

A/L GENERAL ENGLISH · PRACTICE PAPER SERIES

MODEL PAPER 03

Living in Harmony

PAPER I · 60 MARKS · 1 HOUR

PAPER II · 140 MARKS · 3 HOURS

FINAL SCORE = (I + II) ÷ 2

FREE TO USE · NOT FOR SALE

Practice paper. Format copied from the 2020/2024/2025 papers. Content is original. Biographical passages stick to well-known facts but are simplified for exam use — answer from the passage as printed.

This paper deliberately targets textbook Unit 02, which has never supplied a major question in the three papers we have — see [HYPERLINK "../input/prediction/2026-prediction.md"../prediction/2026-prediction.md](#).

Progress Today. **Greatness** Tomorrow.

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PAPER I

General English I · One hour · Total 60 marks

Instructions

- Answer all questions on this paper itself.
- Marks will be deducted for incorrect punctuation (omission of full stops, capital letters, etc.) and for mistakes in basic grammar.

PART A GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY

35 MARKS

1 QUESTION 01

05 MARKS

Fill in the blanks in the following text, using the prepositions given in the box. Use each preposition only once. There is one preposition extra.

among at between for into to

Two neighbours who had quarrelled (1) many years went (2) the house of a wise old man and asked him to settle the dispute (3) them.

The old man listened to the first neighbour and said, "You are right."

He then listened (4) the second and said, "You are right too."

His young student, who had been sitting quietly (5) the visitors, protested. "Sir, they cannot both be right!"

The old man smiled and said, "You are also right."

2 QUESTION 02

10 MARKS

Fill in each blank with the correct form of the verb given within brackets.

A traveller who (1) (visit) a village noticed that the temple, the mosque and the church (2) (stand) within a few hundred metres of one another. Curious, he asked an elderly resident how long they (3) (be) there.

"They (4) (build) more than a century ago," the old man replied, "and we (5) (never / have) a serious quarrel about them."

The traveller asked what the secret was. The old man thought for a while before (6) (answer).

"There is no secret," he said. "When the church roof (7) (damage) in the storm last year, the men from the mosque (8) (help) to repair it. If we (9) (wait) for someone else to do it, it would still be leaking today. People who (10) (work) together find very little time to argue."

3 QUESTION 03

10 MARKS

Underline the most appropriate word from those given within brackets to fill in the blanks in the following text.

Sri Lanka is home to (1) (a / an / the) remarkable variety of communities, languages and religions. (2) (This / These / Those) diversity is one of the country's greatest strengths, (3) (although / because / unless) it has sometimes been treated as a weakness.

Children who grow up (4) (among / between / along) neighbours of different faiths learn early that people can differ without being enemies. (5) (They / Their / There) friendships are formed long before anyone teaches them to notice difference.

Unfortunately, mistrust can spread very quickly when people know little about (6) (other / another / each other). Rumours travel faster than facts, (7) (so / nor / for) communities that never meet find it easy to believe the worst.

(8) (Therefore / However / Moreover), the solution is not complicated. Shared work, shared classrooms and shared festivals do more to build trust than (9) (many / much / few) speeches about harmony. (10) (Every / All / Much) citizen has a part to play in this.

4 QUESTION 04

05 MARKS

Underline the most appropriate word from those given within brackets.

We should (respect / regard / notice / observe) the beliefs of other communities.

Mutual understanding helps to (stop / prevent / avoid / refuse) unnecessary conflict.

The two villages have lived in (peace / quiet / silence / calm) for generations.

False rumours can (damage / break / hurt / spoil) relations between communities.

National unity (depends / relies / stands / bases) on trust between all citizens.

5 QUESTION 05

05 MARKS

Underline the correct word-ending, selecting from those given within brackets.

Sri Lanka's cultural diver (1) (sity / sify / sively) is visible in its festivals, its food and its languages. Peace (2) (able / ful / less) coexistence has been the ordinary experience of most communities for centuries. Where mistrust has grown, it has usually been encouraged by a small number of irrespons (3) (ive / ible / ent) voices rather than by ordinary people. Strengthening friend (4) (ly / ship / less) between communities is therefore not an idealistic dream but a practi (5) (ce / cal / cally) necessity.

