

2011 National English Contest for College Students

(Level C – Preliminary)

Tapescripts

Part I Listening Comprehension (30 marks)

Section A (5 marks)

*In this section, you will hear **five** short conversations. Each conversation will be read only **once**. At the end of each conversation, there will be a **twenty-second** pause. During the pause, read the question and the **three** choices marked **A**, **B** and **C**, and decide which is the best answer. Then mark the corresponding letter on the **answer sheet** with a single line through the centre.*

1. **M:** Did you see last night's game? It was so exciting!

W: I know! Some friends and I watched it at a restaurant. It stayed open late to show the game. Everybody clapped and shouted when Manchester United won.

M: That sounds like fun. I should watch the next game there with you.

2. **W:** Have you got a MySpace account yet? It's really cool. You can keep a blog, send messages, and do lots of other things.

M: I would like to, so I could upload photos, but I'm no good with computers.

W: Trust me, it's easy. They tell you how to do everything in simple English.

3. **M:** My assistant, Sam, told me you're doing some work from home.

W: Right, my department started a teleworking program in April. So far, I like it. I'll see how things go for a few months, then I'll decide whether or not to continue.

M: Personally, it's not for me. I don't like taking my work home.

4. **M:** Have you received chapter sixteen of *Supermarket Killers* yet? I think there's something wrong with my phone.

W: Nobody has received it yet. I really want to know what happens. The suspense is killing me!

M: Exactly. You know, I think twenty chapters is too short. I hope his next story is thirty chapters long.

5. **W:** Where were you, Peter?

M: I just went to say hello to our new neighbors. They're from Tokyo. They don't speak much

English, but I invited them over for a barbecue tomorrow night.

W: Oh, that will be interesting. I'll have to look on the Internet to see what kind of food they like.

Section B (10 marks)

*In this section, you will hear **two** long conversations. Each conversation will be read only **once**. At the end of each conversation, there will be a **one-minute** pause. During the pause, read the questions, each with **three** choices marked **A**, **B** and **C**, and decide which is the best answer. Then mark the corresponding letter on the **answer sheet** with a single line through the centre.*

Conversation One

W: Hi, Jack. How was your vacation?

M: Hey, Sunny. It was pretty good. I had to study a lot, though.

W: Why? Did your teachers give you a lot of summer homework?

M: No, it's not that. Ms Wellington is going to be one of my teachers this year.

W: I've never been in her class. Is she tough?

M: Tough? She's one of the hardest teachers in school.

W: How do you know?

M: I had one of her classes last year. She gave us so much work that it was really hard to get it all done.

W: So were you studying over the vacation to get a head start?

M: That's exactly right. I just hope I did enough.

Conversation Two

Barbara: Sunrise Hotel. Good Morning. Barbara speaking.

John: Hello. My name's John Griffin. I'd like to make a booking for tonight, please. Are there any rooms still available?

Barbara: Yes, there're a few left. What kind of room do you want?

John: Well, I'm on a business trip so I only need a single room.

Barbara: I don't think that'll be a problem. Let's look. Yes... There's one single room left. Shall I book it for you?

John: Yes, please. That would be great.

Barbara: Right, then. Let me get a pen. So, what's your name again, please?

John: John Griffin. That's J-O-H-N G-R-I-F-F-I-N.

Barbara: OK. I've got that down. Wait a minute. You've been here before, haven't you?

John: Yes, that's right. I've stayed in your hotel twice before.

Barbara: Well, we should have your details already. Let's look at the cards. Here we are. So, John Griffin... from Sydney, right?

John: Yes, that's right.

Barbara: So, tell me if I'm wrong. John Griffin, passport number 87637489. Age 30.

John: Yes, that's right.

Barbara: So, it's a single room for two nights. Is your credit card number the same to confirm the booking?

John: Yes, it's the same, but I'll want you to forward the bill to my company again, if that's OK?

Barbara: Oh yes, Mr Griffin. That's no problem at all. Your company has always settled very promptly in the past. And, what time can we expect you tonight, Mr Griffin?

John: Well, the plane lands at 9:15 pm, so by the time I get through the formalities... that should take about 20 minutes... I should be at the hotel by about 10:00. Will the restaurant be open then as I'll be hungry – I hate the food on planes!

