

## Text 3

The text below is a short story about a group of teenagers' canoe trip in the Canadian Tundra. Read it carefully and answer Questions 5-16 in the Question Booklet.

- 1 The plane vibrated with the cacophonous drone of idling engines. We had over an hour of flying ahead of us, and then forty-two days of paddling. The pilots, now directing us to climb aboard from their perch on the float, had filled the Twin Otter turboprop with our gear, from the forward bulkhead to the tight heap of large packs at the rear. Our three Old Town Tripper canoes filled the entire right side of the plane. The only open spaces left were the cockpit, the narrow row of six canvas seats on the port side, and the space above the poorly sealed spare fuel barrel stowed immediately behind the copilot's chair. Dan was clambering over the seats in front of me, his six-and-a-half-foot frame scrunched by the small fuselage and the wall of canoes. The seats were austere-old canvas slung over aluminum frames, positioned in the small space like hurdles in a tunnel. We had to step awkwardly over each one until we found our spots. 5
- 2 At an even six feet, six inches shorter than Dan, I was also having trouble traversing the seats. Behind me was Jean in his bright-red rain jacket, eyes hidden behind sunglasses, jaw tight as if to hold in the same excitement I felt clenched under my ribs. Behind him was Auggie, the least bundled up of us, in just a few layers topped with a thin fleece. He was ready to go, calm. Behind Auggie was Mike, in bright yellow, his recently shaved head up, eyes open. Bringing up the rear was Darin. The smallest of us, he took the tiny seat at the rear bulkhead, behind a cache of gear and beside the large door at the back of the plane. I found mine and then looked out the hazy porthole, past the blur of propeller blades spinning loudly on the wing. 10
- 3 Standing on the dock was a group of five girls, the Femmes, who would be making a counterpart trip to ours. Their canoes and gear lay in a heap onshore, just as ours had. After setting us down in the emptiness of the Canadian taiga<sup>1</sup>, the plane would come back for them. They, too, would land somewhere deep in the wilderness and paddle great rivers and lakes. 25
- 4 "See you at Baker Lake!" we all had said, and before I knew it, I was looking out at them from my seat in the plane. I molded my earplugs and let these earplugs expand in my ears, muffling the rumble of the idling engines. Out the porthole I watched as the smiling group lined up shoulder to shoulder to start the Camp Menogyn traditional line-dance send-off. The Femmes kicked together, left and right, singing "Happy Trails". We couldn't hear them over the roar of the plane, but we knew the words. 30
- 5 When we arrived at our destination in the middle of nowhere, we circled above Wholdaia Lake. Our pilots made a scouting pass, looped around again, and dropped in for a smooth landing on the first lake of our trip. Using the propellers, they maneuvered their ungainly boat to shore and beaching the plane with a violent shudder. 35
- 6 The six of us wriggled out the rear door and took our first breath of fresh subarctic air before unloading the boats. It had felt odd to disassemble our canoes before the flight,



so they would nest and all three would fit. Now the pilots helped us pull the enormous canoes out of the tiny plane. I wanted to get the boats back together before the pilots left, in case we ran into trouble. These canoes were our lifelines. Without them, we'd be in a mess: hikers with canoe gear. 40

7 The blackflies found us immediately. They came silently, tiny malicious dots that attacked exposed skin at the wrist, waist, and hairline, burrowing their heads and leaving hot welts and weeping trickles of blood on our skin. Soon, all our gear was out of the plane, and the pilots were preparing for their flight back. By the end of the day, they would probably be back at some camp, some town, maybe even in their own bed but we were in a strange, foreign place for another month and a half. This was the beginning of something life-changing for my fellow paddlers and me - 42 days of canoeing Canada's wild rivers and lakes. 45 50

8 I was seventeen.

*Adapted from The Twenty-Ninth Day: Surviving a Grizzly Attack in the Canadian Tundra*

1 The taiga is a forest of the cold, subarctic region. The subarctic is an area of the Northern Hemisphere that lies just south of the Arctic Circle.



## Section C

## Text 4

*The article below is about the uncertain future of handwriting. Read it carefully and answer Questions 17 – 24 in the Question Booklet.*