PART A · 35 MARKS



PART B READING AND WRITING

25 MARKS

6 QUESTION 06

05 MARKS

Underline the option that best expresses the meaning of each of the sentences given below in bold print.

(1) Had the two communities talked to each other earlier, the misunderstanding could have been avoided.

- (a) The two communities talked earlier and avoided the misunderstanding.
- (b) The two communities did not talk earlier, so the misunderstanding was not avoided.
- (c) The misunderstanding was avoided although they did not talk.
- (d) The two communities are still not talking to each other.

(2) Amara, whose grandmother was born in Jaffna, speaks all three languages fluently.

- (a) Amara's grandmother speaks three languages.
- (b) Amara was born in Jaffna.
- (c) Amara speaks all three languages fluently.
- (d) Amara's grandmother speaks only Tamil.

(3) Not until the flood struck did the villagers realise how much they depended on one another.

- (a) The villagers realised their dependence before the flood.
- (b) The villagers realised their dependence only after the flood struck.
- (c) The villagers never realised their dependence.
- (d) The flood did not affect the villagers.

(4) Although the two schools had competed for years, they jointly organised the relief camp.

- (a) The two schools refused to work together.
- (b) The two schools worked together in spite of their long rivalry.
- (c) The two schools stopped competing and never worked together.
- (d) Only one of the schools organised the relief camp.

(5) Hardly any of the students had visited a place of worship other than their own.

- (a) Most of the students had visited other places of worship.
- (b) All the students had visited other places of worship.
- (c) Very few students had visited other places of worship.
- (d) The students were not allowed to visit places of worship.

7 QUESTION 07

10 MARKS

Read the following four news items and answer the questions (I) and (II).

Inter-school harmony camp held in Anuradhapura

A three-day residential camp bringing together students from twelve schools in five provinces concluded at Anuradhapura on Friday, 12th June. The camp, organised by a national youth foundation, included group projects, language exchange sessions and a joint cultural evening. Two hundred and forty students took part. The organisers said applications had been received from more than sixty schools and that the camp would be expanded next year.

Villagers rebuild damaged shrine together

Residents of a village in the Batticaloa district completed repairs to a small shrine damaged in last month's storm on Sunday, 14th June. Volunteers from all the communities in the village contributed labour, and the materials were donated by a local trader. The village committee secretary said the work had taken three

weekends and that a similar effort would be made to repair the village library.

Trilingual dictionary released for schools

A Sinhala–Tamil–English dictionary designed for school use was launched in Colombo on Monday, 15th June. The dictionary, which contains 12,000 entries, will be distributed free of charge to 3,000 government schools. Officials said that the project had taken four years and that they would release a digital version later in the year.

Study finds high support for mixed schooling

A survey of 1,800 parents released on Tuesday, 16th June found that 78 per cent supported sending their children to schools attended by pupils from different communities. Support was strongest among parents in urban areas. The researchers noted, however, that only a minority of the parents surveyed had themselves attended such a school.

(I) Underline the most appropriate response in each of the questions from (1) to (5).

- (1) How many students took part in the harmony camp?
(a) Twelve (b) Sixty (c) Two hundred and forty (d) One thousand eight hundred
- (2) Which of the following happened on Sunday?
(a) The conclusion of the harmony camp
(b) The completion of the shrine repairs
(c) The launch of the trilingual dictionary
(d) The release of the parents' survey
- (3) Who or what does the pronoun "they" refer to in the news item about the dictionary?
(a) The dictionary entries (b) The schools (c) The officials (d) The pupils
- (4) Which of the following was not given in the news item about the shrine?
(a) how long the repair work took
(b) who donated the materials
(c) the cost of the repairs
(d) what the villagers plan to repair next
- (5) The underlined phrase "only a minority of the parents surveyed" most nearly means
(a) almost all of the parents questioned.
(b) less than half of the parents questioned.
(c) none of the parents questioned.
(d) exactly half of the parents questioned.

(II) Do the following statements agree with the information given in the above news items? In boxes (6) to (10), write True, False or Not Given.

	Statement	
(6)	More schools applied for the harmony camp than were able to attend.	
(7)	The shrine repairs were paid for entirely by the government.	
(8)	The trilingual dictionary will be sold to schools at a reduced price.	
(9)	A digital version of the dictionary is expected later in the year.	
(10)	Support for mixed schooling was strongest among parents living in rural areas.	

