

# SESSION ONE

The University of the State of New York

REGENTS HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

IN

ENGLISH

SESSION ONE

**Wednesday, June 18, 2003 — 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., only**

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The last page of this booklet is the answer sheet for the multiple-choice questions. Fold the last page along the perforations and, slowly and carefully, tear off the answer sheet. Then fill in the heading of your answer sheet. Now circle “Session One” and fill in the heading of each page of your essay booklet.

This session of the examination has two parts. Part A tests listening skills; you are to answer all six multiple-choice questions and write a response, as directed. For Part B, you are to answer all ten multiple-choice questions and write a response, as directed.

When you have completed this session of the examination, you must sign the statement printed at the end of the answer sheet, indicating that you had no unlawful knowledge of the questions or answers prior to the session and that you have neither given nor received assistance in answering any of the questions during the session. Your answer sheet cannot be accepted if you fail to sign this declaration.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS EXAMINATION BOOKLET UNTIL THE SIGNAL IS GIVEN.**

## Part A

**Overview:** For this part of the test, you will listen to a speech about effective speech writing, answer some multiple-choice questions, and write a response based on the situation described below. You will hear the speech twice. You may take notes on the next page anytime you wish during the readings.

**The Situation:** Your English class intends to publish a handbook for incoming freshmen, advising them on skills needed for high school. Your assignment is to write an article on techniques for effective speechwriting. In preparation for writing your article, listen to a speech by Jane Tully, a professional speechwriter. Then use relevant information from the speech to write your article.

**Your Task:** Write an article for a handbook for incoming freshmen in which you discuss techniques for effective speechwriting.

### Guidelines:

**Be sure to**

- Tell your audience what they need to know about techniques for effective speechwriting
- Use specific, accurate, and relevant information from the speech to support your discussion
- Use a tone and level of language appropriate for an article for high school freshmen
- Organize your ideas in a logical and coherent manner
- Indicate any words taken directly from the speech by using quotation marks or referring to the speaker
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

## NOTES

**DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**

## Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (1–6): Use your notes to answer the following questions about the passage read to you. Select the best suggested answer and write its number in the space provided on the answer sheet. The questions may help you think about ideas and information you might use in your writing. You may return to these questions anytime you wish.

- 1 According to the speaker, keeping listeners' attention is more difficult with a large audience than with a small audience because people in large groups
  - (1) feel pressured by peers
  - (2) feel unnoticed
  - (3) cannot hear the speaker clearly
  - (4) cannot see the speaker
  
- 2 According to the speaker, knowing the age range of the audience would be helpful to a speechwriter in
  - (1) selecting support materials
  - (2) finding a topic
  - (3) choosing a setting
  - (4) predicting the number of participants
  
- 3 The speaker expresses concern about the use of the "food image" to illustrate the importance of choosing stories according to an audience's
  - (1) size
  - (2) location
  - (3) gender
  - (4) age
  
- 4 As an example of her advice to speechwriters to "use only the best ingredients," the speaker recommends that speeches include
  - (1) sophisticated vocabulary
  - (2) an unusual fact
  - (3) foreign phrases
  - (4) a generally accepted theory
  
- 5 According to the speaker, the speechwriter's main purpose in using appealing quotations and stories is to
  - (1) add historical accuracy
  - (2) provide comic relief
  - (3) improve the speaker's credibility
  - (4) help the audience remember ideas
  
- 6 By asking the question, "If your audience remembered only one thing, what would you want it to be?" a speechwriter can establish
  - (1) an intriguing opening
  - (2) a strong ending
  - (3) a main idea
  - (4) an organizing principle

After you have finished these questions, turn to page 2. Review **The Situation** and read **Your Task** and the **Guidelines**. Use scrap paper to plan your response. Then write your response in Part A, beginning on page 1 of your essay booklet. After you finish your response for Part A, go to page 5 of your examination booklet and complete Part B.

## Part B

**Directions:** Read the text and study the graphic on the following pages, answer the multiple-choice questions, and write a response based on the situation described below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response.

**The Situation:** As part of a social studies unit on contemporary issues, your class is preparing a panel discussion on the topic “Forest fires: What are the best ways to deal with them?” In preparing for the panel discussion, your teacher has asked you to write an essay in which you discuss the practices that lead to forest fires and recommend ways to deal with forest fires.

**Your Task:** Using relevant information from *both* documents, write an essay in which you discuss the practices that lead to forest fires and recommend ways to deal with forest fires.

