

ANH_10
(Đề thi gồm 15 trang)

KỲ THI CHỌN HỌC SINH GIỎI
LẦN THỨ XVII, NĂM 2026
ĐỀ THI MÔN: TIẾNG ANH - LỚP 10
Thời gian làm bài: 180 phút
(không kể thời gian giao đề)

SECTION A: LISTENING (50 POINTS)

Part 1: For questions 1 to 5, complete the form below. Write NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for each answer. (10 points)

Pinder's Animal Park	
Enquiries about:	temporary work
Personal Details:	
Name:	Jane (1) _____
Address:	42 West Lane, Exeter
Telephone number:	(2) _____
Availability:	can start work on (3) _____
Work details:	
Current place of study:	a (4) _____
Relevant skills:	familiar with kitchen equipment
Relevant qualifications:	a food handling certificate
Training required:	a (5) _____ course

Part 2: You are going to listen to a live interview about Dr. Choi's progress on lupus research. For questions 1 5, listen and decide whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F). (10 points)

1. Despite extensive knowledge about the pathological origin of lupus, available therapies are still deemed ineffective.
2. Dr Choi's study revealed how internal chemical disruptions trigger the immune system to defend vital organs.
3. Rather than managing the symptoms, Dr. Choi's research hints at the potentials of neutralizing the root cause of Lupus.
4. Dr Choi believes this research on animal subjects can reveal the chemical mechanism of lupus and lead to new treatments.
5. Dr Choi dismissed the prospect of ever accomplishing a one-time fix for Lupus.

Part 3. You'll hear a radio interview with Salim Abdool Karim, Director of CAPRISA, discussing a breakthrough in HIV/AIDS medications. For questions 1 to 5, choose the answer (A, B, C, or D) which fits best according to what you hear. (10 points)

1. What is Salim Abdool Karim's view on the trial results of lenacapavir?
 - A. He is cautiously optimistic about its potential but remains reserved.
 - B. He believes they are unparalleled in his decades of medical career
 - C. He suspects the findings may be too good to be true.
 - D. He is surprised that an old drug class could be this effective.
2. Why does Karim believe lenacapavir could make a major impact in Africa?
 - A. The drug is especially popular among people already living with HIV.
 - B. It avoids the need for regular testing or monitoring.
 - C. It targets the demographic most affected by the epidemic.
 - D. It works better in countries with weak healthcare systems.
3. What challenge does Karim associate with the daily use of oral HIV prevention drugs?
 - A. Patients often stop taking it due to unpleasant side effects.
 - B. It is difficult for healthy individuals to remain consistent.
 - C. Most people are unaware of the importance of adherence.
 - D. Clinics rarely have enough supply to meet the demand.
4. What is said to be a key benefit of the twice-yearly injection format?
 - A. It provides better immune system support.
 - B. It reduces the cost of treatment significantly.
 - C. It simplifies the patient's responsibility.
 - D. It lowers the dosage needed to prevent infection.
5. According to Karim, what is a major reason for dwindling public attention to AIDS?
 - A. Most governments believe the disease is now under control.
 - B. Successes in the West have led to global complacency.
 - C. Funding has shifted entirely to new emerging diseases.
 - D. Other crises have drawn focus away from ongoing pandemics.

Part 4. For question 1 to 10, listen to the recording and complete the summary by writing NO MORE THAN FOUR WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER for each answer. (20 points)

A.I.'s Environmental Impact Will Threaten Its Own Supply Chain

- As artificial intelligence becomes embedded in daily life, its seamless interfaces disguise a far more resource-intensive reality. Each interaction with a large-scale model draws on data centres with a (1) _____, consuming extraordinary levels of electricity, water, and minerals. The trend also entails massive infrastructure construction, whose impact literally (2) _____.