8

QUESTION 08

10 MARKS

Write a paragraph beginning with the given sentence. Use about 75–100 words. Do not exceed the word limit. Do not write more than one paragraph.

There are many benefits of living in harmony with people of other communities.

Write your answer below.

PART B • 25 MARKS

PAPER II

General English II · Three hours + 10 minutes reading time · Total 140 marks

PART A READING SKILLS

50 MARKS

1 QUESTION 01

10 MARKS

Read the following text in which some words are given in bold print. Then, underline the meaning that is most appropriate to the context for the words given in bold print from (1) to (10).

Nelson Mandela is remembered as one of the most (1) **influential** figures of the twentieth century. Born in a small village in South Africa in 1918, he trained as a lawyer at a time when the country's laws (2) **denied** black citizens the most basic rights. Together with others, he campaigned against a system that (3) **segregated** people entirely on the grounds of race.

His opposition led to his arrest, and in 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment. He spent twenty-seven years in prison, much of it on a small island, doing hard labour in a lime quarry. Many expected such treatment to (4) **embitter** him permanently.

Instead, the years in prison seem to have (5) **deepened** his conviction that the country's future depended on reconciliation rather than revenge. When he was finally released in 1990, he urged his supporters to (6) **restrain** their anger and to negotiate.

Four years later he was elected president in the first election in which all South Africans could vote. His government worked to (7) **dismantle** the old racial laws while deliberately avoiding the (8) **retribution** that many had feared and some had demanded.

He served only one term and then stepped down, a decision that (9) **reinforced** his reputation far more than a second term could have done. He died in 2013, leaving a country transformed and an example that continues to (10) **resonate** wherever people are divided.

No.	Options
(1) influential	wealthy · powerful in effect · talkative · fortunate
(2) denied	granted · refused · delayed · reviewed
(3) segregated	united · separated · educated · protected
(4) embitter	encourage · make resentful · confuse · weaken
(5) deepened	intensified · reduced · questioned · replaced
(6) restrain	express · control · explain · increase
(7) dismantle	build · take apart · defend · rewrite
(8) retribution	forgiveness · punishment · celebration · negotiation
(9) reinforced	damaged · strengthened · created · questioned
(10) resonate	disappear · have an effect · be forgotten · be repeated



2

QUESTION 02

10 MARKS

Read the following text and answer questions (I) and (II).

① Geoffrey Bawa is generally regarded as the most important architect Sri Lanka has produced. Born in Colombo in 1919 into a family of mixed European and Sri Lankan descent, he grew up between cultures — an experience that later shaped an architecture belonging to no single tradition and drawing on several.

② His route into architecture was unusual. He first read English at Cambridge and then qualified as a barrister in London, returning to Ceylon in his twenties to practise law. He found the work unsatisfying. In 1948 he bought an abandoned rubber estate at Lunuganga, near Bentota, intending to make a garden of it, and it was this project that turned his attention to design.

③ Only then did he begin formal training. He returned to London and studied at the Architectural Association, qualifying as an architect in 1957 at the age of thirty-eight — an age at which many architects are already established. He then worked in Sri Lanka for more than four decades.

④ His buildings are known for the way they open themselves to the climate and the landscape instead of shutting them out. Courtyards, verandahs, deep eaves and unglazed openings allow air and light to move through the building, so that the boundary between inside and outside is deliberately blurred. This approach came to be called tropical modernism, and it has been widely imitated across South and Southeast Asia.

⑤ Among his best-known works are the Sri Lankan Parliament complex at Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte, the Kandalama Hotel near Dambulla, whose structure is wrapped around a rocky hillside, and the garden at Lunuganga, which he continued to develop for over fifty years. He died in 2003. His reputation now rests less on any single building than on an idea: that modern architecture need not look the same everywhere, and that a building should belong to the place it stands in.

(I) Do the following statements agree with the information given in the above text? Write True or False in the boxes (1) to (8).

	Statement	
(1)	Geoffrey Bawa studied architecture immediately after leaving school.	
(2)	He qualified as a barrister before he became an architect.	
(3)	He bought the Lunuganga estate after he qualified as an architect.	
(4)	He qualified as an architect at the age of thirty-eight.	
(5)	His buildings are designed to keep the climate and landscape out.	
(6)	The Kandalama Hotel is situated near Bentota.	
(7)	He continued to develop the garden at Lunuganga for more than fifty years.	
(8)	His approach to design influenced architects outside Sri Lanka.	

