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DEPARTMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGES

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FIRST OPPORTUNITY EXAMINATION PAPER	
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INSTRUCTIONS
1. Answer ALL the questions. 2. Read all the questions carefully before answering. 3. Number the answers clearly

THIS QUESTION PAPER CONSISTS OF 10 PAGES (Including this front page)

Section A: Reading Comprehension

[30 marks]

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.

The growth of bike-sharing schemes around the world

How Dutch engineer Luud Schimmelpennink helped to devise urban bike-sharing schemes

1. The original idea for an urban bike-sharing scheme dates back to a summer's day in Amsterdam in 1965. Provo, the organisation that came up with the idea, was a group of Dutch activists who wanted to change society. They believed the scheme, which was known as the Witte Fietsenplan (the white bicycle plan), was an answer to the perceived threats to air pollution and consumerism. In the centre of Amsterdam, they painted a small number of used bikes white. They also distributed leaflets describing the dangers of cars and inviting people to use the white bikes. The bikes were then left unlocked at various locations around the city, to be used by anyone in need of transport.
2. Luud Schimmelpennink, a Dutch industrial engineer who still lives and cycles in Amsterdam, was heavily involved in the original scheme. He recalls how the scheme succeeded in attracting a great deal of attention – particularly when it came to publicising Provo's aims – but struggled to get off the ground. The police were opposed to Provo's initiatives and almost as soon as the white bikes were distributed around the city, they removed them. However, for Schimmelpennink and for bike-sharing schemes in general, this was just the beginning. "The first Witte Fietsenplan was just a symbolic thing," he says. "We painted a few bikes white, that was all. Things got more serious when I became a member of the Amsterdam city council two years later."
3. Schimmelpennink seized the opportunity to present a more elaborate Witte Fietsenplan to the city council. "My idea was that the municipality of Amsterdam would distribute 10 000 white bikes over the city, for everyone to use," he explains. "I made serious calculations. It turned out that a white bicycle – per person, per kilometre – would cost the municipality only 10% of what it contributed to public transport per person per kilometre." Nevertheless, the council unanimously rejected the plan. "They said that the bicycle belonged to the past. They saw a glorious future for the car," says Schimmelpennink. But he was not in the least discouraged.
4. Schimmelpennink never stopped believing in bike-sharing, and in the mid-90s, two Danes asked for his help to set up a system in Copenhagen. The result was the world's first large-scale bike-share programme. It worked on a deposit: "You dropped a coin in the bike and when you returned it, you got your money back." After setting up the Danish system, Schimmelpennink decided to **try his luck** again in the Netherlands – and this time he succeeded in arousing the interest of the Dutch Ministry of Transport. Times had changed. People had become more environmentally conscious, and the Danish experiment had proved that bike-sharing was a real possibility. A new Witte Fietsenplan was launched in 1999 in Amsterdam. However, riding a white bike was

no longer free; it cost one guilder per trip and payment was made with a chip card developed by the Dutch bank Postbank. Schimmelpennink designed conspicuous, sturdy white bikes locked in special racks which could be opened with the chip card and the plan started with 250 bikes, distributed over five stations.

