

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA
Peperiksaan Semester Kedua
Sidang 1986/87

HEK 202 - Bahasa Inggeris Maju I

Tarikh: 16 April 1987

Masa: 9.00 pagi - 12.00 t/hari
(3 Jam)

Answer all FOUR(4) questions.

1.

SPEAK, MEMORY

Few things indeed have I known in the way of emotion or appetite, ambition or achievement, that could surpass in richness and strength the excitement of entomological exploration. From the very first it has a great many intertwinling facets. One of them was the acute desire to be done, since any companion, no matter how quiet, interfered with the concentrated enjoyment of my mania. Its gratification admitted of no compromise or exception. Already when I was ten, tutors and governesses knew that the morning was mine and cautiously kept away.

In this connection, I remember the visit of a schoolmate, a boy of whom I was very fond and with whom I had excellent fun. He arrived one summer night from a town some fifty miles away. His father had recently perished in an accident, the family was ruined and the stouthearted lad, not being able to afford the price of a railway ticket, had bicycled all those miles to spend a few days with me.

On the morning following his arrival, I did everything I could to get out of the house for my morning hike without his knowing where I had gone. Breakfastless, with hysterical haste, I gathered my net, pillboxes, sailor cap, and escaped through the window. Once in the forest, I was safe; but still I walked on, my calves quaking, my eyes full of scalding tears, the whole of me twitching with shame and self-disgust, as I visualized my poor friend, with his long pale face and black tie, moping in the hot garden--patting the panting dogs for want of something better to do, and trying hard to justify my absence to himself.

Let me look at my demon objectively. With the exception of my parents, no one really understood my obsession, and it was many years before I met a fellow-sufferer. One of the first things I learned was not to depend on others for the growth of my collection. Aunts, however, kept making me ridiculous presents--such as Denton mounts of resplendent but really quite ordinary insects. Our country doctor, with whom I had left the pupae of a rare moth when I went on a journey abroad, wrote me that everything had hatched finely; but in reality a mouse had got at the precious pupae, and upon my return the deceitful old man produced some common Tortoise-shell butterflies, which, I presume, he had hurriedly caught in his garden and popped into the breeding cage as plausible substitutes (so *he* thought). Better than he, was an enthusiastic kitchen boy who would sometimes borrow my equipment and come back two hours later in triumph with a bagful of seething invertebrate life and several additional items. Loosening the mouth of the net which he had tied up with a string, he would pour out his cornucopian spoil--a mass of grasshoppers, some sand, the two parts of a mushroom he had thriftily plucked on the way home, more grasshoppers, more sand, and one battered Cabbage butterfly.

I also found out very soon that an entomologist indulging in his quiet quest was apt to provoke strange reactions in other creatures. How often, when a picnic had been arranged, and I would be self-consciously trying to get my humble implements unnoticed into the tar-smelling charabanc (a tar preparation was used to keep flies away from the horses) or the tea-smelling Opel convertible (benzine forty years ago smelled that way), some cousin or aunt of mine would remark: "Must you *really* take that net with you? Can't you enjoy yourself like a normal boy? Don't you think you are spoiling everybody's pleasure?" Near a sign *Nach Rodenlaube*, at Bad Kissingen, Bavaria, just as I was about to join for a long walk my father and majestic old Muromtsev (who, four years before, in 1906, had been President of the first Russian Parliament), the latter turned his marble head toward me, a vulnerable boy of eleven, and said with his famous solemnity: "Come with us by all means, but do not chase butterflies, child. It mars the rhythm of the walk." On a path above the Black Sea, in the Crimea, among shrubs in waxy bloom, in March, 1919, a bow-legged Bolshevik sentry attempted to arrest me for signaling (with my net, he said) to a British warship. In the summer of 1929, every time I walked through a village in the Eastern Pyrenees, which I was exploring lepidopterologically, and happened to look back, I would see in my wake the villagers frozen in the various attitudes my passage had caught them in, as if I were Sodom and they Lot's wife. A decade later, in the Maritime Alps, I once noticed the grass undulate in a serpentine way behind me because a fat rural policeman was wriggling after

