

الاسم:
الرقم:

مسابقة في مادة اللغة الانكليزية
المدة: ثلاث ساعات

Part One: Reading Comprehension

(Score: 11/20)

Read the following selection in which the writer highlights the experience of Finland in the field of education and its achievements, and then answer the questions that follow.

The ABC's of Success in Finland

- 1 Imagine an educational system in which children do not start school until they are seven, spending not more than \$5,000 a year per student, lacking programs for the gifted, and having class sizes that often approach 30 students. **It** is a prescription for failure, no doubt, in the eyes of many experts. However, in this case, it is a description of Finnish schools, which were recently ranked the world's best.
- 2 Last year, Finland topped a respected international survey, ranking first in literacy and being placed in the top five in math and science. Ever since, educators from all over the world—"educational pilgrims", the locals call them—have thronged to this self-restrained Nordic country to deconstruct its school system and, with any luck, to take home a sliver of wisdom.
- 3 "We are a little bit embarrassed about our success," said S. Juva, a special government adviser to the Ministry of Education, summing up the typical reaction in Finland, where boasting and gloating over accomplishments are not that common. "Perhaps next year," he said, "Finland will rank second or third."
- 4 The question on people's minds is obvious: How did Finland, a country that was hobbled by a deep recession during the 1990s, manage to outscore 31 other countries in last September's review by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)?
- 5 The review rankings were based on reading, math and science tests given to a sample of 15-year-olds attending both public and private schools.
- 6 Finland's recipe is both complex and unabashedly basic. **It** is also similar to that in other Nordic countries. Some of the ingredients can be exported—its flexibility in the classroom, for example—and some cannot—the nation's small, homogenous population and the relative prosperity of most Finns, to name two.
- 7 If there is one trait that sets Finland apart from many other countries, it is the quality and social standing of its teachers, said B. Macgaw, the Director for Education at the OECD. All teachers in Finland must have at least a Master's degree, and though they are not better paid than teachers in other countries, the profession is highly respected. Many more people want to become teachers after graduating from high schools than universities can actually handle, so the vast majority are turned down.
- 8 "Teaching is the number one," O. Pihlman, an English language teacher at Suutarila School, said about a recent survey asking teenagers to name their favorite profession. "At that age, you would think they would want anything but to go back to school."
- 9 The Suutarila School—cheerful, well-lit, nicely heated—is typical of Finnish "Comprehensive Schools," which run from first to ninth grade. The students, who number about 500, leave their snow boots by their lockers and pad about in their socks. After every 45-minute lesson, they are let loose outside for 15 minutes, so they can burn off steam. Others, allowed to practice their music, file into classrooms, sling electric guitars across their chests or grab drumsticks, and jam for fun.
- 10 Children **here** start school late on the theory that they will learn to love learning through play. Preschool for six-year-olds is optional although most attend. And since most women work outside the home in Finland, children usually go to daycare after they turn one.
- 11 At first, the 7-year-olds lag behind their peers in other countries in reading, but they catch up almost immediately and then excel. Experts say there are several reasons for that: reading to

children, telling folk tales, and going to the library which are cherished in Finland. Reading Finnish is easy to learn. And, lastly, children grow up watching television shows and movies, many of them in English, with subtitles. Nothing is dubbed, so they read while they watch television.

12 So long as schools stick to the core national curriculum, which lays out goals and subject areas, they are free to teach the way they want. They can choose their textbooks or ditch them altogether, teach indoors or outdoors, cluster children in small or large groups. While there are no programs for gifted children, teachers are free to devise ways to challenge **them**. The gifted ones help teach their average peers. There is also a new emphasis on integrating special education students. Art, music, physical education, woodwork and textiles are obligatory for boys and girls. Hot and healthy school lunches are free.

13 Despite the great achievements, Finnish officials say they are far from perfect. Boys, for example, perform much worse than girls in reading, and with so many students aiming to become teachers, there are not enough willing to leap outside the social service sphere.

Questions

A. Answer each of the following questions in 1- 4 complete sentences of your own words.

1. How does Juva view embarrassment among the Finns? (Score: 0.5)
2. State **four** main traits that distinguish Finnish educational system from that of other countries. (Score: 01)
3. Was Pihlman successful in choosing the sample of the survey mentioned in Paragraph 8? Justify. (Score: 0.5)
4. Explain in what sense Finnish schools are typically nontraditional for students and teachers. (Score: 01)
5. Infer **two** modifications the Finnish educational system might take to become closer to perfection. (Score: 01)

B. Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What **two** purposes does the first sentence in Paragraph 1 serve? Justify. (Score: 01)
2. Explain the analogy in “educational pilgrims” mentioned in Paragraph 2. (Score: 01)
3. How does the writer achieve credibility in the selection above? Justify. (Score: 01)
4. Identify **two** types of audience, other than the general reader, who might be interested in reading the selection, and state the interest each finds in it. (Score: 01)

C. Write a **one-sentence** summary of Paragraph 10. (Score: 01)

D. Refer to Paragraphs 2, 4, and 9 to find words/phrases that almost have the following meanings. (Score: 01)

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| 1. <i>to crowd into</i> | 3. <i>to move along</i> |
| 2. <i>a period of decline</i> | 4. <i>to proceed in a row</i> |

E. What does each of the words, **bold-typed** in the selection above, refer to? (Score: 01)

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| 1. It (Paragraph 1) | 3. here (Paragraph 10) |
| 2. It (Paragraph 6) | 4. them (Paragraph 12) |

Part Two: Writing

(Score: 09/20)

When students are not allowed to take personal decisions (e.g. choice of majors, activities, methods of learning, etc.), they may encounter social, academic and personal hardships. Discuss the significant role the educational system (teachers, textbooks, teaching and learning materials, etc.) plays in developing and enhancing the skill of taking decisions. Develop your answer in an essay of 400-500 words, using facts and real-life examples to support your point of view. Make sure that, in your introduction, you put your reader in the general atmosphere of your topic and clearly provide a thesis statement, and that each of your body paragraphs starts with a topic sentence which you back up with relevant supporting details. Draft, revise, and proofread your essay. Your writing will be assessed for ideas, language and style, and tidiness.

(Score: 05 for content, 03 for language and style, and 01 for tidiness and legible handwriting)