5. Theo Molenaar, who was a system designer for the project, worked alongside Schimmelpennink. "I remember when we were testing the bike racks I designed, he announced that he had already designed better **ones**. But of course, we had to go through with the ones we had.' The system, however, was prone to vandalism and theft. "After every weekend there would always be a couple of bikes missing," Molenaar says. "I really have no idea what people did with them, because they could instantly be recognised as white bikes." But **the biggest blow was dealt** when Postbank decided to abolish the chip card, because it was not profitable. "That chip card was pivotal to the system," Molenaar says. "To continue the project, we would have needed to set up another system, but the business partner had lost interest."
 6. Schimmelpennink was disappointed, but –characteristically – not for long. In 2002 he got a call from the French advertising corporation JC Decaux, who wanted to set up his bike-sharing scheme in Vienna. That went really well. After Vienna, they set up a system in Lyon. Then in 2007, Paris followed. That was a decisive moment in the history of bike-sharing. The huge and unexpected success of the Parisian bike-sharing programme, which now boasts more than 20 000 bicycles, inspired cities all over the world **to follow suit**. "It is wonderful that this happened," he says. "But financially I did not really benefit from it, because I never filed for a patent."
 7. In Amsterdam today, 38% of all trips are made by bike and, along with Copenhagen, it is regarded as one of the two most cycle-friendly capitals in the world – but the city never got another Witte Fietsenplan. Molenaar believes this may be because everybody in Amsterdam already has a bike. Schimmelpennink, however, cannot see that this changes Amsterdam's need for a bike-sharing scheme. "People who travel on the underground don't carry their bikes around. But often **they** need additional transport to reach their final destination." Although he thinks it is strange that a city like Amsterdam does not have a successful bike-sharing scheme, he is optimistic about the future. "In the 1960s we didn't stand a chance because people were prepared to give their lives to keep cars in the city, but that mentality has totally changed. Today everybody longs for cities that are not dominated by cars."
1. What were the Provo organisation's main reasons for wanting to introduce the bike-sharing scheme? (2)
 2. Provide two reasons why was the first Witte Fietsenplan not successful? (2)
 3. Give two reasons that the council of Amsterdam gave to reject the second bike-sharing plan two years later? (2)

4. What convinced Schimmelpennink that his third bike-sharing plan might be well received? (2)
5. How was the Amsterdam bike-sharing plan of 1999 different from the previous ones? (1)
6. Which three factors contributed to the failure of the bike-sharing plan of 1999? (3)
7. Apart from the Netherlands, name two other countries that have also introduced bike-sharing plans. (2)
8. Explain why Schimmelpennink never made any money from his idea. (1)
9. Which two cities are regarded as the most bicycle friendly in the world? (2)
- 10(i) Quote one word from the last paragraph that shows that Schimmelpennink believes that a bike-sharing scheme will be successfully implemented in Amsterdam in the future. (1)
- (ii) Give two reasons for Schimmelpennink belief mentioned in 10 (i). (2)
11. Read the following statements and then match each statement to the correct person (A or B) Write only the correct letter next to the number in your answer book. E.g. (i)B You may use a letter more than once. (4)

A=Luud Schimmelpennink

B =Theo Molenaar

- (i) Calculated the potential savings a bike-sharing scheme would bring.
- (ii) Is of the opinion that Amsterdam does not need a bike-sharing scheme.
- (iii) Was part of the very first bike-sharing plan.
- (iv) Designed the bike racks used in the 1999 bike-sharing scheme.

12. Explain the following phrases in bold in the passage in your own words: (3)

- (i) "to try his luck" (par. 4)
- (ii) "the biggest blow was dealt" (par. 5)
- (iii) "to follow suit" (par. 6)

13. What do the following pronouns in bold in the passage refer to? (3)

- (i) it (par. 3)
- (ii) ones (par. 5)
- (iii) they (par. 7)

Section B: Grammar

[30 marks]

Read the passage below and then answer the grammar questions based on the passage.

Africa's proposed Smart Cities fail to show their promise

1. Africa's urban migration i) **(to be)** accelerating to the point of a crisis, and there is a need for solutions to overcrowding, transportation gridlock, unemployment, sanitation and water and electricity shortcomings acute. One notorious trait followed by many African governments is a preference for creating mega projects rather than financing the unglamorous, hard work of fixing what already ii) **(to exist)**. Politicians – even those who are not corrupt nor attracted to kickbacks built into the price tag of highway and bridge construction – iii) **(to lure)** by the attraction of claiming credit for megaprojects. Recently, a new temptation for them iv) **(to have)** arisen that seeks not to fix African cities but to bypass them altogether. Planned 'smart cities' v) **(to offer)** as a utopian answer to all urban problems.

