Livello di base

INGLESE

Prova d’esame 1

A) Comprensione di testi scritti
B) Conoscenza e uso della lingua

Lunedì, 30 maggio 2011 / 80 minuti (40 + 40)

Al candidato sono consentiti l’uso della penna stilografica o della penna a sfera, della matita HB o B, della gomma e del temperamatite.
Al candidato viene consegnato un foglio per le risposte.

La prova si compone di 12 pagine, di cui 4 bianche.
A) COMPRENSIONE DI TESTI SCRITTI (Tempo consigliato per la risoluzione: 40 minuti)

TASK 1: SHORT ANSWERS
Answer in note form in the spaces below. Use 1–5 words for each answer.

Example:
0. Who was the trip advertised for?
   For grown-up men.

Embracing Ontario’s great outdoors and rediscovering my inner Scout

1. Why was the beginning of the trip untypical of scouts?

2. Which hotel facility was most appreciated by the author’s group?

3. Why does the word "park" appear unsuitable to describe Algonquin?

4. Why was Algonquin Park founded?

5. What were the participants given before setting off?

6. What kept their spirits up?

7. How did they relax their painful limbs?

8. Why did the author fail to fully follow Robin’s explanations?

9. What was the consequence of the author’s wearing a cheap outfit?

10. How did the group try to communicate with the wolves?
Embracing Ontario’s great outdoors and rediscovering my inner Scout

Adapted from The Daily Mail, 15 March 2010, by David Lewis

It has been a long time since I donned my green uniform and talked up my scouting honour so I was a little apprehensive when I was offered a chance to jet off to the Canadian wilderness on a trip billed as a ‘Scouts adventure for grown men’.

According to the itinerary we would be exploring the expansive Algonquin Park in Ontario, canoeing and hiking by day and camping and cooking dinner by the bonfire at night.

It sounded too good to pass up so with thoughts of knot-tying, marshmallow roasting and other benign activities that filled my life before I discovered girls – I booked myself in.

A little unsure of what awaited me in the Great Outdoors, I was glad of the opportunity to ease myself in to my adventure gently with a little pre-wilderness luxury at the Deerhurst Resort.

The sumptuous lakeside hotel is set in acres of verdant grounds complete with golf course, swimming pools (indoor and out) and – most importantly for our all-male group – a bar that stayed open until the last person left.

After a maple syrup-heavy breakfast fit for a king we piled into our van and bid farewell to the good life for a few days. It was time for Algonquin Park.

Algonquin can barely be described as a park at all. It is roughly the size of Wales (almost 5,000 square miles) and renowned for its hundreds of freshwater lakes and towering birch and maple forests. It was established as a sanctuary for diverse local wildlife – including man-eating black bears and carnivorous packs of wolves – more than a century ago and the best way to see it all is from a canoe.

Splitting into pairs for our watery outing, I found myself alongside my equally out-of-shape travel buddy who had definitely left his best canoeing days behind him. This was going to be interesting.

After a brief shoreline lesson on paddling, steering and general canoeing etiquette from Robin, our barrel-chested guide, we felt like experts.

Like the young boys we wished we could be, we practically jumped into our canoes as we raced off into the huge expanse of water.

Speeding along I dared to hope that we were fitter than we had first thought, those years of beers and takeaways hadn’t taken their toll after all, this was a doddle.

But, within a couple of hundred yards reality set in. As our arms gave up and our lungs exploded we slowed, panting and ground to a near halt. Lesson one: canoeing is a marathon not a sprint.

It took us a while to get into the right rowing rhythm but once we did, it was glorious.

We were never going to turn back the time and become the young adventurers we once were, but gliding over the clean, fresh water and breathing the crisp air was incredibly revivifying.

That evening we hauled our canoes onto the bank to pitch our tents in good time for nightfall. We had just enough light for a bracing swim – the perfect tonic for my aching muscles.

After collecting our own firewood, we managed to get the bonfire going and sit down to a fireside meal of chicken fajitas, prepared from our food barrel. In true Scouts' style we even roasted some marshmallows on a stick for dessert.

Conversation – almost inevitably – turned to bears and wolves. Just what were our chances of coming into contact with these beasts in their local habitat? Remote, we suspected, but that did not stop our guide hanging up the food high on a branch to keep it out of reach of inquisitive bears. I went to bed praying any curious Yogis and Boo Boos would keep well away.

The next morning it was time for the most physically demanding activity of the trip (and my life) – portaging.