- Spruce Pine, a small Appalachian town, happens to sit atop the planet's richest reserves of (3) _____. Nearly the entire global supply originates from this single (4) _____, feeding semiconductor foundries across East Asia. This exceptional material — valued for its (5) _____ and high purity — is indispensable for manufacturing the chips that power the current AI rush.
- Yet the environmental burdens do not end with extraction. In South Memphis, Elon Musk's AI supercomputer is siphoning energy far beyond the capacity of the (6) _____, prompting operators to deploy supplementary fossil-fuel generators. This left the predominantly African-American neighborhood feeling (7) _____ by Musk's project.
- The strain is not unique to one state. Across the country, communities report water supplies stretched thin as cooling demands surge. Meanwhile, federal policy has accelerated expansion: soon after withdrawing the U.S. from the (8) _____, President Trump approved vast new AI infrastructure projects.
- When hurricane Helene struck Spruce Pine, floods mixed with wastewater, oil and (9) _____, result in the devastation of local properties and ecology. The link between industries, warming planet and extreme weathers has been proven, and people are questioning whether AI development genuinely serves the public good—or merely a narrow (10) _____.

SECTION B: LEXICO-GRAMMAR (40 POINTS)

Part 1. For questions 1-20, choose the best option A, B, C, or D to complete the following sentences. (20 points)

1. More than that, it is vital and correctly reflects society's _____ of the evils that it seeks to address.
 A. aversion B. contorsion C. abhorrence D. concession
2. The heir to the fortune made headlines when he chose to _____ his inheritance, stating his desire to make his own way in the world.
 A. repeal B. desert C. renounce D. resign
3. I've heard that argument before and quite frankly it just doesn't _____!
 A. carry weight B. hit the hay C. face the music D. hold water
4. Her _____ display of tears at work did not impress her new boss, who felt she should try to control her emotions.
 A. pernicious B. ailing C. maudlin D. precarious
5. It's always good to know that, _____, your job is safe.
 A. in the least B. legend has it that
 C. by the same token D. come what may

6. Providing homeless people with somewhere to stay when the weather is cold only skates _____ the problem. It doesn't solve it.
A. off **B. down** **C. along** **D. over**
7. What I fear most of all is that we _____ in what refers to the building of a new market in West Crane. The local people seem to be very wary about it.
A. might misinterpret **B. might be misinterpreted**
C. might have misinterpreted **D. will be misinterpreted**
8. _____ have made communication faster and easier through the use of email and Internet is widely recognized.
A. That it is computers **B. That computers**
C. Computers that **D. It is that computers**
9. - "Fred doesn't look very happy."
 - "No, _____ that he owes a lot of money."
A. He's supposed **B. It's been hinted**
C. He's suspected **D. It's been confessed**
10. Never before had the travelers witnessed such a breathtaking celestial display, _____.
A. nor did they expect the sky to ignite tonight
B. scarcely expecting the sky would ignite tonight
C. yet for the sky to ignite tonight had they ever expected
D. neither had they the expectation of the sky igniting tonight
11. We have constant worldwide conferences, international squabbles and local wars, _____ have numbed our senses.
A. and these things **B. and all of which**
C. and most of such **D. and much of them**
12. To find out what her husband bought for her birthday, Susan attempted to _____ his family members about his recent shopping excursions.
A. prescribe **B. probe** **C. alienate** **D. converge**
13. The Labour Party is divided into two broad _____ on the issue of the euro: those who want to enter the monetary union and those who do not.
A. barracks **B. camps** **C. teams** **D. regiments**
14. It's all very _____ saying put more money into research and development, but where's the money going to come from?
A. right **B. correct** **C. good** **D. well**
15. The organizers expressed their _____ at the poor attendance figures.
A. dissention **B. disturbance** **C. discourse** **D. dismay**
16. The government have _____ the agreement to subsidize organic farmers.
A. scrubbed **B. scrapped** **C. scrounged** **D. scarred**

17. After a(n) _____ of dry weather, the farmers were relieved to see the rain clouds gathering, hopeful for the much-needed precipitation to nourish their crops.

