

NAME
SCHOOL

INDEX NUMBER
DATE

COMPREHENSION

1. 2006 P2

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.

During the last couple of decades, the developing world has made enormous economic progress. This can be seen most clearly in the rising trend of incomes and consumption: between 1965 and 1985 consumption per capita in the developing world went up by almost 70 percent. Broader measures of well-being confirm this picture—life expectancy, child mortality, and educational attainment have all improved markedly.

Against that background of achievement, it is all the more staggering—and all the more shameful—that more than one billion people in the developing world are living in poverty. Progress in raising average incomes however welcome, must not distract attention from this massive and continuing burden of poverty.

The same is true of the broader measures of well-being. Life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa is just 50 years, in Japan it is almost 80 more than 110 million children in the developing world lack access even to primary education while in the developed world, anything less than universal enrollment would rightly be regarded as unacceptable. The starkness of these contrasts attests to the continuity toll of human deprivation.

It should be noted that even in the developing world, poverty levels differ from region to region, country to country and even location to location within same country. For example, nearly half of the world's poor live in South Asia, a region that accounts for less than one third of the world's population. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for a smaller, but still highly disproportionate share of global poverty— Within regions and countries, the poor are often concentrated in certain places: in rural areas with high population densities. Often, the problems of poverty, population, and the environment are intertwined; earlier patterns of development and pressure of rapidly expanding populations mean that many of the poor live in areas of acute environmental degradation.

It is also true that the weight of poverty falls heavily on certain groups. Women in general are disadvantaged. This is because in poor households, they often shoulder more of the workload than men, are less educated, and have less access to remunerative activities. Children, too suffer disproportionately, and the future quality of their lives is compromised by inadequate nutrition, health care, and education. This is especially true quality of their lives is compromised by inadequate nutrition, health care, and education. This is especially true for girls, for their primary school enrolment rates are less than 50 percent in many African countries.

Obviously, reducing poverty is the fundamental objective of the economic development in any country. It is estimated that in 1985, more than one billion people in the developing world lived in absolute poverty. Clearly then, economic development has a long

way to go. Knowledge about the poor is essential if governments are to adopt sound development strategies and more effective policies for attacking poverty.

How many poor are there? Where do they live? What are their precise economic circumstances? Answering these questions is the first step toward understanding the impact of economic policies on the poor.

- a) What evidence does the author give to show that incomes and consumption trends are rising in the developing world?
(2marks)

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- b) How does the author feel about the progress made so far by the developing world?
(2marks)

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- c) Why does the author mention Japan?
(1mark)

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- d) What is odd about the poverty situation in South Asia?
(2marks)

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- e) Explain the relationship between poverty and a high population
(3marks)

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f) Rewrite the following sentence in the singular
“They are also less educated, and have less access to remunerative activity”
(1mark)

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g) Why is a girl doubly disadvantaged in a poor country?
(3marks)

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h) In about 55 words, summarise, the main argument of the author
(4marks)

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i) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage
(2marks)

Staggering
Compromised

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2. 2007 P2

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow

You may think that expecting food to change your life is too much to ask. But have you considered that eating the right food at the right time will increase energy, help you manage weight and ward off major illness?

Researchers have found that eating a meal with plenty of protein leaves you feeling more satisfied for longer when compared to a meal loaded with low - quality carbohydrates. Your body takes longer to digest protein, leading to a gradual increase in blood sugar.

The high protein breakfast will therefore carry you through the morning and more importantly, through your tea break, many high carbohydrate meals are absorbed quickly and send blood sugar on a roller coaster ride, taking your appetite with it and depleting your energy.

Many foods contain antioxidants, but fruits and vegetables may be the richest source. Behaving like chemical warriors, antioxidants neutralize molecules known as free radicals before they damage arteries and body cells. This protects you from heart diseases, high blood pressure, cancer and diabetes. You can now see why antioxidant foods should be consumed in generous portions

Actually, forget pills – antioxidants work best when consumed in foods. In fact, nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. It's less daunting than it sounds: a portion equals a piece of fruit, three tablespoons of cooked vegetables or a glass of fresh juice.

