

DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

LISTENING SECTION

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN ENGLISH

Tuesday, August 13, 2002—8:30 to 11:30 a.m., only

BE SURE THAT THE LISTENING SECTION IS ADMINISTERED TO EVERY STUDENT.

- 1 Before the start of the examination period, say:

Do not open the examination booklet until you are instructed to do so.

- 2 Distribute one examination booklet and one essay booklet to each student.

- 3 After each student has received an examination booklet and an essay booklet, say:

Tear off the answer sheet, which is the last page of the examination booklet, and fill in its heading. Now circle “Session One” and fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet.

- 4 After the students have filled in all headings on their answer sheets and essay booklets, say:

Look at page 2 of your examination booklet and follow along while I read the **Overview** and **The Situation**.

Overview:

For this part of the test, you will listen to an account of the influenza epidemic of 1918, answer some multiple-choice questions, and write a response based on the situation described below. You will hear the account twice. You may take notes on the next page anytime you wish during the readings.

The Situation:

Your social studies class has been studying World War I and its effects on civilians in America. For a final project, you have decided to prepare a position paper in which you argue that World War I may have contributed to the spread of the influenza epidemic of 1918. In preparation for writing your position paper, listen to this account of the epidemic taken from a PBS broadcast narrated by David McCullough. Then use relevant information from the account to write your position paper.

Now I will read the passage aloud to you for the first time.

- 5 Now read the passage aloud with appropriate expression, but without added comment.

Listening Passage

In 1918, the United States was a vigorous young nation, leading the world into the modern age. All our fears and anxieties were directed toward Europe, where [World War I] raged; at home, we were safe....

Some say [the influenza epidemic] began in the spring of 1918, when soldiers at Fort Riley, Kansas, burned tons of manure. A gale kicked up. A choking duststorm swept out over the land -- a stinging, stinking yellow haze. The sun went dead black in Kansas.

Two days later -- on March 11th, 1918 -- an Army private reported to the camp hospital before breakfast. He had a fever, sore throat, headache ... nothing serious. One minute later, another soldier showed up. By noon, the hospital had over a hundred cases; in a week, 500.

That spring, forty-eight soldiers -- all in the prime of life -- died at Fort Riley. The cause of death was listed as pneumonia....

That summer and fall, over one and a half million Americans crossed the Atlantic for war. But some of those doughboys came from Kansas. And they'd brought something with them: a tiny, silent companion.

Almost immediately, the Kansas sickness resurfaced in Europe. American soldiers got sick. English soldiers. French. German. As it spread, the microbe mutated -- day by day becoming more and more deadly.

By the time the silent traveller came back to America, it had become a relentless killer....

When the strange new disease was finally identified, it turned out to be a very old and familiar one: influenza: the flu. But it was unlike any flu that any one had ever seen.

[According to] Dr. Alfred Crosby, author [of], "America's Forgotten Pandemic," "One of the factors that made this so particularly frightening was that everybody had a preconception of what the flu was: it's a miserable cold and, after a few days, you're up and around. This was a flu that put people into bed as if they'd been hit with a 2 [by] 4, that turned into pneumonia, that turned people blue and black and killed them. It was a flu out of some sort of a horror story. They never had dreamed that influenza could ever do anything like this to people before."

Soldiers carried the disease swiftly from one military base to the next. They did it ... just by breathing.

If an individual with influenza were standing in front of a room full of people coughing, each cough would carry millions of particles with disease-causing organisms into the air. All the people breathing that air would have an opportunity to inhale a disease-causing organism. It doesn't take very long for one case to become 10,000 cases....

There were two enormously important things going on at once and they were at right angles to each other. One, of course, was the influenza epidemic, which dictated that you should sort of shut everything down and the war which demanded that everything should speed up, that certainly the factories should continue operating, you should continue to have bond drives, soldiers should be put on boats and sent off to France.... It's as if we could, as a society, only contain one big idea at a time and the big idea was the war.

With America's tunnel vision focused on the war, throngs turned out for enormous parades supporting Liberty Loan drives.

In Philadelphia, 200,000 [people] sardined in the streets. The crowd linked arms, sang patriotic songs -- breathed on each other -- infected each other....

Hospitals overflowed; emergency relief centers sprang up in parks and playgrounds. But practically every available doctor and nurse had been sent to Europe. The ones who remained were asked to perform the impossible....

In many places, officials rushed through laws requiring people to wear masks in public....

But masks didn't help. They were thin and porous -- no serious restraint to tiny microbes. It was like trying to keep out dust with chicken wire.

In Washington, D.C., Commissioner Louis Brownlow banned all public gatherings. He closed the city's schools, theaters and bars. He quarantined the sick. He did everything he had the power to do.

But the death rate in Washington kept rising....

[Biochemists] thought it was caused by a bacteria, so they made up a vaccine with the bacteria they thought was influenza.... But you can't make a vaccine if you're looking at the wrong causative organism. They were on the wrong track; the influenza was caused by a virus.

In the month of September, some 12,000 people died of influenza in America. But those numbers would be dwarfed. For the full horror now began. October would be the cruellest month....

No one was safe. In Washington, Victor Vaughan [acting Surgeon General of the Army] was working late, trying to make sense of the hellish chaos. He uncovered an unnerving fact. Usually, influenza kills only the weak -- the very young and very old -- but this time it had a different target. People in the very prime of life -- from 21 to 29 -- were the most vulnerable of all....

For example: soldiers. In Europe, the flu was devastating both sides. Seventy-thousand American soldiers were sick; in some units, the flu killed 80% of the men. General John Pershing made a desperate plea for reinforcements. But that would mean sending soldiers across the Atlantic on troop ships.

There's nothing more crowded than a troop ship, it's just being jammed in there like sardines and if somebody has a respiratory disease, everybody's going to get it.

President Woodrow Wilson now faced an agonizing decision. Sending the soldiers would be signing thousands of death warrants. Wilson gazed out of his office window. After a long moment, he nodded. The troop shipments would [have to] continue....

In New York, 851 people died of the flu in a single day. But the greatest horror came to Philadelphia. In one week in October, the death rate there was seven hundred times higher than normal....

In 31 shocking days, the flu would kill over 195,000 Americans. It was the deadliest month in the nation's history....

If the epidemic continue[d] its mathematical rate of acceleration, civilization could easily disappear from the face of the earth.

But a miraculous thing began to happen. As mysteriously as it had come, the terror began to slip away. By early November, the flu had virtually disappeared from Boston;

the toll in Washington fell below 50 a week; even in ravaged Philadelphia, life was slowly returning to normal.

Then, on November 11, the Armistice ended The Great War. In San Francisco, the scene was surreal. Thirty thousand people paraded through the streets -- all dancing, all singing, all wearing masks. The country had a lot to celebrate -- not only was the war over, but the worst of the epidemic was passing....

The epidemic killed. At a very, very conservative estimate, it killed 550,000 Americans in ten months. That's more Americans than had died in combat in all the wars of [the twentieth] century, and the epidemic had killed at least 30 million in the world and infected the majority of the human species....

(excerpted)

- 6 After reading the passage aloud once, say:

You may take a few minutes to look over **The Situation** and your notes.
(Pause) Now I will read the passage aloud a second time.

- 7 Read the passage a second time.

- 8 After the second reading, say:

Now turn to page 4 of your examination booklet, read the directions, and answer the multiple-choice questions. Be sure to follow all the directions given in your examination booklet and your essay booklet. You may now begin.