

ИНОСТРАННЫЕ ЯЗЫКИ И МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОММУНИКАЦИЯ
(Английский язык) /
FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION
(English Language)

10-11 классы / 10th and 11th Grades

Вариант 7 / Version 7

The test consists of 2 parts: Language and Culture Studies and Analytical Writing.
Duration – 80 minutes.

PART 1. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE STUDIES (50 points)

Task 1. For questions 1-6, read the text below and answer the questions (24 points).

Culture and Aging

Aging is inevitable, unfortunately. It refers to **progressive physiological changes in our body that lead to senescence, or a decline of biological functions.**

It seems that most of us in Western culture would do whatever it takes to prevent aging – wrinkle creams, hair dyes, supplements, and even plastic surgery are commonplace. What is it that keeps us searching for the fountain of youth? Many believe it is our culture’s negative depiction of aging.

“There’s so much shame in our culture around aging and death,” said Koshin Paley Ellison, co-founder of the New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care. “As people approach old age they frequently feel that there’s something wrong with them and that they’re losing value.” Jared Diamond, a professor at UCLA, said that America’s high value of work ethic means that “if you’re no longer working, you’ve lost the main value that society places on you,” and that our “cult of youth” places an emphasis on independence and self-reliance – which are often lost with age.

In many other cultures, however, old age is revered. The elderly are highly valued, and the process of aging is embraced. Below are some examples of how cultural attitudes toward aging outside America affect the life experiences of their inhabitants.

In the Chinese and Japanese cultures, filial piety (a token of appreciation for one’s ancestors) is highly valued. In fact, it’s the law in China and other countries including India, France, the Ukraine, and Singapore. “Placing your parents in retirement homes will see you labeled as uncaring or a bad child,” said Beijing resident Zhou Rui. “To abandon one’s family is considered deeply dishonorable.” Chinese seniors can sue their children over lack of financial and emotional support; many seniors have already sued their children for not visiting them regularly. Companies are required to give employees time off in order to tend to and visit their elderly parents.

Japan holds a national holiday every year on the third Monday of September to honor and show appreciation for the elderly. “Respect for the Aged Day” is a paid holiday from work. Family members give gifts to their grandmothers and grandfathers, and share a meal with them to show their gratitude. Even those who don’t have family are shown appreciation and respect and often receive free meals.

However, these cultures are beginning to see somewhat of a breakdown in these values as much of the younger generation continues to move to urban areas for work, while their parents usually stay in rural areas. The significant growth of the senior population because of China's one-child policy and increasing life expectancy is also projected to change the social norms when it comes to senior care. Japan is also dealing with these changes; according to *Social Gerontology: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*, 7.2 percent of the Japanese population will be 80 or older in 2020 (compared to 4.1 percent in the U.S.).

Korean culture not only values filial piety, but also celebrates old age. Koreans traditionally hold large celebrations for their loved ones' 60th and 70th birthdays. In the Asian Zodiac, 60 years is considered a full cycle, so this milestone birthday is when children will celebrate their parents' entering old age. Another reason for celebration is that advances in modern medicine have allowed them to reach old age, where many of their ancestors did not. Sixty is also the age when, traditionally, a man can retire and rely on his children to support him. The 70th birthday calls for a similar celebration and is known as kohCui, meaning "old and rare."

While contemporary American culture places a stigma of fear on death, Native American cultures accept death as a natural way of life and do not fear it. In these communities, it is expected that the elders pass on wisdom and life experiences to the younger family members, according to a study by the University of Missouri, Kansas City.

by Taylor French

1. According to Jared Diamond, the high value of work ethic in the USA implies losing a lot of employee benefits when you retire or resign.
 - a) True
 - b) False

2. In oriental cultures like Chinese or Japanese it is common to
 - a) regularly give free meals to elderly people who do not have their own families.
 - b) demonstrate a sign of respect to the elderly.
 - c) promote the cult of youth.
 - d) continue working till a very old age.

3. According to the text, which of these statements about China are true? Check all that apply.
 - a) relocating aging parents to a nursing home is generally viewed as cruel.
 - b) young people tend to abandon their families.
 - c) parents can file a lawsuit if they do not get enough care from their offspring.
 - d) the sixtieth anniversary is a special date in Chinese astrology.

