

# Content

<b>1. Reading Comprehension</b>	<b>(approx. 1 ½ hours)</b>	<b>40 points</b>	
<b>2. Grammar</b>	<b>(approx. ½ hour)</b>	<b>30 points</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>70 points</b>	<b>= mark 1</b>
<b>3. Essay</b>	<b>(approx. 2 hours)</b>		<b>= mark 2</b>

**Final mark: average of mark 1 and mark 2**

**All the best!**

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## I. READING COMPREHENSION

### 1. *Read the following text carefully:*

## **India's missing girls**

by Raekha Prasad and Randeep Ramesh in the *Guardian* February 28<sup>th</sup> 2007 (abridged)

1 When Bhavia came to the orphanage of Palna, along with twenty other babies,  
she was nameless, with no date of birth. What is certain, from a cursory glance at  
the line of babies, is that an orphanage is one of the few places in India where  
males are outnumbered. For every boy lying in the sunny courtyard, there are  
5 four girls. Some have been dumped outside police stations, some in railway  
toilets, crowded fairgrounds, or the dark corners of bus stations. Others were left  
outside the orphanage in a wicker cradle.

Almost always, it is girls who are left in the cradle. Healthy boys are only  
deserted in India if born to single mothers; boys left by a married couple are the  
10 disabled ones. Not all abandoned girls come from families too poor to feed them,  
however. Some have been found with a neatly packed bag containing a change  
of clothes, milk formula and disposable nappies.

Girls such as Bhavia are survivors in an India where it has never been more  
dangerous to be conceived female. A preference for boys, who carry on the  
15 family bloodline and inherit wealth, has always existed in Indian society. But what  
has made being a girl so risky now, is the lethal cocktail of new money mixed  
with medical technology that makes it possible to tell the sex of a baby while it is  
still in the womb.

Although gender-based abortion is illegal, parents are choosing to abort female  
20 foetuses in such large numbers that experts estimate India has lost 10 million  
girls in the past two decades. In the 12 years since selective abortion was  
outlawed, only one doctor has been convicted of carrying out the crime.

This hidden tragedy surfaces not only in the statistics of disproportionate sex  
ratios, but also in the back yards of clinics that hoped to bury the evidence.  
25 Earlier this month police arrested two people after the discovery of 400 pieces of  
bones believed to be of female foetuses in the town of Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh.

Last year, in a series of reports entitled *Kokh Me Katl*, or *Murder in the Womb*,  
two journalists working for India's Sahara Samay television channel found 100  
doctors, in both private and government hospitals, who were prepared to perform  
30 illegal terminations of girl foetuses.

Although ministers in India have woken up to "a national crisis", the response has  
been to tolerate the abandonment of female babies. "If you don't want a girl,  
leave her to us," Renuka Chowdhury, India's minister of state for women and  
child development, said recently. The government "will bring up your children.  
35 Don't kill them". The announcement was a desperate response to slow down  
India's dramatic deficit of women. In the west, women outnumber men by at least

3%. India has almost 8% more men than women. The question for India is what sort of future it faces without enough women. One dystopian answer, given by academics Valerie M Hudson and Andrea den Boer, is that a generation of men  
40 unable to find wives has already emerged. In their book, "Bare Branches", they write of men who will never marry and have children. It is these men, they say, who are already largely responsible for social unrest in those areas where women are in short supply.

Indian scholars, they say, have noted a growing relationship between sex ratios  
45 and violent crime in Indian states. When potential wives are scarce, it is the least-skilled and least-educated men who are left on the shelf. Hudson and Den Boer put forward a scenario where large areas of India could be overrun by this under-class, with roaming groups of under-educated testosterone-high youths causing chaos. "It will mean a stronger masculine and macho culture," says Den Boer,  
50 co-author and lecturer in International Politics at the University of Kent. "Men do change their behaviour when they settle down. Those growing pools of men that don't settle down are more likely to gather to take part in stealing, gangs, bootlegging and terrorism."

In villages across the flat plains of north India, two decades of widespread female  
55 foeticide is already felt by thousands of families who cannot find brides for their sons. One local leader in the state of Haryana likened the lack of marriageable women to the shortage of food in a famine.

It is an appropriate simile, given that the response to the catastrophe has seen  
60 women from poorer states being traded like goods by bride traffickers. As little as 10,000 rupees (£125) is paid to impoverished families in Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh for a daughter who will supposedly be found a job in a more prosperous part of India. The reality is that she will be sold into a forced marriage to a family in a richer state.

