



NWFP PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR THE POSTS OF
PROVINCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICE (BPS-17) 2008

ENGLISH PRECIS AND COMPOSITION

TIME ALLOWED: THREE HOURS

MAXIMUM MARKS: 100

- Note: - i) Attempt ALL questions. Marks will be deducted for incorrect use of the English language. Extra attempt of any question will not be considered.
- ii) Candidate must draw two straight lines (=====) at the end to separate each question attempted in answer book.

Q.1 Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow:

(20)

Hidden Persuasion?

Advertising is art with ulterior motives. It is used to attract consumers' attention and make them believe that one brand is better than another or that they need something that they really do not. Advertising indirectly sets many cultural norms. It plays on many common beliefs, hoping to relate to the majority of the consumers. There are many popular methods for getting such message across.

We are subjected to a continual barrage of advertisements on the television, the print media and the internet. The average internet surfer comes across at least an ad or two per page surfed.

Over the years, advertising has become an important economical means through which the demand for a product is controlled. The need for advertisement has been reflected by a continual increase in demand for market analysts, strategists and psychologists.

In Pakistan, even our utility companies have resorted to the rather tasteless printing of advertisements all over the phone and gas bills! Our roads are lined not with trees but with huge hoardings advertising everything from food to vacations.

Subliminal Advertising

Subliminal means, according to Webster's New World Dictionary, "below the threshold of consciousness or apprehension." So, what are subliminal adverts?

They are covertly embedded images or 'messages' that 'speak' to the subconscious and not to the conscious mind. Subliminal adverts are used as tools of persuasion by our media manipulators. They are embedded in advertising material for a variety of reasons, usually to stimulate consumption, alter our moods and enhance associations.

We 'react' to images and symbols in a powerful way and our media persuaders know how to use this fact to their advantage. In other words, depending on the intended effect, specific words or images can trigger unconscious thought which may lead to subsequent action.

The whole point of a subliminal ad is that you can't see it.

The public first became aware of subliminal advertising in the 1950's with a movie theater experiment. Short clips of the phrases "Hungry? Eat Popcorn" and "Drink Coca-Cola" were inserted by advertiser James Vicary in the movies being shown.

This supposedly boosted sales at the refreshment stands, but later it was found to be hoax. Vicary admitted that the original "study" was fabrication (Skeptical Inquirer, Spring 1992), intended only to increase customers for his marketing business.

Belief in subliminal messaging reached surreal height in USA in 1980 with the publication of

The Clam-Plate Orgy and Other Subliminals the Media use to Manipulate Your Behavior by Dr. Wilson Bryan Key.

USA has its own set of extremists of all kinds. Americans see a hidden hand in many areas. In the September 2000 election campaign in USA, there was a subliminal message scare: A Republican ad flashed the segment "RATS," from the word "Bureaucrats," for 1/30 of a second over a picture of the Democratic candidate, Al Gore. Complaints were made but the Republican's ad agency denied that this was intentional ("subliminal").

Detractors claim that subliminal messages have also been detected in radio advertisements, print and media ads for cigarettes (Camels), soft drinks (Coke and Pepsi cans), clothes and perfumes, several Disney movies (the Lion King), and popular rock and roll songs. However, the effectiveness of these messages in modifying behavior has yet to be proven.

As though subliminal messaging in ads isn't enough, there are ad companies researching the possibility that auditory stimuli may induce people to go on a spending spree. The New Scientist talks about ads which are geared to stimulate our sense of smell and persuade us to buy expensive perfumes, coffee, bread etc.

Should there be laws to limit what ad companies can do?

Do ad companies have the right to employ psychology to induce us to buy their product?

Is this an Orwellian nightmare?

Attempt any 4 questions:

1. Why can't we 'see' subliminal ads?
2. What is the writer's opinion of subliminal advertising? Do you agree with the views of the writer?
3. What does the writer mean by an "Orwellian nightmare"?
4. In your opinion are subliminal ads an ethical practice?
5. After reading the above passage, do you think the writer has exaggerated the situation, or is it possible that this is already being practiced?