2. Senegalese singer Akon's self-named Akon City is the most famous of these promised but never-realised dream cities. In November 2023, officials in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, vi) **(to announce)** a project to build Kasangulu Smart City. Investors from the East African community, vii) **(to lead)** by a Kenyan financial consultancy, are said to be behind the vision of 40 hectares of prime land that viii) **(to develop)** with multi-storey houses, a level-four hospital, a school, a train station, a water theme park, malls, a hotel, a lake and even an artificial beach. Recently, the Dubai-based architectural studio Urb announced its plans for The Parks: a 17-km² sustainable city to be located somewhere in the eastern portion of South Africa. This technology-dependent, self-sufficient city with a population of 150,000 living in 40,000 residential units aims to produce all its energy, water and food on-site.

3. These concept cities are just that – concepts – and while they present an almost dreamlike response to existing congested, unsustainable and polluted cities, they exist as architectural renderings of fancy futuristic buildings. They reflect less on the answers to African needs than attempting to impress by imitating the work of the art director of the *Black Panther* and the movie's futuristic city Wakanda. Whereas Wakanda was built and powered by an alien power metal that does not exist in real life, Africa's urban problems are rooted in genuine African realities. The professionals were dedicated to these realities – the under-resourced and often neglected workers in the city planning departments – understand their communities' needs and should be the true recipients of financial investment.

(source: <https://www.inonafrica.com>)

The following grammar questions are based on the article given in above.

Read the article again and then answer all the questions that follow.

1. Change the verbs in bold, *numbered (i) to (viii)* in the text into the correct verb tense.

(8)

2. Identify and write down example(s) of the following from *paragraph 3*.

(4)

(i) two present participles

(ii) an infinitive

(iii) a past participle

3. Identify whether the sentences below are in the active or passive voice.

(4)

(i) The place is conceived as an entity separate from existing cities by the residents.

(ii) Senegal's President gave Akon, a singer who is known globally, a star reception.

(iii) Impressive-looking paintings of an ultra-modern city captivated the media.

(iv) It is good that these issues are being raised in the executive meeting by the residents.

4. Rewrite the sentences in question 3 above in the opposite voice.

(4)

5. Rewrite the following sentence in reported speech.

(5)

The president said, "Akon relaunched the project, but the land was originally for the government, and now it seems to be intended for an international hotel consortium next year."

6.1. Identify the type of conditional used in the following sentence.

(1)

Akon will train more people if he is not criticized for choosing people from the cities only.

6.2. Change the sentence at 6.1 into:

(i) a second conditional

(2)

(ii) a third conditional

(2)

Section C: Critical Reading

[40 marks]

Question 1

[10x2=20 marks]

Read the passage below and summarize the author's main claim and the main reasons given for the author's beliefs about the conversation styles of different genders. Your summary should not be more than 120 words.

The Impact of Technology on Human Interaction

In the last few decades, technology has revolutionized the way we communicate and interact with one another. From the invention of the telephone to the rise of the internet and smartphones, the methods of human interaction have shifted dramatically. While many argue that these advancements have facilitated global communication and have made it easier to stay connected, others believe that they have contributed to a decline in face-to-face interactions and the quality of human relationships.

One of the most notable impacts of technology on communication is the convenience it provides. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter allow people to connect with friends, family, and even strangers from around the world with the click of a button. Video calling services like Zoom and Skype have made it possible to conduct meetings and maintain relationships across vast distances. In this context, technology has been a tremendous boon for personal and professional relationships, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, where physical distancing became the norm.

However, despite the undeniable convenience of these tools, some experts argue that they are eroding the depth of human connections. Online communication, while fast and accessible, often lacks the nuance and emotional depth of in-person interactions. Non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice are either absent or difficult to interpret in digital communications. As a result, misunderstandings and miscommunications can occur more frequently online than in face-to-face interactions.