Portaging is similar to hiking – but with a four-metre canoe balanced on the shoulders. Robin led the way and chirpily explained about the local flora and fauna as he strolled. All I could do was try and keep up and not whinge about the stinging pain in my shoulders.

And then, when I thought things could not get any worse, the heavens opened. With all the freshwater in the park it does not so much rain in Algonquin, but lash down water from every angle. It was quite an experience. (My main regret was buying such a cheap “waterproof” – mine kept me dry for seconds and wet for hours.) My mood lifted a little later after I had my first encounter with some local wildlife.

Back in the canoe I glimpsed a beaver swimming along just yards from where we were rowing. It had possibly surfaced to have a closer look at us but by the time I had grabbed my camera it had vanished into the murky depths with a plop.

We had the chance to play at being Dr Doolittle after we set up camp on the final night. Robin assured us that wolf packs respond to lupine sounds, so we howled into the blue-black night and waited with bated breath for a reply. After a few seconds we were rewarded with an eerie but beautiful sound as a pack of distant wolves returned our cry. It was totally exhilarating and a great final memory to take from the trip.

In a matter of days the city slickers that had stepped off the plane had been replaced with enthusiastic lads, enchanted by their surroundings. Our muscles may have been punishing us for putting them through more work than they had ever experienced, but we all felt so energised.

© The Daily Mail
Women who escape forced marriages
Adapted from an article in The Telegraph, 8 August 2010, by Cyrus Shahrad

It's no accident that the Stonham women's refuge is a nondescript house in a nondescript street. Even inside, (0 L): a coin-operated washer-dryer in the laundry; an Islamic prayer calendar pinned to the corkboard by the pay-phone; kitchen cupboards padlocked and stickered with names, those of past clients ghostly and peeling.

It could be a hostel or student accommodation block and, if it were not for the way she fights back tears as she tells her story, (1 __). Aneeta was 15 when her father left Gujarat in India for London, where he spent two years setting up a home before returning to pick up his wife and children. She says the difference in him was remarkable – he had grown gaunt and distant – but she threw herself into her new life, doing her GCSEs and an internship at her local youth parliament. Yet when she began speaking about A-Levels (2 ___). "They told me a girl my age shouldn't be wasting time on education," says Aneeta, sporting metallic blonde highlights and a hoodie that muffles her miniature frame. "They told me I should find full-time work and support the family financially. Slowly things got worse: my father began telling me I was ugly and a burden on the family, (3 ___)."

Aneeta spoke to a teacher who put her in touch with the police, who in turn relocated her to Stonham. She admits that she barely left her bedroom for two months, (4 ___) and that it fell on other female residents to draw her out by taking her food shopping or having her stir the communal curries they made each evening. Then the phone calls began – one from her father and brother telling her that everything was forgiven, and the other from distant relatives insisting she should return to Gujarat for a holiday. "That frightened me," she says, "because nobody ever called me from India. I phoned my mum and she whispered that (5 ___), so I should stay where I was. She told me to carry on with my studies and never to reveal my location, because they would find me."

In a neighbouring office, the walls tacked with drawings by children of older residents fleeing abusive marriages, the manager, Pinkie, describes a shock rise in the number of girls like Aneeta at the house. "It's partly because there's more awareness out there," she says. "The previous generation was reluctant to talk about forced marriage for fear of bringing shame on the family, but kids today know more about their rights, (6 ___)."

Not that it makes Pinkie's job any easier. She still suffers the heartbreak of returning with girls to pick up possessions from their family homes, where not even the police escort can stem the flow of invective from the parents. She's still forced to juggle 14 residents and their children between three staff members, as well as negotiating budget limitations and legal obstacles to her clients' wellbeing.
The current threat to 19-year-old Sumita's immigration status, for example, could see her deported to Bangladesh despite having been beaten by her father and threatened at knife-point by her brother for resisting a forced marriage.

"In many cases the abuse has gone on so long (7 ____) The good thing about the refuge is that there's no pressure on them to worry about paperwork or getting their stories straight; we move them in, make sure they have enough money and introduce them to other women in the house, who will usually welcome newcomers with a meal and a friendly ear. After a couple of days we'll sit down and get as much out of them as possible, but at their own pace. It's a refuge, at the end of the day, (8 ____)"

Such sanctuary was unavailable to Jasvinder Sanghera in 1980 when, aged 15, she tore a page from her school exercise book, scribbled a reassuring note to her parents and fled Derby with her lower-caste boyfriend to escape a marriage being prepared for her in Punjab.