### Guidelines:

#### Be sure to

- Tell your audience what they need to know about forest fires and the practices that lead to forest fires
- Recommend ways to deal with forest fires
- Use specific, accurate, and relevant information from the text *and* the graphic to support your discussion
- Use a tone and level of language appropriate for an essay for your social studies class
- Organize your ideas in a logical and coherent manner
- Indicate any words taken directly from the text by using quotation marks or referring to the author
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

## Text

Ninety years ago today, in the choking heat of a summer without rain in the northern Rockies, the sun disappeared from the sky and a sound not unlike cannon fire began rattling throughout Montana and Idaho. The Big Burn, as the three-million-acre firestorm of 1910 was called, eventually consumed entire towns, killed 87 people and burned a lesson into the fledgling United States Forest Service.

Thereafter, the service vowed, it would snuff out every fire, at one point swearing to do so by 10 a.m. on the day after the fire started. The best-known forester of that time, Gifford Pinchot, equated wildfire with slavery as a historic scourge of the nation. Another, Bernhard Fernow, blamed “bad habits and loose morals” for the fires.

Now, in the midst of the worst wildfire year in nearly half a century, a new round of finger-pointing is under way. Touring Montana last week, J. Dennis Hastert, the speaker of the House, blamed the Clinton administration for not logging the tinder-dry forests. Environmentalists pointed at the timber industry and development for altering forest ecology and creating an artificial landscape ripe for catastrophe.

But the Forest Service remains focused on its own primary culprit: the symbol of fire eradication, Smokey Bear.

The era of prevention and suppression represented by Smokey and his shovel may have been good for safety, but it was not the best thing for forests. The agency had reached that conclusion even before the additional evidence foresters drew from the fires that tore through almost half of Yellowstone National Park in 1988.

Fire is as much a part of nature as creeks and wildflowers. Most forests have a natural cycle, in which a purging burn comes through every 10, 20, 50 or 100 years. The cycle may be suppressed, foresters say, but only at the cost of more powerful fires when it re-emerges.

“We have a problem when people say these fires are destroying all these areas,” said Mr. Wiebe, the former Smokejumper. “It’s just not correct to say a forest is destroyed by fire.”

During the decades when fires were routinely suppressed, forests choked themselves with excess growth, creating better habitats for tree-killing insects. The dying tinder became tinder.

“These forests are long overdue,” said Mick Harrington, a research fire ecologist with the Forest Service in Montana, a state that has just been declared a disaster area. “They were just ready to go.”

The fires that have already run through five million acres this year are hotter, faster-burning, more ferocious than any burns of modern times, the people battling them say. And a number of reports say future fire seasons may be worse, identifying about 40 million acres of public land as being at risk of catastrophic fire.

Fire suppression is only part of the problem. In some forests, experts say, logging has removed the biggest and most fire-resistant trees. Their replacements — some planted, some natural — are crowded stands of young and disease-prone trees, with 500 or more to the acre, where there used to be 50. Foresters also

point to other elements — excessive grazing by cattle and sheep, diversion of  
rivers to newly developing areas — that have contributed to what some call ghost  
forests, spectral stands of diseased and dying timber now baking, if not yet  
50 burning, in the August sun.

In addition, there are many new areas demanding fire protection. Homes and  
vacation cottages that have sprung up at the edge of national forest boundaries  
have become firefighters' front lines.

“We’ve become so good at putting out fires because that’s what the public  
wants,” said Lindon Wiebe, a fire ecology specialist with the Forest Service in  
55 Washington, and a former Smokejumper, as the service’s firefighters are called.  
“But what we can do is pretty small compared to what Mother Nature wants  
to do.”

Just as people have gradually learned not to build homes in areas prone to  
60 flooding, they need to understand the danger of erecting structures in fire zones,  
says Dr. Phil Omi, a professor of forest fire science at Colorado State University  
and director of the Western Forest Fire Research Center.

“Somebody has got to get the message to these people that they are putting  
themselves at risk, whether it’s the insurance industry or the government,” Dr.  
65 Omi said. But he said he could not blame the Forest Service, or homeowners, for  
being slow to understand the nature of wild fire in the West. “Our understanding  
of forest fire ecology is relatively new,” he said.

Those trying to address the future fire threat are focusing on two solutions:  
taking out more trees by logging or thinning, and deliberately setting fires.

70 Under Mr. Clinton, logging in national forests has declined by nearly 75  
percent, and some critics blame this decline for the explosive fires. A number of  
Western senators back the idea of allowing the timber industry to remove more  
trees.

75 However, environmental groups point out that the biggest fires in Montana  
and Idaho are burning not in wilderness areas, but in land that has been  
developed or logged. Such areas also account for 90 percent of the acreage  
identified as most vulnerable to wildfire, the Forest Service says.

