



READING CHALLENGE 45

BƯỚC 1: ĐỌC VÀ HOÀN THÀNH CÁC CÂU HỎI

READING PASSAGE (Cam 19 – Test 4– Passage 3)

The Unselfish Gene

A psychologist gives his view on how humans became self-centred

A

There has long been a general assumption that human beings are essentially selfish. We're apparently ruthless, with strong impulses to compete against each other for resources and to accumulate power and possessions. If we are kind to one another, it's usually because we have ulterior motives. If we are good, it's only because we have managed to control and transcend our innate selfishness and brutality.

B

This bleak view of human nature is closely associated with the science writer Richard Dawkins, whose 1976 book *The Selfish Gene* became popular because it fitted so well with – and helped to justify – the competitive and individualistic ethos that was so prevalent in late 20th-century societies. Like many others, Dawkins justifies his views with reference to the field of evolutionary psychology. Evolutionary psychology theorises that present-day human traits developed in prehistoric times, during what is termed the 'environment of evolutionary adaptedness'.

C

Prehistory is usually seen as a period of intense competition, when life was such a brutal battle that only those with traits such as selfishness, aggression and ruthlessness survived. And because survival depended on access to resources – such as rivers, forests and animals – there was bound to be conflict between rival groups, which led to the development of traits such as racism and warfare. This seems logical. But, in fact, the assumption on which this all rests – that prehistoric life was a desperate struggle for survival – is false.

D

It's important to remember that in the prehistoric era, the world was very sparsely populated. According to some estimates, around 15,000 years ago, the population of Europe was only 29,000, and the population of the whole world was less than half a million. Humans at that time were hunter-gatherers: people who lived by hunting wild animals and



collecting wild plants. With such small population densities, it seems unlikely that prehistoric hunter-gatherer groups had to compete against each other for resources or had any need to develop ruthlessness and competitiveness, or to go to war.

E

There is significant evidence to back this notion from contemporary hunter-gatherer groups, who live in the same way as prehistoric humans did. As the anthropologist Bruce Knauff has remarked, hunter-gatherers are characterised by 'extreme political and sexual egalitarianism'. Knauff has observed that individuals in such groups don't accumulate property or possessions and have an ethical obligation to share everything. They also have methods of preserving egalitarianism by ensuring that disparities of status don't arise.

F

The !Kung people of southern Africa, for example, swap arrows before going hunting and when an animal is killed, the acclaim does not go to the person who fired the arrow, but to the person the arrow belongs to. And if a person becomes too domineering, the other members of the group ostracise them, exiling the offender from society. Typically in such groups, men do not dictate what women do. Women in hunter-gatherer groups worldwide often benefit from a high level of autonomy, being able to select their own marriage partners, decide what work they do and work whenever they choose to. And if a marriage breaks down, they have custody rights over their children.

G

Many anthropologists believe that societies such as the !Kung were normal until a few thousand years ago, when population growth led to the development of agriculture and a settled lifestyle. In view of the above, there seems little reason to assume that traits such as racism, warfare and male domination should have been selected by evolution – as they would have been of little benefit in the prehistoric era. Individuals who behaved selfishly and ruthlessly would be less likely to survive, since they would have been ostracised from their groups.

H

It makes more sense, then, to see traits such as cooperation, egalitarianism, altruism and peacefulness as innate characteristics of human beings. These were the traits that were prevalent in human life for tens of thousands of years. So presumably these traits are still strong in us now.

I

But if prehistoric life wasn't really as brutal as has often been assumed, why do modern humans behave so selfishly and ruthlessly? Perhaps these negative traits should be seen as a later development, the result of environmental and psychological factors. Research has

shown repeatedly that when the natural habitats of primates such as apes and gorillas are disrupted, they tend to become more violent and hierarchical.

J

So, it could well be that the same thing has happened to us. I believe that the end of the hunter-gatherer lifestyle and the advent of farming was connected to a psychological change that occurred in some groups of people. There was a new sense of individuality and separateness, which led to a new selfishness, and ultimately to hierarchical societies, patriarchy and warfare. At any rate, these negative traits appear to have developed so recently that it doesn't seem feasible to explain them in adaptive or evolutionary terms.

QUESTIONS 27–30

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C or D**.

Write the correct letter in boxes 27–30 on your answer sheet.

