FSP
Vibrant Youngsters Competitions

QUESTION BOOKLET 2026

INTERNATIONAL FSP

ENGLISH LINGUISTICS CONTEST

VOLUME - 24

ACADEMIC CONTESTS AUSTRALIA
ACA

GRADE 7 & 8

VIBRANT YOUNGSTERS

TIME ALLOWED	90 MINUTES
MAXIMUM MARKS	90

INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE EXAMINATION INVIGILATORS

1. Invigilators must be carried out promptly.
2. Don't start attempting the paper until instructed by the invigilator.
3. Carefully recheck your name, father name, school name, address etc. at the bubble sheet / answer sheet.
4. Record all answers on the bubble sheet only. select best answer from the four given options and mark only one option in each question.
5. Use blue / black ink to fill up the circles for your answers on the bubble sheet use of lead pencil is not allowed.
6. Use of any helping material including cell phones and electronic devices is strictly prohibited.
7. Every correct answer earns three points. there would be negative marking. one point would be deducted for every incorrect answer.
8. Candidates may not leave the examination room unescorted for any reason, and this includes using the washroom.
9. No materials or electronic devices shall be brought in to the room.
10. There are five categories of the contest as under:

A	Vibrant youngsters Grade 1 & 2
B	Vibrant youngsters Grade 3 & 4
C	Vibrant youngsters Grade 5 & 6
D	Vibrant youngsters Grade 7 & 8
E	Vibrant youngsters Grade 9 & 10 / O-levels

11. Only registered students can participate in the contest.
12. No candidate shall take out of the hall any answer book(s) or part of an answer book, whether used or unused, or other supplied material.
13. If a participant does not understand a word or phrase on the exam paper, neither examiner nor invigilator is permitted to answer.
14. for information about upcoming contests or providing valuable feedback, please visit **www.fspcompetitions.org**
15. Any academic misconduct or malpractice must be reported to FSP vibrant youngsters at **info@fspcompetitions.org**

Read the following poem carefully and answer questions 1 through 6.

The Architect of Echoes



I built a tower out of things unsaid,

Mortared with silence, roofed with heavy doubt,

Where phantom footsteps dance around my head,

And guttering candles lock the twilight out.

The plumb line swings, an unconvincing tongue,

Trying to prove the heavy walls are straight—

But everything is warped that we postponed when young,

And gravity is just another word for fate.

I trace the blueprints of an uncarved stone,

The corridors we drew but never walked,

To find that though I stand here quite alone,

The rooms are crowded with the way we talked.

Q1. **The primary extended metaphor developed throughout the poem compares unexpressed emotions and regrets to:**

A. A crumbling natural landscape eroding over time.

B. An unstable, physically constructed building or tower.

C. A chaotic, loud courtroom trial where no one listens.

D. A sinking ship abandoned by its original crew.

Q2. **In the context of the poem, what does the phrase "guttering candles lock the twilight out" most likely imply?**

A. The speaker is actively trying to prevent the passage of physical time.

B. The speaker's failing, dimming perspective is isolating them from the outside world.

C. The speaker prefers to work on architectural blueprints during the night.

D. The tower is structurally sound enough to withstand external weather conditions.

Q3. **The line "The plumb line swings, an unconvincing tongue" utilizes personification to suggest that:**

A. The speaker's tools are old, broken, and completely unusable.

B. External measurements and logical reassurances fail to make the speaker's internal life feel stable.

C. The speaker has forgotten how to speak eloquently to others.

D. The truth of the architecture is being intentionally hidden by a dishonest narrator.

Q4. **What psychological state is highlighted by the speaker tracing the "blueprints of an uncarved stone"?**

A Pride in artistic achievements that have withstood the test of time.

B Deep fixation on potential futures or choices that were never actually realized.

C A sudden desire to learn a new trade like stone masonry.

D Relief that a difficult and exhausting project was abandoned early.

Q5. **The paradox in the final stanza ("though I stand here quite alone, / The rooms are crowded...") emphasizes that:**

A. The speaker is experiencing auditory hallucinations due to isolation.

B. The physical tower has been overrun by unexpected visitors.

C. Memories of past conversations possess a heavy, overwhelming presence that fills the speaker's isolation.

D. The speaker's architectural designs were meant to host massive social gatherings.

Q6. **Which option best captures the nuanced, overarching tone of this text?**

A. Resigned and analytical

B. Bitter and confrontational

C. Melancholic and introspective

D. Whimsical and nostalgic

Read the following short story carefully and answer questions 7 through 12.