On her first call home she was told that she was dead to her family, and spent subsequent decades struggling to come to terms with her emotional exile while moving from city to city – a journey (9 ____) So complete was Sanghera's excommunication that not even the suicide of her elder sister could heal the breach. Robina, herself the victim of an abusive husband, took her life by dousing herself in paraffin and striking a match. When Sanghera called to ask about funeral arrangements she was told to stay away for fear her presence would further tarnish the family honour.

"The common thread in all cases is this concept of izzat," says Sanghera, now 45. "The honour that the daughter must uphold. The reputation of the family rests on her ability to make a good marriage and that reputation can be dented by rumours about her behaviour, (10 ____) When Robina died my mother told me I couldn't come to the funeral because 'they' would talk, but she could never tell me who these people were, because she didn't know."

© The Telegraph

A and they know there are people they can go to for help
B when she eloped with a local motorbike enthusiast, Jack Briggs
C 20-year-old Aneeta could be a student like any other
D that she cried for hours each day
E even if those rumours are unfounded
F her father and younger brother closed in on her
G she describes in her 2007 autobiography, Shame
H they were planning a marriage for me
I but we try to make it a home for them, too
J that the girls are depressed and mentally unstable
K and my brother started to beat me
L the untrained eye struggles to pick out signs of its deeper purpose
B) CONOSCENZA E USO DELLA LINGUA (Tempo consigliato per la risoluzione: 40 minuti)

TASK 1: GAP FILL

Write the missing words in the spaces on the right.

There is ONE word missing in each gap.

There is an example at the beginning: Gap 0.

Italy bans the plastic water bottle along heritage coastline
Adapted from an article in The Telegraph, 21 September 2010, by Nick Squires

Hikers and tourists visiting one of Italy's most scenic stretches of coastline have been banned __0__ carrying plastic bottles of water amid fears that the area is being "buried" in rubbish.

Instead they will be asked to pay one euro for reusable, metal flasks which can be filled __1__ from newly-installed public water fountains.

The quaint Italian villages, terraced vineyards and precipitous cliffs of the Cinque Terre in the country's north-west attract three million visitors __2__ year.

However, as well as enjoying the region's wine, food and stunning views, the tourist hordes discard two million plastic bottles, some of which tumble down the cliffs and end up littering local beaches and polluting the sea.

The worst month is August, when __3__ average of 400,000 plastic bottles are discarded along the narrow strip of picturesque World Heritage coast, which lies south of Genoa in the province of Liguria.

Under the plan, tourists entering the national park which encloses the Cinque Terre region will be encouraged to buy the one-litre reusable flasks, stamped __4__ the national park's logo.

Automated water fountains offering chilled, fizzy and still water will be installed in the coming months so that they can replenish __5__ water supply as they hike the nine mile long coastline.

The Cinque Terre -- literally, The Five Lands -- consists of five coastal villages linked by a railway line and a network of steep, narrow footpaths.

The first five fountains will be installed next month. Franco Bonanini, the president of the Cinque Terre national park, said the ban was being introduced because the area was being "buried" in plastic.

"With so __6__ visitors, the footpaths and villages of the Cinque Terre are at risk of being transformed __7__ a great big open air dustbin."

"We are going to update the existing water fountains and install new ones: they will provide people with still or sparkling filtrated water. By the start of next Spring, we hope to have liberated ourselves from __8__ nightmare," said Mr Bonanini.

He said local shopkeepers were likely to be unhappy with a ban __9__ selling bottled water but should realise that it would be in their long-term interests.

"If the Cinque Terre is reduced to a rubbish dump in five years' time, they will suffer the consequences. This is a sacrifice that will benefit shopkeepers __10__ everyone else. To the three million tourists __11__ come here every year, we ask them for a little bit of understanding __12__ order to save this paradise for the future."

Marco Salarpi, from the local water authority, said tests had shown that mains water was as good as, if __13__ better, than bottled water.

The length of time it takes plastic to decompose makes __14__ one of the most problematic types of litter around the world.

Last year scientists confirmed that there are millions of tonnes of plastic floating around the Pacific Ocean in an area known __15__ the North Pacific Gyre, a slow moving vortex.

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Evolution of malaria is traced back to greatest ape
Adapted from an article in The Independent, 23 September 2010, by Steve Connor

Research may open new avenues of study ______ (HALT) disease.

The malaria parasite, which ______ (KILL) more people than any other infectious disease so far, almost certainly originated in gorillas ______ (INFECT) by a genetically identical microbe, scientists have discovered.

