



Scholarships Exam - Reading

Section-1: Questions: 01-13

Section-2: Questions: 14-30

Total: 30 points

SECTION 1

READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13 which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

Andrea Palladio. Italian architect

A new exhibition celebrates Palladio's architecture 500 years on

A

Vicenza is a pleasant, prosperous city in the Veneto, 60km west of Venice. Its grand families settled and farmed the area from the 16th century. But its principal claim to fame is Andrea Palladio, who is such an influential architect that a neoclassical style is known as Palladian. The city is a permanent exhibition of some of his finest buildings, and as he was born – in Padua, to be precise – 500 years ago, the International Centre for the Study of Palladio's Architecture has an excellent excuse for mounting la grande mostra, the big show.

B

The exhibition has the special advantage of being held in one of Palladio's buildings, Palazzo Barbaran da Porto. Its bold façade is a mixture of rustication and decoration set between two rows of elegant columns. On the second floor the pediments are alternately curved or pointed, a Palladian trademark. The harmonious proportions of the atrium at the entrance lead through to a dramatic interior of fine fireplaces and painted ceilings. Palladio's design is simple, clear and not over-crowded. The show has been organised on the same principles, according to Howard Burns, the architectural historian who co-curated it.

C

Palladio's father was a miller who settled in Vicenza, where the young Andrea was apprenticed to a skilled stonemason. How did a humble miller's son become a world renowned architect? The answer in the exhibition is that, as a young man, Palladio excelled at carving decorative stonework on columns, doorways and fireplaces. He was plainly intelligent, and lucky enough to come across a rich patron, Gian Giorgio Trissino, a landowner and scholar, who organised his education, taking him to Rome in the 1540s, where he studied the masterpieces of classical Roman and Greek architecture and the work of other influential architects of the time, such as Donato Bramante and Raphael.

D

Burns argues that social mobility was also important. Entrepreneurs, prosperous from agriculture in the Veneto, commissioned the promising local architect to design their country villas and their urban mansions. In Venice the aristocracy were anxious to co-opt talented artists, and Palladio was given the chance to design the buildings that have made him famous – the churches of San Giorgio Maggiore and the Redentore, both easy to admire because they can be seen from the city's historical centre across a stretch of water.

E

He tried his hand at bridges – his unbuilt version of the Rialto Bridge was decorated with the large pediment and columns of a temple – and, after a fire at the Ducal Palace, he offered an alternative design which bears an uncanny resemblance to the Banqueting House in Whitehall in London. Since it was designed by Inigo Jones, Palladio's first foreign disciple, this is not as surprising as it sounds.

F

Jones, who visited Italy in 1614, bought a trunk full of the master's architectural drawings; they passed through the hands of Dukes of Burlington and Devonshire before settling at the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1894. Many are now on display at Palazzo Barbaran. What they show is how Palladio drew on the buildings of ancient Rome as models. The major theme of both his rural and urban building was temple architecture, with a strong pointed pediment supported by columns and approached by wide steps.

G

Palladio's work for rich landowners alienates unreconstructed critics on the Italian left, but among the papers in the show are designs for cheap housing in Venice. In the wider world, Palladio's reputation has been nurtured by a text he wrote and illustrated, "Quattro Libri dell' Architettura". His influence spread to St Petersburg and to Charlottesville in Virginia, where Thomas Jefferson commissioned a Palladian villa he called Monticello.

H

Vicenza's show contains detailed models of the major buildings and is leavened by portraits of Palladio's teachers and clients by Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto; the paintings of his Venetian buildings are all by Canaletto, no less. This is an uncompromising exhibition; many of the drawings are small and faint, and there are no sideshows for children, but the impact of harmonious lines and satisfying proportions is to impart in a viewer a feeling of benevolent calm. Palladio is history's most therapeutic architect.

I

"Palladio, 500 Anni: La Grande Mostra" is at Palazzo Barbaran da Porto, Vicenza, until January 6th 2009. The exhibition continues at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, from January 31st to April 13th, and travels afterwards to Barcelona and Madrid.

Questions 1-7

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1-7 on your answer sheet write

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

- 1 The building where the exhibition is staged has been newly renovated
- 2 Palazzo Barbaran da Porto typically represent the Palladio's design
- 3 Palladio's father worked as an architect.
- 4 Palladio's family refused to pay for his architectural studies
- 5 Palladio's alternative design for the Ducal Palace in Venice was based on an English building.
- 6 Palladio designed both wealthy and poor people.
- 7 The exhibition includes paintings of people by famous artists

Questions 8-13

Answer the questions below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **8-13** on your answer sheet.

- 8 What job was Palladio training for before he became an architect?
- 9 Who arranged Palladio's architectural studies?
- 10 Who was the first non-Italian architect influenced by Palladio?
- 11 What type of Ancient Roman buildings most heavily influenced Palladio's work?
- 12 What did Palladio write that strengthened his reputation?
- 13 In the writer's opinion, what feeling will visitors to the exhibition experience?

SECTION 2

READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26 which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.

The future never dies?

The prospects for humanity and for the world as a whole are somewhere between glorious and dire. It is hard to be much more precise.

A

By 'glorious', I mean that our descendants – all who are born on to this Earth – could live very comfortably and securely, and could continue to do so for as long as the Earth can support life, which should be for a very long time indeed. We should at least be thinking in terms of the next million years. Furthermore, our descendants could continue to enjoy the company of other species – establishing a much better relationship with them than we have now. Other animals need not live in constant fear of us. Many of those fellow species now seem bound to become extinct, but a significant proportion could and should continue to live alongside us. Such a future may seem ideal, and so it is. Yet I do not believe it is fanciful.

There is nothing in the physical fabric of the Earth or in our own biology to suggest that this is not possible.