So significant has the lack of brides become in Punjab and Haryana that this has  
65 become a political issue dominating local elections. Candidates standing for office promise that they will "help provide girls" if elected. Village leaders are continually approached by unmarried men and asked to find them brides. Meanwhile, activists say that trafficked girls - who are often under age - are treated as forced labour and sex slaves once married. The groups supporting  
70 trafficked brides are overwhelmed by the extent of the problem. "We're losing the battle," says Ravi Kant, executive director of Shakti Vahini, an organisation working on the effects of female foeticide. "It is in every village. The police are saying these families are doing nothing wrong. There are secret agreements between the law and the politicians, and this situation is destroying the whole  
75 social fabric."

India's paradox is that prosperity has not meant progress. Development has not  
eliminated traditional values: in fact, selective abortion has been accelerated in a globalising India. On the one hand there has been new money and an awareness of family planning so family sizes get smaller. But wealthier (and better-educated)  
80 Indians still want sons. A recent survey revealed that female foeticide was highest among women with university degrees.

The demographic consequences of mass female foeticide are most pronounced

in the most developed parts of India. In Delhi, one of the richest cities in India,  
there are just 827 girls per 1,000 boys being born. Not far away, in the wealthy  
85 farming belt of Kurukshetra, there are only 770.

At the heart of the matter lies the most sacred institution in Indian life: marriage.  
New money has raised the price of getting married, a ritual still governed by the  
past. Not only do most Indians believe in arranged marriage, in which dowry  
payments are made; there is also a widespread acceptance of the inequality  
90 between bride-givers and bride-takers.

The bride's side, according to convention, is supposed to give but never take  
from the groom's family. In today's India that translates into an increasingly  
expensive gift list of consumer goods. Decades ago, a wealthy bride's father  
would have been expected to give gold bracelets. Today it is jewellery, fridges,  
95 cars and foreign holidays - and the bride's family may end up paying the bill for  
the rest of their lives.

A son, by contrast, has financial value for his family. Even leaving aside the  
wealth his bride will bring, a boy will retain the family and the caste name. He will  
also inherit the property, and he is seen as a way of securing parent-care in old  
100 age.

Indians, therefore, have come to view the girl child as a burden, an investment  
without return. A favourite Hindi saying translates as: "Having a girl is to plant a  
seed in someone else's garden." One of the results is that women themselves  
face immense family pressure to get rid of the girl in their womb. Feminists in  
105 India argue that criminalising women who have done so is to ignore how strongly  
patriarchal the value system is. As some see it, a woman who participates in the  
killing of her own child is actually denying her own self-value and should not be  
punished but be treated with concern.

line 53 **bootlegging** illegal making and selling of goods (especially alcohol, recordings)

line 88 **dowry** money and/or property that a wife's family must pay to her husband's  
family when the couple get married

**Language****2. Explain the following in your own words or give a synonym: (1 point each)**

a) to abandon (line 10)

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b) to tolerate (line 32)

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c) to settle down (line 51)

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**3. Give an antonym for the following: (1 point each)**

a) dangerous (line 14)

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b) to accelerate (line 77)

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c) wealthier (line 79)

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**4. Give the noun derived from the words below: (1 point each)**

a) desperate (line 35)

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b) responsible (line 42)

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c) to deny (line 107)

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**5. Paraphrase the underlined parts:**a) males are outnumbered (line 4)**(2 points)**

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b) in the past two decades (line 21)**(2 points)**

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c) when potential wives are scarce (line 45)**(3 points)**

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d) who are left on the shelf (line 46)**(2 points)**

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**Comprehension**

**6. Answer the following questions in your own words as fully as possible. Write your answers on a separate piece of paper. No points will be awarded for repeated answers. Up to six additional points will be awarded for the quality of your language.**

- a) Give two examples of situations which lead to boys being abandoned at birth in India.  
**(2 points)**
- b) Explain why boys are preferred in India, and what developments have made this choice easier.  
**(4 points)**
- c) What evidence is there to show that it is not just poor families which abandon baby girls?  
**(2 points)**
- d) According to the text, what will be the consequences of gender-based abortion?  
a) for men? b) for women? c) for society as a whole?  
**(5 points)**
- e) How have politicians responded to the problem on national and local level?  
**(3 points)**

## II. GRAMMAR

### 1. *Read through the following newspaper article.*

*Put the verbs in brackets into the correct form and write them into the gaps provided on this task sheet. Do not add any other words. (1/2 point each)*

#### **Coma victim wakes up to post-Communist world**

A Polish railway worker ..... (1. wake) up after 19 years of a coma to discover that his world has changed beyond all recognition. "When I ..... (2. go) into a coma, there was only tea and vinegar in the shops," Jan Grzebski, now 65, told a Polish news channel. "Meat was rationed and there were huge petrol queues everywhere."

