

الاسم: مسابقة في مادة اللغة الإنكليزية
الرقم: المدة: ثلاث ساعات

Part One: Reading Comprehension

(Score: 12 /20)

The selection below highlights the life and works of the American horror writer Howard Phillips Lovecraft. Read it carefully, and then answer the questions that follow.

It's a Fad!

1 Nearly 80 years after his death, Howard Phillips Lovecraft is considered one of the most influential horror writers of all time. Stephen King, an American author of horror, called Lovecraft “the twentieth century’s greatest specialist of the classic horror tale”.

2 From 1917 until his death in 1937, Lovecraft wrote hundreds of poems, short stories, and essays. And yet Lovecraft died in poverty, almost unknown, never having published a single book in his lifetime. Today, his writings are popping up in Facebook feeds. So how did the horror writer’s literary tentacles appear from beyond the grave to get such a grip on pop culture?

3 It certainly was not his writing skills. Unlike his more literary counterparts such as Edgar Allan Poe, Lovecraft is not celebrated for his cohesive plots or his three-dimensional characters. **Many** have criticized him for his long maze-like sentences filled with obscure words like “eldritch”, “rugose”, and “gibbous”. He wrote in old-fashioned prose, even for his time, because of his lifelong devotion to antiquity.

4 Lovecraft was all about the monsters. He made an entire temple of extraterrestrial creatures called the Great Old **Ones**, who govern secret spiritual groups. They have strange names like Nyarlathotep, Yog-Sothoth, and the Fungi from Yuggoth. “I could not write about ‘ordinary people’ because I am not in the least interested in them,” he said. “Man’s relations to man do not captivate my fancy. It is man’s relation to the universe — to the unknown — which alone arouses in me the spark of distinctive imagination.” He saw himself as “a floating, spiritual eye which sees all manner of marvelous phenomena without being greatly affected by them.”

5 His most famous monster is Cthulhu, a fictional creature that first appeared in the short story *The Call of Cthulhu*, described as “a monster of vaguely anthropoid shape, but with an octopus-like head with claws on hind and fore feet, and long, narrow wings behind.” The name Cthulhu, Lovecraft explained, was “a fumbling human attempt to catch the phonetics of an absolutely non-human word.”

6 Lovecraft’s other unique work is the frightful mystical masterpiece called *Necronomicon*. Featured in many of his works, this ancient book is usually locked away and fiercely protected by nervous librarians. They are right to be cautious — the book is a dangerous work of spells and rituals filled with evil power, if uttered aloud could open doors to let in all manner of scary insects.

7 The most often asked question about the *Necronomicon*: “Is it real?” Lovecraft insisted it was, of course, but the book did not exist before it was introduced in the 1922 short story *The Hound*. That, of course, has not stopped numerous “genuine” *Necronomicons* from surfacing, most notably one attributed to someone calling himself “Simon”, published in 1977.

8 Apart from two years in Brooklyn, New York, which he found very unpleasant, Lovecraft spent his entire life in Providence, Rhode Island, where he was born in 1890. Most people think of Lovecraft as a man who prefers solitude and tends to avoid other people, which is not quite accurate. He did have a broad circle of friends, mostly other writers.

9 However, he never actually met most of his friends in person — he corresponded with them in letters, a lot of letters. Estimates put it between 70,000 and 100,000, and they were much more than “Hey, how is it going? Your pal, Howard.” His letters were often 40 or more double-sided pages, ranging in topics from philosophy, science, religion, and writing to amusing anecdotes about buying a suit or eating an ice-cream

cone. In the midst of his bleakest financial woes, Lovecraft was known to go without food so that he could afford stamps for his letters.

10 He was briefly married to a woman named Sonia Greene, but his odd habits and lack of income strained their marriage, and they soon parted. Lovecraft made almost no money from his fiction and supplemented his meager earnings by editing and writing for others.

11 Lovecraft died a sad, painful death, surrendering to intestinal cancer in 1937 at the age of 47.

Questions

A. Answer each of the following questions in 1- 4 complete sentences using your own words.

1. Based on Paragraph 3, what two characteristics distinguish Lovecraft’s writings from that of others? (0.5)
 2. Based on Paragraph 4, how did Lovecraft view the relation between man and the universe? Justify. (01)
 3. Identify two similarities between Lovecraft’s two works that are mentioned in Paragraphs 5 and 6. Justify your answer. (01)
 4. Based on Paragraph 8, what do the contradictory views towards Lovecraft reveal? Explain. (01)
 5. Based on the last three paragraphs, explain how Lovecraft’s personality contributed to the end he had. (01)
- B.**
1. Does the selection follow **IBC** order (Introduction-Body-Conclusion)? Explain. (01)
 2. Identify one figure of speech in Paragraph 2 and explain it. (0.75)
 3. What mood dominates Paragraph 10? Explain. (0.75)
 4. What two types of audience, other than the general reader, might be interested in reading the selection above? What interest does each type find in it? (01)
- C.** The table below shows the results of an Australian survey on the type of writings that males and females generally like to read. Read the table carefully, and then answer the question that follows. (01)

Genre Gender	Fantasy	Science Fiction	Horror
Females	62%	43%	18%
Males	38%	57%	82%

What do the percentages indicate about females and males reading preferences? Explain your answer in 2 to 4 sentences, using evidence.

