



DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL STUDIES

RESIT EXAMINATION

Student ID (in Figures) :

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Student ID (in Words) : _____

Course Code & Name : **MPU3232 Academic Writing Skills**
 Trimester & Year : September – December 2019
 Lecturer/Examiner : Shazan Khan Omar
 Duration : 2 hours

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

1. **This question paper consists of 2 parts:**
PART A (55 marks) : READING COMPREHENSION & SUMMARY
 There are **TWO (2)** questions. Answer both questions in the space provided.
PART B (45 marks) : ESSAY WRITING
 There is **ONE (1)** question. Write your essay in the space provided.
2. **Candidates are not allowed to bring any unauthorized materials except writing equipment into the Examination Hall. Electronic dictionaries are strictly prohibited.**
3. **This question paper must be submitted along with all used and/or unused rough papers and/or graph paper (if any). Candidates are NOT allowed to take any examination materials out of the examination hall.**
4. **Only ballpoint pens are allowed to be used in answering the questions, with the exception of multiple choice questions, where 2B pencils are to be used.**

WARNING: The University Examination Board (UEB) of BERJAYA University College regards cheating as a most serious offence and will not hesitate to mete out the appropriate punitive actions according to the severity of the offence committed, and in accordance with the clauses stipulated in the Students’ Handbook, up to and including expulsion from BERJAYA University College.

Total Number of pages = 7 (Including the cover page)

PART A : READING COMPREHENSION & SUMMARY (55 MARKS)

INSTRUCTION(S) : There are **TWO (2)** questions. Answer both questions in the space provided.

READING PASSAGE

Before answering the two questions, read the article below.

Are Humans Adapted to Modern Environments?

Adapted from: Barber, N 2004, *Are humans adapted to modern environments?*, viewed 25 April 2018, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-human-beast/201704/are-humans-adapted-modern-environments>.

Our two main theories of human behaviour do a poor job of explaining how humans change to meet the demands of varied environments. Cultural determinism mostly denies that this happens. On the other hand, the evolutionary psychologists claim we are matched to the environments of our remote ancestors. Weaknesses of both theories are exposed by recent evidence. As the species that colonises new habitat unlike any other, humans are better adapted than most.

Apparently, exploiting varied resources were required in human adaptation to ensure their survival. For this reason, anthropologists believe that homo erectus had both butchered animals with stone choppers and used fire to cook meat for over a million years. Although they likely took advantage of naturally occurring bush fires, there was at least one population, at Gesher Benot Ya'Aqov in the north of Israel, where hearths were regularly used from 750,000 years ago. This population was involved in hunting large game, catching fish, and cooperative movement of large stone slabs used in tool manufacture.

As our ancestors migrated out of Africa, they encountered much colder climates and likely adapted by using animal skins to keep themselves warm. For satisfactory clothing, hides had to be properly cured and deftly stitched. The crucial task of clothes making in cold-adapted populations like the Inuit is performed mostly by women, representing a time-honored division of labor and superior manual dexterity.

There is a body of inherited knowledge underlying such skills – knowledge that is unlikely to be lost given that it is critical for survival in a familiar habitat. Solutions to inherit the knowledge and skills had to be produced quickly as our ancestors migrated to new habitats so that gene selection was mostly irrelevant. One well-known example is the loss of boat-building technology by aboriginal residents of Tasmania. Anthropologists now believe that when the island lost its land bridge to the mainland that the remaining population was too small to sustain specialized boat-building skills. Clearly, skills and technological

innovations helped humans to solve problems easily and quickly that defeated other mammals and primates.

Also, the need to assimilate into a new community urges humans to experience acculturation. Acculturation is a process, in which an individual adopts, acquires and adjust to a new cultural environment. Individuals of a differing culture try to incorporate themselves into the new more prevalent culture by participating in aspects of the more prevalent culture, such as their traditions, but still hold onto their original cultural values and traditions.

However, some people believe that humans could not be quick to adapt to modern environments psychologically or behaviourally. It is not just the biologists which view adaptation as a very slow process requiring hundreds of generations of gene selection but evolutionary psychologists also assumed that behavioural evolution was extremely slow as well. Evolutionary psychologists believe that other vertebrates are actually very good at adjusting to altered environments through rapid behavioural change. It was widely assumed that human fears of snakes, spiders, and large predators such as lions were partly inherited by genes. Also, a study found that humans are always resistant towards change (e.g. the refusal to adopt new technology in medical fields) which causes them unable to survive severe medical issues.

It is emphasised that even if there was no time for gene selection, our hunting forbears were highly adapted to new way because the process of adaptation to new ecologies was mostly non-genetic. Other vertebrates may adapt to new environments through their rapid behavioural change. However, the ability of humans to utilise various resources will sustain their survival. Also, humans can adapt better than other species because they are likely to be affected by social learning. Likewise, the reduction of the death rates shows that humans are able to adapt to modern environments because they are willing to try new medical breakthroughs.

QUESTIONS

1. Reading comprehension (30 marks): Reconstruct the argument presented in the article above by identifying the following elements:

I. the main claim (3 marks)

II. the reasons in support of the main claim

(8 marks)

III. the opposing claim

(3 marks)

IV. the reasons in support of the opposing claim

(8 marks)

V. the refutations of the reasons in support of the opposing claim

(8 marks)