And do you desire to relive yourself of some baggage? Calcium is the latest weight – loss star to appear on the scene. Scientists stumbled on its magic by accident. From a study that measured the blood pressure of obese people. It was discovered that those who took one large tub of yoghurt a day in their diet lost an average of eleven pounds of body fat in one year, even though they did not eat less.

A follow-up study found that people on a high calcium diet lost weight and fat than did people on a low – calcium diet - and again, both consumed the same number of calories. Researchers believe calcium encourages fat cells to stop “getting fatter” instead, the cells burn extra fat without you having to go anywhere near a gymnasium.

It probably sounds strange to say that you can eat more in order to lose weight. Obviously, the question you should ask immediately is, “Eat more of what?” We are talking about foods rich in fibre. They have what is referred to as low- energy density; that translates to few calories relative to weight. This means that you can down a mountain without fear of calories overload.

Fibre also aids weight loss because it's filling. Most high - fibre foods take a lot of chewing, triggering your body's fullness sensors. Moreover, you absorb the food more slowly so you feel full longer.

Will the wonders of food ever cease? Not if researchers in nutrition keep their pace. Let them keep the good news flowing- such as the fact that we don't have to starve ourselves to lose weight and keep diseases at bay.

(Adapted from *Reader's Digest*, January 2004)

(a) From the information given in the first paragraph, how can you improve your life? (1 mark)

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(b) In not more than 35 words, summarize the effects of eating carbohydrates (4 marks)

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(c) Explain how free radicals contribute to the occurrence of high blood pressure and cancer (2 marks)

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(d) In what two forms can antioxidants be consumed (2 marks)

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(e) In fact, nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruit and vegetable a day.”

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(f) What is the attitude of the author towards calcium as a weight – cutting measure? (3 marks)

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(g) According to the passage, how can you use up excess fat? (2 marks)

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(h) Identify an instance of irony in the passage (2 marks)

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(i) Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage (3 marks)
Daunting

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Baggage
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Down a mountain
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3. 2008 P 2

For Africans living abroad, nothing is more irritating than the constant diet of negative news on Africa. The only silver lining is that Africa is way down the list of news importance for the Western media. Most of the time Africa is ignored but when it does make it into the newspapers, radio or TV, then it is always portrayed as sinking in corruption, wars, famine and disease. If you set out to find a positive story on Africa, you may have to wait until your grand children have grown old.

What is more unfortunate is that whereas the rest of the world is divided into nations, Africa is lumped into one big sorry mass. A civil war in a tiny country in Africa elicits screaming headlines such as “Africa returns to barbarity”. Civil wars in Europe are not European civil wars but civil ears in Bosnia, Sebia and so on. No one bothers to mention that out of Africa’s 54 countries, only two may be engaged in civil wars. That means 52 countries are peaceful. But the impression you get from the Western media is that all of Africa is at war with itself.

The same goes for diseases, especially aids. Hardly does a week go by without the ‘experts’ from the West predicting how Africa’s entire population will be wiped out in fifty years’ time. If all the predictions made about the impact of Aids had been correct, most African countries would have been entirely depopulated by now.

According to the Western media, Africa is corrupt . All of Africa, all the time. It is interesting to note that in America, for example, only the executives of a given company are said to be corrupt while all African leader are seen as being irredeemably corrupt.

The point being put across is that Africa is guilty unless proven innocent. Western journalists assigned to cover Africa are in most cases the most junior and the least experienced in the organization. They are given this version of a ‘Hopeless Continent’ for so long that when

they land in any African country, they immediately set out to confirm their prejudices. And you can always find what you are looking for.

The situation is similar to the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. In Africa, Western journalists set out to find corruption, decay and mismanagement. And if they cannot find it, they will invent it on the basis that “ it must be there somewhere”

The causes of this generalized negative view of Africa are complex. When you confront Western journalists, they deny that their view of Africa is prejudiced. They are probably telling the truth because they report what they see- but they see what they want to see. And what they want to see, subconsciously is a version of backward, primitive and uncivilized Africa.

So, while we feel irritated and even angered by the Western media’s portrayal of Africa, we must remember that many journalists cannot help but see Africa the way they programmed to do. The only way this can change is if the programming is changed. But how do you go about doing so?