The Alchemist's Mirror



Master Kenji's workshop did not smell of gold, though the townspeople swore he made it by the bucketful. It smelled of

vinegar, damp earth, and roasted copper. Kenji was a small man who wore spectacles thick enough to deflect pebbles, and he possessed a silence so profound it felt heavy, like an extra piece of furniture in the room.

I was his apprentice, brought in because my uncle owed him a debt. My days were an endless cycle of grinding charcoal, washing glass vials, and keeping the furnace at an unchanging, dull-red glow. I despised it. I wanted the lightning of transformation; he gave me the slow torture of patience.

One evening, a wealthy merchant smashed through our door, holding a silver mirror that had turned completely black. "Fix it!" the merchant demanded, throwing a purse of gold coins on the counter. "It is a family heirloom, and its reflection has died."

Kenji did not touch the gold. He picked up the blackened mirror, brought it close to his thick spectacles, and breathed onto the glass. He didn't scrub it. He didn't cast a spell. He simply set it

down in the direct path of the furnace's dull glow. "The mirror is not dead," Kenji murmured. "It is merely honest."

The merchant scoffed. "Honest? It's a dark void! I see nothing!"

"You see sulfur," Kenji replied evenly. "You live near the hot springs, yet you keep your finest silver exposed to the air. The metal did not break; it simply reacted to its environment. Leave it in the heat of this room overnight. The sulfur will release its hold."

Irritated by the lack of magic, the merchant snatched his gold back and stormed out, leaving the mirror behind in disgust.

I looked at Kenji, furious on his behalf. "Why didn't you perform the ritual? You could have taken his gold and pretended it was magic!"

Kenji looked through me with his massive eyes. "You watch the flames, boy, but you do not comprehend the heat," he said softly. "The merchant wanted a miracle to cure his negligence. True

alchemy is not changing iron into gold; it is understanding why the iron changed in the first place. If you only look for magic, you will remain blind to the laws that govern the world."

Turning back to my mortar and pestle, the heavy silence of the room cracked open. The grinding of charcoal no longer felt like a punishment; it felt like a conversation with the hidden structures of reality.

Q7. **What is the primary thematic purpose of describing Kenji's workshop as smelling of "vinegar, damp earth, and roasted copper" rather than gold?**

A. To establish that Kenji is an unsuccessful alchemist who is failing financially.

B. To contrast the romanticized myth of alchemy with its grounded, gritty, and scientific reality.

C. To show that the apprentice is terrible at keeping the workshop clean.

D. To foreshadow that the merchant's mirror was ruined by chemicals.

Q8. **The narrator's initial frustration with his apprenticeship stems from a conflict between:**

A. His desire for immediate, dramatic results and the slow, disciplined reality of the craft.

B. His loyalty to his uncle and his intense dislike of Master Kenji's personality.

C. The low wages he receives and the high cost of living above the shop.

D. His fear of working with dangerous furnace fires and toxic chemical fumes.

Q9. When Kenji says the mirror is "merely honest," he means that the black coat on the surface is:

A. A magical curse meant to reveal the merchant's dark, corrupted soul.

B. A natural, predictable physical consequence of the environment it was kept in.

C. A fake layer of paint applied by a deceptive merchant trying to trick them.

D. Proof that the silver used to make the mirror was entirely low-grade and counterfeit.

Q10. In this story, the "blackened mirror" serves as a multi-layered symbol for:

A. The inevitable economic downfall of greedy merchants.

B. The hidden truths of nature that require patience and insight to uncover rather than superficial fixes.

C. The apprentice's total lack of skill in maintaining glass laboratory vials.

D. A literal window into a dark, alternative magical universe.

Q11. **Kenji's reprimand, "You watch the flames, boy, but you do not comprehend the heat," matches which of the following insights?**

A. The apprentice is being reckless and might cause a dangerous fire in the shop.

B. True expertise requires looking past superficial, flashy actions to grasp the underlying principles.

C. The furnace needs to be stoked immediately to save the merchant's mirror.

D. Alchemy can only be taught to those who have an innate resistance to extreme heat.

Q12. **How does the narrator's perspective shift following his epiphany at the end of the text?**

A. He resolves to steal the merchant's mirror and sell it to pay off his uncle's debt.

B. He realizes Kenji is a fraud and decides to quit the apprenticeship immediately.

C. His mundane, repetitive chores transform into meaningful engagements with the laws of nature.

D. He concludes that magic is superior to science and vows to find a new master.

Q13. **Read the following brief observation:**

Before entering the theater for her solo performance, Maya tells her director, "I feel perfectly calm, like a still lake." However, her director notices that she has been unconsciously checking her stage shoes every two minutes for the last hour.

