

## ERASMUS EXAMINATION PAPER DETAILED DESCRIPTION

### Section 1 : Reading Specifications General Description

#### Text Length:

1 text (700-1000 words, consisting of 9-12 paragraphs)

#### Items:

- **Number:** 4 items
- **Format:** Multiple Choice (MC) question (4 options), open ended questions

#### Aims:

To test the ability to

- identify the main ideas of the paragraphs and the text,
- identify specific information and details
- guess the meaning of unknown words from the context,
- infer implied meaning, author's purpose and attitude, and the intended audience.

**Task demands-Curriculum Operations:** careful reading (global & local)

**Nature:** Assessed

### Section 2: Writing Specifications General Description

#### Aims:

To test the ability to write a response paragraph of about 300-400 words which

- provides a critical response to the reading text with reflection on the content in a logical and meaningful way by agreeing or disagreeing with the arguments presented in it.
- provides relevant supporting details and expands them with reasons and relevant examples from the primary text through paraphrasing or quoting arguments using APA style. (effectively develops the controlling idea in a logical and coherent way)
- develops an argument systematically (composing a logical, well structured, and organized paragraph).
- applies ideas to a wider perspective (local & global context).
- synthesizes the key ideas of the text and applies them to a specific context (e.g. personal experiences).
- effectively evaluates/refutes ideas in an appropriate style.

- develops written argumentation through the use of exemplification, emphasis, addition, demonstration of causes & effects and summation.
- has a variety of structures, vocabulary and mechanics relevant to the task and level.

## Erasmus Language Exam (ELE)-Practice

### Overpopulation is “Main Threat to Planet” by Steve Connor

1 Climate change and global pollution cannot be adequately tackled without addressing the neglected issue of the world's booming population, according to two leading scientists.

2 Professor Chris Rapley, director of the British Antarctic Survey, and Professor John Guillebaud, vented their frustration yesterday at the fact that overpopulation had fallen off the agenda of the many organisations dedicated to saving the planet. The scientists said dealing with the burgeoning human population of the planet was vital if real progress was to be made on the other enormous problems facing the world. "It is the elephant in the room that nobody wants to talk about" Professor Guillebaud said. "Unless we reduce the human population humanely through family planning, nature will do it for us through violence, epidemics or starvation."

3 Professor Guillebaud said he decided to study the field of human reproduction more than 40 years ago specifically because of the problems he envisaged through overpopulation. His concerns were echoed by Professor Rapley, an expert on the effects of climate change on the Antarctic, who pointed out that this year an extra 76 million people would be added to the 6.5 billion already living on Earth, which is twice as many as in 1960.

4 By the middle of the century, the United Nations estimates that the world population is likely to increase to more than nine billion, which is equivalent to an extra 200,000 people each day. Professor Rapley said the extra resources needed to sustain this growth in population would put immense strains on the planet's life-support system even if pollution emissions per head could be dramatically reduced. "Although reducing human emissions to the atmosphere is undoubtedly of critical importance, as are any and all measures to reduce the human environmental 'footprint', the truth is that the contribution of each individual cannot be reduced to zero. Only the lack of the individual can bring it down to nothing," Professor Rapley says in an article for the BBC website. "So if we believe that the size of the human 'footprint' is a serious problem - and there is much evidence for this - then a rational view would be that along with a raft of measures to reduce the footprint per person, the issue of population management must be addressed."

5 Professor Rapley says the explosive growth in the human population and the concomitant effects on the environment have been largely ignored by many of those concerned with climate change. "It is a bombshell of a topic, with profound and emotive issues of ethics, morality, equity and practicability," he says. "So controversial is the subject that it has become the Cinderella of the great sustainability debate", - rarely visible in public or in even in private, he continues, **in interdisciplinary meetings addressing how the planet functions as an integrated whole, demographers and population specialists are usually notable by their absence.**

6 Professor Guillebaud, who co-chairs the Optimum Population Trust, said it became politically

incorrect about 25 years ago to bring up family planning in discussing the environmental problems of the developing world. The world population needed to be reduced by nearly two-thirds if climate change was to be prevented and everyone on the planet was to enjoy a lifestyle similar to that of Europeans, Professor Guillebaud said.

