WEEK 1

Exercise 1:

EXAM FOCUS

Birds that feed in flocks commonly retire together into roosts. The reasons for roosting continually are not always obvious, but there are some likely benefits. In winter especially, it is important for birds to keep warm at night and **conserve** precious food reserves. One way to do this is to find a sheltered roost. Solitary roosters shelter in dense vegetation or enter a cavity – horned larks dig holes in the ground and ptarmigan burrow into snow banks – but the effects of sheltering is **magnified** by several birds huddling together in the roosts, as wrens, swifts, brown creepers, bluebirds, and anis do. Body contact reduces the surface area exposed to the cold air, so the birds keep each other warm. Two kinglets huddling together were found to reduce their heat losses by a quarter, and three together saved a third of their heat.

The second possible benefit of communal roosts is that they act as "information centers." During the day, parties of birds will have spread out to **forage** over a very large area. When they return in the evening some will have fed well, but others may have found little to eat. Some investigators have observed that when the birds set out again next morning, those birds that did not feed well on the previous day appear to follow those that did. The behavior of common and lesser kestrels may illustrate different feeding behaviors of similar birds with different roosting habits. The common kestrel hunts vertebrate animals in a small, familiar hunting ground, whereas the very similar lesser kestrel feeds on insects over a large area. The common kestrel roosts and hunts alone, but the lesser kestrel roosts and hunts in flocks, possibly so one bird can learn from others where to find insect swarms.

Finally, there is safety in numbers at communal roosts since there will always be a few birds awake at any given moment to give the alarm. But this increased protection is partially **counteracted** by the fact that mass roots attract predators and are especially vulnerable if they are on the ground. Even those in trees can be attacked by birds of prey. The birds on the edge are at greater risk since predators find it easier to catch small birds perching at the margins of the roosts.

1. The word "conserve" is closest in meaning to

- A. retain
- B. watch
- C. locate
- D. share

2. The word "magnified" is closest in meaning to

- A. caused
- B. modified
- C. feed
- D. combined

3. The word "forage" is closest in meaning to

- A. fly
- B. assemble
- C. feed
- D. rest

4. The word "counteracted" is closest in meaning to

- A. suggested
- B. negated
- C. measured
- D. shielded

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Exercise 2:

EXAM FOCUS

Horatio Alger, Jr.

Horatio Alger, Jr. (1832-1899) was the author of more than 100 books for boys in the second half of the nineteenth century **that** focused on the theme of success coming to those who work hard to achieve **it**. The son of a minister, Alger came from a prominent Massachusetts family. He graduated with honors from Harvard in 1852 and graduated from the Cambridge Divinity School eight years later. He served as a minister for a short time before moving to New York City in 1866 to devote his time to writing inspirational books for boys.

In many of his books, he wrote about the poor and homeless children of the slums of New York City, seeing **them** as unfortunate pawns of society **who**, if only given the opportunity, could improve their lot. A general plotline that he followed often was of a poor boy who managed to achieve a respectable and successful life by working hard and taking advantage of opportunities presented. Though his writing style was characterized by simplicity and repetition, **it** was well received by his target audience; his books were enormously popular, selling millions of copies well into the first few decades of the twentieth century.

1. The word "that" in paragraph 1 refers to

- A. author
- B. books
- C. boys
- D. half

2. The word "it" in paragraph 1 refers to

- A. the second half
- B. the nineteenth century
- C. 100
- D. success

3. The word "them" in paragraph 2 refers to

- A. books
- B. children
- C. slums
- D. pawns

4. The word "who" in paragraph 2 refers to

- A. slums
- B. society
- C. pawns
- D. opportunity

5. The word "it" in paragraph 2 refers to

- A. style
- B. simplicity
- C. repetition
- D. audience

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Exercise 3:

Body Language and Cultural Differences

The body language people use often communicates more about their feelings than the words they are saying. We use body movements, hand gestures, expressions and changes in our voice to communicate with each other. Although some body language is universal, many gestures are culturally specific and may mean different things in different countries. You have to be careful not to put your foot in your mouth!