Q.2 Write a précis of 169 words of the following passage. Give it a suitable title. (20)

Hydroponics, an unconventional growing technique, is the cultivation of plants in water. Revolutionary as it may sound, plants do not need soil as such – they need only the nutrients and moisture contained in the soil, and these can be supplied through gravel that contains water, as well as through soil.

Hydroponics is not a new process. As long ago as the 1690's, an English physician tried growing plants in a laboratory experiment, and in the 1880's German researchers used the method to develop many of the formulas for plant nutrient still in use today.

About a generation ago, hydroponics moved out of the research labs into commercial use. A California physiologist, W.F. Gericke, published guidelines for hydroponics agriculture in 1936. Use was made of hydroponics in some military operations during World War II. Since then research projects and commercial ventures in hydroponics have gone forward in a number of countries, including areas where water is in short supply and temperatures are too extreme for ordinary agriculture.

One of the leading companies in the field of hydroponics, in Arizona, which operates over 200 greenhouses on a 48 hectare section of land. Hydroculture produces more than 2.7 million kilograms of vegetables and fruit each year – mostly tomatoes, but also cucumbers, lettuce and melons. Crop yields are excellent. Each mature tomato plant produces an average of 12.1 kilos of fruit in a year of two growing cycles. This compares with about 9 kilos for two crops of the average soil grown plant.

Hydroculture's greenhouses measure 8 by 39 meters and consist of steel frames covered with reinforced plastic film that is resistant to weather and lets in a maximum amount of light. The plants are fed by inorganic nutrients dissolved in water which is supplied by a plastic pipeline. The feeding and watering system is automated. Electric sensing devices (sensors) determine when the plants are hungry or thirsty. The sensors send impulse messages that automatically activate the water and nutrient delivery system. When the sensors 'know' that the plants have had enough, they automatically shut off the system.

Temperature, humidity and air circulation are carefully controlled. Air conditioning and heating keep the temperature at 29 Celsius by day and 18 by night. No entry is given to wind, hail, frost, drought, weeds or insects.

Despite the development, soilless agriculture still remains only a minor competitor to the traditional open-field way of growing crops. Hydroponics accounts for only a small fraction of world output of food and fibre, and its potential is primarily in arid-region agriculture where water is in short supply, or in the production of high priced specialty crops which reward costly investment and intensive care.

Q.3 Explain the meaning of any five of the following (5)

i) Activate	v) Sensors
ii) Arid	vi) Resistant
iii) Humidity	vii) Unconventional
iv) Automated	viii) Inorganic

Q.4(a) Chose the word nearest in meaning to the word in capitals. (Attempt only 5) (5)

1) DOMESTICATE: a) to turn native b) be exclusive c) tame d) cut claws	2) ANTICS: a) expectation b) absurd behavior c) temper d) place where ants live	3) DATA: a) belief b) point of origin c) date line d) information
4) TRAIT: a) narrow enclosure b) strong point c) distinguishing feature d) footprint	5) ERA: a) curious event b) disaster c) period of history d) cycle	6) SACROSANCT: a) peaceful b) sacred c) mundane d) painful

Q.4(b) Use only five of the following in sentences which illustrate the meaning of the idiom: (10)

i) Have your cake and eat it too	iv) Take something with a pinch of salt
ii) Like two peas in a pod	v) To read between the lines
iii) Bur one's boats	vi) To stick to one's guns

Q.5(a) Change the following into reported speech. Attempt only 5. Any extra attempt will not be considered (10)

i) Amir said, "I haven't seen you for a long time."	iv) Amir asked Junaid, "When are we going to leave?"
ii) I asked my sister, "Why did you do that?"	v) She said, "I had an infection."
iii) She asked him, "Why don't you love me any more?"	vi) Junaid said, "I don't like to stay in be."
	vii) Akbar said, "I bought a new car."

Q.5(b) Make up five groups of three words which are similar in meaning or area of usage: (10)

barge barrel bucket can cane

canoe flask hive nest raft

rod stick tin vat warren

Q.6 Write about 250 words on one of the following: (20)

- The advantages of living alone
- A night spent out in the open
- Your first visit to a large city
- Children should be seen and not heard.