27. What is the writer doing in the first paragraph?
 - A. setting out two opposing views about human nature
 - B. justifying his opinion about our tendency to be greedy
 - C. describing a commonly held belief about people's behaviour
 - D. explaining why he thinks that humans act in a selfish manner
28. What point is made about Richard Dawkins' book *The Selfish Gene*?
 - A. Its appeal lay in the radical nature of its ideas.
 - B. Its success was due to the scientific support it offered.
 - C. It presented a view that was in line with the attitudes of its time.
 - D. It took an innovative approach to the analysis of human psychology.
29. What does the writer suggest about the prehistoric era in the fourth paragraph?
 - A. Societies were more complex than many people believe.
 - B. Supplies of natural resources were probably relatively plentiful.
 - C. Most estimates about population sizes are likely to be inaccurate.
 - D. Humans moved across continents more than was previously thought.
30. The writer refers to Bruce Knauft's work as support for the idea that
 - A. selfishness is a relatively recent development in human societies.
 - B. only people in isolated communities can live in an unselfish manner.
 - C. very few lifestyles have survived unchanged since prehistoric times.
 - D. hunter-gatherer cultures worldwide are declining in number.



QUESTIONS 31–35

Complete the summary below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Contemporary hunter-gatherer societies

Bruce Knauft's research shows that contemporary hunter-gatherer societies tend to exhibit a high level of **31** _____ in all areas of life. In these cultures, distributing resources fairly among all members is a moral obligation. These societies also employ strategies to prevent differences in **32** _____ occurring: for example, the !Kung follow a custom whereby the credit for one person's success at **33** _____ is given to another member of the group. Individuals who behave in a **34** _____ manner are punished by being excluded from the group, and women have a considerable amount of **35** _____ in choices regarding work and marriage.

QUESTIONS 36–40

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in Reading Passage 3?

In boxes 36–40 on your answer sheet, write:

YES if the statement agrees with the views of the writer

NO if the statement contradicts the views of the writer

NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

36. Some anthropologists are mistaken about the point when the number of societies such as the !Kung began to decline.

37. Humans who developed warlike traits in prehistory would have had an advantage over those who did not.

38. Being peaceful and cooperative is a natural way for people to behave.

39. Negative traits are more apparent in some modern cultures than in others.

40. Animal research has failed to reveal a link between changes in the environment and the emergence of aggressive tendencies

BƯỚC 2: CHẤM BÀI, NOTE LỖI SAI, LÝ DO SAI, VÀ NOTE ĐIỂM VÀO BẢNG TIẾN ĐỘ

Questions 27–30 (Multiple Choice)

Câu	Đáp án	Clue trong bài	Lý do
27	C	"There has long been a general assumption that human beings are essentially selfish." (A)	Đoạn 1 mô tả niềm tin phổ biến , chưa nêu quan điểm riêng
28	C	"became popular because it fitted so well with... the competitive and individualistic ethos" (B)	Thành công vì phù hợp tư tưởng thời đại
29	B	"the world was very sparsely populated... unlikely... to compete... for resources" (D)	Ít người → tài nguyên tương đối dồi dào
30	A	Đoạn E + G: hunter-gatherers egalitarian → selfishness không được chọn lọc	Knauf dùng để ủng hộ ý ích kỷ là phát triển muộn

Questions 31–35 (Summary Completion)

Câu	Đáp án	Clue trong bài	Lý do
31	egalitarianism	"extreme political and sexual egalitarianism" (E)	Mức độ bình đẳng cao
32	status	"ensuring that disparities of status don't arise" (E)	Ngăn chênh lệch địa vị
33	hunting	"swap arrows before going hunting" (F)	Thành công trong săn bắn
34	domineering	"if a person becomes too domineering..." (F)	Hành vi lấn át/độc đoán
35	autonomy	"benefit from a high level of autonomy" (F)	Phụ nữ có quyền tự chủ

Questions 36–40 (YES / NO / NOT GIVEN)

Câu	Đáp án	Clue trong bài	Lý do
36	NOT GIVEN	–	Không nói anthropologists sai mốc thời gian
37	NO	"would be of little benefit... ostracised" (G)	Tính hiếu chiến không có lợi thế
38	YES	"innate characteristics... cooperation... peacefulness" (H)	Hòa bình & hợp tác là bản tính tự nhiên
39	NOT GIVEN	–	Không so sánh giữa các nền văn hóa hiện đại
40	NO	"Research has shown repeatedly that..." (I)	Nghiên cứu có chỉ ra mối liên hệ