- A. pane B. spell C. burst D. patch

18. As the festival season kicked off, _____ of tourists descended upon the city, filling the streets with a vibrant energy and a mix of languages from around the world.

- A. rounds B. bundles C. droves D. chains

19. On the dance floor, moving to the rhythm of the music, he was truly _____, captivating everyone with his energy and grace.

- A. facing the music B. in his element
C. having second thoughts D. reading between the lines

20. After years of financial mismanagement, the company became _____, unable to meet its debts and forced to declare bankruptcy.

- A. notorious B. irresolute C. insolvent D. irreverent

Part 2. For questions 1-10, fill each gap with the correct form of the word in brackets. (10 points)

1. The investor can (**MATERIAL**) _____ only those certificates that are already registered in his name.

2. Having an accident without insurance can be (**RUIN**) _____ expensive.

3. With a (**CONVERT**) _____ currency, a rudimentary banking system and no stock market, the country was struggling.

4. Many economists say any (**PUNISH**) _____ measures against foreign companies would hurt U.S. interests.

5. The policy is both impractical and (**IMPLEMENT**) _____.

6. Even her dementia-stricken mother pops up with moments of (**LUCID**) _____ at exactly the right time.

7. Age alone is not a (**INDICATE**) _____ to surgery.

8. Prolonged (**BREED**) _____ in any species can eventually lead to serious birth defects.

9. His phone rang (**OPPORTUNITY**) _____ during the movie, drawing glares from fellow moviegoers.

10. The child's appetite seemed (**SATISFY**) _____, constantly asking for more snacks even after finishing a large meal.

Part 3. The following passage contains 5 mistakes. Find the mistakes and correct them. (10 points)

Psychology and Big Business

Powerful multinational companies are turning to globalization in an ever-increasing drive to maximize profits. As a company is the sum of its parts, the chief executives have to go to the realization that a healthy, well-motivated workforce will increase the firm's productivity. In its pursuit of profit, management have acknowledged this, and new psychological theories are helping achieve this goal. The new buzz word is team-building, and there was massive expenditure of late by companies hoping to foster team spirit so that they run like a well-oiled machine.

Psychological counselling is costly and is, unfortunately, generally unavailable within state-funded health care systems. Normally, it is only for the rich or those who the state deems criminally insane. As an industry, the field of psychology needs cash input and so relies on the continuing custom of big business. Psychometric tests are used in the recruitment process and unsuccessful applicants can blame such tests for their rejection in many cases. Consequently, ordinary mortals who suffer from stress-related ailments cannot afford the fees charged by psychoanalysts.

SECTION C: READING (60 POINTS)

Part 1. For questions 1-10, read the following passage and decide which option (A, B, C, or D) best fits each gap. (10 points)

Buzzwords come and go, but there's one at the moment that's taking the world by storm and looks (1) _____. This word, which rolls off the tongue as well as (2) _____, not only describes a process but a whole approach and mentality, while simultaneously (3) _____ images in the mind of fun and excitement. That word is 'gamification' and it's set to reform culture, business and education!

So what is it and how does it work? (4) _____, it is the application of game-design principles in non-game contexts. In other words, gamification is engagement: a transformation, where any task can become interesting and motivational. By harnessing the entertaining qualities of games, gamification technology enables business, educators or coaches to interact with their audiences in (5) _____ ways. Indeed, in the modern world, people demand things that provoke a reaction and offer instant gratification and fulfilment, and the millennial generation especially is more (6) _____ games than any other. Some experts have (7) _____ gamification as the next level of human-technological interaction, and with impressive real-world implications in numerous areas of life, it's easy to understand why.

The real beauty of gamification and its mechanics lies in its simplicity. By offering rewards for performance such as points, badges and coins, users can progress through levels and track themselves on (8) _____. This competitive element encourages and (9) _____ people to persist with things they are struggling with and immerse themselves in the chosen activity, (10) _____ a new language or improving productivity in the workplace.

