion of its tourism by \_\_\_\_\_

- A. geographical location.
- B. guerrilla warfare.
- C. political instability.



- D. street crime.
12. Many of Chile's tourists used to come from EXCEPT
- A. U.S.A.
  - B. the Far East.
  - C. Western Europe.
  - D. her neighbours.
13. According to the author, Chile's greatest attraction is \_\_\_\_\_
- A. the unspoilt beaches.
  - B. the dry and hot desert.
  - C. the famous mountain range.
  - D. the high standard of services.
14. According to the passage, in WHICH area improvement is already under way?
- A. Facilities in the ski resorts.
  - B. Domestic transport system.
  - C. Air services to Asia.
  - D. Road network in the south.
15. The objection to the development of Chile's tourism might be all EXCEPT that it \_\_\_\_\_
- A. is ambitious and unrealistic.
  - B. is politically sensitive.
  - C. will bring harm to culture.
  - D. will cause pollution in the area.

#### Passage 4

This month Singapore passed a bill that would give legal teeth to the moral obligation to support one's parents. Called the Maintenance of Parents Bill, it received the backing of the Singapore Government.

That does not mean it hasn't generated discussion. Several members of the Parliament opposed the measure as un-Asian. Others who acknowledged the problem of the elderly poor believed it a disproportionate response. Still others believe it will subvert relations within the family; cynics dubbed it the "Sue Your Son" law.

Those who say that the bill does not promote filial responsibility, of course, are right. It has nothing to do with filial responsibility. It kicks in where filial responsibility fails. The law cannot legislate filial responsibility any more than it can legislate love. All the law can do is to provide a safety net where this morality proves insufficient. Singapore needs this bill not to replace morality, but to provide incentives to shore it up.

Like many other developed nations, Singapore faces the problems of an increasing proportion of people over 60 years of age. Demography is inexorable. In 1980, 7.2% of the population was in this bracket. By the turn of the century, that figure will grow to 11%. By 2030, the proportion is projected to be 26%. The problem is not old age per se. It is that the ratio of economically active people to economically inactive people will decline.

But no amount of government exhortation or paternalism will completely eliminate the problem of old people who have insufficient means to make ends meet. Some people will fall through the holes in any safety net.



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Traditionally, a person's insurance against poverty in his old age was his family. This is not a revolutionary concept. Nor is it uniquely Asian. Care and support for one's parents is a universal value shared by all civilized societies.

The problem in Singapore is that the moral obligation to look after one's parents is unenforceable. A father can be compelled by law to maintain his children. A husband can be forced to support his wife. But, until now, a son or daughter had no legal obligation to support his or her parents.

In 1989, an Advisory Council was set up to look into the problems of the aged. Its report stated with a tinge of complacency that 95% of those who did not have their own income were receiving cash contributions from relations. But what about the 5% who aren't getting relatives' support? They have several options: (a) get a job and work until they die; (b) apply for public assistance (you have to be destitute to apply); or (c) starve quietly. None of these options is socially acceptable. And what if this 5% figure grows, as it is likely to do, as society ages?

The Maintenance of Parents Bill was put forth to encourage the traditional virtues that have so far kept Asian nations from some of the breakdowns encountered in other affluent societies. This legislation will allow a person to apply to the court for maintenance from any or all of his children. The court would have the discretion to refuse to make an order if it is unjust.

Those who deride the proposal for opening up the courts to family lawsuits miss the point. Only in extreme cases would any parent take his child to court. If it does indeed become law, the bill's effect would be far more subtle.

First, it will reaffirm the notion that it is each individual's--not society's responsibility to look after his parents. Singapore is still conservative enough that most people will not object to this idea. It reinforces the traditional values and it doesn't hurt a society now and then to remind itself of its core values.

Second, and more important, it will make those who are inclined to shirk their responsibilities think twice. Until now, if a person asked family elders, clergymen or the Ministry of Community Development to help get financial support from his children, the most they could do was to mediate. But mediators have no teeth, and a child could simply ignore their pleas.

But to be sued by one's parents would be a massive loss of face. It would be a public disgrace. Few people would be so thick-skinned as to say, "Sue and be damned". The hand of the conciliator would be immeasurably strengthened. It is far more likely that some sort of amicable settlement would be reached if the recalcitrant son or daughter knows that the alternative is a public trial.

It would be nice to think that Singapore doesn't need this kind of law. But that belief ignores the clear demographic trends and the effect of affluence itself on traditional bonds. Those of us who pushed for the bill will consider ourselves most successful if it acts as an incentive not to have it invoked in the first place.

16. The Maintenance of Parents Bill \_\_\_\_\_

- A. received unanimous support in the Singapore Parliament.
- B. was believed to solve all the problems of the elderly poor.
- C. was intended to substitute for traditional values in Singapore.
- D. was passed to make the young more responsible to the old.

