TONBRIDGE SCHOOL

Specimen paper for entry into Year 12

English as an Additional Language

NAME OF CANDIDATE:

SECTION A : Reading Comprehension	**20 minutes (no extra reading time allowed)**
SECTION B : Writing	**40 minutes**
Total time:	**1 hour**

Examination administrators, please note points (1) to (3) below and overleaf:

(1) No dictionaries or electronic translators may be used.

(2) Answers must be handwritten, unless evidence in line with current UK public examination regulations is provided to support the need to use a computer, in which case the computer must not allow the candidate access to anything other than a plain page to type on. (Spell and grammar checks must be disabled.)

(3) No extra time may be awarded, unless evidence is produced of a condition that would merit such extra time being granted, again in accordance with current UK public examination regulations.

SECTION A: READING COMPREHENSION

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1 – 12, which are based on the reading passage below.

Talent and Creativity

What do we mean by being 'talented' or 'gifted'? The most obvious way is to look at the work someone does and if they are capable of significant success, label them as talented. The purely quantitative route – 'percentage definition' – looks not at individuals, but at simple percentages, such as the top 5% of the population, and labels them – by definition – as gifted. This definition has fallen from favour, eclipsed by the advent of IQ tests, favoured by luminaries such as Professor Hans Eysenck, where a series of written or verbal tests of general intelligence leads to a score of intelligence.

The IQ test has been eclipsed in turn. Most people studying intelligence and creativity in the new millennium now prefer a broader definition, using a multifaceted approach where talents in many areas are recognised rather than purely concentrating on academic achievement. If we are therefore assuming that talented, creative or gifted individuals may need to be assessed across a range of abilities, does this mean intelligence can run in families as a genetic or inherited tendency? Mental dysfunction – such as schizophrenia – can, so is an efficient mental capacity passed on from parent to child?

Animal experiments throw some light on this question, and on the whole area of whether it is genetics, the environment or a combination of the two that allows for intelligence and creative ability. Different strains of rats show great differences in intelligence or 'rat reasoning'. If these are brought up in normal conditions and then run through a maze to reach a food goal, the 'bright' strain make far fewer wrong turns than the 'dull' ones. But if the environment is made dull and boring the number of errors becomes equal. Return the rats to an exciting maze and the discrepancy returns as before – but is much smaller. In other words, a dull rat in a stimulating environment will almost do as well as a bright rat who is bored in a normal one. This principle applies to humans too – someone may be born with an innate intelligence, but their environment probably has the final say over whether they become creative or even a genius.

Evidence now exists that most young children, if given enough opportunities and encouragement, are able to achieve significant and sustainable levels of academic or sporting prowess. Bright or creative children are often physically very active at the same time, and so may receive more parental attention as a result – almost by default – in order to ensure their safety. They may also talk earlier, and this, in turn, breeds parental interest. This can sometimes cause problems with other siblings who may feel jealous even though they themselves may be bright.

Their creative talents may be undervalued and so never come to fruition. Two themes seem to run through famously creative families as a result. The first is that the parents were able to identify the talents of each child, and nurture and encourage these accordingly but in an even-handed manner. Individual differences were encouraged, and friendly sibling rivalry was not seen as a particular problem. If the father is, say, a famous actor, there is no undue pressure for his children to follow him onto the boards, but instead their chosen interests are encouraged. There need not even be any obvious talent in such a family since there always needs to be someone who sets the family career in motion, as in the case of the Sheen acting dynasty.

Martin Sheen was the seventh of ten children born to a Spanish immigrant and Irish mother. Despite intense parental disapproval he turned his back on entrance exams to university and borrowed cash from a local priest to start a fledgling acting career. His acting successes in films such as *Badlands* and *Apocalypse Now* made him one of the most highly-regarded actors of the 1970s. Three sons – Emilio Estevez, Ramon Estevez and Charlie Sheen – have followed him into the profession as a consequence of being inspired by his motivation and enthusiasm.

A stream seems to run through creative families. Such children are not necessarily smothered with love by their parents. They feel loved and wanted, and secure in their home, but are often surrounded more by the atmosphere of work, where following a calling appears to be important. They may see from their parents that it takes time and dedication to be a master of a craft, and so are in less of a hurry to achieve for themselves once they start to work.