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. A. put up to be | B. set to stay | C. bet to stand | D. cast to last |
| 2. A. it reads on the page | | B. reading it on the page | |
| | C. it is read on the page | D. being read on the page | |
| 3. A. bringing forth | B. conjuring up | C. trifling with | D. polishing off |
| 4. A. Needless to say | | B. Frankly speaking | |
| | C. Put simply | D. In actual fact | |
| 5. A. highly relevant new | | B. newly high relevant | |
| | C. relevant highly new | D. relevantly high new | |
| 6. A. continted on | B. adept at | C. resonant with | D. attuned to |
| 7. A. crowned | B. hailed | C. flagged | D. exalted |
| 8. A. switchboards | B. dashboards | C. leaderboards | D. scoreboards |
| 9. A. galvanises | B. mobilises | C. capitalises | D. centralises |
| 10. A. learning as it though | | B. much be it learning | |
| | C. should learning be it | D. whether it be learning | |

Part 2. For questions 1-10, fill each of the blanks with ONE suitable word. (10 points)

The old university library was famous for its grand architecture and leafy courtyard, (1) _____ climbing vines stretched across ancient stone walls. Students often gathered beneath the trees to study, (2) _____ that the green surroundings helped organize their thoughts. Inside, the library was surprisingly uncluttered. Long wooden tables were (3) _____ neatly, and the tall shelves rose in silent symmetry. It was a place where noise seemed unwilling to enter, as if the building (4) _____ insisted on quiet reflection.

However, the library (5) _____ a certain mystery. There were occurennces that students whispered about—books that seemed to shift places overnight, or lights that flickered even when the bulbs were new. Some claimed that the library was unresponsive (6) _____ modern technology; laptops would freeze, and phones would lose signal the moment someone stepped inside. It was as (7) _____ the building, with all its age and memory, preferred to remain untouched by the fast pace of the outside world.

(8) _____ these peculiar stories, many students returned day after day. They felt that, in the (9) _____ of the library, their minds worked differently, as if they were able to think more deeply. Some even described moments of sudden clarity, when confusing ideas became simple. They called these moments enlightenment, earned not through force, (10) _____ through patient study under the calm of the courtyard.

Part 3. For questions 1-10, read the following passage and circle the best answer to each of the following questions. (15 points)

Neurons and Human Memory

Writing a paper, recognizing a smell, remembering a phone number, and singing a song are all examples of different functions that require some measure of human memory. The processes of the brain have puzzled and **intrigued** scientists for years. Many have sought to understand how the memory works. After years of study, research shows that memory is recorded and processed by neurons found in the brain.

Neurons, or nerve cells, are the basic units of the nervous system. These cells comprise the core components of the brain and act as the processing and transmission centers for the body. **They** are the way the rest of the body communicates with the brain and are highly specialized in nature. Some neurons in the brain are capable of signaling and connecting with thousands of other cells, others receive many signals, but only send out one or two. A synapse is essentially a gap between neurons that serves as the link between them. These neurons transmit information across the synapse in the form of an electrical impulse. It is within the action of these neurons that memories are created.

Memory is the ability to store, retain, and retrieve information. For the brain to record memories, it requires a simultaneous and coordinated activation of neuron receptors at the synapses. For example, a child knows not to touch hot objects from a previous experience of being burned. When he first touched a hot stovetop, the pain signal from the skin on his hand along with the view from his retina reached the brain at the same time, forming a memory. He refers to that memory each time he sees a hot object, remembering the consequences of touching something hot. Thus, the signals sent to the neurons in the brain formed a specific and useful memory.