A study of nearly 3,000 biological specimens from wild apes ______ (LIVE) in 57 field sites across central Africa has identified the gorillas of the Congo as the most likely source of Plasmodium falciparum, the most deadly malaria parasite in humans.

The findings reject earlier suggestions based on a more limited study that wild chimpanzees were the original source of the human disease, a theory that ______ (CAN/DISCOUNT) now, the scientists said.

They suggest that the malaria parasite ______ (CROSS) the "species barrier" from gorillas to humans only once as a result of a mosquito bite, causing the global epidemics that have ravaged generations of people throughout history.

The researchers predict identifying the original source of the most dangerous form of malaria ______ (PROVIDE) greater knowledge of how to fight its spread and how to improve its treatment.

"Understanding where a human pathogen like Plasmodium falciparum originated can be an important step in learning how to prevent and treat the disease that it causes," said Beatrice Hahn of the University of Alabama, who ______ (LEAD) the research team since 2008.

"Like AIDS, malaria is of primate origin. Studies of the primate precursors of HIV have unravelled many aspects of AIDS. I expect the same ______ (HAPPEN) when the biology of the gorilla precursor of Plasmodium falciparum is compared to that of its human counterpart," Dr Hahn said.

Malaria, which is caused by a microscopic blood parasite ______ (TRANSMIT) by mosquitoes, infects about 500 million people a year, killing about 2 million. It ______ (KNOW) by the ancient Chinese, and has been the curse of western civilisations, from the ancient Egyptians to the British Empire.

Julian Rayner of the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute in Cambridge, which was part of the research effort, said it was not possible from the findings to determine exactly when the cross-infection from gorillas to humans ______ (TAKE) place.

"At some time it seems to have jumped the barrier from gorillas into humans but when this happened is difficult to know. One theory is that it was about 12,000 years ago, or even earlier," Dr Rayner said. "Another unanswered question is whether this jumping of the species barrier ______ (STILL/HAPPEN). The current data suggests it happened just once, but we don’t really know."

The study, which was published in the journal Nature, was based on an analysis of 2,700 samples of ape faeces using a novel technique that could identify and sequence the DNA of Plasmodium falciparum parasites in the animals.
The secret of happiness: Family, friends and your environment
Adapted from an article in The Independent, 15 August 2010, by Rachel Shields

How do you find __0__ (CONTENT) in an acquisitive society? By changing the things you spend your money on, says a US academic.

We've suffered horrendous job cuts and falling investment values, and watched the high streets grow __1__ (INCREASE) unattractive because of empty shopfronts, even as we face public sector job losses and the __2__ (POSSIBLE) of a double-dip recession. We might be forgiven for allowing ourselves a moment of misery. And yet, a growing school of thought believes that we have actually gained something from the last few years of __3__ (ECONOMY) gloom; that we are starting to value the things that matter: our friends, homes and the world we live in. Even more remarkably, they suggest that these things are making us happier than the conspicuous __4__ (CONSUME) and hedonism of the boom years.

While, arguably, everyone could be forgiven for battening down the hatches and looking after number one, it seems that across the UK people are becoming less __5__ (MATERIALISM) and more outward-facing: volunteering, joining clubs and caring for the environment in record numbers.

From more Brits spending their weekends involved in wholesome outdoor pursuits instead of scouring the high street for the latest must-have item, to the __6__ (GROW) in household savings – which rose to 6.9 per cent of disposable income in the first quarter of 2010, up from less than zero in the first quarter of 2008 – experts believe there is __7__ (EVIDENT) that people have realised that happiness may not lie in the relentless pursuit of more, and better, "stuff".

The latest figures from the British Retail Consortium show that __8__ (RETAIL) selling big-ticket items such as flat-screen TVs, carpets and kitchens are reporting negative like-for-like sales when compared with last year, while the number of people who walk for leisure increased by almost a million, rising 10 per cent between 2006 and 2008, and the number of __9__ (RECREATION) cyclists rose by 6.4 per cent between 2008 and 2009.

Although we may be on the cusp of a "new" happiness movement, the quest for it is as old as mankind, and has preoccupied some of the finest minds in history, all of whom have had differing theories. While a definitive answer to the question of what makes us happy might have eluded everyone from Socrates to Thomas Aquinas, a US academic now believes she has the answer.

Elizabeth Dunn argues that spending money __10__ (WISE) is a sure-fire route to happiness, which is clearly highlighted in her new paper, "If Money Doesn't Make You Happy Then You Probably Aren't Spending it Right".

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