Moreover, the rise of social media has been linked to increased feelings of loneliness and isolation for some individuals. Paradoxically, while people are more connected than ever through their devices, the quality of those connections is sometimes questioned. Many users of social media report feelings of inadequacy when comparing their lives to the carefully curated images and experiences posted by others. Studies have shown that excessive use of social media can contribute to mental health issues, including anxiety and depression, particularly among younger generations.

In addition to concerns about the quality of communication, there are also worries about the ethical implications of technological advancements in communication. The widespread use of algorithms to curate social media feeds has raised concerns about privacy and the manipulation of information.

These algorithms often prioritize content that is likely to generate engagement, which can lead to the amplification of misinformation and divisive content. This raises ethical questions about the role of technology companies in shaping public discourse and influencing social dynamics.

Ultimately, while technology has undeniably transformed human interaction, its overall impact remains a topic of debate. On the one hand, it has enabled unprecedented levels of global communication and connectivity. On the other hand, it has introduced challenges related to the quality of relationships, mental health, and ethical concerns about privacy and information manipulation. As society continues to navigate the digital age, it will be crucial to find a balance between embracing technological advancements and preserving the human elements of connection.

1. What is the main argument presented in the passage? (2 marks)

- a) Technology has ruined human relationships completely.
- b) Technology has only had positive effects on communication.
- c) Technology has both positive and negative impacts on human interaction.
- d) Technology has had no effect on communication.

2. According to the passage, what is one of the biggest advantages of technology in communication? (2 marks)

- a) It eliminates the need for face-to-face interactions.
- b) It allows global communication and connection.
- c) It has made people more self-aware.
- d) It prevents misunderstandings in conversations.

3. What is one potential downside of online communication mentioned in the passage? (2 marks)

- a) It improves emotional understanding between people.
- b) It reduces the chances of making new friends.
- c) It lacks non-verbal cues, leading to miscommunication.
- d) It completely replaces in-person meetings.

4. How has social media contributed to feelings of loneliness according to the passage? (2 marks)

- a) It prevents people from staying connected with others.
- b) It leads people to compare their lives to others' curated posts.
- c) It limits the number of people someone can communicate with.
- d) It encourages deeper, meaningful relationships.

5. What concern is raised about the role of algorithms on social media platforms?

(2 marks)

- a) They help maintain privacy and security.
- b) They ensure that only accurate information is shared.
- c) They may prioritize content that leads to misinformation.
- d) They prevent divisive content from being seen by users.

6. What does the author suggest is crucial for society moving forward in the digital age?

(2 marks)

- a) Completely rejecting technological advancements.
- b) Finding a balance between technology and human connection.
- c) Embracing technology without reservation.
- d) Encouraging more online interactions over face-to-face ones.

7. How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the use of communication technology?

(2 marks)

- a) It made video calling and online meetings less common.
- b) It led to a decrease in technology use overall.
- c) It increased reliance on communication technology due to physical distancing.
- d) It caused people to avoid using technology altogether.

8. What mental health issues are associated with excessive use of social media?

(2 marks)

- a) Increased feelings of happiness and connection.
- b) Anxiety and depression.
- c) A greater sense of fulfillment.
- d) A decrease in social isolation.

9. Why is online communication sometimes less effective than face-to-face communication?

(2 marks)

- a) People are not familiar with online tools.
- b) Online communication happens too slowly.
- c) It lacks important non-verbal cues like facial expressions and body language.
- d) People prefer typing over speaking.

10. What is one ethical concern about the impact of technology on communication?

(2 marks)

- a) Technology has made communication more expensive.
- b) Social media algorithms can manipulate the information people see.
- c) Technology ensures that everyone gets the same information.
- d) People have become more aware of misinformation.

Question 2: Summary Writing

[20 marks]

Read the passage above in question 1 and summarize in prose the **author's main ideas of how technology has changed human communication, both positively and negatively, and touch on the ethical concerns related to social media and privacy.** Your summary should not be more than 120 words and use your own words as much as possible.

[The End]