Mr Grzebski lost consciousness in 1988, after he ..... (3. hit) by a train. Doctors gave him only two or three years to live. But because of the tireless care of his wife Gertruda, who moved him every hour to prevent bedsores, he remained in good health. However, he ..... (4. completely remove) from the dramatic changes across the world. After ..... (5. regain) consciousness, he told his family that he had vague memories of family gatherings and of his relatives talking to him, ..... (6. try) to provoke a response.

Since 1988, Poland ..... (7. see) great changes, but for many of these years, the injured railwayman was dead to the world. His wife, who ..... (8. say) by Mr Grzebski's doctor to have "done the job of an entire intensive care team", continued to change his position every hour. Speaking about those long and lonely years, Mrs Grzebski told reporters that she ..... (9. cry) a lot. "Those who came to see us kept ..... (10. ask), 'When is he going to die?' But he's not dead."

Mr Grzebski's remarkable story is a real life version of the film *Good Bye, Lenin!*, in which Katrin Sass, an East Berliner, ..... (11. fall) into a coma after a heart attack in 1989 – thereby ..... (12. miss) the fall of the Berlin Wall and the sudden and dramatic transformation of everyday life as the Communist system collapses. When she comes back to life, the doctor warns Katrin's son that a shock might kill her, so he tries very hard to conceal from her the revolution that ..... (13. take) place, rescuing East German furniture, restoring the Communist décor and persuading friends to visit dressed as Young Communist scouts.

Gertruda Grzebska took no such precautions when her husband came round, and the miracle of modern Poland flooded his senses. He couldn't help ..... (14. notice) that people were complaining just as much as during the years of empty shops and martial law.

"Now I ..... (15. see) people on the streets with mobile phones and there are so many goods in the shops it makes my head spin," he confessed. "What amazes me is all these people who walk around with their mobile phones and yet they never stop ..... (16. complain)."

(Adapted from an article in *The Independent*, June 2007)

2. **Complete the second sentence using the word given so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence. Do not change the word given.**

(2 points each)

a) Although he can't play tennis himself, John wants his children to learn.

**unable** Despite ..... himself,  
John wants his children to learn.

b) I wish I hadn't gone on holiday with James.

**regret** I ..... on holiday with  
James.

c) "You stole my book!" Anne said to Patrick.

**accused** Anne ..... her book.

d) The cinema may be expensive so take plenty of money.

**case** Take plenty of money .....  
expensive.

e) We last went to Portugal five years ago.

**not** We ..... to Portugal ..... five years.

f) I couldn't hear what he said because of the noise.

**prevented** The noise ..... what he  
said.



**3. Correct the mistake in the following sentences. You can write on this sheet.  
(1 point each)**

- a) If Sam hadn't spent all his money, he wouldn't have been on social security now.
- b) The little girl kept asking where was her mother.
- c) I wonder why Mr Farmer isn't looking forward to go on holiday.
- d) Sal won't talk to you anymore unless you would give her her money back.
- e) "No, you stay here! You needn't go out before you've done your homework!"
- f) A lot of people came to the meeting, what really astonished us.
- g) The choir had sung the national anthem beautifully and therefore praised the minister.
- h) The boys were running down the road shouting that they saw an old woman fall over.
- i) I'm not surprised that the most people own a mobile phone.
- j) The teacher wants all his students do their homework conscientiously.

### III. ESSAY

**Choose one of the following topics to write an essay of 400-600 words.**

**Hand in a fair copy.**

**Count your words and state the number at the end of your essay.**

a) Tradition and progress: a contradiction in a globalized world? Discuss.

b) A successful woman.

What does a successful woman's life look like? Discuss the idea of success, saying whether it means the same for men and for women.

c) "I am the master of my fate". (William Ernest Henley; English poet; 1849-1903)

What does Henley's statement mean and what are the (social) implications? Discuss how far you agree or disagree with the quotation.

d) "Education is the most powerful weapon which can be used to change the world".  
(Nelson Mandela)

Discuss the education you have received, saying whether you think it has given you the necessary power to make a difference in the world.