7 An environmental assessment by the conservation charity WWF and the Worldwatch Institute in Washington found that humans were now exploiting about 20 per cent more renewable resources than can be replaced each year. Professor Guillebaud said this meant it would require the natural resources equivalent to four more Planet Earths to sustain the projected 2050 population of nine billion people. "The figures demonstrate the folly of concentrating exclusively on lifestyles and technology and ignoring human numbers in our attempts to combat global warming," he said. "We need to think about climate changers - human beings and their numbers - as well as climate change."

8 Some environmentalists have argued that it is not human numbers that are important, but the relative use of natural resources and production of waste such as carbon dioxide emissions. They have suggested that the planet can sustain a population of nine billion people or even more provided that everyone adopts a less energy-intensive lifestyle based on renewable sources of energy rather than fossil fuels. But Professor Guillebaud said: "We urgently need to stabilise and reduce human numbers. There is no way that a population of nine billion - the UN's medium forecast for 2050 - can meet its energy needs without unacceptable damage to the planet and a great deal of human misery."

**Crowded Earth**

9 2050.

\* The human population stands at 6.5 billion and is projected to rise to more than 9 billion by 2050.

\* In less than 50 years the human population has more than doubled from its 1960 level of 3 billion.

\* China is the most populous country with more than 1.3 billion people. India is second with more than 1.1 billion.

\* By about 2030 India is expected to exceed China with nearly 1.5 billion people.

\* About one in every three people alive today is under the age of 20, which means that the population will continue to grow as more children reach sexual maturity.

\* Britain's population of 60 million is forecast to grow by 7 million over the next 25 years and by at least 10 million over the next 60 years, mainly through immigration.

\* This is equivalent to an extra 57 towns the size of Luton (pop 184,000)

\* By the time you have finished reading this column, an estimated 100 babies have been born in the world.

Adapted from Connor, S.(2006). Overpopulation is Main Threat to Planet. *Independent*. Retrieved January 2006 from <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/overpopulation-is-main-threat-to-planet-521925.html>

**Question 1 (5 points):**

How would you describe the author's attitude to rising global population? Choose one of the following and justify your answer with examples from the text to get full points.

- a. humorous                      b. ironic                      c. indifferent                      d. alarmed

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**Question 2 (5 points):**

What is the main idea of **paragraph 7**? How does the writer support it?

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**Question 3 (5 points):**

In Paragraph 5, what can be inferred when the writer states, “...in interdisciplinary meetings addressing how the planet functions as an integrated whole, demographers and population specialists are usually notable by their absence.”

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**Question 4 (5 points):**

What is the author’s purpose in writing the article? Justify your answer with examples from the text.

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**Question 5 (30 points):**

Do you agree or disagree with the arguments presented in the article? Write a well organised paragraph of **300+ words** in which you include examples and evidence from the article and your own experience to support your view using in-text citation: (either direct quotations from the text or paraphrases in a proper referencing style).

**Points will be awarded for language skills, organisation, development of ideas and content, and your ability to integrate evidence in academic referencing styles.**

Now take five minutes to **brainstorm ideas** on the following questions before you write your response: **Your notes will not be graded.**

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**Özyeğin University**  
**School of Languages**  
**Erasmus Language Exam (ELE)-Practice**

<b>Student's Name</b>		<b>ID#</b>	
<b>Department</b>		<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	
<b>Duration</b>	<b>90 mins.</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>___/ 50 pts.</b>

**Overpopulation is "Main Threat to Planet"**

**by Steve Connor**

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2 Professor Chris Rapley, director of the British Antarctic Survey, and Professor John Guillebaud, vented their frustration yesterday at the fact that overpopulation had fallen off the agenda of the many organisations dedicated to saving the planet. The scientists said dealing with the burgeoning human population of the planet was vital if real progress was to be made on the other enormous problems facing the world. "It is the elephant in the room that nobody wants to talk about" Professor Guillebaud said. "Unless we reduce the human population humanely through family planning, nature will do it for us through violence, epidemics or starvation."

