

2014 O Level Paper 2

Text 1: Jane Goodall Institute

The webpage is about the work of the Jane Goodall Institute in Singapore, and more specifically its youth programme.

Qn 1

Candidates were asked what idea the photograph is trying to establish. The photograph shows Jane Goodall shaking hands with a chimpanzee, and is **intended to illustrate the link between humans and primates**. Candidates found this a challenging question; and many described what they saw without making the generalisation or conveying that they understood the reason for its presence on the page.

ANS

It is trying to establish the idea that humans and animals are linked. [1]

Qn 2

Question 2 asked why Jane Goodall's discovery that chimpanzees use tools was so important. The answer is found in the first paragraph.

ANS

It caused mankind to rethink their view of primates, and consequently other animals as well. [1]

Qn 3

The great majority of candidates successfully identified the right images. Those who were **unsuccessful** generally tried to add the **silhouette of Jane Goodall herself**, which is **part of the logo** as a whole but **not what the question asked**.

ANS

Animal welfare -- **Chimpanzee icon**

Natural environment – **Leaf icon**

Human communities -- **Hand icon**

[all 3 for 1m]

Qn 4

This was the most challenging question in this section. Candidates were asked what the name of the youth programme 'Roots & Shoots' suggests about young people. The webpage uses the common feature of a direct quotation (here from Jane Goodall) in a side box to sharpen the point, and to answer correctly candidates needed to put that together with what was written about the programme in the third paragraph under the heading 'Roots & Shoots'. Unsuccessful responses were often based on botanical ideas of growth and development which are not on the webpage.

ANS

(i) Though small like roots and shoots, young people can break through to make a huge difference. [1]

(ii) Like-minded, they can advocate change through building international partnerships. [1]

Text 2: Mountain adventures

The writer tells how two boys were trapped up a mountain in bad weather, but while the reader is waiting for them to be rescued, he describes another incident that had happened to himself. By pointing up both the similarities and the differences between the two incidents, the writer increases the tension and suspense.

Qn 5

Generally candidates coped well with this direct question on language. The majority answered by quoting three phrases from the passage – usually the correct phrases – and adding a short explanation to each. The emphasis of the question, however, was the other way round and what was being looked for was an overall explanation of how the language conveys the thickness of the fog, with the details to support. Better answers combined separate explanations to give a convincing and sufficiently full picture. Some did not identify the correct phrases and offered instead others that were more factual and did not add to the description.

ANS

1. The fog was described as 'thick as candy floss', which suggests that the fog was like a big mass of clouds, making visibility difficult. [1]
2. The phrase 'muffled the fading sun' suggests that the fog was so thick that it blocked the light from the sun which was setting. [1]
3. The phrase 'the world purpled down into absolute darkness' uses colour to describe the place fading into darkness, showing that visibility was difficult. [1]

Qn 6

Candidates were directed to the relevant phrases in the third paragraph and explicitly told to use their own words. One of the phrases states clearly that it was the increasing gloom at the base of the cliff that made it difficult to see how far down it extended; there has been nothing yet about general darkness. Candidates who referred to fog had not noticed the shift to the second storyline, although it was clearly signalled at the beginning of the second paragraph.

ANS

(i) There were many trees and plants which blocked their view. [1]

(ii) It was getting dark at the bottom – possibly the shadow cast by the cliff -- to see how far the cliff extended. [1]

[Students have to paraphrase 'vegetation' and 'gloom' given in the paragraph.]

Qn 7

This was the first question that focused on the idea of a sequence of important decisions and the role of a wilderness survival manual, both of which run through both storylines. Candidates were first asked in part (i) what his decision was. This needed the candidates to be completely clear about what stage in the story has been reached, and the majority knew that the decision had been taken in the previous paragraph to rappel down the cliff. Part (ii) proved more challenging. Candidates were asked what is suggested by 'snapping away at the edge'. Most candidates offered simply that he changed his decision; he did, but that is not what is suggested by the metaphor.

ANS

(I) His decision was to rappel down the cliff with the rope. [1]

[Students have to refer to the previous paragraph to derive the answer.]

(ii) The writer was suddenly bothered by his decision as he realised he might not be making the right choice. [1]

[The answer can be inferred from the lines after the phrase.]

Qn 8

This question was directed at the language the writer uses to describe his past actions. At the end of paragraph 4, he says that he told his companions that 'a smart hiker never jumps into the whirling darkness of terrible depths' and adds 'Or words to that effect'. Candidates were asked what that final phrase suggests about the style of the language that he actually used in the preceding sentence. Only the strongest candidates recognised that **the deliberately exaggerated diction and vagueness of 'whirling darkness' and 'terrible depths', combined with 'or words to that effect', indicate that he actually said something much blunter and more forceful.** Most candidates just repeated the idea from the question that he used different words which meant the same thing, sometimes adding in explanation that he had probably forgotten exactly what he said.

ANS

He exaggerated his words to drive home his message in a blunt and forceful way.

Qn 9

Almost all candidates paraphrased the content of the two sentences in part (i) and commented on the beauty in the first and/or the danger in the second. Only a very few saw that **the contrast is based on the way the sentences are set right next to each other, with a fairly long descriptive sentence followed immediately by an abrupt, short, unadorned statement of fact.**

ANS

(I) In the first sentence, the writer describes the scenery of a beautiful morning by writing about the rising sun and colourful flowers in a long sentence. This tone is immediately contrasted by the next short sentence which highlights the actual distance of the top of the cliff to the ground. [1]

(ii)

Part (ii) asked for the effect made by the contrast. Rather more candidates were successful in identifying the shock to the reader, or the emphasis on how dangerous the situation had been. Those who talked about the height of the drop or how lucky the group were to have survived were focusing too closely on the details of the story.

