



**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION**

**END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION**

**BAC 1206 WRITING FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018

**Time:** 14:15 – 16:15

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**Instructions**

1. This examination paper consists of **FIVE** questions.
2. Answer **Question ONE (COMPULSORY)** and **any other TWO** questions.
3. The content of all of your responses to the questions will be graded in terms of the accuracy, completeness, and relevance of the ideas expressed.
4. The form of your answer will be evaluated in terms of clarity, organization, correct mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar, capitalization, agreement), and legibility.

**Question 1**

Carefully read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

I think that I have become a little more skilful in guessing right explanations and in devising experimental tests; but this may probably be the result of mere practice, and of a larger store of knowledge. I have as much difficulty as ever in expressing myself clearly and concisely; and this difficulty has caused me a very great loss of time; but it has had the compensating advantage of forcing me to think long and intently about every sentence, and thus I have been led to see errors in reasoning and in my own observations or those of others.

There seems to be a sort of fatality in my mind leading me to put at first my statement or proposition in a wrong or awkward form. Formerly I used to think about my sentences before writing them down; but for several years I have found that it saves time to scribble in a vile hand whole pages as quickly as I possibly can, contracting half the words; and then correct deliberately. Sentences thus scribbled down are often better ones than I could have written deliberately.

Having said thus much about my manner of writing, I will add that with my large books I spend a good deal of time over the general arrangement of the matter. I first make the rudest outline in

two or three pages, and then a larger one in several pages, a few words or one word standing for a whole discussion or series of facts. Each one of these headings is again enlarged and often transferred before I begin to write in *extenso*.

As in several of my books facts observed by others have been very extensively used, and as I have always had several quite distinct subjects in hand at the same time, I may mention that I keep from thirty to forty large portfolios, in cabinets with labelled shelves, into which I can at once put a detached reference or memorandum. I have bought many books, and at their ends I make an index of all the facts that concern my work; or, if the book is not my own, write out a separate abstract, and of such abstracts I have a large drawer full. Before beginning on any subject I look to all the short indexes and make a general and classified index, and by taking the one or more proper portfolios I have all the information collected during my life ready for use.

I have said that in one respect my mind has changed during the last twenty or thirty years. Up to the age of thirty, or beyond it, poetry of many kinds, such as the works of Milton, Gray, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, gave me great pleasure, and even as a schoolboy I took intense delight in Shakespeare, especially in the historical plays. I have also said that formerly pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry: I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music. Music generally sets me thinking too energetically on what I have been at work on, instead of giving me pleasure. I retain some taste for fine scenery, but it does not cause me the exquisite delight which it formerly did. On the other hand, novels which are works of the imagination, though not of a very high order, have been for years a wonderful relief and pleasure to me, and I often bless all novelists. A surprising number have been read aloud to me, and I like all if moderately good, and if they do not end unhappily— against which a law ought to be passed. A novel, according to my taste, does not come into the first class unless it contains some person whom one can thoroughly love, and if a pretty woman all the better.

This curious and lamentable loss of the higher aesthetic tastes is all the odder, as books on history, biographies, and travels (independently of any scientific facts which they may contain), and essays on all sorts of subjects interest me as much as ever they did. My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone, on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive. A man with a mind more highly organised or better constituted than mine, would not, I suppose, have thus suffered; and if I had to live my life again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.

Excerpt from *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*

- a. Identify the thesis statement in the passage **(6 Marks)**
- b. Analyze the techniques used in developing the thesis statement. **(16 Marks)**
- c. Discuss the effect of sentence types and structures in the passage. **(8 Marks)**

## Question 2

Argue for or against the teaching of mechanics of writing to University students who have been reading and writing throughout their school life. **(15 marks)**

### **Question 3**

You are currently employed as the Communications Manager in a medium sized hospital and part of your duties include internal and external communication. Explain how you would use the 7 Cs of communication listed below in written interactions with your audience.

- i. Completeness
- ii. Conciseness
- iii. Consideration
- iv. Concreteness
- v. Clarity
- vi. Courtesy
- vii. Correctness

**(15 marks)**

### **Question 4**

Discuss what you would do in selecting a topic and writing a persuasive essay. **(15 marks)**

### **Question 5**

Writers use a number of rhetorical devices in their communication with various audiences. Briefly describe when and how you would use rhetorical aims and rhetorical appeals.

**(15 marks)**