



FIJI PUBLIC SERVICE

EXAMINATION "S & U": PAPER A

ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS

27th August 2008

TIME: 2 ½ Hours (9:00am – 11:40am)
(10Mins. Reading Time)

TOTAL MARKS: 100

INSTRUCTION TO CANDIDATES

1. Ensure that your **Index Number is written on** the top right hand corner of every sheet of paper you use. Your name **Must Not** appear anywhere on the answer script.
2. You may use blue or black ink or ballpoint pen. You **Must Not** use a red pen or pencil and answers written in either of this, the answer script will not be marked.
3. Access to reference material during the exam is forbidden.
4. Read each question & instruction very carefully. Note the allocation of marks to each question and distribute your time accordingly.
5. **Ten (10) minutes** is allocated to read the questions. **Do Not** start writing until you are told to do so.
6. Use of Mobile phone in the class/ hall is not permitted. It should be switched off before the commencement of the exam.
7. Please note that a candidate will be disqualified from sitting or to continue with the examination if one does not comply with the above and other instructions announced by the invigilator.
8. Answer **all** Questions.

SECTION C**WRITING****[50 Marks]**

120

All questions in this section are compulsory.

Question 30.**Report****(20 marks)**

You have recently represented your Ministry at a three-day seminar conducted by the Public Service Commission on Improving Productivity in the Civil Service. Write a report to your Section Head on the Seminar. Give a brief outline of what was discussed, what you have learnt from it, and how it affected you as a civil servant.

Write your report under the following sub-headings using preferably 200 words:

1. Introduction.
2. What is productivity?
3. The importance of improving productivity in the civil servant.
4. How you as a civil servant can contribute in this process.
5. Conclusion

Question 31.**Formal Letter****(15 marks)**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Civil Aviation is organising a regional conference on Trade Initiatives. The Conference will be held at the Forum Secretariat from the 16th - 18th September, 2008. As the Secretary of the Officials Organising Committee, you are to officially invite the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific to attend this conference. Please provide all necessary details including venue, duration of Conference, and subject matter.

Note that you are writing on behalf of the Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Civil Aviation.

Question 32.**Minute****(5 marks)**

You are a Clerical Officer in your Ministry. Write a minute to your Administrative Officer requesting approval for two weeks of sporting leave.

Question 33.**Memorandum****(10 marks)**

As an Administrative Officer in the Public Service Commission (PSC), you are required to respond to the Permanent Secretary Finance approving requests for overseas travel for two of their senior officers.

Set your memorandum in the appropriate style.

The End

Question 24. Changing Forms

In each of the following, change the word in bold into its correct form.

- (a) **system** preparation - _____
- (b) **surgeon** precision - _____
- (c) a state of **delirious** - _____
- (d) **atmosphere** pressure - _____

(4 marks)

Question 25. Matching clichés with their meanings

Match up the clichés in the left-hand column with their correct meaning in the right-hand column, write only the number as your answer.

Clichés	Meaning
(a) A storm in a teacup	1. To run away
(b) To hold out an olive branch	2. To be content with past success
(c) To rest on one's laurels	3. A great fuss over nothing
(d) To show a clean pair heels	4. To make a peace overture

(4 marks)

Question 26. Apostrophes

Expand the following contractions

- (a) it's - _____
- (b) they'd - _____
- (c) we'll - _____
- (d) don't - _____

(2 marks)

Question 27. Using combination 'so....that'

Join the two sentences using the above combination

- (i) The car is common.
- (ii) Every family owns one.

(1 mark)

Question 28. Making a negative statement

Correct the error in the following sentence.

They did not tolerate no criticism of their product.

(1 mark)

Question 29. Using Conjunctions

Using the appropriate conjunctions, correct the following sentences. Write the correct conjunction only.

- (a) The drivers did not know whether to stoke the boilers and put on the brakes.
- (b) The diplomats were that afraid that they were unable to sleep.
- (c) No sooner had the train stopped when the ambassador stumbled out.