4. According to the text, in Native American cultures there is a special ritual of passing on wisdom from elderly members of a family to a younger generation.
 - a) True
 - b) False
 - c) Not stated

5. Match these characteristics with young or senior generation descriptions given in the text.
 - a) They can get a day or days off to meet with their relatives. YOUNG/SENIOR

- b) In China it is common for them to continue living in the countryside. YOUNG/SENIOR
- c) A special family-planning policy in China has led to a significant rise in this age group. YOUNG/SENIOR
- d) An anniversary for this age group has a special name. YOUNG/SENIOR

6. Find the word from the text that means the following: ‘loyalty’ = _____
(*type it in in small letters*).

Task 2. For questions 7-12, think of one word which can be used appropriately in all three idioms, proverbs, or expressions from around the world. Type the word in small letters (12 points).

7. Old age lives on remembrance, _____ lives on hope. (French proverb)
We pay when old for the excesses of _____. (Traditional proverb)
What is learned in _____ is carved in stone. (Arabian proverb)
8. Gray hair is a sign of _____, not of wisdom. (Greek proverb)
People fool themselves. They pray for a long life, but fear old _____. (Chinese proverb)
Women only keep quiet about their _____. (German proverb)
9. You can be cautious about the future, but not the _____. (Chinese proverb)
Regretting the _____ is like chasing after the wind. (Russian proverb)
All the _____ died yesterday; the future is born today. (Chinese proverb)
10. We do not _____ the land from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children. (American proverb)
Those who _____ a penny are expected to spend a dollar. (German proverb)
Those who _____ fortunes are frequently more of a problem than those who made them. (Congolese proverb)
11. Fools _____ without watering. (Italian proverb)
Palm trees that _____ in the shade will not bear ripe fruit. (Afghan proverb)
There are five ways in which to become wise: be silent, listen, remember, _____ older and study. (Arabian proverb)
12. When comes _____, the rich man has no money and the poor man no debt. (Estonian proverb)
Habit is a shirt that we wear till _____. (Russian proverb)
He, who is afraid of _____, loses his life. (Romanian Proverb)

Task 3. For questions 13-19, match the sociocultural facts with their countries of origin. There are more countries than you will need (14 points).

A	India	D	Spain	G	Israel
B	Germany	E	Japan	H	New Zealand
C	South Korea	F	USA	I	Ireland

13. In this country young boys and girls celebrate a special holiday at age 13 and 12 in order to demonstrate their commitment to their faith and recognize that they are now responsible for following a traditional religious law.
14. Young girls in this country celebrate their fifteenth anniversary. This coming of age tradition typically begins with a Catholic mass where girls solidify their commitment to family and faith. Immediately following the mass is a big party where friends and family eat and dance.
15. The 16th birthday is an important celebration for youngsters in this country, as it marks the time when they are legally permitted to drive a car.
16. Celebrating the life of the deceased in this country involves parading the dead through the streets, the bodies dressed in colors are sprinkled with water from the river and then cremated at the town's main cremation grounds.
17. In this country space is scarce and in demand, and cremation is becoming the only realistic choice for burying dead people. So, relatives turn the ashes of the deceased into beads. Put inside glass vases or even open in dishes, these beads can then take center stage inside a house.
18. After leaving the hospital, mother and her baby often go to the mother's parents' home for a month or even longer. It is an important tradition that women stay in bed with their newly-born baby for 21 days. During this time friends or relatives may come to greet the new baby and join the family in eating the celebratory food *osekihan* (red rice with red beans).
19. There are some restrictions when you name a child in this country. The name must indicate gender, and if a neutral name is chosen, a second gender specific name must be added. Similarly, a boy's name cannot be chosen for a girl or vice versa.

PART 2. ANALYTICAL WRITING (50 points)

Task 4. Now you have learned about aging stereotypes in different cultures. Write an essay analysing views on aging from the perspective of your cultural experience and background. Your essay should have an introduction, two/three body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

You must:

- define the cultural phenomenon using your own words;
- explain how this cultural phenomenon impacts intercultural communication;
- analyse how this cultural phenomenon is reflected in your culture in the given sphere providing examples.

Answers

Task 1

1. b

2. b

3. a, c

4. c

5. a - YOUNG, b – SENIOR, c – SENIOR, d - SENIOR

6. piety

Task 2

7. youth

8. age

9. past

10. inherit

11. grow

12. death

Task 3

13. G

14. D

15. F

16. A

17. C

18. E

19. B