

# UNEB U.C.E ENGLISH

## COMPREHENSION (PAPER 2) 2009

### 1. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

The Mbuti pygmies are unique population living in the Ituri Forest in the north-eastern part of Congo. There are only about 40,000 of them and they are mainly hunter and gatherers, dependant almost entirely on the natural products of the forest.

In the same area, there are cultivators who on the whole, fear and despise the forest, and whose main interest is to cut down the trees and plant crops. The pygmies, understandably, regard the cultivators as a threat to their existence, for unlike the pygmies, the cultivators destroy the environment. *Turnbull* (1961) suggests that there is kind of mutually acceptable separation between the pygmies and the cultivators actually acceptable separation between them, there is little interest in each other's affairs.

The life of the pygmies is closely adapted to the special conditions of the forest, and it is therefore not surprising that they regard non-forest people with suspicion and hostility. However, it appears that they forest will be destroyed, and yet *Turnbull* suggests that the problem of accommodating Mbuti in non-forest environment cannot be overcome. The Ituri forest consists of a large area of primary forest with an enormous diversity of species of trees, plants and animals. The climate is fairly uniform all the year round and the Mbuti are known to have inhabited the forest for 5000 years. The Mbuti pygmies are rarely short of food and probably suffer less from malnutrition than the nearby cultivators.

Only one main road cuts through the forest and it is along this road that the cultivators have settled. The forest itself is inhabited only by the pygmies who live in rather small groups. They regard themselves as the children of the forest, and according to the *Turnbull* they refer to it as 'mother' or 'father', reasoning the forest like their own mother and father, provides food, shelter, warmth and affection. They hunt the forest animals, but have not exploited the fish that abound in the streams. They collect a wide variety of invertebrates, including the large snails, the larvae of moths and termites. The women, especially, are the gatherers and they collect mushrooms, roots, berries and nuts, moving from species to species, as the season changes.

All of these activities require expert knowledge of what is edible and what is poisonous. The rewards from hunting and gathering may vary with the season and also from year to year, but the enormous difference of plant and animal life ensure an adequate food supply all year round.

The social organization of Mbuti pygmies is highly adapted to the most efficient ways of hunting and gathering: groups are not too large and not too small. Different groups of hunters know each other well and the interaction between them are friendly. The society is highly democratic and there are no chiefs, elders, priests or other specialists who might exert an authoritarian influence; the opinion of members is sought and individuals with specialized knowledge receive considerable attention in the proper circumstances. *Turnbull* points out that their greatest loyalty is the forest, the provider of all that is good. If anyone upsets the smooth running of a group, it is normal to remind him that it is the forest he is really upsetting.

The pygmies are, therefore, well adjusted to their environment and have been in this position without outside interference for many generations. But the forest is now threatened by exploitation from outsiders whom the pygmies despise and distrust. *Turnbull* thinks that the Mbuti are not well adapted to life outside the forest and that when removed from their environment, they tend to die of sunstroke and disorders of the stomach. Their future is not bright as they will soon have to cope with people who want to alter the environment to suit themselves rather than adjust to the special conditions of the forest.

[From: *Ituri*: Home of the pygmies by Ezeulu]

### Questions:

- In not more than 60 words, summaries why *Turnbull* thinks the Mbuti pygmies value the forest.
- In not more than 60 words, summaries what *Turnbull* thinks are the possible and immediate threats to the existence of Mbuti pygmies.

## 2A. Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Since my family was not willing to help me find a cooking job, I decided I would look for it all by myself and not tell them about it until I had got one.

I had seen an agency advertised in a local newspaper, so as soon there was no one about to ask "where are you going?" I rushed out of the house in search of it. I was wildly excited and at the same time, nervous as if I was going on stage. Finding the place quite easily, I tore up the three flight of stairs and swung breathlessly through a door which said " Enter without knocking, if you please!"

The simple atmosphere of the place calmed me and I sat humbly down on the edge of the chair. The woman at the desk opposite looked carefully at me for a while through her glasses, and I became absorbed in the question of whether or not her hair was her own. I had just decided that it was too undesirably untidy to be anything else, when I realized that she was questioning me in a low voice. I answered softly because it seemed to be thing to do and because all of a sudden I started to feel rather helpless. She made it known to me in a delicate way that she wondered why was looking for this sort of job, so I felt I had to give her the idea of a widowed mother at home and a despairing struggle against poverty . I almost made myself believe in the pity of it but to avoid further questioning, quickly changed the subject. I felt even more helpless when she told me it would be difficult to get a job without experience or references. **She stirred about among her papers** for a bit and I wondered whether I ought to leave when the telephone on her desk rang. While she was busy having a mysterious conversation she kept looking at me. Then, I heard her say: "As a matter of fact, I've got someone in the office at this very moment that might be suitable"

She wrote a number, and my spirits rose at once as I took the little piece of paper she held out to me saying: "Ring up this lady. She wants a cook immediately. In fact, you could have to start tomorrow by coking a dinner for ten people. Could you manage that, I wonder"

"Oh yes," said I, never having coked for more than four people in my life. I thanked her again and again and rushed out to the nearest telephone box.

I collected my thoughts, powered my nose, took a deep breath and rang the number. A calm voice at the other end informed me that I was speaking to Miss. Cathemole. I said confidently, with all my powers of persuasion that I was just what she was looking for.