(3 marks)

SECTION A

COMPREHENSION & SUMMARY

20 MARKS

QUESTION 1

COMPREHENSION

[15 marks]

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow:

The Rise of Dining Diplomacy

Before you tuck into this month's issue, let us offer a small warning: You will be tempted. Our focus is food, and in Taiwan, you're never far from the presence of mouthwatering cuisine. Which is not necessarily a bad thing - if you're lucky enough to have a slim build.

Food and culture are inextricably linked here. At Lunar New Year celebrations, new dishes emerge from the kitchen even as the last few overstuffed diners push themselves away from the table. Festivals invariably include eating a special kind of food as a central element. Colleagues are always returning from visits to their hometowns or international destinations with diet-busting goodies. A casual drink with friends involves a constant parade of small dishes-you may not feel as if you're eating much, but somehow all of those snacks seem to disappear. And once you are drawn into shops that on the outside appear innocently dedicated to serving coffee and tea, waiters casually proffer glossy menus loaded with difficult to resist treats. Even down the smallest alley, there is always a small restaurant or a street vendor to be found. There truly is no place to hide.

A simple trip to the night market for a pair of shoes or a new skirt inevitably involves running a gauntlet of vendors selling the sweet, the sour, the spicy and the just plain delicious. It's a severe test of willpower- while you may be able to say no to the American-style steaks served in Taipei's famous Shilin Night Market, your resolve may wilt once confronted with Turkish ice cream at the Liuho Night Market in Kaohsiung.

The sheer variety of food found in Taiwan is staggering. Everything from expensive la-course meals to a humble bowl of noodles can be found at almost any hour of the day or night. Name an exotic dish from a far-off land, and somewhere in Taiwan, someone in a restaurant is probably preparing it for tonight's dinner.

There are also an overwhelming array of dishes from every corner of China, down-home Taiwanese delights, Hakka delicacies and aboriginal specialties. These last three local cuisines are where the nation is really developing its own distinctive food culture. Instead of the spices and complex sauces typically found in food from China, Taiwanese food has a lighter, fresher flavor and often features the seafood the island has in such abundance. In addition to its tastiness, Taiwanese fare also tells the story of the nation's economic rise. Simple pleasures like congee with yam, which was a staple during the lean times before the boom began some 40 years ago, have found new popularity among the nostalgic and health conscious. Hakka food, which has a reputation for being heavier in rural areas, is being revamped to appeal to the lighter tastes of city dwellers. And aboriginal food, which ranges from the carnivorous indulgence of roasted boar in the mountains to the satisfying simplicity of Orchid Island's sweet potatoes and fish, is gradually finding a greater presence in Taiwan's food scene. Government agencies around the island are doing their part to introduce more people to the joys of aboriginal food by organizing cooking competitions, hosting markets and publishing cookbooks.

None of this will come as a surprise if you live in Taiwan, but the word is also getting out around the world. In a poll of international tourists, more than 50 percent said that food was one of the top reasons for their visit. As the government focuses on enlarging the nation's international presence through diplomatic means, the nation's food industry is doing its part in a much more direct way-by thoroughly satisfying the appetites of millions of visiting gourmets each year. Taiwan may not be able to compete with China in terms of dollar diplomacy, but in terms of dining diplomacy, this small island can break bread with the largest nations on earth.

Hungry yet? Don't say we didn't warn you.

Source: Editorial, Taiwan Review May 2008

- Question 1.** What is an integral part of festivals in Taiwan? (1 mark)
- Question 2.** What three cuisines are being used to create a distinctive Taiwanese food culture? (1.5 marks)
- Question 3.** Is there any evidence of Taiwanese restaurants serving exotic international cuisine? (1 mark)
- Question 4.** How much Chinese influence is present in Taiwan's food industry? (1 mark)
- Question 5.** In what way does Taiwanese food differ from Chinese dishes? (1 mark)
- Question 6.** What role did food play in Taiwan's economic rise four decades ago? (1 mark)
- Question 7.** List two undertakings of the Government agencies in enticing more people to aboriginal food. (1 mark)
- Question 8.** How is Taiwan's food industry aiding the Government in establishing international diplomatic links? (1 mark)
- Question 9.** Explains "Taiwan's dining diplomacy can break bread with the largest nations on earth". (1 mark)
- Question 10.** How a simple visit to the night market can become a severe test of will power? (1/2 mark)
- Question 11.** What are two key aspects of aboriginal food? (1 mark)
- Question 12.** What is the trend associated with Hakka food? (1 mark)
- Question 13.** Choose a word with similar meaning from the list given:
a. staggering - shocking, surprising, amusing
b. nostalgic - thinking, happy, reminiscing
(1 mark)
- Question 14.** Comment on the appropriateness of the title. (1 mark)
- Question 15.** Quote a phrase from the article that confirms that Taiwanese food industry has an overpowering presence in the urban areas. (1 mark)