“Commercial logging is not a prescription for forest health — it is one of the  
major causes of unhealthy forest conditions,” said Thomas Powers, chairman of  
80 the economics department at the University of Montana, whose specialty is  
natural resource issues.

The other solution — planned fire — has become a public relations debacle.  
Last year, a record 1.4 million acres of Forest Service land was deliberately  
burned. Most prescribed burns go off without trouble. But it only takes one to stir  
85 public ire. And this year, the one that got away, a 43,000-acre blaze set by the  
National Park Service near Los Alamos, N.M., destroyed more than 200 homes.

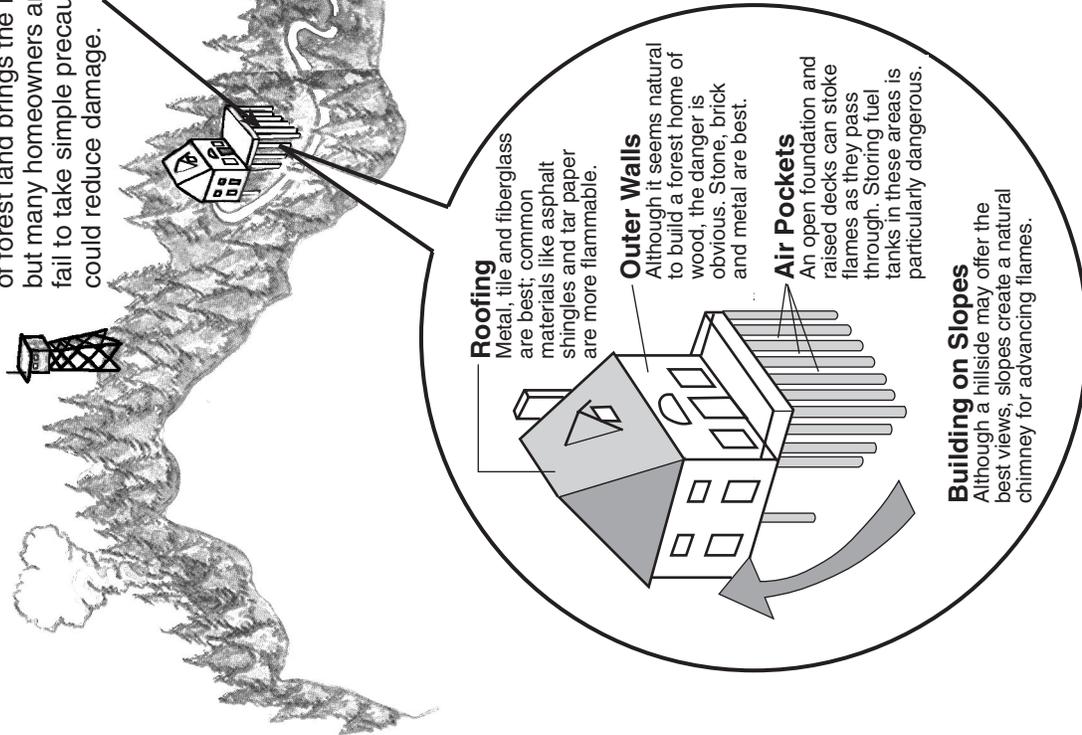
And no matter how convinced the experts are that Los Alamos was an  
exception, the fires now raging in every state of the West look horrific on  
television, blackening national treasures like Mesa Verde National Park and  
90 raining embers on popular campgrounds.

— Timothy Egan  
“Why Foresters Prefer to Fight Fire with Fire”  
*The New York Times*, August 20, 2000

# Common Practices Contributing to Forest Fires

## Hazardous Homes

Building a home in or near the edge of forest land brings the risk of fire, but many homeowners and builders fail to take simple precautions that could reduce damage.



### Roofing

Metal, tile and fiberglass are best; common materials like asphalt shingles and tar paper are more flammable.

### Outer Walls

Although it seems natural to build a forest home of wood, the danger is obvious. Stone, brick and metal are best.

### Air Pockets

An open foundation and raised decks can stoke flames as they pass through. Storing fuel tanks in these areas is particularly dangerous.

### Building on Slopes

Although a hillside may offer the best views, slopes create a natural chimney for advancing flames.

## Water Diversion

Diverting the natural waterways to serve growing communities can also change the ecology of surrounding forests, leaving them dry and undernourished. Also, rivers that once served as natural barriers to fast-moving wildfires have been narrowed, enabling flames to leap to neighboring groups of trees easily.