One researcher has studied the basic functions of memory, finding that individual memories are “burned onto” receptors that are constantly in motion around nerve synapses. **[A]** The synapses allow signals to travel through the brain, and often the receptors containing memories are lost or escape from the synapses. **[B]** When this occurs, a specific set of molecules catches the loose receptors and takes them to a recycling plant of sorts, where they are reprocessed and then returned intact to the synapse. **[C]** When the receptors are not recycled, there is a gradual loss of synaptic function and, subsequently, a reduced cognitive ability. These findings may prove useful in understanding memory loss as well as neurological disorders such as Alzheimer’s and learning disorders like autism. **[D]**

A different group of scientists has performed a study on the specific connection between memory and neurons. The study showed that when a person learns something and then recalls what was learned, the same neurons used in the original experience are triggered. It actually reintroduces the same emotions felt when the memory was formed. Additionally, memories are most likely stored in neuron subgroups. Those neurons are activated in response to various sensory experiences that prompt a memory. This discovery shows precisely which circuits are active during formation of a specific

memory. Whereas researchers previously knew that neurons existed, they now understand more comprehensively how they work.

This study was done on a set of mice that contained a specific gene that had been altered for study. In essence, the scientists genetically tagged, or marked, individual neurons within each mouse's brain and noted when the neurons were activated within a given time frame. They reasoned that fear was a natural and necessary emotion in survival and thus was a valid emotion that mice experience. The technology allowed scientists to record and measure neuron activity along with certain memories. The mice showed that the same neurons activated during fear conditioning are reactivated during memory retrieval.

Now that researchers have found a link between neurons and memory formation, the technique can be applied in other settings. The procedure could help physicians discover how medications work in the brain. Until now, physicians have had trouble evaluating the effects of antidepressants on patients because each patient can react differently to a medication. Antidepressants that work for one individual may not work for another. Often, physicians can measure the effects of antidepressants on a patient only after months of observation. **This new genetic tagging technology would allow physicians to evaluate treatment by comparing how a patient's brain works at two different times during treatment, noting how and where the drug affects specific neurons.** This would allow physicians to evaluate treatment options more quickly and accurately.

1. The word **intrigued** in the passage is closest in meaning to
A. busied B. fascinated C. informed D. taught
2. The word **They** in paragraph 2 refers to
A. Components of the brain B. Basic units
C. Neurons D. Processing and transmission centers
3. According to paragraph 2, what makes nerve cells within the brain unique?
A. They form the body's nervous system.
B. They receive signals from the rest of the body.
C. They are dependent on synapses to give them information.
D. Their only function is to store memories.
4. Why does the author mention the child who touched a hot object?
A. To argue that the action was done purposely to form a useful memory
B. To illustrate a memory that can prevent repeated action
C. To compare touching hot objects with the formation of negative memories
D. To note a symbolic way that the brain records memories
5. According to paragraph 3, all of the following are true of memory formation **EXCEPT**
A. It results in the storage and retention of events.
B. Consequences of an action are not recorded as memory.

- C. Simultaneous and coordinated activity is required.
- D. The process involves information moving across synapses.
6. Look at the four squares [] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

This is an ongoing process occurring over minutes or hours, so the brain continually receives recycled receptors.

Where would the sentence best fit?

- A. [A] B. [B] C. [C] D. [D]

7. Which of the following can be inferred about neurological illnesses?

- A. The recycling of receptors leads to Alzheimer's and other diseases.
- B. The cause of these illnesses is not treatable because it involves neurons.
- C. "Burning" neurons results in a mass of memories that move as one group.
- D. Loss of receptors is a likely cause of these brain disorders.

8. According to paragraph 5, how does emotion from an experience factor into memory?

- A. Feelings are reintroduced when recalling the specific memory.
- B. The brain records the emotion that becomes the memory.
- C. Memory-related feelings are only recalled in certain circuits.
- D. Neurons activate the appropriate emotion depending on the type of memory.