Question 16. Summary Writing

Read the following passage and in one paragraph of 90 - 100 words summarise the key ideas given.

The Impact of One's Life

In 2006 Taiwan's overall fertility rate declined to 1.1 children per woman of childbearing age—the lowest in the world (Japan is second lowest at 1.25). The sacred profession of motherhood has become very unpopular among today's females. Despite preferential policies from governments worldwide, the trend seems irreversible—another sign that the human race has deviated from the natural order of things.

But are women today truly deaf to the call of their maternal instincts? No. The problem is that life produces too much stress and anxiety, leaving everyone gasping for breath, with no time or energy to take care of a new life.

With this in mind, we decided to celebrate Mother's Day from a positive and nostalgic angle, by introducing mothers of successful individuals so that we can look at the difficulties they have been through, how they influenced their children, and how they strike the balance between self and their role as mother.

These mothers didn't pamper their children, nor were their lives centered around them; rather, they are very ambitious about their own lives. For example, Hong You-mien, "Grändma" of the National electronics brand, did her part in her husband's business. Chen Hsiou-mei, mother of Yang Yuhsin, let go of her children to help them learn to be independent, even doing missionary work abroad for many years. Children should not be a stumbling block for mothers, but should serve as a driving force encouraging them onward. Watching their mothers courageously trying to make their mark on this world inspires children and gives them confidence.

Looking at their methods of bringing up children, we realize this world has all types of mothers. Some we interviewed prefer the carrot and stick approach, some are optimistic and uncomplicated, still others generous and hardworking. Some stress the details of their children's education, others less so. Some are ready to make sacrifices and dedicate themselves to their children, while others wouldn't dream of sacrificing—there is no such thing as a "typical" mother. If we try to explain their children's success, we find that the question is too abstract and involves too many variables. We can't, and shouldn't, judge mothers by their children's success. But we should be willing to applaud them and share in their joy.

Source: June 2008 Taiwan Panorama

(5 marks)

PART [I] Grammar and Vocabulary**15 marks****Question 17. Filling in the Gap - [one word per blank space]**

Every 8 minutes and 15 seconds, somebody in Taiwan is diagnosed _____ cancer. For four years running, breast cancer among women, and the number of cases has continued to grow by 7 - 8% annually.

Taiwan is _____ no means an isolated case. Reports by the World Health Organisation in recent years indicate that breast cancer is currently the _____ common form of cancer among women around the world, with 1.15 million new cases every year _____ accounting for 10% of all cancer cases among women.

Although breast cancer is the top threat, there is no need for women to panic as increasingly advanced and standardised treatments _____ significantly increased the cure rate.

(5 marks)**Question 18. Pronouns**

Select the correct pronoun for the blank space.

The air of hills is cooler than _____ of plains. (that / those)

(1 mark)**Question 19. Confusing pair**

Complete this sentence by inserting the correct word from the brackets given.

The _____ witness failed to appear in court. (principle / principal)

(1 mark)**Question 20. Suffixes**

Using a suffix, change the word given in bold print into a noun.

The old woman's **generous** _____ did not go unnoticed.

(1 mark)**Question 21. Redundancy**

Identify a redundant word or phrase from the following sentence. [Only write the redundant word/phrase, not the whole sentence]

- (a) We'll see if we can get the exact facts.
- (b) The Government does not consider the explanation adequate enough.
- (c) I've had to change my mental thinking.
- (d) The future prospects of our client are amazingly excellent.

(4 marks)