Barbara: I'm afraid it'll be closed by then, Mr Griffin. Can I arrange to have a snack left in your room? A burger? Fries? A sandwich?

John: Yes, that would be great. How about a cheese sandwich with fries?

Barbara: No problem, sir. I'll see to that. Oh, the fries might be cold by the time you arrive.

John: Ah yes. Just the sandwich then.

Barbara: No problem. Anything else, Mr Griffin?

John: No, that's all. Thank you. See you tonight.

Barbara: See you tonight, Mr Griffin. Goodbye.

John: Goodbye.

Section C (5 marks)

*In this section, you will hear **five** short news items. After each item, which will be read only **once**, there will be a pause. During the pause, read the question and the **three** choices marked **A**, **B** and **C**, and decide which is the best answer. Then mark the corresponding letter on the **answer sheet** with a single line through the centre.*

16. At the end of each year, the Associated Press releases a list of the top ten news stories of the year. American editors and news directors are asked to vote for what they consider the top

stories. This year, the story with the most votes was the huge oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. An oil rig operated by BP exploded in April. The explosion killed eleven workers. Close to five million barrels of oil were released into the Gulf until the leak was contained in the middle of July.

17. Mobile phone technology is quickly changing the way the world operates. Today, we tell about two new projects involving mobile health, also known as m-health. Doctors and technology experts in London are developing a new way to test for sexual infections. The new device uses mobile phones and computers to help people find out if they have been infected with a sexual disease. People will be able to perform the test in the privacy of their own homes.
18. President Obama announced an agreement with Congressional Republicans Monday. It would extend for two years the tax cuts put in place by former president George W. Bush. The tax cuts were to end in January. The compromise extends current income tax rates for all Americans for two years. That includes rates for the richest Americans.
19. Despite the number of undernourished people in the world falling between 1990 and 2006, recent years have seen that number creep up, with the data from 2009 showing more than one billion hungry people. The most recent figures from 2010 suggest the number may again be falling, but this data isn't yet complete.
20. Astronomers have assumed that the composition of all galaxies is the same as our own. But using a new, more powerful instrument on the Keck telescope in Hawaii, researchers have discovered that older galaxies contain twenty times more small dim stars, called "red dwarves", than younger galaxies such as our own. Doctor Marek Kukula of the Royal Greenwich Observatory describes what the view from a planet in an older galaxy might be like.

Section D (10 marks)

*In this section, you will hear a short passage. There are **10** missing words or phrases. Fill in the blanks with the exact words or phrases you hear. Remember to write the answers on the **answer sheet**.*

What do you do if you don't get into your first-choice university? This (21) **dilemma** faces thousands of British students every year. Many such (22) **candidates** turn to Clearing, a service that helps find university places for students at the last moment. If they don't have the marks to get

into their (23) **institution of first choice**, Clearing tells them about places available at other universities, though they might have to read a different subject.

This year has seen a record number of people applying to university. This, combined with the (24) **weak economy**, an uncertain job market, and budget cuts at universities, has produced even more of a scramble for places than usual. Some sources say six students have applied for each remaining (25) **undergraduate** place.

The British University Admissions Service, UCAS, says up to a quarter of this year's university applicants – almost 190,000 people – have not been admitted into a (26) **degree course**. That's an increase of over 46,000 students from last year.

Faced with these figures, some British students might consider an interesting alternative: (27) **studying abroad**. The University of Nottingham, for example, is offering places at its campuses in Ningbo, near Shanghai, and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Students at these institutions can earn University of Nottingham degrees in business, accounting, engineering and English. Similarly, the University of Bolton says it has “unlimited” places at its campus in the United Arab Emirates.

To deal with these problems, the UK's Higher Education Minister, David Willetts, is encouraging students who haven't made the grade to consider alternatives to university, such as (28) **apprenticeships** and studying at home.

“There are a range of options available,” he says. “People can reapply next year, so they should consider spending this year in a way that will add positively to their CVs. Getting (29) **practical work experience** or other skills will strengthen their chances next year.” Some commentators say, though, that rising university costs, poor long-term (30) **job prospects**, and a drop in graduate recruitment mean this is the worst time to be a university student in the UK.