(II) Underline the most appropriate answer.

(9) Who or what does the pronoun "it" in bold print in paragraph ② ("it was this project...") refer to?

- (a) The law practice
- (b) The purchase and making of the garden at Lunuganga
- (c) His training at Cambridge
- (d) His return to Ceylon



(10) The phrase "the boundary between inside and outside is deliberately blurred" in paragraph ④ most nearly means

- (a) the walls of the building are difficult to see.
- (b) the building has no doors or windows at all.
- (c) the difference between interior and exterior space is intentionally reduced.
- (d) the building is constructed partly underground.

**QUESTION 03****05 MARKS**

Read the following poem and do the activities that follow.

One Rain

The bell, the drum, the call to prayer
Rise separately at dawn;
But all of them are answered by
The same slow-lifting sun.

We plant our fields in different rows
And name our gods apart,
Yet every field is watered by
One rain, one sky, one heart.

The stranger at my gate today
Speaks words I cannot read;
But hunger has a single word
And so, I think, does need.

Let those who wish divide the earth
Into a hundred lands —
The harvest still must come to us
Through one another's hands.

(A) Underline the most appropriate response.

(1) In the first stanza, the poet emphasises that the different calls to worship are

- (a) all answered by the same sun. (b) heard only in the evening.
- (c) in competition with one another. (d) never heard by anyone.

(2) What does the poet mean by "hunger has a single word"?

- (a) That hunger is easy to describe.
- (b) That basic human needs are the same for everyone.
- (c) That the stranger is asking for food in one language.
- (d) That hunger cannot be expressed in words.

(3) In the final stanza, the poet suggests that people

- (a) should divide the earth into more countries.
- (b) depend on one another whatever the divisions between them.
- (c) should harvest their fields separately.
- (d) will never be able to work together.

(4) The attitude of the poet towards human differences is

- (a) accepting. (b) hostile. (c) fearful. (d) indifferent.

(B) Write down a word, selecting from the poem, which means the same as "a person you do not know."

.....

4 QUESTION 04

05 MARKS

Complete the blanks of the summary meaningfully and appropriately, using one word only from the passage titled "Volunteering."

Volunteering

Volunteering is the practice of giving one's time and effort to help others without expecting payment in return. It takes many forms: coaching a school team, cleaning a canal, teaching a neighbour to read, or helping at a relief camp after a disaster.

The obvious benefit is to the community, which gains services it could not otherwise afford. The less obvious benefit is to the volunteer. Employers increasingly value volunteering experience because it demonstrates initiative and the ability to work with people who are not like oneself. Many volunteers also report an improvement in their own confidence.

Perhaps the most valuable outcome, however, is social. Volunteering brings together people who would otherwise never meet — across age, income and community — and shared work is one of the most effective ways of dissolving suspicion between groups. A person who has spent a weekend building a wall alongside a stranger rarely continues to think of that stranger as a stranger.

Summary

Volunteering means giving one's time to help others without expecting (1) The community benefits from services it could not otherwise (2) , while the volunteer gains experience that employers value because it shows (3) Volunteers also report greater (4) in themselves. Most importantly, volunteering brings together people who would never otherwise meet, and shared work is an effective way of dissolving (5) between groups.

5 QUESTION 05

20 MARKS

Read the following text and answer the questions from (1) to (5).

① Sri Lanka is a small island with an unusually complex social composition. Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim, Burgher and Malay communities have lived alongside one another for centuries, and the country's Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic and Christian traditions are woven through its festivals, its place names and its food. For most of that history, ordinary coexistence has been the rule and open conflict the exception — a fact that is easily forgotten when the exceptions are what get recorded.

..... **Studies of** inter-community relations consistently find that prejudice is strongest where contact is weakest. People who work beside members of another community, or whose children attend school together, are markedly less likely to believe hostile generalisations about that community than people whose only information comes from rumour or from social media.

③ This is why the structure of schooling matters so much. A large proportion of Sri Lankan children complete thirteen years of education without ever sharing a classroom with a child of another language or faith. They may live within a few kilometres of such a child and never meet one. Whatever is taught about harmony in a civics lesson is unlikely to outweigh thirteen years of separation in practice.