ANS

(ii) It highlights that even though the scenery was beautiful, the writer and his companions had been in a precarious position. [1]

Qn 10

At the beginning of Paragraph 6, the writer clearly signals a return to the story of the two boys, and to the themes of decision-making and the wilderness survival manual. This is a factual question.

ANS

The twigs were wet so they could not catch fire.

[Students have to refer to the paragraph to obtain the answer.]

Qn 11(a)

Question 11(a) picked up the theme of decision-making. In the passage, each of the sequence of three decisions is signposted. To find all three parts of the sequence.

ANS

(i) They spent time checking their wilderness survival manual to make a fire. [1]

(ii) They tore out the pages of the manual to make a fire. [1]

[Students have to refer to paragraphs 6 and 7 to obtain the answer.]

Qn 11(b)

Question 11(b) asked how the rescuers found the climbers. This had to be worked out from the statement in Paragraph 6 that rescue helicopters were looking for them, and then that they were finally successful in Paragraph 7 in lighting the fire. Must deduce that **the rescuers saw the boys' fire**. To bear in mind that in the thick fog, emphasised in Paragraph 1 and mentioned again at the end of Paragraph 6, smoke would not have been visible.

ANS

The light from the fire that the climbers had made enabled the rescuers to find them.

Qn 12

Question 12 picked up the other theme, the role of the survival manual, which is featured in each of the two stories in the passage. It asked candidates what the effect of following the manual's advice was in (i) the writer's story, and (ii) the story of the two boys. This was an invitation to look back over the whole passage and **contrast the effect of the advice in the two stories**, leading to the generalised idea that it had been very **useful in the first case**, and **useless in the second**. The contrast is one of the ways in which the **writer increases the suspense about the rescue** of the two boys and is clear in the passage. The strongest candidates were able to convey this. Fewer candidates were able to distill the general from the specific in the boys' story, and many just said that it did not help them to light the fire. Some candidates appeared not to have noticed that the question was about the advice given by the manual, not its use as fuel for the fire.

ANS

(i) The writer did not rappel down the cliff, escaping death. [1]

(ii) The survival guide did not enable the boys to make a fire, which heightens the suspense about their rescue. [1]

Qn 13

Generally, candidates were successful in answering this question on text organisation. There was a significant number who did not choose the correct alternative for paragraph 2, despite the clear topic sentence at the beginning of that paragraph; the other three were usually correct.

Para 2 - **not knowing when to stop** [1]

Para 4 - **wise advice** [1]

Para 6 - **trying to put theory into practice** [1]

Para 7 - **a different approach** [1]

Text 3: The nature of sport in today's world

This is a factual passage commenting on the role of technology in modern sport, but quite biased in its approach. Candidates were generally successful in their responses.

Qn 14

To isolate the correct phrases about notions of fair play, achieving a balance between body and mind, and valuing participation over winning.

ANS

(i) Players should compete fairly. [1]

(ii) Players should play sports to develop their mind and body. [1]

(iii) Players should value the experience of participating, not winning. [1]

Qn 15

Only the strongest candidates focused on the phrase in the question and were able to explain that a shadow is ominous or sinister and implies a threat. Some made less accurate attempts, stating that technology is evil or dark. The majority gave examples of the writer's disapproval, stating for example that he dislikes the changes that have happened, or that he thinks technology has overpowered sport.

ANS

As a shadow is ominous, it suggests that the writer views technology as a threat to sport. [1]

Qn 16

Question 16 postulated two candidates who have read the article having a conversation about it. The majority of the candidates correctly identified two correct examples from the middle of Paragraph 3 for part (i).

ANS

(i) Equipment like helmets and mouthpieces have been specially developed to improve the safety of athletes. [1]

For part (ii) candidates were directed to the relevant three lines, and the majority identified the two points required.

ANS

(ii) With the development of these equipment, athletes think that they will not get injured and take more unnecessary risks. [1] Also, some may use these equipment to hurt their opponents, thus resulting in more injuries. [1]

Qn 17

This question – which asked candidates to give in their own words the meaning of the phrase ‘the elusive edge’ – proved to be one of the more challenging questions on this text. Some candidates were able to define elusive with ‘hard to achieve’ or a similar phrase. Rather more candidates recognised from the context that an ‘edge’ is an advantage, but only the strongest were able to say that it is a slight advantage. Here the exact definition is important to the flow of the argument of the passage.

ANS

‘elusive’ – hard to achieve [1]

‘edge’ – slight advantage [1]

Qn 18

Almost all candidates recognised the disapproval in the phrase, and many specified sarcastic or mocking. The exaggeration or the anger, however, is how the writer creates the tone.

ANS

The writer uses an angry and exaggerated tone. [1]

19. It is clear that technology has changed modern sport because

1. video technology is now used to analyse how athletes' movements can be
2. improved, thus giving them an edge over others.
3. Enhanced sports equipment as well as health-enhancing diets
4. are also used to help athletes win.
5. For ordinary people, exercise equipment can be adjusted
6. to suit individuals' needs and preferences.
7. Ordinary people can also follow diets which use the latest developments in food technology.
8. Gadgets like pedometers, heart monitors and ipods are also used by people when they exercise.

(78 words)