Based on this context, what is most likely true about Maya?

A She is fully confident and entirely prepared for the upcoming show.

B She is experiencing unacknowledged anxiety or nervousness despite her claims.

C She has a severe obsession with footwear and fashion trends.

D She is trying to delay the show because she forgot her lines.

Q14. **Read the dialogue below:**

Arif: "We should use our budget to buy high-end microphones for our podcast project."

Zain: "But if we spend all our money on microphones, we won't have anything left to boost our episodes online so people can actually hear them."

Arif: "What if we buy mid-tier microphones and allocate the remaining thirty percent of the budget to targeted digital promotions?"

What does the resolution of this conversation demonstrate?

A. Arif completely ignored Zain's financial concerns to get what he wanted.

B. They abandoned the project because their budget was entirely insufficient.

C. They utilized collaborative compromise to balance audio quality with project reach.

D. Zain convinced Arif that microphones are completely unnecessary for a podcast.

Q15. **Choose the option that utilizes correct parallel structure to complete the sentence logically:**

The ideal candidate for the structural engineering position must demonstrate an advanced mastery of physics, possess a deep familiarity with local zoning laws, and _____.

A. They must know how to lead dynamic team projects effectively.

B. Exhibit a proven capacity for leading dynamic teamprojects.

C. Excel at leadership of dynamic team projects in an office setting.

D. To lead dynamic team projects with exceptional organizational skill.

Q16. **Read the following statement:**

When the school principal announced that the annual sports gala would be replaced with an extra week of intensive exam preparation, Bilal stood up and loudly clapped his hands, shouting, "Oh, absolutely brilliant! Just what my weekend dreams were made of!"

What is Bilal expressing through his reaction?

A. Sincere enthusiasm and relief regarding his academic future.

B. Thick sarcasm highlighting his deep disappointment with the decision.

C. Direct confusion because he did not hear the announcement clearly.

D. Intense fear of failing his upcoming exams.

Q17. **Read the following text from an explorer's journal:**

Day 42. The rations have dwindled to three dry biscuits and half a flask of brackish water per man. My crew moves like clockwork ghosts, silent and hollow-eyed, their gazes fixed entirely on the blank horizon where the sea meets a sky of iron grey. No one speaks of the shore anymore; to speak of green grass feels like an insult to our present reality.

Based on this excerpt, what can you conclude about the state of the crew?

A. They are highly optimistic about reaching their destination soon.

B. They are physically exhausted, starving, and psychologically despairing.

C. They are furious with the captain and are planning a mutiny.

D. They prefer traveling in grey weather because it keeps the ship cool.

Q18. Select the passage that demonstrates a distinctly ominous or suspenseful tone:

A. The small skiff bounced playfully against the wooden dock, its red paint bright against the brilliant blue of the morning lake.

B. A heavy fog rolled in over the coastline, swallowing the lighthouse whole. Inside the cabin, the old radio suddenly cut to static, followed by three rhythmic, metallic thuds from the cellar door.

C. The kitten pounced wildly on a stray piece of yarn, skidding across the slippery kitchen tiles before tumbling into a soft, purring heap under the table.

D. His critique was a cold masterclass in precision; he didn't raise his voice once, but his quiet words dismantled her confidence item by item until she felt completely exposed.

Q19. **Read the following text and answer the question below:**

While preparing for my dive off the coast of Iceland, I memorized every chart regarding subterranean tectonic rifts: their depths, hydrothermal vent temperatures, and basaltic compositions. Yet, the moment my boots cleared the boat's edge and the freezing, absolute abyss of the North Atlantic closed over my helmet, I realized that a textbook is merely a ghost of the living world.

Which author's purpose is best suggested by the text?

A. To inform the reader about the exact chemical breakdown of basaltic rock formations in Iceland.

B. To describe a personal diving experience to highlight the massive gap between academic study and physical reality.

C. To persuade young students to pursue careers in deep-sea volcanic exploration.

D. To complain about the poor quality and inaccuracies found in modern geography textbooks.

Q20. **Complete the text with the most logical conjunctive adverb:**

The archaeological team discovered that the ancient stone tablet had been severely eroded by centuries of acidic groundwater; _____, they were forced to utilize multi-spectrum digital imaging to reconstruct the faint inscriptions.