④ Language compounds the problem. A young person who speaks only one of the national languages cannot easily form a friendship across the divide even where the opportunity exists. Trilingual education has been official policy for many years, but implementation has been uneven, and in many schools the second national language is taught by teachers who are not fluent in it themselves.

⑤ None of this is beyond repair, and some of the most effective responses have been small and local rather

than national. Joint sports tournaments, shared use of facilities, twinning arrangements between schools in different provinces, and community projects that require different groups to work towards a single practical goal have all been shown to reduce mutual suspicion. What they have in common is that they create contact around a task, rather than lecturing people about tolerance.

⑥ Harmony, in other words, is not chiefly a matter of sentiment. It is a matter of ordinary arrangements — who studies with whom, who works with whom, who is depended upon by whom. Where those arrangements bring people together, goodwill tends to follow. Where they keep people apart, no amount of official rhetoric will supply it.

(1) Do the following statements agree with the information given in the above text? Write True, False or Not Given in the boxes from (a) to (f). (06 marks)

	Statement	
(a)	According to the text, open conflict has been more common than coexistence in Sri Lankan history.	
(b)	Prejudice is strongest where contact between communities is weakest.	
(c)	Many Sri Lankan children complete their schooling without sharing a classroom with a child of another language or faith.	
(d)	Trilingual education has been implemented evenly across the country.	
(e)	The government has recently increased the salaries of second-language teachers.	
(f)	The writer believes that official rhetoric alone can create harmony.	

(2) Answer the following. (03 marks)

- (i) Underline the most appropriate option to complete the missing sentence in paragraph ②.
- (a) Sri Lanka's communities have never had any disagreements.
 - (b) The single most reliable predictor of good relations between communities is simple contact.
 - (c) Social media is entirely responsible for community tensions.
 - (d) Prejudice cannot be reduced by any known means.
- (ii) Why, according to the writer, is a civics lesson on harmony unlikely to be effective on its own?
- (a) Because civics is not an examination subject.
 - (b) Because teachers are not trained to deliver it.
 - (c) Because it cannot outweigh thirteen years of actual separation.
 - (d) Because students are not interested in the subject.
- (iii) What do the successful local responses described in paragraph ⑤ have in common?
- (a) They are funded by the central government.
 - (b) They create contact around a shared practical task.
 - (c) They focus on teaching tolerance directly.
 - (d) They involve only students and teachers.

(3) If you wish to extend each paragraph further, in which paragraphs do you include the following information? Match the information with the paragraphs of the text and write the number of the paragraph in the relevant box. (03 marks)



	Information	Paragraph
(a)	Researchers found that workers in ethnically mixed factories held far more positive views of other communities than workers in single-community workplaces.	
(b)	Two schools in Jaffna and Matara exchange groups of students for a week each term.	
(c)	Several Sinhala place names in the hill country are derived from Tamil words.	

(4) Who or what do the following pronouns in bold print refer to? (03 marks)

- (a) that community (paragraph ②) :
 (b) They (paragraph ③, "They may live within a few kilometres...") :
 (c) it (paragraph ④, last word of the passage) :

(5) Write one word in each blank, selecting from the passage, which means the same as the following. (05 marks)

- (a) Living together in the same place at the same time :
 (b) An unfair opinion formed without knowledge :
 (c) Makes a problem worse :
 (d) Putting a plan or policy into effect : (e) Impressive language that may not be sincere :

PART A · 50 MARKS

PART B DIALOGUES

25 MARKS

6

QUESTION 06

05 MARKS

How do you respond in each of the following situations? Write only one appropriate sentence or question for each, beginning with the word/s given.

- (1) A new student who speaks a different language has joined your class. Welcome him.
 "Welcome"
- (2) Someone in your group makes an unkind generalisation about another community. Disagree.
 "I don't"
- (3) You want to invite your friend to a festival celebrated by your family. Invite her.
 "Would ?"
- (4) You accidentally interrupted someone during a religious observance. Apologise.
 "I'm terribly sorry"
- (5) Your friend is nervous about visiting a place of worship unfamiliar to her. Reassure her.
 "Don't"

7 QUESTION 07

05 MARKS

Complete the following dialogue between Nadeesha and Fathima. Do not use more than two sentences/questions in each blank.

