

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE 112/2**

### **SENIOR FOUR ASSIGNMENT**

*Read the following passage and answer the questions which follow.*

Certain people insist that religion is irrelevant to modern life. It is out of fashion. It is regarded as an embarrassing carryover from man's primitive past, a foolish creation of weak, superstitious minds. Others argue that it is an invention of evil men who use it to pacify simple people and then exploit them. Despite these views, however, religion is man's humble acknowledgement of the supernatural-his recognize that there are powers that are non-human and that these influence his destiny.

Man has not outgrown religion. There is plenty of evidence throughout the world to prove that religion still has a strong influence on man. Some countries have pressurized their citizens to abandon religion beliefs but with little success. Strangely enough, history testifies to the fact that following religious persecutions, the believers increase in number. Millions of people in the world, regardless of colour, political persuasion, mental abilities and social background, find religion relevant and practical in their everyday lives. All over the world, magnificent mosques, cathedrals, temples and shrines stand out and quietly exclaim that man is a creature that cannot be separated from religion.

On the other hand, we must recognize the wonderful achievements of science. Many killer diseases have been eradicated or brought under control. Food production has increased. life for many is easier, more comfortable and more convenient. These astonishing successes have, however, developed in man an unfortunate disregard for the established human values. But scientific adventurism has also led us to the brink of self-destruction. Man lives in fear of his inventions.

No doubt science has answered many questions about man and his life on earth, but religion also provides satisfactory answers to otherwise insoluble questions. It fills the gap in human knowledge and experience and so reduces areas of doubt and uncertainty. In the face of dangers that would otherwise be overwhelming, religious beliefs inspire confidence and provide moral and emotional satisfaction. In addition, religion serves as a social restrain by instilling fear of supernatural punishment if approved values are violated.

Since science has left many needs unmet, it would be a disservice to society if we did not continue to examine other ways of making life on earth more delightful. Religion can help, man to overcome misunderstanding, racism, suspicion and other evils that plague him and therefore it ought to be encouraged. After all, many religions teach about the brotherhood of all men and the importance of living in harmony.

**Question:**

*In not more than 100 words, summarize the advantages of having a religion.*



**Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.**

With the invention of televisions, many forms of entertainments have been replaced. Lively programs like television serials and world news, have removed from us the need to read books or papers, to listen to radios or even to watch movies. In fact, during the 1970s, when televisions were first introduced, cinema theatres suffered great losses as many people chose to stay in the comforts of their homes to watch their favorite programs.

Indeed, the television brings the world into our house. Hence, by staying at home and pressing some buttons world happenings are immediately presented before us. Children nowadays develop faster in language, owing to the early exposure to television programs. At such tender age, it would be difficult for them to read books or papers. Thus, television programs are a good source of learning for them. Furthermore, pronunciations by the newscasters, actors or actresses are usually standardized, hence young children watching these programs will learn the 'right' pronunciations too. Owning a television is also extremely beneficial to working parents who are usually too busy or tired to take their kids out for entertainments. Surrounded by the comforts of their home, the family can have a chance to get together and watch their favorite television programs.

Of course, we should not be too carried away by the advantages of the television and overlook its negative points. Watching television programs takes away our need to read. Why bother to read the papers when we can hear them from the television news reports? Why read books when exciting movies are screened? The lack of reading is unhealthy especially to younger children as they will grow up only with the ability to speak but not write. I have a neighbor whose six-year-old child can say complete sentences like "I like cats," but when told to write out the sentence, is unable to do so. Not only are the writing skills of children affected, their thinking capacities are also handicapped. Television programs remove the need to think. The stories, ideas and facts are woven in the way television planners wanted. Exposure to such opinions and the lack of thinking opportunities will hinder the children's analyzing ability.

Despite the disadvantages of watching television programs, personally, I think that choosing the 'middle path', which is to do selective television viewing and not over indulging in the habit should be the best solution to reconcile both the merits and demerits of owning a television.

**Question.**

In not more than 120 words, summarize the advantages and disadvantages of owning a television



Africa's debt is so large in comparison to the continent's income that it cannot be repaid. But as long as it is not cancelled, the constant pressure to pay it off is unrelenting. "Must we starve our children to pay our debt?" asks former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere. Where debt payments come first, with macro economic adjustment policies imposed by creditors, health and education budgets are squeezed to the bone. So are other long term investments necessary for development.

Most ominously, international efforts to address the debt burden offer no exit strategy for most indebted African countries. Among churches, non government organisations consensus is building in favour of massive and dramatic debt cancellation, as an indispensable step for addressing Africa's other problems. Without such action, prospects for economic growth as well as human development will be crippled. Yet international financial institutions and developed country governments are still trying to resist this conclusion.

There are many reasons for the debt crisis, both political and economic. During the Cold War, corrupt African leaders were often able to gain financing from major powers anxious to retain their loyalty. The creditors receipt what they paid for support in the Cold War. Yet the debt burden remained for future generations to pay. In its last 15 years of defending white majority rules, the apartheid regime in South Africa accumulated more than 18 billion USD in debt, while regional war forced it's neighbours to incur more than 26 billion USD in debt. Yet investors say responsibility in paying these debts must take priority over re addressing racial inequalities and rebuilding from war. In 1960s and 1970s, international leaders readily pushed a high volume of loans on many African states. Neither the lenders nor borrowers anticipated how high the cost of repayment would rise.

For African countries with agricultural exports, both unpredictable prices and natural disasters increased vulnerability to debt, just as for farmers anywhere in the world. World oil hikes in 1972 and 1979 drastically raised the cost of imports. Even countries that exported oil and other minerals faced boom and bust cycles that raised the odds of incurring unsustainable debt. When interest rates skyrocketed in the 1980s, interest payment jumped. Trying to pay off more debt with less income allowed unpaid debt to mushroom. With all these factors at work, the impact of every additional mistake in economic policy was multiplied.

In not more than 60 words, summarise the causes of Africa's debt burden.