9. The author discusses fear conditioning in paragraph 6 in order to

- A. illustrate one of the multiple techniques used to test the mice.
- B. demonstrate a logical emotion to which mice respond.
- C. explain the only feeling recorded by active neurons.
- D. question the researchers' techniques and findings.

10. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence?

- A. Physicians can see how medication affects the brain and which drug is most effective by using this technology.
- B. The new technology allows doctors to diagnose certain illnesses and then treat them with a variety of drugs.
- C. By monitoring the patient's brain, doctors can experiment with different drugs and note their effect on each patient.
- D. Patients subject to tagging technology show notable brain activity and are more resistant to medication.

Part 4. For questions 1-10, read the passage and do the following tasks. (15 points)

A Study of Western Celebrity

A. It seems that our current society cannot get enough information about the daily lives of celebrities. But how did celebrities become such an important force in our culture? While

people have always shared a certain obsession for the fantastic and the famous, the notion of celebrity, as well as the types of people termed ‘celebrities,’ has evolved greatly throughout the ages. The word ‘celebrity’ has its roots in the language of the ancient Roman civilization. The word we now know to mean ‘a condition of being famous’ or ‘a famous person’ is derived from the Latin word ‘celeber,’ meaning frequented or populous.

B. The celebrities of the ancient world were the powerful and awesome deities of Greece and Rome, and the citizens of these civilizations believed in a vast number of immortals who had a direct impact on their lives. It was, therefore, important to know about these figures’ personal lives. This need to know led to the creation of myths, which personalized the gods and involved them in ancient celebrity scandals that thrilled and excited the common people.

C. During ancient times, amateur and professional athletes also began to make an impact on the celebrity culture. Victors in the ancient Olympic Games were treated as heroes and were often elevated to god-like status. In the ancient Roman civilization, gladiators—the equivalent of today’s professional athletes—were also revered by the common people for their heroics and seemingly superhuman strength.

D. As Europe moved into the Dark Ages (the years spanning approximately 400-1300 AD) and a time when athletics and the arts were largely forgotten, monarchs and rulers continued to maintain celebrity status, while religious figures took on newfound fame. The miraculous lives and fascinating deaths of spiritual figures lent excitement to the lives of common people when there was often little else to be excited about, as they faced war, disease, and food shortages.

E. During the period 1300-1600 AD, or the Renaissance period as it is known, interest in ruling figures faded. As Europe emerged from its long neglect of the arts, there was greater appreciation for portraits, statues, and stone carvings. This period of appreciation for the arts lent a sense of celebrity to artists who were noted for their works and their personal achievements. It was a time when artists began to surpass political and religious individuals for supreme celebrity—a trend that would continue into later centuries.

F. While the figures of the ancient and early modern civilizations were able to achieve moderate and sometimes lasting celebrity within particular cultures, the global reach of their fame was limited. It was not until the 1700s, when technological advances made publishing commercially viable, that the extent of a person’s fame could spread further. The increase in the availability of the written word was accompanied by a huge rise in the number of common people who could read, allowing a mass audience to find out about celebrities for the first time. Suddenly, the lives of authors, politicians, war heroes, and other celebrities could now be read about in newspapers around the world. These gave

ordinary people the opportunity to become intimately knowledgeable about the figures they most admired.

G. In the modern era, particularly as radio and film took off in the 1900s, things really began to change. First, radio began to make its way into the average home in the 1920s and 1930s. Professional athletes also began to be regarded as stars, as their games and exploits could be broadcast over the air for an entirely new audience. Then, the rise of television in the 1950s only cemented the premier level of celebrity that film stars, athletes, and television actors were beginning to share. This also meant a huge increase in the individual salaries of these celebrities. Even a few animals gained fame through children's TV shows. The emergence of reality television shows in the late 1990s allowed all kinds of people with little ability to enjoy a short burst of fame on the television screen. All you needed, it seemed, was an attractive appearance. Today, reality television programmes make it possible to be famous not for doing anything in particular, but simply for being, with the audience deciding whether someone deserves to become a celebrity or not. As the meaning of celebrity continues to evolve and redefine itself in a quickly changing world, there is no telling who will become of interest next.