## Logging and Clear-Cutting

In many areas, logging removed the oldest, most fire-resistant trees. The smaller, denser tree stands that grew in their absence burn more easily. Logging can also leave behind debris that acts as kindling for wildfires.

## Fire Suppression

Development in general led to a consistent policy of stifling fires, but this inhibited the natural process of burning and allowed stands of fire-prone trees to grow.

## Grazing

The growth of cattle raising throughout the 19th and 20th centuries reduced grasslands, which fuel natural forest fires and keep the flames low to the ground.

GRAPHIC

Sources: National Forest Service; Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact; and Tom Zeller and John Pappasian / *The New York Times* (adapted and taken from a larger set of graphics that accompanied the article)

## Multiple-Choice Questions

**Directions** (7–16): Select the best suggested answer to each question and write its number in the space provided on the answer sheet. The questions may help you think about ideas and information you might want to use in your writing. You may return to these questions anytime you wish.

- 7 According to the author, one result of the Big Burn in 1910 was that the Forest Service adopted a policy of
- (1) gradually removing dead trees from dry areas
  - (2) quickly extinguishing all fires
  - (3) routinely setting small, controlled fires
  - (4) occasionally thinning out healthy trees
- 8 As used in line 26, “purging” most nearly means
- (1) cleansing
  - (2) damaging
  - (3) alarming
  - (4) frightening
- 9 In saying that it is “not correct to say a forest is destroyed by fire” (lines 30 and 31), Mr. Wiebe implies that
- (1) most fires could be prevented
  - (2) fire is less destructive than smoke
  - (3) few forest animals are harmed by fire
  - (4) some fires should be allowed to burn
- 10 The author implies that one result of the practice of suppressing forest fires is that, eventually,
- (1) trees become more resistant to fire
  - (2) the public loses interest in fire prevention
  - (3) forest fires do more damage
  - (4) more fires occur outside of forests
- 11 Lindon Wiebe’s comment that “what we can do is pretty small compared to what Mother Nature wants to do” (lines 57 and 58) emphasizes the capacity of nature to
- (1) inspire
  - (2) adapt
  - (3) confuse
  - (4) destroy
- 12 What question is at the center of the disagreement about logging?
- (1) How can logging national forests be made less difficult?
  - (2) How can data about logging and forests be made more reliable?
  - (3) What is the effect of logging on the health of forests?
  - (4) Who should pay for the logging of the national forests?
- 13 The author implies that the primary purpose of prescribed burns is to
- (1) remove excess growth
  - (2) train firefighters
  - (3) educate the public
  - (4) research forest ecology
- 14 The irrigation system shown at the right of the graphic is an illustration of what practice?
- (1) removing the oldest trees
  - (2) diverting natural waterways
  - (3) stifling fires
  - (4) raising cattle
- 15 According to the graphic, houses in forests can be made somewhat safer if builders
- (1) cover roofs with asphalt shingles
  - (2) use small logs for outer walls
  - (3) enclose areas under the houses
  - (4) situate houses on slopes
- 16 All of the practices on the graphic are closely related to
- (1) slowing economy
  - (2) changing climate
  - (3) decreasing population
  - (4) increasing development

After you have finished these questions, turn to page 5. Review **The Situation** and read **Your Task** and the **Guidelines**. Use scrap paper to plan your response. Then write your response to Part B, beginning on page 7 of your essay booklet.



COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN ENGLISH

SESSION ONE

Wednesday, June 18, 2003 — 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., only

ANSWER SHEET

Session One – Essay A \_\_\_\_\_  
Essay B \_\_\_\_\_

Session Two – Essay A \_\_\_\_\_  
Essay B \_\_\_\_\_

Total Essay Score

Session One –  
A–Multiple Choice \_\_\_\_\_  
B–Multiple Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Session Two –  
A–Multiple Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Total Multiple Choice

Final Score

Tear Here

Student ..... Sex:  Male  Female

School ..... Grade ..... Teacher .....

Write your answers to the multiple-choice questions for Part A and Part B on this answer sheet.

Part A

Part B

1 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

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HAND IN THIS ANSWER SHEET WITH YOUR ESSAY BOOKLET,  
SCRAP PAPER, AND EXAMINATION BOOKLET.

Your essay responses for Part A and Part B should be written in the essay booklet.

I do hereby affirm, at the close of this examination, that I had no unlawful knowledge of the questions or answers prior to the examination and that I have neither given nor received assistance in answering any of the questions during the examination.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Tear Here

Tear Here

Tear Here