BƯỚC 3: RÚT TRÍCH VÀ HỌC TỪ VỰNG

3.1 DỊCH SONG NGỮ

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE
There has long been a general assumption that human beings are essentially selfish . We're apparently ruthless , with strong impulses to compete against each other for resources and to accumulate power and possessions. If we are kind to one another, it's usually because we have ulterior motives . If we are good, it's only because we have managed to control and transcend our innate selfishness and brutality .	Từ lâu đã tồn tại một giả định phổ biến rằng con người về bản chất là ích kỷ . Chúng ta dường như tàn nhẫn , có những thôi thúc mạnh mẽ muốn cạnh tranh với nhau để giành tài nguyên , cũng như tích lũy quyền lực và của cải. Nếu chúng ta đối xử tử tế với nhau, thường là vì có động cơ ẩn giấu . Nếu chúng ta sống tốt, đó chỉ là vì đã kiềm chế và vượt lên trên bản tính ích kỷ và tàn bạo bẩm sinh của mình.
This bleak view of human nature is closely associated with the science writer Richard Dawkins , whose 1976 book <i>The Selfish Gene</i> became popular because it fitted so	Quan điểm u ám về bản chất con người này gắn liền với nhà văn khoa học Richard Dawkins , người có cuốn sách <i>The Selfish Gene</i> xuất bản năm 1976 trở

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE
well with – and helped to justify – the competitive and individualistic ethos that was so prevalent in late 20th-century societies. Like many others, Dawkins justifies his views with reference to evolutionary psychology , which theorises that present-day human traits developed in prehistoric times, during the environment of evolutionary adaptedness .	nên nổi tiếng vì nó rất phù hợp với – và giúp biện minh cho – tinh thần cạnh tranh và cá nhân chủ nghĩa vốn phổ biến trong xã hội cuối thế kỷ 20. Giống như nhiều người khác, Dawkins biện minh cho quan điểm của mình bằng tâm lý học tiến hóa , cho rằng các đặc điểm của con người hiện đại đã hình thành trong thời tiền sử, trong cái gọi là “ môi trường thích nghi tiến hóa ”.
Prehistory is usually seen as a period of intense competition , when life was such a brutal battle that only those with traits such as selfishness, aggression and ruthlessness survived. Because survival depended on access to resources , there was bound to be conflict between rival groups , leading to racism and warfare . This seems logical. But in fact, the assumption that prehistoric life was a desperate struggle for survival is false .	Thời tiền sử thường được xem là giai đoạn cạnh tranh khốc liệt , khi cuộc sống là một cuộc chiến tàn bạo , chỉ những kẻ mang đặc điểm như ích kỷ, hung hăng và tàn nhẫn mới sống sót. Vì sự sống còn phụ thuộc vào việc tiếp cận tài nguyên , nên chắc chắn sẽ có xung đột giữa các nhóm đối địch , dẫn đến phân biệt chủng tộc và chiến tranh . Nghe có vẻ hợp lý. Nhưng thực tế, giả định rằng đời sống tiền sử là một cuộc đấu tranh sinh tồn tuyệt vọng là sai lầm .
It's important to remember that in the prehistoric era the world was very sparsely populated . Around 15,000 years ago , the population of Europe was only 29,000 , and the whole world less than half a million . Humans were hunter-gatherers , living by hunting animals and collecting plants. With such low population densities , it seems unlikely they needed to compete for resources or develop ruthlessness, competitiveness or warfare .	Điều quan trọng cần nhớ là trong thời tiền sử, thế giới có mật độ dân số cực kỳ thưa thớt . Khoảng 15.000 năm trước , dân số châu Âu chỉ khoảng 29.000 người , và toàn thế giới chưa tới nửa triệu . Con người khi đó là thợ săn – hái lượm , sống bằng săn bắt động vật hoang dã và hái lượm thực vật. Với mật độ dân số thấp như vậy, khó có khả năng họ phải cạnh tranh tài nguyên hay cần phát triển tính tàn nhẫn, hiếu thắng hoặc chiến tranh .

