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I. Vocabulary (20%)

Choose the answer that best completes the sentence and mark the corresponding letter (A, B, C, or D) on your answer card.

1. The dealer offers various cars, including the latest _____ models that combine a gasoline engine with an electric motor for improved fuel efficiency.
A) diesel B) hybrid C) edible D) ceramic
2. Despite the driver's efforts to avoid the accident, a _____ occurred at the intersection, causing significant damage to both vehicles.
A) collision B) detour C) procession D) catalyst
3. After a lengthy discussion, the committee reached a/an _____ decision to approve the new policy, with all members in full agreement.
A) separated B) dispersed C) unanimous D) fragmented
4. After the announcement of the company's bankruptcy, its stock prices began to _____ dramatically.
A) stabilize B) ascend C) thrive D) plunge
5. Due to their weakened immune systems, cancer patients are often more _____ to infections.
A) resistant B) elastic C) comprehensive D) vulnerable
6. In anticipation of the approaching hurricane, the coastal residents were ordered to _____ the area.
A) evacuate B) shelter C) conserve D) abbreviate
7. Although there was no logical reason for it, the coach was quite _____ and insisted that his team follow a specific routine before every game.
A) rational B) superstitious C) intelligent D) contagious
8. The company was accused of trying to _____ the natural resources of the region without considering the environmental impact.
A) sustain B) assault C) exploit D) manipulate
9. After completing the online purchase, a confirmation email was sent to acknowledge the successful _____.
A) transaction B) disturbance C) prescription D) complexion
10. The flight encountered unexpected _____ shortly after takeoff, causing some passengers to feel uneasy.
A) serenity B) fragrance C) turbulence D) aviation

II. Cloze (20%)

Read the following passages, choose the most appropriate answer for each blank, and mark the corresponding letter (A, B, C, or D) on your answer card.

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Passage 1

Have you ever seen a “dumb blonde” meme on Instagram or a silly blonde in movies? For ages, blondes have been the subject of stereotypes, often portrayed as less intelligent or more focused on looks than their non-blonde peers. However, the 11 of blonde female leaders nowadays is challenging these clichés. Some figures, such as the first female justice of the US Supreme Court and the first female presidential candidate, 12 as proof of this trend.

A study from the University of British Columbia provides some insights. In an experiment, researchers presented 100 men with photos of both blonde and brunette women paired with commanding quotes. The brunettes were more often perceived as seeming unpleasant or bossy, 13 the blondes scored higher on warmth and appeal because of existing stereotypes. Blondes’ friendly image is considered to soften the blow of commanding behavior. That’s why, in leadership roles, experts think some women might use social perceptions to their 14 and lessen criticism through their hair color. The fact that even top-level women sometimes 15 their appearance to fit in underlines a deeper issue. There’s a substantial journey ahead in the pursuit of gender equality. But let’s hope for a day when every woman, blonde, brunette or otherwise can openly be herself.

11. (A) decline (B) crack (C) evasion (D) rise
 12. (A) serving (B) serve (C) serves (D) has served
 13. (A) while (B) because (C) however (D) where
 14. (A) advantage (B) dismay (C) surprise (D) drawback
 15. (A) risk (B) rely (C) alter (D) prove

Passage 2

In Taiwan, a quick stop at a local convenience store allows you to grab a hot dog whenever you want. But have you ever wondered how this popular snack got its unique name and became a leading light of American 16? First, the name “hot dog” is actually a combination of different ideas. Vendors called the sausages “red hot” to get customers to buy one fresh off their grills. As for the “dog” part, it’s a playful joke to compare the meat of the sausage to 17 of a dog—specifically, a dachshund. This small, long dog 18 was introduced to the US by German immigrants, just like the hot dog itself. Speaking of German immigrants, they probably played a role in the way we eat hot dogs today. It’s said that back in the 1860s, German immigrant Charles Feltman established the first hot dog stand at Coney Island in New York. To make it easier for visitors to enjoy his treats while they wandered around, he placed sausages in buns. This creative idea gradually 19 on, and hot dogs with buns became an American classic. 20, Feltman’s contribution is just one of the many theories about the origin of this successful pair. So, the next time you’re hungry, grab a hot dog and enjoy this slice of Americana for yourself!

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16.	(A) cuisine (B) tradition (C) pastry (D) luxury				
17.	(A) which (B) one (C) that (D) part				
18.	(A) trend (B) breed (C) label (D) snack				
19.	(A) moved (B) took (C) set (D) caught				
20.	(A) In fact (B) In contrast (C) Instead (D) Likewise				

III. Article Completion (10%)

Read the following passage and choose the most appropriate answer for each blank. Mark the corresponding letter (A, B, C, D, or E) on your answer card.

The story of personal audio equipment begins in the late 1800s, shortly after the invention of the telephone and the loudspeaker. Businessmen recognized that with these technologies, live music could be shared with people far away from a concert hall. (21)_____. This problem led to the invention of the Electrophone system by a British company. The Electrophone used telephone lines to deliver live performances from theaters and opera houses across London. The Electrophone service was a subscription-based model (22)_____. They were made up of two earpieces which connect together below the chin. Since the service provided a novel form of entertainment, it was popular among the wealthy at the time. (23)_____. He invented a prototype telephone headphone in his kitchen. The headphone consists of two speakers connected by a band. Such a design is (24)_____. After several tests and adjustments, this device was put into use in the US Navy. In the 1950s, a jazz musician named John C. Koss introduced stereo technology to personal headphones, making the sound from the device more realistic. (25)_____. As audio systems decreased in size, new designs of headphones were released one after another.