A. instead
B. therefore
C. similarly
D. missing

Q21. **Read the following sentence and identify the word or phrase that is completely redundant and should be removed to maximize linguistic efficiency:**

Despite the fact that the experimental aircraft was built using incredibly lightweight composite materials, the heavy weight of the prototype caused it to consume fuel at an alarming rate.

A. experimental aircraft
B. incredibly lightweight
C. the heavy weight of the prototype
D. at an alarming rate

Q22. Select the relative pronoun that best completes the complex sentence:

Dr. Elena Vance, _____ groundbreaking research into bioluminescent deep-sea fungi completely revolutionized organic lighting design, was awarded the global science prize last autumn.

A. whom
B. whose
C. which
D. who has

Q23. **Complete the following verbal analogy:**

Symptom is to Diagnosis as Clue is to _____

A. Mystery
B. Investigation
C. Solution
D. Suspect

Q24. **Look at the source text and compare it to the student's summary.**

"The construction of the Roman aqueducts relied heavily on volcanic pozzolana concrete, which allowed structures to set underwater and retain incredible strength across millennia, effectively outlasting contemporary brick counterparts."

Student's Text: *Ancient Roman aqueducts survived for thousands of years because they were built using a specific volcanic concrete that could harden underwater and maintain massive durability.*

Is the student's text plagiarized?

A No, because the student used completely different words to explain a historical fact.

B Yes, because the student failed to cite Dr. Arthur Pendelton as the original source of this this specific structural insight.

C Yes, because the student copied the phrase "survived for thousands of years" directly from the text.

D No, because historical facts are automatically public domain and never require citation.

Q25. Use context clues to identify the meaning of the underlined word:

*The diplomat's speech was deliberately filled with **equivocal** phrases, leaving both negotiating parties believing he supported their opposing terms, thereby preventing an immediate breakdown of the peace talks.*

A. Clear and emotionally moving

B. Intentionally vague or ambiguous

C. Strongly aggressive and hostile

D. Statistically accurate and verified

Q26. Read the following puzzle scenario:

An ancient vault can only be opened if four specific gears are turned in sequence. Gear A can only turn if Gear B is already moving. Gear C stops turning whenever Gear D moves. If Gear D is currently spinning at maximum speed, which of the following statements must be true?

A. Gear A is spinning rapidly.
B. Gear C is completely stationary.
C. Gear B is forcing Gear A to turn.
D. The vault door is wide open.

Q27. Read the following excerpt from a speech:

"We cannot hope to clean our city's rivers by simply picking up the plastic bottles floating on the surface every Saturday morning. We must look upstream to the chemical plants and manufacturing units that treat our waterways as free dumping grounds."

What is the central or main idea of the speaker's argument?

A. Saturday morning cleanup drives are completely useless and should be banned.

B. Surface litter like plastic bottles does no real damage to aquatic ecosystems.

C. Effective pollution control requires addressing the root systemic causes rather than just cleaning up superficial symptoms.

D. Chemical plants should be relocated away from urban areas immediately.

Q28. **Complete the sentence using flawless parallel structure:**

To successfully execute a deep-space satellite launch, engineers must calculate precise orbital paths, verify atmospheric conditions, and _____.

A. they need to secure reliable backup communication links.

B. secure reliable backup communication links.

C. securing reliable backup communication links is necessary.

D. to secure reliable backup communication links carefully.

Q29. Complete the analogy:

Map is to Territory as Blueprint is to _____

A. Architect
B. Construction
C. Design
D. Edifice

Q30. Read the following brief conversation:

Teacher: "Class, remember that your historical fiction essays are due tomorrow morning."

Rayan: "Is a digital copy submitted at midnight technically considered tomorrow morning?"

What is Rayan attempting to do with his question?

A. Clarify a confusing printing requirement.

B. Exploit a technical linguistic loophole to gain more time for his assignment.

C. Inform the teacher that his home computer is broken.

D. Argue that essays should not be graded on deadlines.

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ANSWER SHEET

GRADE 7 & 8

Q.NO	ANSWER	Q.NO	ANSWER
1	B	16	B
2	A	17	A
3	C	18	A
4	A	19	A
5	B	20	A
6	C	21	A
7	A	22	A
8	B	23	A
9	A	24	B
10	C	25	A
11	A	26	C
12	C	27	C
13	A	28	B
14	C	29	D
15	A	30	A



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