



# TONBRIDGE SCHOOL

Test for Entrance into Year 12 in September 2024

## English Language

Time allowed:

**45 minutes**

**Name** .....

**School** .....



# Instructions

Part One: total 20 minutes

Answer the questions in the spaces provided in this booklet.

Part Two: total 40 minutes.

Make sure you **plan** for 10 minutes.

Write your plan in the booklet.

**Dictionaries or electronic translators may NOT be used.**

Answers must be handwritten unless permission to type  
has been granted in advance by Tonbridge School.

## **PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION**

**You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1 – 12, which are based on the reading passage below. There are two marks available for each answer.**

## **The Problem of Wildfires**

1. Wildfires have increasingly emerged as a significant environmental challenge, affecting various parts of the world with devastating consequences. These uncontrolled and often uncontrollable fires have long been a natural occurrence, playing a vital role in fact in maintaining ecological balance. Perhaps the most amazing fire adaptation is that some species actually *require* fire for their seeds to sprout. Some plants, such as the lodgepole pine, *Eucalyptus* and *Banksia*, have cones or fruits that are completely sealed with resin. These can only open to release their seeds after the heat of a fire has physically melted the resin. Other species, including a number of shrubs and annual plants, require the chemical signals from smoke and charred plant matter to break seed dormancy. Some of these plants will only sprout in the presence of such chemicals and can remain buried in the soil seed bank for decades until a wildfire awakens them.

2. Wildfires of this kind have mostly been manageable and not too dangerous to humans or the rest of nature. However, due to a combination of factors such as climate change, more intensive land-use practices and many other human activities, wildfires have recently intensified in frequency, scale, and severity, posing significant threats to ecosystems, human lives, and socioeconomic stability. Climate change has contributed to increased temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, and prolonged droughts, creating favourable conditions for wildfires. Rising temperatures and changing weather patterns lead to drier vegetation and increased fuel availability, making landscapes more susceptible to ignition. Humanity must recognise its responsibility for much of the acceleration of global warming, but other human activities also, such as the careless disposal of barbecue equipment or cigarette butts, campfire mismanagement, electrical equipment failures, and even deliberate arson, are obvious and direct major causes of wildfires. Additionally, land-use practices like deforestation, urban sprawl, and the expansion of agricultural activities into fire-prone areas, all further exacerbate the risk of wildfires.

3. Wildfires often have severe consequences on the natural environment. They result in the loss of (sometimes endangered) wildlife species and habitats, the destruction of vegetation, and the release of substantial amounts of greenhouse gases and toxins into the atmosphere. The subsequent erosion and degradation of soil may further impair the ability of ecosystems to recover, leading to long-term ecological damage. Fires also pose significant threats to human life and well-being. Direct impacts include injuries, fatalities, and the displacement of communities. The smoke produced by wildfires deteriorates air quality, causing respiratory problems and exacerbating existing health conditions. Furthermore, wildfires can damage infrastructure, including homes, schools, hospitals, and transportation networks, leading to economic losses and possible disruption in the distribution of essential food, water, medical aid, and fuel supplies. The pollution caused

by the global increase in wildfires has also created widespread long-term impacts on human health, in addition to these immediate problems.

4. It is no longer acceptable to ignore the harm wildfires cause. A recent example serves to demonstrate this: the Canadian wildfire season of 2023 was the worst in the country's history, severely affecting eleven provinces and territories. By the start of June, over 2,000 fires had burned 43,000 square kilometres. On just one day, June 6<sup>th</sup>, there were 413 active wildfires, of which 249 were deemed out of control. Smoke emitted from the fires caused air quality alerts in Canada, the United States, and even northern Europe. Media photographs of the density of smoke over New York, about 900 kilometres away from the fires, were extremely alarming. Landmarks such as the Statue of Liberty were all but invisible. Roughly half of all wildfires in Canada are caused by lightning and, due to climate change, lightning strikes are happening more frequently. Direct human behaviour causes the other half of wildfires in Canada, often unintentionally started by things such as discarded cigarettes, abandoned smouldering campfires, or sparks from braking trains.

5. Effective wildfire management requires a comprehensive approach that includes prevention and preparedness measures. These include public awareness campaigns, stricter regulations on fire-prone activities, and improved infrastructure planning. Early warning systems, enhanced firefighting resources, and prescribed burning can also contribute to reducing the frequency and severity of wildfires.