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE
There is significant evidence from contemporary hunter-gatherer groups . Anthropologist Bruce Knauft notes their extreme political and sexual egalitarianism . Individuals don't accumulate property , have an ethical obligation to share , and maintain equality by preventing status disparities .	Có nhiều bằng chứng quan trọng từ các cộng đồng săn bắt – hái lượm hiện đại . Nhà nhân học Bruce Knauft nhận xét rằng họ có mức độ bình đẳng chính trị và giới tính cực cao . Cá nhân không tích lũy tài sản , có nghĩa vụ đạo đức phải chia sẻ , và duy trì bình đẳng bằng cách ngăn chặn chênh lệch địa vị .
The !Kung people swap arrows before hunting , and credit for a kill goes to the arrow's owner. Domineering individuals are ostracised . Women enjoy high autonomy , choosing marriage partners, work and schedules, and retain custody rights if marriage breaks down.	Người !Kung đổi mũi tên trước khi đi săn , và công lao giết được con mồi thuộc về người sở hữu mũi tên. Những cá nhân độc đoán sẽ bị tẩy chay . Phụ nữ có mức độ tự chủ cao , được chọn bạn đời, công việc, thời gian làm việc, và giữ quyền nuôi con nếu hôn nhân tan vỡ.
Many anthropologists believe such societies were normal until population growth, agriculture and settled lifestyles emerged. Traits like racism, warfare and male domination would have been of little benefit and thus not selected by evolution. Selfish individuals were less likely to survive because they were ostracised .	Nhiều nhà nhân học tin rằng các xã hội như vậy từng là chuẩn mực cho đến khi dân số tăng, nông nghiệp và lối sống định cư xuất hiện. Những đặc điểm như phân biệt chủng tộc, chiến tranh và thống trị nam giới hầu như không mang lại lợi ích tiến hóa. Những cá nhân ích kỷ có khả năng sống sót thấp hơn vì bị loại trừ khỏi cộng đồng .
It therefore makes more sense to see cooperation, egalitarianism, altruism and peacefulness as innate human traits , prevalent for tens of thousands of years , and likely still strong today.	Do đó, hợp lý hơn khi xem hợp tác, bình đẳng, vị tha và hòa bình là những đặc điểm bẩm sinh của con người , đã tồn tại suốt hàng chục nghìn năm và có lẽ vẫn còn mạnh mẽ cho tới ngày nay.
Why then do modern humans behave so selfishly and ruthlessly ? Perhaps these are later developments , caused	Vậy tại sao con người hiện đại lại cư xử ích kỷ và tàn nhẫn ? Có lẽ đây là những phát triển muộn , do các yếu tố môi trường và

ENGLISH	VIETNAMESE
by environmental and psychological factors . Studies show when primates' natural habitats are disrupted , they become more violent and hierarchical .	tâm lý . Nghiên cứu cho thấy khi môi trường sống tự nhiên của các loài linh trưởng bị phá vỡ, chúng trở nên bạo lực và phân cấp hơn.
I believe the end of the hunter-gatherer lifestyle and the advent of farming led to a psychological change : a sense of individuality and separateness , producing selfishness, hierarchy, patriarchy and warfare . These traits appeared too recently to be explained in evolutionary terms .	Tôi tin rằng sự kết thúc của lối sống săn bắt – hái lượm và sự ra đời của nông nghiệp đã dẫn tới một thay đổi tâm lý : cảm giác cá nhân hóa và tách biệt , từ đó sinh ra ích kỷ, xã hội phân tầng, chế độ phụ hệ và chiến tranh . Những đặc điểm này xuất hiện quá muộn để có thể giải thích bằng lý thuyết tiến hóa .

3.2 VOCABULARY LIST

Word / Phrase	POS	Meaning (VN)	Synonym	Antonym
selfish	adj	ích kỷ	self-centred	altruistic
ruthless	adj	tàn nhẫn	merciless	compassionate
ulterior motive	n	động cơ ẩn giấu	hidden agenda	-
innate	adj	bẩm sinh	inborn	acquired
transcend	v	vượt lên trên	go beyond	-
evolutionary psychology	n	tâm lý học tiến hóa	-	-
egalitarianism	n	chủ nghĩa bình đẳng	equality	hierarchy
accumulate	v	tích lũy	amass	disperse
ostracise	v	tẩy chay	exclude	include
autonomy	n	quyền tự chủ	independence	dependence
patriarchy	n	chế độ phụ hệ	male dominance	-
hierarchy	n	hệ thống phân cấp	ranking	equality



Word / Phrase	POS	Meaning (VN)	Synonym	Antonym
hunter-gatherer	n	thợ săn – hái lượm	-	-
altruism	n	lòng vị tha	selflessness	selfishness

3.3 CÁC CẤU TRÚC GHI ĐIỂM

Cấu trúc	Nghĩa
There has long been an assumption that...	Từ lâu đã tồn tại giả định rằng
be closely associated with + N	gắn liền chặt chẽ với
in view of the above	xét theo những điều trên
there is little reason to assume that...	hầu như không có lý do để cho rằng
be characterised by + N	được đặc trưng bởi
It makes more sense to + V	hợp lý hơn khi
appear too recently to be explained by...	xuất hiện quá muộn để có thể giải thích bằng