D. Each of the following extracts (A and B) is the correct ending of ONE paragraph in the selection. Read them carefully, and then choose from Paragraphs 1→11 the one that correctly fits with each extract. (0.5)

Extract A: *There is some debate about how Cthulhu should be pronounced, but since it’s an alien word, unpronounceable by humans, it doesn’t really matter.*

Extract B: *Today, the book appears in dozens of movies, comic books, short stories, novels and even cartoons.*

E. Refer to Paragraphs 2, 6 and 10 to find words that almost have the following meanings. (02)

1. *to appear suddenly or unexpectedly*
2. *a work of outstanding artistry or skill*
3. *in a strong and powerful manner*
4. *to stress or overweigh*

F. What does each of the following words, **bold-typed** in the selection above, refer to? (0.5)

1. **Many** (Paragraph 3)
2. **Ones** (Paragraph 4)

Part Two: Writing (Choose ONE of the two prompts below.) (Score: 08/20)

Prompt A: *Robert Frost said, “A poem begins with a lump in the throat.” Similarly, many believe that only out of deep suffering we do produce our greatest works. However, some others think that only out of happiness and prosperity we do find ways towards success. Write an argumentative essay of 400-500 words in which you show with which point of view you stand. Make sure your essay supports your position and refutes the opposite point of view.*

Prompt B: *Some talented people are ahead of their time, and their works or achievements influence the people of their lifetime as well as the generations that follow them. Write a case-study essay of 400-500 words in which you discuss the statement above, referring to a case of a talented person (artist, writer, scientist, football player, etc.) whose achievements have influenced his/her community. Make sure not to refer to any political or religious figure.*

[Content and organization of ideas 3.5, language and style 3.5, tidiness and handwriting 01]

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Q	Answer Key	Score
I-A-1	First, his writings are full of long sentences and unfamiliar words. Second, they are considered traditional according to his time. (0.25 for each)	0.5
I-A-2	According to Lovecraft, the universe is the source of man's inspiration. This is because his imagination was stimulated only by the unknown (the universe). It is also shown in the way he saw himself: something spiritual (unworldly) that is deeply inspired by the phenomena of the universe. (0.5 for the answer and 0.5 for the justification)	01
I-A-3	First, both are works of fiction: the characters or ideas are not real. Second, they are based on fearful creatures or ideas: in <i>The Call of Cthulhu</i> , the main character is a monster with fearful body parts such as "octopus-like head", "claws" and "long, narrow wings"; and in <i>Necronomicon</i> , there are "spells", "evil power", and "scary insects". (0.5 for the similarity and 0.5 for the difference)	01
I-A-4	Lovecraft preferred to live far from the city life, and that could be a reason why people considered him a person who likes solitude. However, the writer presents an opposite opinion: Lovecraft had many friends. These contradictory views towards Lovecraft reveal that he was a mysterious man (or not known well by others).	01
I-A-5	First, although Lovecraft spent a considerable time writing letters to his friends, he avoided personal interactions. This might be a reason why he did not succeed in publishing his writings or becoming popular. Second, he is described as a person with odd habits who could not succeed in building a family, so he did not have emotional support and died in pain and poverty. Thus, Lovecraft can be blamed for the lonely and painful end he had. (two measures are enough; 0.5 for each)	01
I-B-1	The first two paragraphs are the introduction, for both provide background information about Lovecraft. The body is Paragraphs 3 through 10, where the writer informs the readers about Lovecraft's writings and personal life: his skills, some of his works and their features, his character traits, and the attitudes people/others had towards him. The last paragraph is a conclusion, where the writer informs the readers about the tragic end of Lovecraft. (0.25 for the introduction, 0.5 for the body and 0.25 for the conclusion)	01
I-B-2	There is irony of situation in Paragraph 2. Although Lovecraft wrote hundreds of books, stories, and essays, he was neither financially satisfied nor well-known at his time. Or: Although he died poor and almost unknown, Lovecraft's works are now very popular.	0.75

	Another figure of speech is metaphor, “writer’s literary tentacles appear from beyond the grave”. The writer compares the reputation (literary products/ writings/ stories) of Lovecraft to the limbs or appendages of an animal that can move with flexibility. (0.25 for the type and 0.5 for the justification)	
I-B-3	A sense of disappointment and/or sadness/sympathy dominates the last paragraph. The social status and the short and unsuccessful marriage of Lovecraft provoke a sense of disappointment: “odd habits”, “lack of income”, “strained their marriage” and “soon departed”. (0.25 for the mood and 0.5 for the justification)	0.75
I-B-4	First, teachers or students of literature might be interested in reading the selection because it informs them about one of the most talented horror writers and his unique literary products. Second, writers/poets/essayists might also be interested because the selection highlights literary/writing skills of Lovecraft’s fiction. (0.5 for each; any other logical type of audience with justification is accepted)	01
I-C	The table depicts or shows the percentages of different types of genres read by both females and males in Australia. Females’ interest in reading fantasy books (62%) is almost double that of males (38%). As for science fiction, there is a slight / no significant difference between females’ interest (43%) to that of males (57%). However, males are much more interested (82%) in reading horror book than females (18%). Thus, females are more interested in reading fantasy books in contrast to males who are totally interested in reading horror books. (any other logical interpretation of the percentages is acceptable)	01
I-D	Extract A is the correct end of Paragraph 5. Extract B is the correct end of Paragraph 7. (0.25 for each)	0.5
I-E-1	pop up/ popping up	0.5
I-E-2	masterpiece	0.5
I-E-3	fiercely	0.5
I-E-4	strain/strained	0.5
I-F-1	“ Many ” refers to people/ critics/ other writers / counterparts	0.25
I-F-2	“ Ones ” refers to monsters/ extraterrestrial creatures	0.25
II-A	Content and organization	3.5
II-B	Language and style	3.5
II-C	Tidiness and handwriting	01