17. By quoting the growing percentage points of the aged in the population, the author



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- seems to imply that \_\_\_\_\_
- A. the country will face mounting problems of the old in future.
  - B. the social welfare system would be under great pressure.
  - C. young people should be given more moral education.
  - D. the old should be provided with means of livelihood.
18. Which of the following statements is CORRECT?
- A. Filial responsibility in Singapore is enforced by law.
  - B. Fathers have legal obligations to look after their children.
  - C. It is an acceptable practice for the old to continue working.
  - D. The Advisory Council was dissatisfied with the problems of the old.
19. The author seems to suggest that traditional values \_\_\_\_\_
- A. play an insignificant role in solving social problems.
  - B. are helpful to the elderly when they sue their children.
  - C. are very important in preserving Asian uniqueness.
  - D. are significant in helping the Bill get approved.
20. The author thinks that if the Bill becomes law, its effect would be \_\_\_\_\_
- A. indirect.
  - B. unnoticed.
  - C. apparent.
  - D. straightforward.

### Passage 5

Despite Denmark's manifest virtues, Danes never talk about how proud they are to be Danes. This would sound weird in Danish. When Danes talk to foreigners about Denmark, they always begin by commenting on its tininess, its unimportance, the difficulty of its language, the general small-mindedness and self-indulgence of their countrymen and the high taxes. No Dane would look you in the eye and say, "Denmark is a great country." You're supposed to figure this out for yourself.

It is the land of the silk safety net, where almost half the national budget goes toward smoothing out life's inequalities, and there is plenty of money for schools, day care, retraining programmes, job seminars. Danes love seminars: three days at a study center hearing about waste management is almost as good as a ski trip. It is a culture bombarded by English, in advertising, pop music, the Internet, and despite all the English that Danish absorbs--there is no Danish Academy to defend against it--old dialects persist in Jutland that can barely be understood by Copenhageners. It is the land where, as the saying goes, "Few have too much and fewer have too little," and a foreigner is struck by the sweet egalitarianism that prevails, where the lowliest clerk gives you a level gaze, where Sir and Madame have disappeared from common usage, even Mr. and Mrs. It's a nation of recyclers -- about 55% of Danish garbage gets made into something new--and no nuclear power plants. It's a nation of tireless planners. Trains run on time. Things operate well in general.

Such a nation of overachievers. A brochure from the Ministry of Business and Industry says, "Denmark is one of the world's cleanest and most organized countries, with virtually no pollution, crime, or poverty. Denmark is the most corruption-free society in the Northern Hemisphere." So,



of course, one's heart lifts at any sighting of Danish sleaze: skinhead graffiti on buildings ("Foreigners Out of Denmark!"), broken beer bottles in the gutters, drunken teenagers slumped in the park.

Nonetheless, it is an orderly land. You drive through a Danish town, it comes to an end at a stone wall, and on the other side is a field of barley, a nice clean line: town here, country there. It is not a nation of jaywalkers. People stand on the curb and wait for the red light to change, even if it's 2 a.m. and there's not a car in sight. However, Danes don't think of themselves as a waiting-at-2-a.m.-for-the-green-light people -- that's how they see Swedes and Germans. Danes see themselves as jazzy people, improvisers, more free spirited than Swedes, but the truth is (though one should not say it) that Danes are very much like Germans and Swedes. Orderliness is a main selling point. Denmark has few natural resources, limited manufacturing capability; its future in Europe will be as a broker, banker, and distributor of goods. You send your goods by container ship to Copenhagen, and these bright, young, English-speaking, utterly honest, highly disciplined people will get your goods around to Scandinavia, the Baltic States, and Russia. Airports, seaports, highways, and rail lines are ultramodern and well-maintained.

The orderliness of the society doesn't mean that Danish lives are less messy or lonely than yours or mine, and no Dane would tell you so. You can hear plenty about bitter family feuds and the sorrows of alcoholism and about perfectly sensible people who went off one day and killed themselves. An orderly society cannot exempt its members from the hazards of life.

But there is a sense of entitlement and security that Danes grow up with. Certain things are yours by virtue of citizenship, and you shouldn't feel bad for taking what you're entitled to, you're as good as anyone else. The rules of the welfare system are clear to everyone, the benefits you get if you lose your job, the steps you take to get a new one; and the orderliness of the system makes it possible for the country to weather high unemployment and social unrest without a sense of crisis.

21. The author thinks that Danes adopt a \_\_\_\_\_ attitude towards their country.
- A. boastful
  - B. modest
  - C. deprecating
  - D. mysterious
22. Which of the following is NOT a Danish characteristic cited in the passage?
- A. Fondness of foreign culture.
  - B. Equality in society.
  - C. Linguistic tolerance.
  - D. Persistent planning.
23. The author's reaction to the statement by the Ministry of Business and Industry is \_\_\_\_\_
- A. disapproving.
  - B. approving.
  - C. noncommittal.
  - D. doubtful.
24. According to the passage, Danish orderliness \_\_\_\_\_
- A. sets the people apart from Germans and Swedes.
  - B. spares Danes social troubles besetting other peoples.
  - C. is considered economically essential to the country.



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D. prevents Danes from acknowledging existing troubles.

25. At the end of the passage the author states all the following EXCEPT that \_\_\_\_

- A. Danes are clearly informed of their social benefits.
- B. Danes take for granted what is given to them.
- C. the open system helps to tide the country over.
- D. orderliness has alleviated unemployment.