Directions

• The Practice Test for English has three sections: Listening, Reading, and Writing.

• The Listening section has multiple-choice questions. You will listen to a passage, or a question, and then mark the correct answer.

• The Reading section has multiple-choice questions and questions that require you to write a short written response.

• The Writing section contains a short writing exercise on one topic and a longer writing exercise, where you select one of two topics to write about.

• You may use these practice questions to prepare for the Secondary School Certificate Test.
Section 1—Listening

Directions: In this part of the test, you will hear a dialogue and then answer some questions based on what you heard.
First you have two minutes to read through questions 1–4 quickly so that you become familiar with them.
Now listen to the dialogue. You will hear it twice.

1. What is the main focus of the conversation?
   - [ ] women as unable to lead
   - [ ] men as the only leaders
   - [ ] history of women’s equality
   - [ ] equality between men and women

2. What does Leila believe?
   - [ ] Women cannot be leaders.
   - [ ] Men and women are equal.
   - [ ] Women are not different from men.
   - [ ] Women cannot do what men can do.
3. What does Ali mean by stating that there are more male leaders than female ones?

- All leaders are males.
- Only men can be leaders.
- Women are capable of leadership.
- Men are more capable of leadership.

4. Which of the following best represents Ali’s point of view?

- Women cannot do all the things that men can do.
- Men and women are equal, in spite of the differences.
- There should be equality between men and women.
- Men and women are different, but not necessarily equal.

5. Leila states that most male leaders were raised by women. Which best describes this statement?

- It is reliable.
- It is a fact.
- It is an opinion.
- It is based on statistics.
Directions: In this section, you will hear some sentences that are part of a conversation. You will hear the sentences twice. Choose the best response to the sentences.

6 Which course did Belal attend?

☐ history
☐ science
☐ literature
☐ mathematics

7 Based on the conversation, what does Magda think of Belal’s course?

☐ It is fun.
☐ It is boring.
☐ It is easy.
☐ It is interesting.

8 Belal says that “life is nothing but numbers.” What does this statement mean?

☐ Numbers make life easier.
☐ Numbers make life harder.
☐ Numbers are not important at all.
☐ Numbers are part of everything.
9. Which of the following subjects appeal to Magda?

- maths and science
- science and literature
- literature and history
- history and geography

10. Why does Magda dislike dealing with numbers?

- because she does not have a calculator
- because numbers are meaningless to her
- because numbers need a lot of time to understand
- because Belal advised her not to deal with numbers

11. Which best describes Magda?

- She likes reading and calculations.
- She likes reading, but dislikes calculations.
- She dislikes reading, but likes calculations.
- She dislikes reading and dislikes calculations.
Although file-sharing websites are useful tools for spreading information around, 12_______ raise many copyright issues. 13_______ many laws are passed to regulate copyright theft. Sharing copyrighted materials without permission costs the owners of such materials a lot of money, 14_______ it is prohibited. 15_______, some sharing websites discourage illegal sharing of copyrighted files.

12  [ ] it  [ ] he  [ ] we  [ ] they
13  [ ] There  [ ] For  [ ] Therefore  [ ] Since
14  [ ] so  [ ] while  [ ] since  [ ] because
15  [ ] Because  [ ] However  [ ] Whereas  [ ] Although
Speech Recognition Technology

1 Modern speech recognition software allows humans to enter information directly to computers via the human voice. Speech recognition is based on mathematical calculations that determine statistical relationships among words. These calculations allow machines to predict probabilities that any group of words will appear one after another in speech.

2 Like many new technologies, the software to recognize speech did not work well at first. Today, however, the most advanced speech recognition software can convert 160 spoken words into text per minute with an accuracy rate of 95 percent. This is approximately three times faster than most people can type. The accuracy rate can improve to 99 percent if the speaker trains the computer to understand his unique patterns. Speech recognition software can be useful in many ways. It could help students be more efficient, for example, by allowing them to dictate their papers to the computer instead of typing them.

3 Several companies now sell versions of speech recognition software. Carnegie Mellon University has developed one that is free and can be downloaded from the Internet.

4 It is hard to predict what will happen in the future. The mathematical calculations that make speech recognition software function today will continue to make this technology better. This may lead to future advances in the areas of artificial intelligence and robotics. Not only will computers be able to transcribe human speech in the future, they may one day understand what we say and engage in conversations.
What is the main idea of this passage?

- Speech recognition software has made significant advances.
- Carnegie Mellon has done a lot of work in speech.
- Mathematicians have solved many problems such as speech recognition.
- Robotics and artificial intelligence will depend on speech recognition software.

Which is a statement about the future of speech recognition software?

- computers understanding what we say
- humans communicating directly with computers via the human voice
- speech recognition software being based on mathematical calculations
- Carnegie Mellon developing a free speech recognition tool

Read the sentence from paragraph 3.

Several companies now sell versions of speech recognition software.

Which word could replace the underlined word in the sentence?

- lists
- types
- opinions
- improvements
Are we dependent on computer?

1. Computers are useful tools that can make our lives easier. Even so, there are some concerns about our growing dependence on computers and the increasing amount of time we spend on them. Can we live without computers?

2. A common comment about the increased time people spend on computers is that it can cause a person to become less sociable and more socially isolated. Instead of visiting family and friends in person, one can stay at home and stay connected with the world by computer instead. This kind of connectivity may also be a benefit, however. One can instantly send an email or chat with a friend anywhere in the world.

3. The ability of computers to perform tasks such as calculating complex equations is great. A problem arises, however, when people stop learning how to do these things themselves. There is a fear that we might become overly dependent on computers to solve our problems. It is comforting to know, however, that no matter how dependent we become on computers, they are always more dependent on us. Even after a computer stops working, a person can continue to find solutions to a problem.