me on his belly to find out if I were not trapping song birds. America has shown even more of this morbid interest in my doings than other countries have--perhaps because I was in my forties when I came here to live, and the older the man, the queerer he looks with a butterfly net in his hand. Stern farmers have drawn my attention to *No Fishing* signs; from cars passing me on the highway have come wild howls of derision; sleepy dogs, though unmindful of the worst bum, have perked up and come at me, snarling; tiny tots have pointed me out to their puzzled mammas; broadminded vacationists have asked me whether I was catching bugs for bait; and one morning on a wasteland, lit by tall yuccas in bloom, near Santa Fe, a big, black mare followed me for more than a mile.

Vladimir Nabokov

- (a) Explain the meaning of each of the words underlined in the passage above using contextual clues and/or word analysis:

- i. entomological exploration
- ii. intertwinling facets
- iii. stouthearted
- iv. obsession
- v. resplendent
- vi. cornucopian

Include in your explanation the sentence or sentences, phrases or words which helped you derive the meaning of each given words.

(12 marks)

- (b) Describe with specific reference to supporting evidence, the writer's attitude towards his hobby.

(4 marks)

- (c) What does the word "demon" refer to in the fourth paragraph? Use clues from the same paragraph to demonstrate how you arrive at your conclusion.

(4 marks)

- (d) The writer's passion does not prevent him from being amusing--not only about others but also about himself. Point out some example of self-irony. How do we know that he is nevertheless serious?

(4 marks)

.../4

- (e) Our country doctor, with whom I had left the pupae of a rare moth when I went on a journey abroad, wrote me that everything had hatched finely; but in reality a mouse has got at the precious pupae, and upon my return the deceitful old man produced some common Tortoise-shell butterflies, which, I presume, he has hurriedly caught in his garden and popped into the breeding cage as plausible substitutes (so *he* thought).

Using the text attack skills discussed in class,

- i. Identify the nature of difficulty contained in the sentence above.
 - ii. Describe how you would go about explaining this complex sentence to a less fluent reader of English.
- (4 marks)
- (f) In your own words supply the most probable thesis statement of the essay.
- (2 marks)

2. It is hard to provide and cook so simple and clean a diet as will not offend the imagination; but this, I think, is to be fed when we feed the body; they should both sit down at the same table. Yet perhaps this may be done. The fruits eaten temperately need not make us ashamed of our appetites, not interrupt the worthiest pursuits. But put an extra condiment into your dish, and it will poison you. It is not worth the while to live by rich cookery. Most men would feel shame if caught preparing with their own hands precisely such a dinner, whether of animal or vegetable food, as is every day prepared for them by others. Yet till this is otherwise we are not civilized, and, if gentlemen and ladies, are not true men and women. This certainly suggests what change is to be made. It may be vain to ask why the imagination will not be reconciled to flesh and fat. I am satisfied that it is not. Is it not a reproach that man is a carnivorous animal? True, he can and does live, in a great measure, by preying on other animals; but this is a miserable way--as any one who will go to snaring rabbits, or slaughtering lambs, may learn--and he will be regarded as a benefactor of his race who shall teach man to confine himself to a more innocent and wholesome diet. Whatever my own practice may be, I have no doubt that it is a part of the destiny of the human race, in its gradual improvement, to leave off eating animals, as surely as the savage tribes have left off eating each other when they came in contact with the more civilized.

Henry David Thoreau

- (a) Discuss the passage above in terms of level of difficulty, development of central idea, sequencing, style, meaning and anything else that seems significant to you. Provide specific examples from the passage in support of your answer.

(15 marks)

- (b) Discuss the basic assumptions behind reading, that is the role of the writer, the text and the reader. What kind of interplay goes on between the three elements in order for effective reading to occur or not to occur. Relate your discussion to Thoreau's passage.

(10 marks)

3. You wish to write a research paper on a topic other than the one you attempted during coursework. Describe, with examples, and justify each of the steps involved in the complete process of writing a research paper on the topic that you have selected.

(25 marks)

4. Write a business letter. You are free to choose your own content for the letter. State and explain (with reference to your example) the criteria necessary for a good letter.

(20 marks)

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