The first step is to create space for dialogue between the Western media and Africans. It is during such discussions that Africans will be able to tell their side of the story. If this happens, then the Western media will see Africa as we do –a glorious continent full of promise but going through a rough time at present.

(Adapted from African Business, May 2004)

a) What is the likelihood of finding a positive story on Africa?
(2marks)

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b) Why are Bosnia and Serbia mentioned?
(3marks)

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c) Why is the word “experts” on the third paragraph put within quotation marks?
(3marks)

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d) Rewrite the following sentence to begin: Had....
“If all the predictions made about the impact of Aids had been correct, most African countries would have been entirely depopulated by now.”
(1mark)

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e) According to the passage is Africa more corrupt than America? Explain your answer.
(3marks)

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f) Give two reasons why African stories are mainly assigned to the most junior and inexperienced journalists
(4marks)

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g) How can we tell that the author is an African?
(2marks)

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h) Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage:
(3marks)
Silver lining

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Sorry

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Irredeemably
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4. 2009 P2

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow.

In the eighteenth century, the field of science was virtually closed to women. In France, the countess wrote a highly regarded book about Newtonian physics, built its very excellence spoke against her. The manuscript was so good that it was widely assumed that it had been written by the countess's tutor rather than by the countess herself. Sadly enough, the tutor Samuel Konig, did nothing to discourage the rumours about the book's authorship. Instead, he took full credit for the countess efforts. In England, the leading nation in science, the situation was worse. Women were strictly prohibited from admission to scientific societies. Indeed, the English denied women access to all forms of scientific study.

Italy, however, was something of an exception to the general European rule, and a number of provincial scientific societies did admit women. It is perhaps not surprising then, that the one woman who crashed the barriers erected against her gender was an Italian, Laura Bassi (1711 – 1778). Bassi actually became a respected scientific figure at a time when women were generally thought to be too intellectually limited for the rigors of scientific study. By all accounts, she thoroughly disapproved the sexist notion that women and the sciences were opposed to one another.

Bassi was one of the lucky women of her era. Her father was an enlightened lawyer in Bologna, Italy, who believed that women should be educated. Thus, young Laura was schooled by the family physician, Gaetano Tacconi. By the age of twenty she was familiar with the scientific concepts of the times, particularly Newtonian physics. Because her father encouraged her to display her erudition at social gatherings, Bassi's reputation as a learned woman grew. Tested by a group of professors and scholars gatherings, Bassi's reputation as a learned woman grew. Tested by a group of professors and scholars anxious to prove that a woman could not possibly be so clever, Bassi astonished the skeptics with her intelligence, learning and eloquence. Local scholars were so impressed that in 1731 they invited her to join

the Bologna Institute of sciences and to study for a degree at the University of Bologna. On May 12, 1732, Bassi became only the second woman ever to gain an academic degree. A few months later, she became the world's first female professor.

But despite her breakthrough, those in charge of the University of Bologna had very rigid ideas about what Bassi could or could not do as a professor. For example, she had no say over her schedule. To the University's leaders, she was an intriguing oddity. They might trot her out for display to curious visiting scholars, but they would not let her lecture on a regular basis. Nor, for that matter, could she pursue her own tudies or research. Still, Bassi was not an easy woman to control, and to a degree, she managed to go her own way.

In 1749, to escape university restrictions, Bassi began offering private lessons in experimental physics. She also began championing Newtonian physics at a time when it was relatively unknown in Italy and she promoted Newton's finding about gravity even in the face of widespread intellectual resistance. In addit..., Bassi corresponded with the leading physicist of the day. Thus she kept her country abreast of new scientific theories.

In 1776 when Bassi was sixty-five, the university acknowledged her contributions to scientific thought by bestowing upon her an unheard of honour for a woman: She was appointed chair of experimental physics, and her husband, the father of her eight children, was appointed her assistant.

Contrary to expectation, Bassi's achievements did not pave the way for other women. This is because many of her male colleagues had been disturbed by her extraordinary progress and were reluctant to let any other female follow in her footsteps. After Bassi's death in 1778, it took more than a century, and the arrival of Marie Curie, for another woman to find herself at home in the male-dominated world of science.

Adapted from Reading for Results by Laraine Fleming (2008) New York: Houghton Mifflin

(a) Why was it widely assumed that the contess's tutor had written the book on Newtonian physics?

