

Maturitätsprüfung 2003

Englisch KEY

1. Comprehension

(40 points)

- 1) The author **mocks** the “extravagant claims” made for world betterment in the name of the Internet by comparing “the wildest optimism” of today’s “cybergurus” to the passion with which “Victorian enthusiasts” greeted an earlier technological development, that of the transatlantic telegraph cable. The point is that in the process of time the once “new” is doomed to become old, while “human nature”, as the author makes clear in his final paragraph, “seems to remain stubbornly unchanged.” Later in the text the analogy to the once “new” in the field of communication is extended to include aeroplanes and the radio, neither one of which, according to the author, can be considered an “intrinsically pacific force”. Through the use of such **parallels** it becomes clear that the author **doubts** “the peace-making possibilities of [...] new technologies.”
- 2) The answer can be found in the antepenultimate and penultimate paragraphs. The key points are:
 1. What the author calls “**income inequality**” can be reduced “between people doing **similar jobs in different countries**” (though not, according to the author, between the rich and the poor in general).
 2. The Internet in particular “has had a dramatic impact on the world of **business**.”
 - a. The author states that “firms can now **link their systems** directly to those of their suppliers and partners”.
 - b. They “can do business online **around the clock**.”
 - c. They “can learn more than ever about their **customers**.”
 3. The author also makes a claim for the importance of the Internet in our personal lives. “For **individuals**, e-mail has emerged as the most important new form of **personal communication** since the invention of the telephone.”
- 3) Clinton’s view of the Internet **contradicts** that of the author. Clinton, “struck by the ‘digital divide’ between rich and poor, argues that universal Internet access would help to reduce income inequality.” The author, on the other hand, claims that “[t]he poor are not shunning the Internet because they cannot afford it: the problem is that they lack the skill to exploit it effectively.” The author believes that “[i]t would make more sense to aim for **universal literacy** than universal Internet access.”
- 4) The answer is to be found in the final paragraph. The author is **sceptical** about the extent to which the Internet will transform the essential problems of our lives. “Even when everyone on the planet has been connected to the Internet, there will still be wars, and pollution, and inequality.” New tools and technologies may come and go, but “human nature” remains a constant, one which the author views **pessimistically**. “Human nature seems to remain stubbornly unchanged; despite the claims of the techno-prophets, humanity cannot simply invent away its failings.”

2. Vocabulary

(25 points)

2.1 Meaning from context

(5 points)

- 1) praising
- 2) enthusiastic
- 3) believe
- 4) grow well
- 5) clear

2.2 Synonyms

(5 points)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1) cut, slash, lower | 4) error, blunder, miscalculation |
| 2) fight | 5) effect, influence |
| 3) greater, higher, better, increased, (superior) | |

2.3 Antonyms

(5 points)

- | | |
|------------|------------------------|
| 1) success | 4) have |
| 2) rise | 5) deteriorate, worsen |
| 3) easy | |

2.4 Word formation

(10 points)

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1) existence | 6) unexpected |
| 2) industrialized/industrialised/industrial | 7) similarities |
| 3) knowledge | 8) Personally |
| 4) peacefully | 9) transformation |
| 5) sensible | 10) uncertainty |

3. Essay

(60 points)

4. Grammar

(75 points)

4.1 Verb forms (tenses and participles)

(15 points)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) is thought | 9) have written |
| 2) was born | 10) devoted |
| 3) died | 11) was published |
| 4) do not know | 12) had not been cancel[l]ed |
| 5) was employed/had been employed | 13) writing |
| 6) accepted | 14) would have seen |
| 7) became | 15) leaving |
| 8) had been | |

4.2 Re-phrasing sentences

(20 points)

- 1) Wars are caused **because different peoples fail / to understand** each other adequately.
or: Wars are caused **because different peoples / do not understand** each other adequately.
- 2) Nowadays there are **fewer people / who believe in** the Internet as a force for peace than 10 years ago.
- 3) If the Victorian enthusiasts **had been right, / hostilities would have** stopped.
- 4) What about the belief that **inequality will be / reduced by** the Internet?
- 5) **In spite of / it(s) being young,** the Internet has been ...
or: **In spite of / its youth,** the Internet has been ...
- 6) Companies **are getting used to / doing** their business online.
- 7) The claims of the techno-prophets will **not come true / as long as** humanity cannot invent away its failings.
- 8) A lot of people still **prefer writing letters / to sending** e-mails.
- 9) Other people **like e-mail / as much as** telephones and letters.
- 10) Many Internet users **do not mind / sending** personal information ...

4.3 Gap filling

(20 points)

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| 1) had | 11) of |
| 2) was | 12) by |
| 3) in | 13) in |
| 4) who | 14) on |
| 5) At | 15) would/could |
| 6) over | 16) their |
| 7) like | 17) which |
| 8) before | 18) about |
| 9) as | 19) from |
| 10) will | 20) enough |

4.4 Translation

(20 points)

- 1) For many years most optimists have believed that misunderstandings between the peoples of the earth can be reduced.
- 2) In the 20th century they even claimed the positive power of the communication technologies would prevent wars if it was used properly.
- 3) Are you sure that there would be fewer problems in the world if the Internet hadn't been invented?
- 4) You mustn't think the world would be different if everyone had a computer of his own.
- 5) No, I disagree, but I still want you to imagine how complicated life used to be.
- 6) Do you remember going to the post office to collect the mail every day? – No, I must have forgotten it.
- 7) How much time do you usually spend at the computer? – Well, I often surf about on the net and I enjoy playing, too.
- 8) And a year ago, for example, the computer helped me (to) find useful information for my 'matura' paper.
- 9) By the way, yesterday I found a page which seemed very interesting. I had been looking for something similar for years.
- 10) In (the) future (,) translations like these will be written on a computer, without any mistakes. – Do you think so?