6. Addressing the root cause of intensified wildfires necessitates efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Implementing sustainable land management practices, such as reforestation, afforestation, and the use of fire-resistant materials in construction, can enhance ecosystem resilience and reduce vulnerability to wildfires. Engaging local communities in wildfire management is also crucial. Educating individuals about fire-safe practices, promoting responsible land-use decisions, and encouraging the development of community-based fire response plans, can foster a collective approach to wildfire prevention and mitigation. Effective wildfire management requires good collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, firefighting services, scientists and researchers, landowners, and communities. Collaboration can facilitate the sharing of resources, knowledge, and best practices, enabling a more co-ordinated and effective response to the danger of wildfires.

7. The problem of wildfires presents a multi-faceted challenge with far-reaching implications for the environment, human lives, and socioeconomic stability. Addressing this problem requires a combination of preventive measures, community engagement, climate change adaptation, and collaborative approaches. By adopting a comprehensive approach to wildfire management, societies can mitigate the risk of wildfires, protect ecosystems, and ensure the safety and well-being of communities. Continued research, investment, and international co-operation will be crucial to developing innovative strategies that promote sustainable coexistence in the face of a changing climate with those wildfires that we cannot prevent.

**Answer ALL the following questions on the passage**

**Questions 1 – 5 (2 marks per question)**

***Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer of the passage?***

***In boxes 1 – 5 below write***

***TRUE***                    ***if the statement fully agrees with the writer's claims***

***FALSE***                    ***if the statement contradicts the writer's claims***

***NOT GIVEN***            ***if there is no explicit information on the statement***

- 1 Economies suffer when wildfires, however caused, are not kept under human control.
- 2 Rainfall around the world has decreased, thus causing more widespread wildfires.
- 3 The most common cause of naturally occurring wildfires is lightning strike.
- 4 Deliberately setting fire to vegetation in the countryside is an act of careless antisocial behaviour.
- 5 The best way to combat the dangers of wildfires to human beings and the environment is to bring climate change successfully under control.

<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>

**Questions 6 – 8 (2 marks per question)**

***From information in the passage, but IN YOUR OWN WORDS, write answers to the following questions in the boxes below. Make sure you write enough each time to be worth 2 marks.***

- 6 Briefly describe two strategies that some types of plant have developed to help them manage to survive wildfires.
- 7 According to the writer, why are wildfires more dangerous and difficult to manage in the present day than they were in times past?
- 8 What measures can be taken to reduce the occurrence of wildfires and the amount of damage they do to humans and the environment?

6
7
8

**Questions 9 – 12 (2 marks per question)**

**Give equivalent but DIFFERENT words of your own for the following phrases, so as to demonstrate their meaning as used in the context of the passage:**

9 <i>'devastating consequences'</i> (paragraph 1)
10 <i>'expansion of agricultural activities into fire-prone areas'</i> (paragraph 2)
11 <i>'widespread long-term impacts'</i> (paragraph 3)
12 <i>'prevention and preparedness measures'</i> (paragraph 5)

**CHECK YOUR ANSWERS CAREFULLY & THEN GO ON TO PART TWO.**

## **PART TWO: WRITING**

***You should spend about 40 minutes on this task, with 5 – 10 minutes used for planning. Write your plan legibly in this booklet. The absence of a written plan will lose you marks. Rough paper is not allowed.***

***Write on ONE of the following topics, giving reasons for your answer and including relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.***

***Write ONLY between 250 and 300 words. (Further writing after 300 words will not be awarded any marks and your essay will be considered incomplete.) Use a formal register and academic language. Evidence of careful thinking and quality of expression is much more important than a large quantity of words.***

***Choose ONE TOPIC from the following:***

1. How far is ecotourism (holiday travel prompted by an interest in observing and preserving the natural environment) acceptable nowadays?

*Give reasons for your answer and support them with examples from your own knowledge and / or experience.*

2. What future difficulties for humanity will the rapidity of the development of Artificial Intelligence be likely to cause? Describe several potential problems and suggest some possible solutions to them, assessing how well each might work in practice.

*Make sure you tackle all the parts of this question. Give practical examples to support your points.*

3. 'The ability to use language is the one thing that distinguishes humankind from the rest of the animal kingdom.'

*Develop an argument either for or against this claim and support it with evidence and examples from your own knowledge and experience.*

4. If you could spend a day with any famous person who is living now or who has ever lived, who would you choose and why?

*Give reasons and evidence to support your choice.*