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6 **specialists are usually notable by their absence.**

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**Question 1 (5 points):**

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Connor (2006) argues that overpopulation is the reason for the climate-change- and global pollution related problems that the world faces today. He is seriously alarmed about the fact that the world's booming population issue has long been ignored. He reinforces this point by referring to two leading scientists throughout the text. In paragraph 4, he states: "Professor Rapley said the extra resources needed to sustain this growth in population would put immense strains on the planet's life-support system even if pollution emissions per head could be dramatically reduced".

The article's tone conveys the writer's great concern for the current situation, which is evident in his language. For instance, words like "immense strains", "enormous problems", and "have been largely ignored" reflect his sense of worry about the increasing population rates.

**Question 2 (5 points):**

What is the main idea of paragraph 7? How does the writer support it?

Connor considers dramatic population growth as the root of all other problems in the world and proves his point by highlighting the direct correlation between the increasing numbers of human population and the depletion of natural resources and the environmental problems.

**Question 3 (5 points):**

In Paragraph 5, what can be inferred when the writer states, "In interdisciplinary meetings addressing how the planet functions as an integrated whole, demographers and population specialists are usually notable by their absence."

One can infer from his statement that although population growth should be the priority issue during the sustainability debate conferences, it has long been ignored and conference organisers do not attach enough significance to this topic to the extent that they do not even invite the experts on this topic to those events. Overpopulation is therefore considered inappropriate to debate.

**Question 4 (5 points):**

What is the author's purpose in writing the article? Justify your answer with examples from the text.

The author is greatly concerned that if we proceed with the increasing human numbers, which will only encourage consumption at all levels without considering the carrying capacity of the world, the environmental problems will escalate. Therefore, he aims to warn the readers about this issue and invite them to share his sense of worry about the increasing population rates that will inevitably result in climate change, global warming, and extreme weather conditions.

**Question 5 (30 points):**

Do you agree or disagree with the arguments presented in the article? Write a well organised paragraph of **300+ words** in which you include examples and evidence from the article and your own experience to support your view using in-text citation: (either direct quotations from the text or paraphrases in a proper referencing style).

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The international efforts to deal with the problem of global warming have always concentrated on persuading people to change their lifestyle so that they use fewer resources and less energy in order to reduce the global carbon footprint. Additionally, advances in technology have given people hope that solutions will be found to combat the climate change threat. The article warns, however, that this is a mistaken approach and that overpopulation remains the most serious threat to a sustainable future. It is misleading, according to Connor (2006), to focus all sustainable development efforts on reducing carbon footprint when the increasing number of humans on the planet will inevitably mean more emissions. No matter how much we decrease energy consumption per person, “the truth is that the contribution of each individual cannot be reduced to zero. Only the lack of the individual can bring it down to nothing” (Connor, 2006, p. 1). In other words, instead of aiming to convince people to change their lifestyle, we should focus our efforts on controlling population growth. The arguments provided in the article are convincing because the advances in technology and health care have meant that more humans are born every day than ever before, with the rate currently being 200.000 humans a day according to figures quoted by the writer. Moreover, as the writer points out, even renewable resources cannot cope with the increase in human population (Connor, 2006, p.2). The author is therefore correct to warn that the combination of overpopulation and lack of resources will ultimately lead to other significant dangers, such as unrest, wars and uncontrollable diseases, something almost every country in the world has already been witnessing. Turkey, for example, is a country where the population growth is resulting in pressure on environment and society. Because of the lack of enough employment opportunities and good living conditions for the rising population in the small cities and rural areas, there has been a steady increase in the migration of people to the urban centres, which are turning into megacities swallowing up resources and producing alarming amounts of emissions. What’s more is that the lifestyle of cities means using cars and enjoying a consumerist lifestyle, as referred to in paragraph 6 of the article. Connor (2006) mentions that population planning is a complex moral and political issue, and perhaps this is why it is considered taboo in international discussions. Yet the writer is certainly right to emphasise that it cannot be ignored, simply because it will have catastrophic consequences in the future. To conclude, in order to have a sustainable planet and avoid causing misery to future generations, introducing population control policies and raising awareness of the importance of family planning should be added to the efforts to reduce the carbon footprint.