4. Overuse of computers can cause health and psychological problems, but moderate use of computers can make life much easier. Generally speaking, people are able to solve problems without computers. Humans existed long before computers, and they would continue to survive without them. People will carry on with their lives whether or not computers exist.
19 Which argument does the passage best support?

- Computers are not useful.
- Computers should be avoided.
- People are completely dependent on computers.
- People are not completely dependent on computers.

20 Based on the passage, which has the most negative effect of spending too much time on computers?

- having too many friends
- ignoring diverse cultures
- becoming socially isolated
- spending too much time with friends
21 Which statement is supported by the passage?

- Computers make life easier.
- Computers make people active.
- Computers are not a waste of time.
- Computers do not solve problems.

22 Which persuasive technique is used in the first paragraph?

- appeal to fear
- tag question
- exaggeration
- rhetorical question
**Roller Coaster Science**

A roller coaster train begins its journey when a machine grabs it and pulls it up a steep incline. As the train climbs, it gains potential energy, which is energy waiting to be converted into power. The higher it goes, the more potential energy the train accumulates. At the top of the incline, the roller coaster has gained its maximum potential energy.

The train then heads down the first slope. As it does, the potential energy it has stored up is changed to kinetic energy, the energy of motion. This energy builds up as the train moves down the slope. By the time it gets to the bottom of the first slope, it has gathered enough energy to send it up the next slope.

**Scream Machines**

Today's roller coasters are “scream machines,” breaking world records for fastest, highest, and craziest.

The Kingda Ka coaster at New Jersey’s Six Flags Great Adventure in the United States is the fastest and tallest roller coaster on Earth. It shoots riders from 0 to 206 kilometers per hour in 3.5 seconds, then sends them flying 139 meters into the sky!

The Steel Dragon 2000 coaster at Nagashima Spa Land in Japan is the longest steel roller coaster in the world. It sends its riders on a journey of over 2,479 meters of looping, twisting track!
23. What causes a roller coaster’s potential energy to be converted into kinetic energy?
- the roller coaster train’s slow climb up an incline
- the roller coaster train’s rapid movement down a slope
- a machine that pulls the roller coaster train up a steep incline
- a machine that sends the roller coaster train up the next slope

24. What is most likely the author’s purpose in writing the article “Scream Machines”?
- to explain how today’s fastest and tallest roller coasters work
- to suggest why roller coasters have been popular for decades
- to describe two of the world’s record-setting roller coasters
- to persuade people to visit Nagashima Spa Land in Japan

25. According to the article “Scream Machines,” what is one thing the Kingda Ka and the Steel Dragon 2000 have in common?
- Both roller coasters hold world records.
- Both roller coasters are located in Japan.
- Both roller coasters are made from steel.
- Both roller coasters are the fastest in the world
What Goes Around Comes Around

A long time ago, there was an Indian woman who baked pies for her family. Every day she would bake an extra pie, put it on the window sill, for any passerby to take, and pray for her missing son who had gone hunting and had not returned. Every day a certain man would come and take the pie. The man didn’t speak to the woman, and said only, “The good you do comes back to you; the evil you do remains with you.” Every day the man said just that.

The woman thought to herself, that man hasn’t even said thank you, only some words I can’t understand. One day she decided that she would not provide that man with pies anymore, because he was so ungrateful. But she hesitated, and thought that even though he was ungrateful, he might still be hungry and need the food for himself or his family. She felt sad for him, and put the pie out for him to take as usual. For a whole month, the man came, took the pies, and said his usual words.

One day while the woman was praying for the return of her missing son, she heard a weak knock at the door. She hurried to open it, and there stood her son. After thirty days of absence, he had returned.

The son told his mother that he had fallen from his horse, while hunting in the forest. He was hurt badly, and there was nobody to help him. A day later, a man found him and took care of him. The man gave him the only food he could afford—pies. The man had given him the pies baked by his own mother.

Only then, the women realized what the man meant by his words, “The good you do comes back to you; the evil you do remains with you.” Suddenly, she realized that all the pies she baked had been consumed by her ill son. She felt grateful to the man, and decided to continue doing good just for the sake of goodness, without expecting any gratitude or reward, because the good you do comes back to you, one way or another.
The theme of the story is: The good you do comes back to you. Use facts and details from the story to support this theme.

Write a paragraph in which you tell the story from the point of view of the son.

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Read the following statement.

The woman thinks that the man was ungrateful to her although she was grateful to him.

Explain by giving one reason why the woman thinks that the man was ungrateful, and one reason why she was grateful to him.
Your sports team has a game scheduled for next Thursday afternoon, but you have an eye doctor’s appointment scheduled for the same time and cannot reschedule that appointment. Unfortunately, next Thursday is also the day the team picture will be taken for the school yearbook.

Write an email to your sports coach explaining why you will miss the game, and asking that the team photo be postponed until a later date. Make sure to include the following:

1. An opening and closing
2. An explanation for why you will miss next Thursday’s game
3. A request to have the team photo postponed until the following game, so that you can be in the yearbook photo

Plan your email in the space below, then write the email on page 19.
Directions: Choose ONE of the topics below to write about.
You will be scored on:
• how well you develop your ideas (2 points)
• how well you organize your ideas (2 points)
• your grammar, spelling, and punctuation (2 points)

Plan your essay on page 21, then write the essay on pages 22–24. 
DO NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THE BOXES.

Topic 1:
Situation
High school students in Qatar should be able to select a program of all Foundations or all Advanced courses.

Task
Argue for or against this statement, supporting your essay with at least two reasons why you agree or disagree.

Topic 2:
Situation
Think about a time you visited a new place. It could have been a distant country, another part of Qatar, or just a place new to you.

Task
Tell the story of your time in that new place so that your reader will understand why you will never forget that place.