If you want to give someone the nod in Bulgaria, you have to nod your head to say no and shake it to say yes – the exact opposite of what we do! In Belgium, pointing with your index finger or snapping your fingers at someone is very rude.

In France, you shouldn't rest your feet on tables or chairs. Speaking to someone with your hands in your pockets will only add insult to injury. In the Middle East, you should never show the soles of your feet or shoes to others as it will be seen as a grave insult. When eating, only use your right hand because they use their left hands when going to the bathroom.

In Bangladesh, the "thumbs-up" is a rude sign. In Burma, people greet each other by clapping, and in India, whistling in public is considered rude.

In Japan, should not blow your nose in public, but you can burp at the end of a meal to show that you enjoyed it. The "OK" sign (thumb and index finger forming a circle" means "everything's good" in the west, but in China it means nothing or zero. In Japan, it means money, and in the Middle East, it is a rude gesture.

3.1 Vocabulary: Match the following words (1-12) in the passage with their appropriate explanations (a-l).

1. body language	a. the finger next to the thumb
2. hand gesture	b. to make a sudden loud sound like something breaking or closing
3. expression	c. the bottom part of a foot
4. universal	d. to allow air from the stomach to come out through the mouth in a noisy way
5. nod	e. something said or done that is considered rude or offensive
6. index finger	f. to make a high sound by forcing air through a small hole or passage, especially through the lips
7. snap	g. body language that is expressed by hand
8. pocket	h. the movements or positions of your body by which you show other people how you are feeling

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7. sole	i. a look on your face showing how you feel
8. insult	j. to move one's head down and up
9. whistle	k. a small bag for carrying things
10. burp	l. existing everywhere or involving everyone

3.2 Comprehension questions: Answer the following questions.

1. What is the main idea of the reading?
   A. It is important to eat with your right hand in Japan.
   B. Other cultures are strange as they are different from ours.
   C. Body language means different things in different countries.
   D. The people in the Middle East don't like the soles of shoes.
2. Why does the author say it is bad to eat with your left hand in the Middle East?
   A. To explain that it it used when going to the bathroom
   B. To show that the left hand is used for gestures
   C. To compare it to western culture
   D. To emphasize our emotions
3. Sometimes body language can …
   A. help us to ask directions
   B. prevent us from understanding each other
   C. make communication difficult
   D. communicate our feelings better than our words can
4. What is a "grave insult"?
   A. A place to bury the dead
   B. Part of a church
   C. To say something bad about someone
   D. To say something good about someone
5. What does this reading tell us about culture?
   A. Cultures are almost all the same.
   B. We cannot understand people from other cultures.
   C. Cultures are very different from each other.
   D. People everywhere are able to communicate through body language.

3.3 Use the following words to fill in the blanks.

soles *universal* *opposite*

1. The flip-flop can be found in every country in the world and has ……. appeal.
2. Made from simple rubber ……. and a strap, the flip-flop is comfortable and cool.
3. The flip-flop is the exact ……. of the uncomfortable heels I have to wear at work.

3.4 Fill in the blanks using the new vocabulary you learned in the passage.

1. I have trouble trying to ……. with my parents.
   A. communicate

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B. communicated
C. communication
D. communicative

2. There are a few things you may need to ……. for your health.
   A. consider
   B. considerate
   C. considerable
   D. considering
3. Perhaps you can wash the dishes or make some other considerate ……. to make your parents happy.
   A. gestures
   B. manners
   C. greeting
   D. kindness

3.5 Fill in the following paragraph using some of the new vocabulary and idioms from the reading passage.

add insult to injury *gestures* *consider*

We take communication for granted, but when dealing with people from other cultures, we must be aware that some words or …….(1) may be understood differently. We need to …….(2) the fact that gestures that we think are harmless may be perceived as rude by someone else. Not apologizing or continuing to make the same gesture will only …….(3).

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