Nadeesha : Fathima, our class has been asked to organise something for Harmony Week.

Fathima : (1)

Nadeesha : I was thinking of a food festival, with dishes from all our communities.

Fathima : That's a lovely idea. (2) ?

Nadeesha : We could hold it in the school hall during the interval on Friday.

Fathima : (3) ?

Nadeesha : About thirty students have offered to bring something from home.

Fathima : (4) ?

Nadeesha : Yes, we will need permission from the class teacher first.

Fathima : (5)

Nadeesha : Thank you. Let's go and see her together tomorrow morning.

QUESTION 08

15 MARKS

Imagine that you and your friend have been asked to plan your school's Harmony Day programme. Write out the dialogue you have with your friend. Each one should speak at least five times. Your dialogue should include the following information.

what activities to include in the programme

how to make sure every community in the school takes part

final agreement on the plan

Write your answer below.



PART B · 25 MARKS

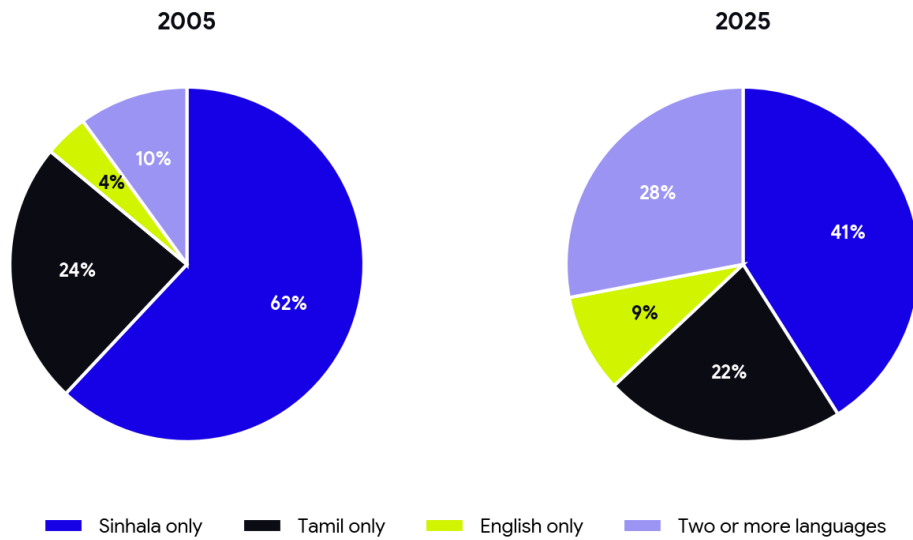
PART C WRITING SKILLS**65 MARKS****9****QUESTION 09****05 MARKS**

Select any five words from the list given below. Write five meaningful sentences using the selected words. You may use the verbs in any tense and nouns in singular or plural form. Do not change the form of the other words.

tolerance celebrate mutual peacefully tradition cooperate diverse
prejudice willingly neighbour

10**QUESTION 10****10 MARKS**

The two pie charts below show the languages spoken at home by the students of a large school in 2005 and in 2025. Describe the information given in the charts by reporting the main features and making comparisons where relevant. Use about 100 words.



Write your answer below.

11

QUESTION 11

15 MARKS

Imagine that you are the Secretary of the Harmony Society of your school. Your society has decided to hold an inter-community cultural evening. Write a suitable NOTICE to be displayed about the meeting at which the event will be planned, inviting Advanced Level students to participate. Use any relevant imaginary details. Use about 50–75 words. Do not exceed this word limit.

Write your answer below.

12

QUESTION 12

15 MARKS

Your school is holding its annual Harmony Day. The organising committee has decided to invite the principal of a neighbouring school to deliver the keynote address. As the Secretary of the organising committee, write a letter inviting him/her. Include the following in your letter:

- the purpose of the event and why he/she has been invited
- the date, time and venue
- the topic you would like him/her to speak on
- a polite request for confirmation

Use about 100–125 words.

Write your answer below.

13

QUESTION 13

20 MARKS

It is proposed that "All schools should teach students about the religions and cultures of every community in the country." Do you agree or disagree? Write an essay giving reasons for your choice. Use about 150–200 words. Do not exceed the word limit.

Write your answer below.



PART C · 65 MARKS