Questions 1 – 7: Reading Passage has seven paragraphs, A-G. Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.

List of Headings

- i. Why it is necessary to explain the meaning of the word celebrity
- ii. The influence of non-human celebrities on societies
- iii. The impact of broadcasting on concepts of celebrity
- iv. Creativity having greater value
- v. Admiration for physical achievement
- vi. The advantages of celebrity status in the ancient world
- vii. A result of hardship
- viii. Literacy and widespread celebrity
- ix. Attitudes of celebrities towards the media
- x. The original definition of celebrity

Paragraphs

- 1. Paragraph A
- 2. Paragraph B
- 3. Paragraph C
- 4. Paragraph D
- 5. Paragraph E
- 6. Paragraph F
- 7. Paragraph G

Questions 8 – 10: Look at the following statements and the list of historical periods in Europe below. Match each statement with the correct historical period, A, B, C, or D.

List of Historical Periods in Europe

- A. Ancient times
- B. Dark Ages
- C. Renaissance
- D. Modern era

- 8. A wide variety of people achieve a brief period of fame.
- 9. Stories are invented about celebrities' lives.
- 10. The fame of rulers is starting to diminish.

Part 5. Read an article about the attraction of buying and renovating old houses and answer questions 1 – 10. (10 points)

A. Years ago, glancing through the property pages of the newspaper one evening, I stumbled upon a tiny photograph of a small ivy-clad stone house with a triangle of blue sea in the background. 'For sale by auction' it said, 'guide price: £80,000.' Even if I'd been looking for a country house, and I wasn't, I'd hardly have opted for one in such a remote area, yet somehow that little image became lodged in my mind. Next day, on a whim, I rang the selling agent. The house, I gleaned, gloried in the name Desolate, was truly in the middle of nowhere and hadn't been touched in half a century. Intrigued, I immediately felt an urge to go and see it for myself. So, it was that the following weekend, after an inordinately long drive down from London with the whole family in tow, I found myself edging up the seemingly interminable farm track that led up to Desolate from the main road. It turned out to be two little houses joined by a stone archway. On one side was a clapped out electricity generator; on the other, a couple of dingy rooms downstairs and a couple more upstairs, all with rotten windows and peeling, brown wallpaper. But from the sitting-room window was a view of a garden gate opening onto a field with the sea cliffs beyond. On seeing that, I was smitten.

B. For more than 50 years, or so the story went, it had been home to a woman aviator called Miss Darker whose wartime exploits had allegedly inspired Michael Ondaatje's novel, *The English Patient*. In the film, she's played by Kristin Scott Thomas and meets a nasty end in the North African desert. The real-life Miss Darker returned home and spent the rest of her life as a recluse at Desolate. All of this just added to my conviction: I just had to have her house. I didn't care that my children thought it the grottiest thing ever, pointing out that despite the view there was no access to the sea, and it was miles to the nearest shop. My ears were closed to such details. I was in love and would elope if need be. I spent the next two weeks gazing rapt at the photos I'd taken and counting money.

C. On the day of the auction, I drove down with an old friend. I took her to see Desolate first, showing it to her with anxious pride as I would show her a man I was marrying. Yes, she said. She understood. The sale was being held in a quiet local town, but as we arrived I sensed my plan was going awry. The car park was jammed with large 4x4s and the room itself was full of braying Londoners: mostly women with expensively abundant hair, all looking strained and excited. I took my place in the front row so I wouldn't have to see the others crammed in behind me. The bidding started at £50,000 and went up slowly. When it paused at £120,000, I was about to raise a shaking hand, but it raced on up, far out of reach until Desolate eventually sold for the best part of half a million. I couldn't look at the man who'd bought it. I got into the car and wept. It was shameful for an unsentimental, middle-aged woman to be brought so low by a heap of stone and a view. But I was desolate over Desolate.