"Are you sure?" she kept saying. "Are you sure? It's a party for my brother just down from his final exams, you know"

Anyway, she decided to employ me for the dinner-party and in a permanent position if I **carried out the promise of my self-praise**. I asked her what tomorrow's menu was to be.

"Just a small simple dinner: lobster, cocktails, soup, turbot mornay, pheasants with vegetables, fruit-salad and a savory."

In a rather shaken voice I promised to turn up in good time and **rang off**. I spent most of the night reading cookery books.

Source; (**Valerie**: by Caroline Ash)

*Answer questions 2.1 to 2.5 on the question paper.*

- 2.1 Why was the writer excited and at the same time nervous?
- 2.2 What conclusion did the writer make about the hair of the woman at the desk?
- 2.3 Why did the writer bring out the idea of a widowed mother?
- 2.4 What evidence is there in the passage to show that the writer was not confident of her ability to do the new job?
- 2.5 Explain the meaning of the following expressions, as they are used in the passage.
  - i. "It seemed to be the thing to do"
  - ii. "She stirred about among her papers...."
  - iii. ".... Carried out the promise of my self-praise."

iv. "... rang off."

**2.B Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:**

They worked with determination. They labored the whole day, except for a short break to stretch their backs and have a drink of water or some light beer in the polished brown calabashes. Chilufya was overjoyed to see their enthusiasm for work "Tremendous! Tremendous!" he said.

To enable them to do their work more quickly, they later thought of a new scheme to enlist the support of their neighbors. They brewed large quantities of neighboring villages. First they had to help on the land. From the morning till afternoon they worked the land, and in the evening they did justice to the beer. So that while they hoed and sang, they knew the reward was bubbling in the pots.

This communal work with other villagers was organized two or three times. Soon the land was ready for the seed.

Chilufya decided to write to his old friends on Van Zyl's farm. He wasn't sure that they were still working for Van Zyl. Nevertheless he wrote to them telling them what he was doing. He wrote a glowing account of enthusiasm of his people for the new methods of farming. He said that there was prosperity in the rural areas waiting for the enterprising people. He told them that all indications were that he was going to have a very successful crop. He told them how his chief of the young crop sparkling with the morning dew: tender crop that he calls his own. It gave him a sense of achievement. It was purposeful; it was meaningful. He began to understand fully what Van Zyl meant when he used to say "my Farm". Chilufya now had his farm too. There he stood on the edge of his farm, admiring the tender crop.

**Answer questions 2.6 to 2.10 by selecting the best of the four possible answers. Put a ring around your best choice.**

2.6 We can conclude that the relationship between Chilufya and the villagers was

- A. aggressive.
- B. Cordial
- C. Strained
- D. pretentious

2.7 Chilufya left Van Zyl's farm because he

- A. wanted to go home
- B. had started his own farm
- C. he was dismissed
- D. his people had called him home

2.8 "Soon the land was ready for the seed." This means that the land was ready for

- A. Young
- B. Enterprising
- C. Bought
- D. A chief.

2.9 "...and in the evening, they did justice to the beer." This means that the people  
beer in the evening.

- A. Young.
- B. Enterprising

C. A foreigner

D. A chief

**3. A Rewrite each item according to the instructions. Do not change the meaning of the original sentence.**

1) There was a lot of luggage. As a result we could not pack it all into the back of the car. (Join into one sentence using: ...so .... that...)

2) As soon the guest of honor arrived, everybody stood up to welcome her. (write using: No sooner ...)

3) Because Muto was not well prepared for the examinations, he failed miserably. (Rewrite beginning: If ...)

4) He attended the wedding but did not see the bride. (Rewrite using: although)

5) Although she is wise, she failed to solve even one problem. (Rewrite using: Despite)

6) There had never before been so many people assembled at the shrine of a saint. (Rewrite: beginning: Never...)

7) The accident was first reported to be very serious. It turned out to be less serious. Everybody was relieved.

(Join into one sentence without using: and, but or so)

8) He was so stupid that he opened the door when the thieves knocked. (Begin: so...)

9) I did not attend the party. None of my friends attended the party. (Join into one sentence using: neither)

10) The guard admitted that he had broken into the Manager's office. (Rewrite using: .... confessed...)

**3. B Complete sentences with the most suitable answer among the given alternatives. Put a ring around your best choice.**

1. It was raining now, so we would get wet if we ..... out.

A. go

B. went

C. had

D. have gone

2. She came here..... the aim ..... seeing him.

A. with, of

B. on, of

C. about, of

D. for, of

3. The rules of the game are ..... complicated than you can imagine.

A. very far

- B. far more
- C. the more
- D. much far

4. Good players are required; ..... secondary school students

- A. actually
- B. preferably
- C. reasonably
- D. really

5. I have known her, we have been great friends.

- A. until
- B. when
- C. now
- D. since

6. Stop that noise, ..... ?

- A. are you
- B. will you
- C. aren't you
- D. won't you

7. Ojambo's second wife was even ..... extravagant than his first.

- A. very
- B. least
- C. more
- D. most

8. If I ..... strong enough, I would fight a lion.

- A. had been
- B. have been
- C. am
- D. were

9. He spent ..... unhappy childhood in the care of his stepmother.

- A. rather
- B. a rather
- C. rather a
- D. such

10. Mabel was not invited to the party but she got wind of it. This expression means she;

A. got something from it.

B. got to know about.

C. smelled the food cooking and came in

D. was afraid she would not be invited