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(b) In what way was France better than England in the treatment of women interested in the sciences? (3 marks)

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(c) Rewrite the following sentence using the word "surprisingly". (1 mark)

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(d) According to the passage, what was a professor expected to do? (3 marks)

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(e) For what selfish purpose did the university of Bologna use Bassi? (2 marks)

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(f) What evidence is given to show that Bassi was difficult to control? (3 marks)

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(g) Why do you think the author mentions the fact that Bassi had eight children? (3 marks)

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(h) Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage. (3 marks)
Eruditing

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To a degree

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Find herself at home
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5. 2010 P2

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow,

Moving to a new country can be an exciting, even exhilarating experience. In a new environment, you somehow feel more **alive**: seeing new sights, eating new food, hearing the foreign sounds of a new language, and feeling a different climate against your skin stimulate your senses as never before. Soon, however, this sensory bombardment becomes sensory overload. Suddenly, new experiences seem stressful rather than stimulating, and delight turns into discomfort. This is the phenomenon known as culture shock. Culture shock is more than jet lag or homesickness, and it affects nearly everyone who enters a new culture - tourists, business travellers, diplomats and students alike. Although not everyone experiences culture shock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.

In the first stage, you are excited by your new environment. You experience some simple difficulties such as trying to use the telephone or public transportation, but you consider these small challenges that you can quickly overcome. Your feelings about the new culture are positive, so you are eager to make contact with people and to try new foods.

Sooner or later, differences in behaviour and customs become more noticeable to you. This is the second stage of culture shock. Because you do not know the social customs of the new culture, you may find it difficult to make friends. For instance, you do not understand how to make "small talk," so it is hard to carry on a casual, get-acquainted conversation. One day in the school cafeteria, you overhear a conversation. You understand all the words, but you do not understand the meaning. Why is everyone laughing? Are they laughing at you or at some joke that you did not understand? Also, you aren't always sure how to act while shopping. Is this store self-service or should you wait for a clerk to assist you? If you buy a sweater in the wrong size, can you exchange it? These are not minor challenges; they are major frustrations.

In the third stage, you no longer have positive feelings about the new culture. You feel that you have made a mistake in coming here. Making friends hasn't been easy, so you begin to

feel lonely and isolated. Now you want to be with familiar people and eat familiar food. You begin to spend most of your free time with students from your home country, and you eat in restaurants that serve your native food. In fact, food becomes an **obsession**, and you spend a lot of time planning, shopping for, and cooking food from home.

You know that you are in the fourth stage of culture shock when you have negative feelings about almost everything. In this stage, you actively reject the new culture. You become critical, suspicious, and irritable. You believe that people are unfriendly, that your landlord is trying to cheat you, that your teachers do not like you, and that the food is making you sick. In fact, you may actually develop stomach-aches, headaches, sleeplessness, lethargy, or other physical symptoms.

Finally, you reach the fifth stage. As your language skills improve, you begin to have some success in meeting people and in **negotiating** situations. You are able to exchange the sweater that was too small, and you can successfully chat about the weather with a stranger on the bus. Your self-confidence grows. After realizing that you cannot change your surroundings, you begin to accept the differences and tolerate them. For instance the food will never be as tasty as the food in your home country, but you are now able to eat and sometimes even enjoy many dishes. You may not like the way some people in your host country dress or behave in public, but you do not regard their clothes and behaviour as wrong -just different.

In conclusion, nearly everyone moving to a new country feels some degree of culture shock. Symptoms may vary, and not all people experience all five stages. Newcomers with a strong support group may feel at home immediately in the new culture, while others may take months to feel comfortable. Staying in touch with friends and family, keeping a positive attitude, and, above all, learning the language as soon as possible are ways to overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to life in a new land.

From: *Writing Academic English*, Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue, Pearson Education, Longman (2006)

(a) According to the passage, what is the meaning of culture shock? (2 marks)

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(b) Identify any **three** factors that can cause culture shock. (3 marks)

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(c) What evidence does the author give to show "you understand all the words, but you do not understand the meaning"? (2 marks)

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(d) Give any **three** features that characterize a person in the worst state of culture shock. (3 marks)

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(e) In note form, give the difficulties experienced in the second stage of culture shock. (4 marks)

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(f) Why is making friends helpful in overcoming culture shock? (2 marks)

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(g) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage: (3 marks)
alive

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obsession

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negotiating

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(h) Staying in touch with friends and family, keeping a positive attitude, and, above all, learning the language as soon as possible are ways to overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to life in a new land.