B

'Dire' means that we human beings could be in deep trouble within the next few centuries, living but also dying in large numbers in political terror and from starvation, while huge numbers of our fellow creatures would simply disappear, leaving only the ones that we find convenient – chickens, cattle – or that we can't shake off, like flies and mice. I'm taking it to be self-evident that glory is preferable.

C

Our future is not entirely in our own hands because the Earth has its own rules, is part of the solar system and is neither stable nor innately safe. Other planets in the solar system are quite beyond habitation, because their temperature is far too high or too low to be endured, and ours, too, in principle could tip either way. Even relatively unspectacular changes in the atmosphere could do the trick. The core of the Earth is hot, which in many ways is good for living creatures, but every now and again, the molten rock bursts through volcanoes on the surface. Among the biggest volcanic eruptions in recent memory was Mount St Helens, in the USA, which threw out a cubic kilometer of ash – fortunately in an area where very few people live. In 1815, Tambora (in present-day Indonesia) expelled so much ash into the upper atmosphere that climatic effects seriously harmed food production around the world for season after season. Entire civilisations have been destroyed by volcanoes.

D

Yet nothing we have so far experienced shows what volcanoes can really do. Yellowstone National Park in the USA occupies the caldera (the crater formed when a volcano collapses) of an exceedingly ancient volcano of extraordinary magnitude. Modern surveys show that its centre is now rising. Sometime in the next 200 million years, Yellowstone could erupt again, and when it does, the whole world will be transformed. Yellowstone could erupt tomorrow. But there's a very good chance that it will give us another million years, and that surely is enough to be going on with. It seems sensible to assume that this will be the case.

E

The universe at large is dangerous, too: in particular, we share the sky with vast numbers of asteroids, and every now and again, they come into our planet's atmosphere. An asteroid the size of a small island, hitting the Earth at 15,000 kilometres an hour (a relatively modest speed by the standards of heavenly bodies), would strike the ocean bed like a rock in a puddle, send a tidal wave around the world as high as a small mountain and as fast as a jumbo jet, and propel us into an ice age that could last for centuries. There are plans to head off such disasters (including rockets to push approaching asteroids into new trajectories), but in truth it's down to luck.

F

On the other hand, the archaeological and the fossil evidence shows that no truly devastating asteroid has struck since the one that seems to have accounted for the extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. So again, there seems no immediate reason for despair. The Earth is indeed an uncertain place, in an uncertain universe, but with average luck, it should do us well enough. If the world does become inhospitable in the next

few thousand or million years, then it will probably be our own fault. In short, despite the underlying uncertainty, our own future and that of our fellow creatures is very much in our own hands.

G

Given average luck on the geological and the cosmic scale, the difference between glory and disaster will be made, and is being made, by politics. Certain kinds of political systems and strategies would predispose us to long-term survival (and indeed to comfort and security and pleasure of being alive), while others would take us more and more frenetically towards collapse. The broad point is, though, that we need to look at ourselves – humanity – and at the world in general in a quite new light. Our material problems are fundamentally those of biology. We need to think, and we need our politicians to think, biologically. Do that, and take the ideas seriously, and we are in with a chance. Ignore biology and we and our fellow creatures haven't a hope.

Questions 14-19

Do the following statements reflect the claims of the writer in Reading Passage 2?

In boxes 14-19 on your answer sheet write

YES if the statement is true

NO if the statement is false

NOT GIVEN if the information is not given in the passage

14 It seems predictable that some species will disappear.

15 The nature of the Earth and human biology make it impossible for human beings to survive another million years.

16 An eruption by Yellowstone is likely to be more destructive than previous volcanic eruptions.

17 There is a greater chance of the Earth being hit by small asteroids than large ones.

18 If the world becomes uninhabitable, it is most likely to be as a result of a natural disaster.

19 Politicians currently in power seem unlikely to change their way of thinking.

Questions 20-25

Complete the summary below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 20-25 on your answer sheet.

The Earth could become uninhabitable, like other planets, through a major change in the **20** Volcanic eruptions of **21** can lead to shortages of **22** in a wide area.

An asteroid hitting the Earth could create a **23** that would result in a new **24** Plans are being made to use **25** to deflect asteroids heading for the Earth.

Question 26

Choose the correct letter A, B, C or D. Write your answer in box 26 on your answer sheet.
What is the writer's purpose in Reading Passage 2?

- A to propose a new theory about the causes of natural disasters
- B to prove that generally held beliefs about the future are all mistaken
- C to present a range of opinions currently held by scientists
- D to argue the need for a general change in behavior

Question 27-30

Answer the questions below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN FOUR WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 27-30 on your answer sheet.

- 27 How was Indonesia named back in 1815?
- 28 What might happen after 200 000 000 years?
- 29 What is the relatively modest speed by the standards of heavenly bodies?
- 30 When did the last asteroid hit the earth?

ANSWER

- 01.** NOT GIVEN
- 02.** TRUE
- 03.** FALSE
- 04.** NOT GIVEN
- 05.** FALSE
- 06.** TRUE
- 07.** TRUE
- 08.** Stonemason
- 09.** Gian Giorgio Trissino
- 10.** Inigo Jones
- 11.** Temple
- 12.** Quattro Libri dell' Architettura
- 13.** benevolent calm
- 14.** YES
- 15.** NO
- 16.** YES
- 17.** NOT GIVEN
- 18.** NO
- 19.** NOT GIVEN
- 20.** temperature
- 21.** (molten) rock / ash
- 22.** food
- 23.** tidal wave
- 24.** ice age
- 25.** rockets
- 26.** D
- 27.** Tambora
- 28.** Yellowstone could erupt again
- 29.** 15,000 kilometres
- 30.** 65 million years ago