The generation of creativity is complex: it is a mixture of genetics, the environment, parental teaching and luck that determines how successful or talented family members are. This last point – luck – is often not mentioned where talent is concerned but plays an undoubted part. Mozart, considered by many to be the finest composer of all time, was lucky to be living in an age that encouraged the writing of music. He was brought up surrounded by it: his father was a musician who encouraged him to the point of giving up his job to promote his child genius, and he learnt musical composition with frightening speed – the speed of a genius. Mozart himself wanted to create the finest music ever written but did not necessarily consider himself a genius. He could write sublime music at will, and so often preferred to lead a hedonistic lifestyle that he found more exciting than writing music to order.

Albert Einstein and Bill Gates are two more examples of people whose have blossomed by virtue of the times they were living in. Einstein was a solitary, somewhat slow child who had affection at home but whose phenomenal intelligence emerged without any obvious parental input. This may partly have been due to the fact that at the start of the 20th Century a lot of the Newtonian laws of physics were being questioned, leaving a fertile ground for ideas such as his to be developed. Bill Gates may have had the creative vision to develop Microsoft, but without the new computer age dawning at the same time he may never have achieved the position on the world stage he now occupies.

Adapted from practice IELTS materials.

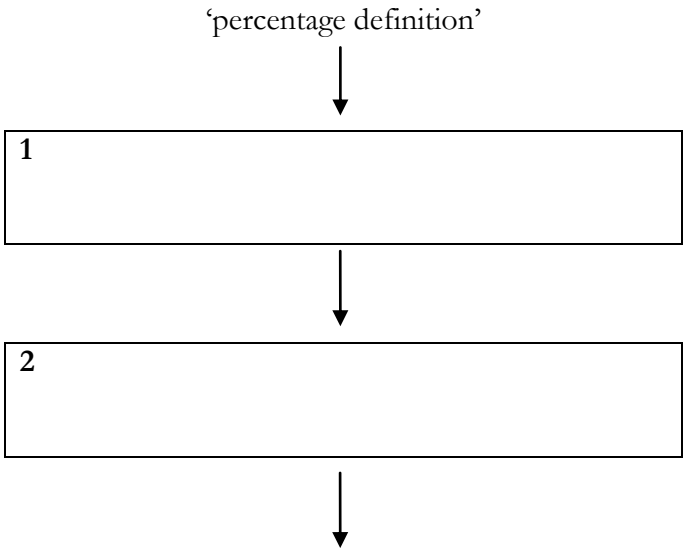
TURN OVER

Questions 1 – 2

Complete the notes, which show how the approaches to defining 'talent' have changed.

Choose **ONE or TWO WORDS from the passage** for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 1 – 2 below.



Questions 3 – 5

Which three of the following does the writer regard as a feature of creative families?

Write the appropriate **THREE LETTERS** in boxes 3 – 5 below.

A a higher than average level of parental affection

B competition between brothers and sisters

C parents who demonstrate vocational commitment

D strong motivation to take exams and attend university

E a patient approach to achieving success

F the identification of the most talented child in the family

3	4	5

Questions 6 – 7

Choose the appropriate letter from A – D below and write them in boxes 6 – 7.

6	7

6 The rat experiment was conducted to show that…

A certain species of rat are more intelligent than others.

B intelligent rats are more motivated than 'dull' rats.

C a rat's surroundings can influence its behaviour.

D a boring environment has little impact on a 'bright' rat.

7 The writer cites the story of Martin Sheen to show that…

A he was the first in a creative line.

B his parents did not have his creative flair

C he became an actor without proper training.

D his sons were able to benefit from his talents.

Questions 8 – 12

Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer of the passage?

In boxes 8 – 12 below write

YES if the statement agrees with the writer's claims

NO if the statement contradicts the writer's claims

NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

8	Intelligence tests have now been proved to be unreliable.	**8**
9	The brother or sister of a gifted older child may fail to fulfil their own potential.	**9**
10	The importance of luck in the genius equation tends to be ignored.	**10**
11	Mozart was acutely aware of his own remarkable talent.	**11**
12	Einstein and Gates would have achieved success in any era.	**12**

TURN OVER

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS TO SECTION A CAREFULLY AND THEN GO ON TO SECTION B BELOW.

SECTION B: WRITING

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task, with at least 5 minutes used for planning.

Write on one of the following topics, giving reasons for your answer and including any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Write between 250 and 280 words. (No credit will be given for longer work.)

Choose ONE TOPIC from the following:

1. With the advent of social networks on the Internet, real-life relationships are in danger of being damaged.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

2. Men who follow the latest fashions in clothes, hairstyles, cosmetics or jewellery are simply showing how superficial they are as people.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

3. The public has a right to know about the private lives of famous people.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

END OF PAPER