- (A) Later advances in battery technology led to smaller radios.
- (B) However, loudspeakers in public places can be an annoyance, which is still the case today.
- (C) similar to the headphones we are familiar with today.
- (D) where customers rented special listening devices similar to doctors' stethoscopes.
- (E) The next breakthrough was made by an American inventor named Nathaniel Baldwin in 1910.

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IV. Reading Comprehension (20%)

Read the following passages and choose the best answer to each question. Mark the corresponding letter A, B, C, D on your answer card.

A.

In 2022, 61,000 deaths in European Union were attributed to summer heat. Likely an underestimate, this is only one of the many indicators of the growing and unavoidable challenge posed by the impacts of climate change on public health and the world of work. The European Environment Agency forecasts a steady rise in average temperatures, as well as increasingly frequent and intense heatwaves, which have been described as “silent, invisible killers of silent, invisible people.”

According to Eurofound, 23 per cent of workers in the EU are exposed to high temperatures for at least a quarter of their working hours; that climbs to 36 per cent in agriculture and industry and to 38 per cent in construction. These sectors are known for precarious working conditions and recruitment of more vulnerable (temporary and migrant) workers.

Those working outside, such as in construction, agriculture or maintenance of public spaces, are most exposed to extreme climate conditions (including ultra-violet radiation). However, it is not only outdoor workers who can be harmed by high temperatures. Indoor workers whose job require physical effort, as in warehouses or on production lines, will also be affected by rising temperatures and humidity. The impact on health can be immediate, ranging from cramp to loss of consciousness and even death.

In France, the National Scientific Research Institute has registered the extra psychosocial risks associated with global heating. Heat is tiring and adds cognitive strain, which can spark irritability or even violence, risking tensions and conflict among worker and with non-colleagues. Cognitive fatigue also increases the risk of accidents, especially because it reduces concentration and can lead to fuzzy decision-making, posing extreme danger when driving or operating machinery.

(excerpted from “Heat stress at work—a political emergency” by Aude Cefaliello)

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26. What is the main idea of this passage?

(A) Migrant workers are often treated poorly and unfairly in the workplace.
 (B) Global climate change poses serious threats to biodiversity.
 (C) Extreme high temperatures can cause significant physical and psychological harm to people working in various occupations.
 (D) Construction is a high-risk industry.

27. According to the passage, the words “invisible people” in the first paragraph refer to ____.

(A) people who are not accustomed to appearing in public
 (B) the working class that usually does not receive much social attention
 (C) the multitude of ordinary people
 (D) low-profile persons

28. In the fourth paragraph, the word “fuzzy” is closest in meaning to ____.

(A) indefinite
 (B) firm
 (C) informed
 (D) timely

29. Based on the passage, which of the following statement is true?

(A) Compared to outdoor workers, indoor workers are less likely to suffer from occupational injuries caused by high temperatures.
 (B) Working in high temperatures can have some effects workers' physical and mental health, but it rarely poses a risk of death.
 (C) Workers under high temperature tend to become particularly irritable and usually do not have the patience to interact with their coworkers.
 (D) Compared to the workers of other sectors, more construction workers are exposed to high-temperature working environments for extended period of time.

30. What would be the best conclusion for the passage?

(A) When high temperatures become the norm, controlling carbon emissions becomes an urgent necessity.

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- (B) If global warming continues to worsen, many island nations will be submerged within a few years.
- (C) With global warming on the rise, improving working conditions has become an urgent issue that must be addressed.
- (D) The overdevelopment of industry, agriculture, and livestock farming is also one of the causes of global warming. We must address it seriously.

B.

Of all the things there may be to fear and loathe about Google's new generative artificial intelligence tool, the most offensive is its name: Bard.

In scholarly circles, there is only one "Bard," and that is "The Bard"—namely, "The Bard of Avon," better known as William Shakespeare, whose writings are everything that AI is not: wise, witty, compassionate, and above all, deeply human.

There may always be disputes over who actually wrote the approximately 39 plays that comprise the so-called Shakespeare canon. But there's one thing we know for certain: It was not a chatbot.

To name a generative AI tool after one of the world's greatest humanists is ironic at best, and at worst belittles the true Bard, whose name the tech industry has now reduced to a marketing commodity, a gimmick to sell software.

The deeper problem, though, isn't just the cheapening of Shakespeare's moniker. It's the devaluing of the humanities—of history, literature and art, and of inquiry, creativity and critical thinking---in every sphere.

(excerpted from "Without the humanities, artificial intelligence spells trouble" by Eliza Newlin Carney)

31. Upon seeing the AI tool launched by Google, the author's attitude is:

- (A) pleased
- (B) dismissive
- (C) full of anticipation
- (D) impressed

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32. In the fourth paragraph, the word “gimmick” is closest in meaning to ____.

- (A) agitprop
- (B) magic
- (C) trick
- (D) lie

33. In the fifth paragraph, the word “moniker” is closest in meaning to ____.

- (A) name
- (B) money
- (C) state
- (D) personality

34. Based on the passage, which of the following statement is true?

- (A) AI would take humans out of the loop someday.
- (B) In terms of creativity, AI is no match for humans.
- (C) With chatbots, Shakespeare's play is no longer a must-read.
- (D) “Bard” is a name apt for this smart chatbot.

35. What would be the best conclusion for the passage?

- (A) We should find ways for AI and humans to coexist and thrive together.
- (B) Google should give a new name to its chatbot.
- (C) In the face of the AI onslaught, we should do everything we can to defend the unique value of humanity.
- (D) We may sit tight and wait for AI to reveal its own flaws.

V. Composition (30%)

Please write an essay within 600 words to describe the most difficult decision you have ever made. In this essay, please detail the formidable challenge you had faced, the decision-making process you went through, and how the final decision changed your life.

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