(Rewrite the sentence above without changing the meaning. Begin: You) (1 mark)

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6. 2012 Q1 P2

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Some fifteen thousand years ago an artist drew on the walls of a cave in Spain a picture of his Stone-Age neighbour robbing a bees' nest of its golden store. In the centuries that have since gone by, no one has ever discovered or invented a purer and sweeter food than honey.

Because of its chief ingredient, Levulose, or "fruit sugar", honey is almost twice as sweet as cane sugar. Table sugar, like salt, has but one taste. Every honey has its own. It would take an epicure's lifetime to discover, sample and enjoy all the possible vintages that bees distil from the thousands of species of nectar-bearing plants.

Honey is the purest of all foods. When properly ripened, its concentration of sugar is so high that bacteria cannot live in it for more than an hour or two. It is said that in one of the royal Egyptian tombs was found honey that was thirty-three hundred years old - darkened and thickened by time, but pure honey still. No knavery can corrupt honey without detection. If diluted with water, it ferments. Nor can the wax of the honeycomb, product of the bees' own glands, be successfully imitated.

This ancient and mysterious food is one of the wonders of the world, the product of an intricate relation between bees; the high peak of insect evolution, and flowers, the loveliest part of the green world. Nature has adapted the forms of flowers to entice bees, and the bodies of bees to fit and pollinate the flowers and to use their pollen and nectar. Some ten thousand species of flowers would be extinct but for the bees, and bees could not live without the flowers.

The honey bee is the most faithful and provident of the flowers' lovers. While a butterfly or a bird would move from flower to flower, a honey-bee is loyal to one sort of flower at a time.

So she brings to each bloom none but its specific pollen, and she makes but one kind of honey at a time.

At the height of the nectar flow in late spring and early summer, bees literally kill themselves with work. It is the destiny of every good worker to die flying, straggling to bring back one last load to the hive. It takes about three hundred pounds of honey just to keep one colony alive; thus to gather a surplus, so that you and I may have some, the hive's workers must fly many million miles more.

Each drop of nectar is an ocean holding minerals, enzymes and foods. It contains traces of iron, copper, manganese, potassium, sodium, phosphorous, proteins and vitamins. This explains why many diabetics can tolerate honey but not table sugar, and why it helps babies to retain calcium and so grow stronger limbs and better teeth.

Only certain plants with truly exquisite nectars produce a honey you would want to eat. Many others yield nectar from which are made dark-coloured, strong flavoured honeys that bakers and confectioners use in immense quantities. Tobacco companies buy millions of pounds of low-grade honey a year for preserving, flavouring, moistening and mellowing tobacco.

Such honeys also go into lotions and cough medicines. For thousands of years connoisseurs have been buying their honey with Discrimination. The ancient Athenians got their most delicate honey from Mt. Hymettis. It was famous because it came from a little wild flower called thyme.

Perfect as it is as a food, honey is more; it is a slow-formed, perfect drop upon a growing tip of evolution. To take that drop upon the tongue is to partake of a sacrament with nature.

(Adapted from *New Horizons in English. A course for secondary schools, Book 4* by Alice Kiai et al, E.A.E. Publishers.

- (a) What amazing fact about honey do we learn from the first paragraph? (2 marks)

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- (b) Why is the bees' nest described as "golden store"? (2 marks)

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- (c) Using information in the third paragraph, summarize the unique qualities of honey in **not more** than fifty words. (4 marks)

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(d) In what ways are bees and flowers interdependent (3marks)

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(e) This ancient and mysterious food is one of the wonders of the world.
(Re-write adding a **question tag**) (1 mark)

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(f) What is the writer's attitude towards the bee?
Give reasons from the passage to support your answer. (3 marks)

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(g) Identify and explain the **metaphor** in the seventh paragraph. (3 marks)

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(h) Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage.

Chief (1mark)

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Knavery (1mark)
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