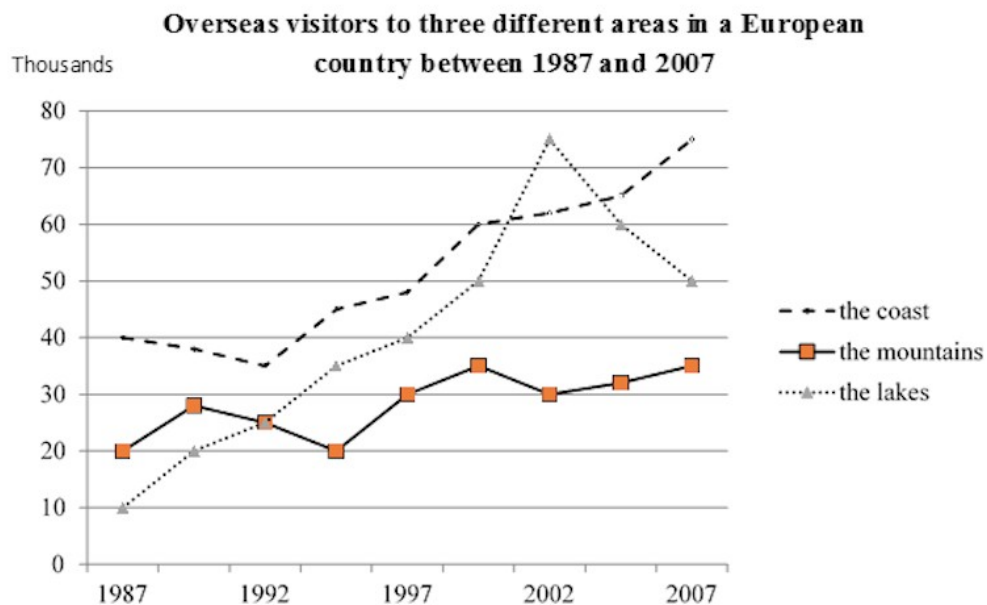
D. The memory of that thwarted love affair came back to me recently when a friend called to tell me about a house she'd seen that was far too expensive for her and suited her in no way. I could hear in her voice that it was pointless trying to talk sense into her. I started to wonder what it is about these houses that can hold such allure for people that they sell for many times their value. Internet message boards are testimony to the fact that it's by no means an uncommon scenario. Perhaps the real reason has little to do with bricks or mortar. You look at a view and you think: 'This will make my life different.' And of course, the houses we fall for most are those that need us most – those where we can most easily make our mark and become part of their history. In the end, we did buy a house; an ugly, cheap and practical one. But the sea is easily reached and through repeated use I've grown fond of it. Yet in writing this article I've looked again at the photographs took of Desolate all those years ago and my heart still aches, just a bit.

In which section does the writer

1. accept that the location of the house called Desolate left a lot to be desired?
2. admit to harboring some regrets about a missed opportunity?
3. attempt to rationalize her feelings about the house she wanted to buy?
4. draw an analogy to underline how seriously she took an idea?
5. pinpoint the moment when she decided to go for something?
6. mention feelings of curiosity arising out of a conversation?
7. recount the story of another person who experienced similar feelings to her own?
8. recall getting the first inkling that a dream wouldn't be realized?
9. remember ignoring sensible misgivings about a plan?
10. suggest that her behavior on one occasion was out of character?

D. WRITING (50 POINTS)

Part 1. The graph below shows the number of overseas visitors to three different areas in a European country between 1987 and 2007. Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant. (20 points)



Part 2. Write an essay of at least 250 words on the following topic. (30 points)
Some people believe that economic development is the key to solving global poverty. Others think that a focus on education and social welfare is more important. Discuss both views and give your opinion.