

Grade: 12/ Humanities

Time: 3hours

English Language Mock Exam

Part one: Reading

Score: 11/20

Read the article below in which the writer sheds light on the impact of laughter on people's lives. When you are through with the text, answer the questions that follow.

Fatal Hilarity

By Suzan Balaa

- 1- If you could choose how to die. How would you cross over to the other side? My guess is many people prefer to die peacefully in their sleep. While that seems a lot better than drowning or suffocation, it's such a sudden, flimsy way to slip away. If it were up to me, I'd want my death to be a celebration of how I lived. I want to die laughing.
- 2- We've all laughed so hard we couldn't breathe. For me, these laughing-frenzies usually take place at the most awkward and inappropriate situations like in crowded elevator, or when I'm sitting in the front row of a small class. Most of the time, the struggle to smother my laugh is funnier than the untimely joke, and that snowballs into a laughing-frenzy. As embarrassing as that may seem, everyone loves a good hysterical laugh, and there's even a good reason why you should. Laughter helps release enzymes and hormones that are helpful for normal functioning of various organs. It is also a good workout for respiratory, abdominal, leg, back and facial muscles. However, in a few special cases, laughter may actually contribute to the death of a person. This extremely rare phenomenon is called "fatal hilarity".
- 3- In mythology, it is told that the Greek soothsayer Calchas was foretold the day of his death by another prophet. He waited anxiously for this day to come and when the day arrived and the prophecy didn't seem to come true, he laughed so hard in cynicism at his victory over death that he dropped dead. But can it really happen? In fact, there have been more than 10 registered cases of "fatal hilarity". On march 24th1975 Alex Mitchell, a 50 year old bricklayer from King's Lynn, England, died laughing while watching an episode of The Goodies. In 1989 a Danish audiologist, named Ole Bentzen, died watching "A Fish Called Wanda". His heart was estimated to have been beaten between 250 and 500 beats per minute, before he finally expired due to cardiac arrest. Also, not so long ago in 2003, Damnoen Saen-um, a Thai ice cream salesman, died while laughing in his sleep at the age of 52. With his wife unable to wake him up, he stopped breathing after two minutes of continuous laughter.
- 4- On a less morbid note, five interesting cases of loss of consciousness due to intense laughter have also been reported. This is called laughter-induced syncope. The laughter causes repetitive forced expirations which result in temporary reduction in blood flow, therefore causing a shortage of oxygen to the brain. One of these cases is a 56-year-old, moderately obese man who suffered laughter induced syncope as he entertained his colleagues in a restaurant:"while waiting for the meals to be served, a guest had told a very amusing joke and the patient began to laugh heartily, 'Ha,ha,ha,ha...' in decrescendo until he was out of breath. To everyone's surprise, he then fell forward resting his head on the table and remained unresponsive for a few seconds before

regaining consciousness." (Laugh syncope as a rare sub-type of the situational syncopes: a case report, Journal of medical Case Reports).

5- In conclusion, not enough information is given about "fatal hilarity" cases to decide whether laughter was the cause of death, contributing factor, or just a coincidence. Nevertheless, you have to admit staring death with a smile on your face seems like a pretty cool way to go. So smile even when no one's looking and laugh hysterically. What's the worst that could happen?

Alloy

Fall 09 Issue #3

A) Answer the set of questions using your own words.

- 1- What embarrasses the writer? (0.75 pt)
- 2- What is ironical about Calchas? (0.75 pt)
- 3- How can laughter lead to unconsciousness? (0.75 pt)
- 4- Other than unconsciousness, what can laughter result in? (0.75 pt)

B) 1-Identify the thesis statement. (0.5 pt)

- 2-Illustrate the writer's attitude toward laughter by giving pieces of evidence? (0.75 pt)
- 3-What is the type of the text? Justify. (0.75 pt)

C) 1-How are Paragraphs 3+4 thematically related? (0.75 pt)

- 2-Who do you think might be interested in reading this article? (0.75 pt)
- 3-Write three different methods of support to show how the writer achieves credibility. (0.75 pt)

D) Based on the information presented in the article fill in the following chart.

Copy the chart on your booklet. (2.25 pt)

| Paragraph | Person | Job/ position | Nationality | Survived/died |
|-----------|--------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

E) Paraphrase sentence 4/ paragraph1. (0.5 pt)

F) Find words in the text which have the antonyms of: (1 pt)

- a- Alertness

- b- Proper
- c- Indifferently
- d- Skinny

Part Two: Writing

score: 9/20

We are all born to live and consequently to die. In between birth and death we suffer. After all life suffering, how would you wish to die? Give reasons for your choice. See that you put the reader in the general atmosphere of your topic by writing a clear thesis statement which must be backed up with relevant details in the body paragraphs and that you end with a proper conclusion. Draft, revise, and proofread your essay before you hand it in. your writing will be assessed as follows: 5 pts for content and organization; 3 pts for language and style and 1 pt for tidiness and legibility.

Good work

Answer Key

A)1-Laughing at the most awkward and inappropriate situations like in a crowded elevator or when sitting in the front row of a small class embarrasses the writer.

2-What is ironic about Calchas is that another prophet fore told him about the death of his death which seemed a false prophecy to him so he laughed cynically thinking that he survived but his convulsive laughter caused him death.

3-Laughter causes repetitive forced expirations which result in temporary reduction in blood flow, therefore causing a shortage of oxygen to the brain; consequently, leading to unconsciousness.

4-Laughter can result in death, contributes to it, or "coincidence" only.

B)1- Thesis statement: last sentence/ paragraph 2 "This → hilarity".

2-The writer has a positive attitude toward laughter since she wants "to die laughing"/ paragraph 1, and asks the audience to die "with a smile".

3-The text type is persuasive since the writer is subjective in her point of view and tries to convince the reader with emotive words and different methods of support.

C)1- Paragraphs 3+4 are related by reinforcing and emphasizing the harmful effects of laughter. In paragraph 3 the writer presents laughter as having fatal effects in certain cases. In paragraph 4, other cases are also harmful but not fatal; they lead only to biological disturbances.

2-Audience who might be interested in reading this article can be;

- a- Psychologist
- b- Biologists
- c- Relatives of victims of laughter

3-Three different methods of support that show how the writer achieves credibility are:

- a- Giving examples: different victims
- b- Numbers: 10 registered cases
- c- Dates: 1975

D)

| Paragraph | Person | Job/ position | Nationality | Survived/died |
|-----------|----------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| 3 | Calchas | Soothsayer | Greek | Died |
| 3 | Alex Mitchel | Brick layer | English | Died |
| 3 | Ole Bentzen | Audiologist | Danish | Died |
| 3 | Damnoen Saenum | Salesman | Thai | Died |
| 4 | Obese man | -- | -- | Survived |

E)The writer says that she would celebrate the way she lived by dying happily either with a laughter or a smile.

F) a- Sleep/ paragraph 1

b-inappropriate/ paragraph 2

c-anxiously/ paragraph 3

d-obese/ paragraph 4