- 1 We are told that writing is dying. Typing on keyboards and screens dominates written communication today. Even scribbling a signature has become rarer due to the prevalence of chip-and-pin credit cards.
- 2 Some experts point out that writing lessons can have indirect benefits. Anne Trubek, author of *The History and Uncertain Future of Handwriting*, argues that such lessons can reinforce a skill called automaticity. That is when you have perfected a task, and can do it almost without thinking, granting you extra bandwidth to think about or do other things while you are doing the task. 5
- 3 Trubek does not believe it will die out for a very long time, "if ever". But she believes students are learning automaticity faster with keyboards than with handwriting: students are learning how to type without looking at the keys at earlier ages, and to type faster than they could write, granting them extra time to think about word choice or sentence structure. 10
- 4 She explains that two of the most common arguments she hears from detractors regarding the decline of handwriting is that not protecting it will result in a "loss of history" and a "loss of personal touch". On the former she counters that 95% of handwritten manuscripts cannot be read by the average person anyway – "that's why we have paleographers who study the ancient styles of writing", she explains, while the latter refers to the warm associations we give to handwritten personal notes, such as thank-you cards. "What it signals is that someone took time and effort and therefore, it was a more meaningful, communication," says Trubek. 15 20
- 5 There is research to support the notion that handwriting can provide several cognitive benefits, however.
- 6 Handwriting may boost fine motor skills in your hands and fingers, for example. A study by the University of Washington found that while writing by hand and by keyboard had some overlap, they utilised different brain functions. This sentiment was echoed by William Klemm in an article written for *Psychology Today*. 25
- 7 "To write legible cursive, fine motor control is needed over the fingers. You have to pay attention and think about what and how you are doing it. Brain imaging studies show that cursive activates areas of the brain that do not participate in keyboarding", Klemm writes. 30
- 8 Further academic study suggests that handwriting can stimulate visual recognition and memory retention. In a 2012 research, authors found that handwriting could be crucial for helping children learn the alphabet.



- 9 In the study, a group of pre-school children practised learning letters by various means, including writing them out by hand and by typing them on a keyboard. Afterwards, the children were shown various letters while lying in an MRI scanner. The scans revealed that when the kids viewed the letters that were practised by hand, it activated parts of the brain that viewing letters practised on a keyboard did not. It suggests that handwriting might aid in mastering reading and writing in children. 35 40
- 10 "Handwriting will still have a place for those times when people want to interact with a pen and paper for a more sensual experience, using age-old handwriting skills to carefully craft and express more meaningful sentiments," says Nils Lenke of Nuance. "It is still convenient for times when speaking is not appropriate, or a keyboard is not at hand." 45
- 11 Cursive handwriting may be declining, such is the march of progress, but its value cannot be understated. The invention of the phone, typewriter, computer keyboard and email have all failed to extinguish penmanship from daily life, and handwriting itself is a fluid and adaptable practice. And it is entirely possible that cursive handwriting could live on as the preserve of design enthusiasts and hobbyists. 50
- 12 Even if it fades in time as an educational stalwart, and day-to-day notation becomes increasingly hand-free, the loops and lines of a studied hand may have some life left yet.

Source: Hosie, E. (2017, November 9). *The uncertain future of handwriting*.  
<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20171108-the-uncertain-future-of-handwriting>

- End of Paper-

**Section B [20 marks]**

**Refer to Text 3 on Pages 1 and 2 of the Insert for Questions 5 to 16.**

- 5** At the beginning of the text, the author describes the lack of space in the airplane. Explain how the language used in Paragraph 1 conveys the tight space. Support your ideas with three details from Paragraph 1.

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.....[3]

- 6** From Paragraph 1, what is the other name for the plane?

.....[1]

- 7** From Paragraph 1 and 2, why were Dan and the author "having trouble traversing the seats"? (lines 13-14)

.....[1]

- 8** Quote a phrase from Paragraph 3 that conveys the same idea as 'They, too, would land somewhere deep in the wilderness and paddle great rivers and lakes.' (lines 25-26)

.....[1]

- 9** What does the expression 'we knew the words' (line 32) suggest about the boys' experience as campers?

.....[1]

- 10** What does "their ungainly boat" (line 36) refer to?

.....[1]



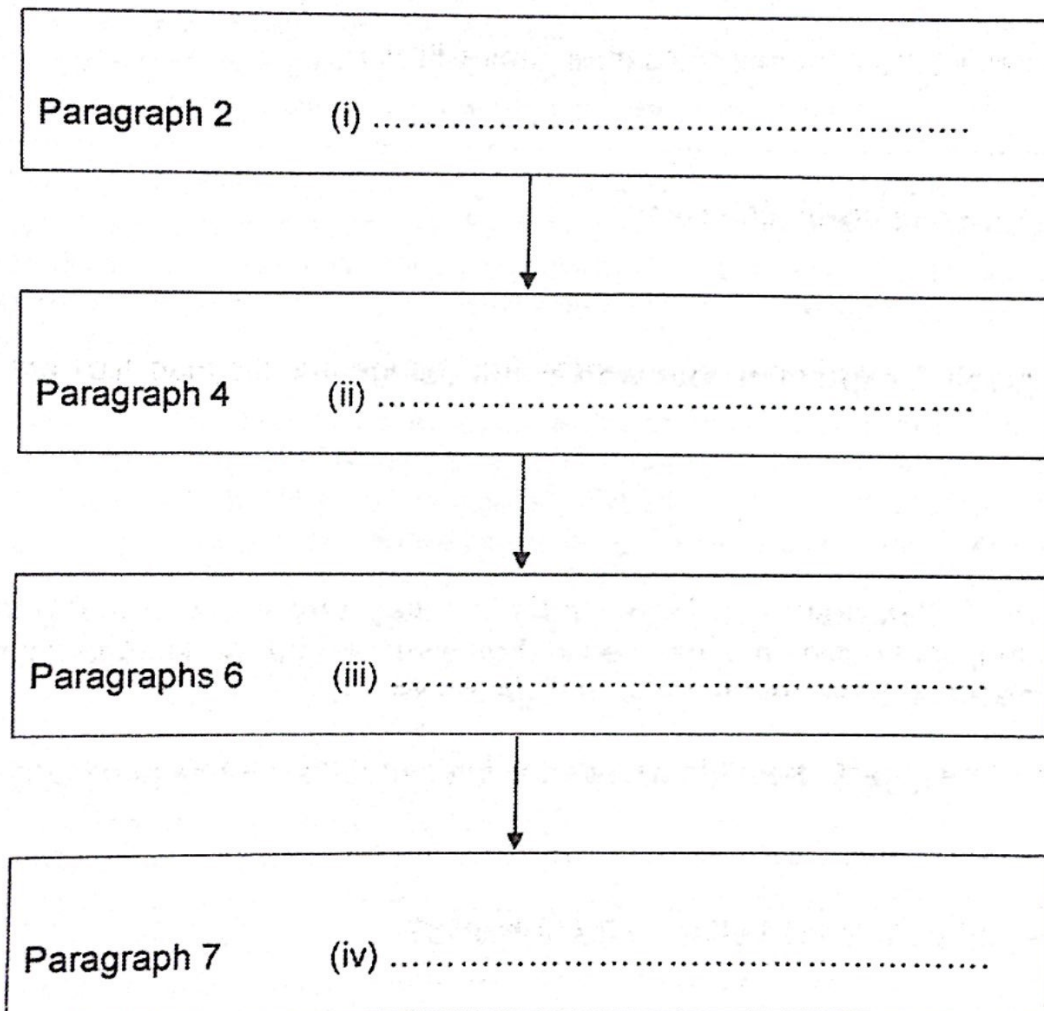
- 11 From Paragraph 5 and 6, which two things did the pilots do which showed that they were skilful and friendly?
- i) Skilful:.....  
.....
- ii) Friendly:.....  
.....[2]
- 12 In Paragraph 6, we are told 'Without them, we'd be in a mess: hikers with canoe gear'
- i) What is the writer comparing the canoe gear with?  
.....[1]
- ii) Why is this comparison effective?  
.....[1]
- 13 From Paragraph 7, **explain in your words** how dangerous the blackflies are.  
.....  
.....[2]
- 14 In Paragraph 7, the writer says 'By the end of the day, they would probably be back at some camp, some town, maybe even in their own bed but we were in a strange, foreign place for another month and a half' (lines 48-50)
- What does this suggest about the writer's feeling about his canoeing expedition?  
.....[1]
- 15 What is the writer's intended effect in Paragraph 8?  
.....[1]

16. The structure of the text reflects the main stages in the narrative. Complete the flow chart by choosing one phrase from the box to summarise the main focus of each stage of the narrative. There are some extra phrases in the box you do not need to use.

**Main focus**

Exploring the new island	Awaiting an adventurous trip
Reaching the destination	Bidding farewell
Challenges in navigating the tight area	A happy new beginning
Unpacking equipment on the new island	

**Flow chart**



Section C [25 marks]

Refer to Text 4 on pages 3 and 4 of the Insert for Questions 17 – 24.

- 17 With reference to Paragraph 2, explain in your own words what automaticity means.

.....

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 18 In Paragraph 3, what does Trubek think about the fate of handwriting?

.....

.....[1]

- 19 From Paragraph 3, state two pieces of evidence that students learn automaticity faster with keyboards than handwriting.

.....

.....

.....[2]

- 20 "while the latter refers to the warm associations..." (line 19).  
What does "the latter" refer to? [1]

.....[1]



- 21 Here is part of a conversation between two students, Alethea and Max, who have read the article.

The decline of handwriting will cause us to lose personal touch.



Alethea

Thankfully, there won't be a loss of history.



Max

- (i) Identify **one** example from Paragraph 4 that Alethea can give to support her view.

.....  
.....[1]

- (ii) With reference to Paragraph 4, how would Max explain his position?

.....  
.....[1]

- 22 What evidence is there to support the view that the value of cursive handwriting 'cannot be understated' (line 48)?

.....  
.....[1]

- 23 What is the overall tone of the writer towards handwriting?

.....[1]

**24** Using your own words as far as possible, summarise the benefits of handwriting.

**Use only information from Paragraphs 6 to 10.**

Your summary must be in continuous writing (not note form). It must not be longer than 80 words (not counting the words given to help you begin).

One benefit of handwriting is .....

No of words:.....