|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SỞ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO**  **NGHỆ AN**  ĐỀ CHÍNH THỨC  *(Đề thi có 14 trang)* | **KỲ THI CHỌN HỌC SINH GIỎI TỈNH LỚP 12**  **NĂM HỌC 2025**-**2026**  **Môn thi: TIẾNG ANH - BẢNG A**  *Thời gian làm bài: 150 phút, không kể thời gian phát đề* |

## Part 1.

## Part 2.

**Task 1**

**Interviewer**: Today we’re looking at the science of happiness. My guests are Rowena Gray and Jesse Mulligan, both professors of psychology. Jesse, you believe there are things people can do to make themselves happier, but you’re not talking about setting goals, are you?

**Jesse**: Not the kind of typical goals people think they should set. For example, they feel dissatisfied with their life, and they say, I need to get that promotion. I’ve got to get those perfect grades. I’ve got to find the perfect partner. They put pressure on themselves because they believe that accomplishing something like that will make a huge difference. But you know, even if they do, the thrill wears off. They just get used to the new situation, and their happiness level drops back to what it was before.

**Interviewer**: So what can people do to feel happier?

**Jesse**: Look, I went to Chile for a short break this year. It would have been nice if the trip had been longer. But anyway, my point is, I bought an experience, not a thing. And so whether that’s a vacation, a beach walk, or laughing over a meal with friends, it’s not subject to social comparison. I can look back and remember the fun I had, and nobody can take that joy away from me. With material goods, it’s true. People feel pleasure from buying a phone or a pair of sneakers, for instance. But then they’re always aware that someone else’s phone might be superior, or their sneakers are starting to wear out. It’s little things too that can make a difference. The science shows that even a couple of minutes chatting to a stranger can lift your spirits.

**Interviewer**: And fewer people do that nowadays, right? Rowena, I know you’re particularly interested in levels of happiness amongst teenagers.

**Rowena**: Yes, and some of my public talks are aimed specifically at teens. You see, all of us, we’re constantly assessing where we are in life, but not objectively. When we ask, how good looking am I? We’re thinking about ourselves in relation to someone who’s extremely attractive, or at least has a team of makeup artists and stylists on hand to ensure they look that way. Or when we wonder, how wealthy am I? We’re rating ourselves against multimillionaires. And because teenagers are online so much, this negative way of evaluating yourself is exacerbated, and they feel inadequate. So, I’m saying choose different reference points and realize that, hey, I’m actually doing all right. Don’t be so harsh on yourself.

**Interviewer**: Spending time with friends is something you advocate, isn’t it?

**Rowena**: Yes, it’s important to get out and socialize. But one thing to bear in mind is that happy people talk about happy stuff. And I know that for myself, when I meet up with my friends, I’ll often start with all the stuff that’s bothering me, that I want to get off my chest, because I think it’ll cheer me up. But the research shows, if you touch on a piece of luck you’ve had, something fortunate that happened, just by actively recalling it, it’ll give your mood a real lift. I mean, I still catch myself moaning about colleagues or an academic paper I’m drafting, but I then make a conscious effort to switch back to positive mode. And let’s be honest, even those closest to you can only tolerate so much negativity.

**Interviewer**: And I understand that your lectures on happiness are extremely popular.

**Rowena**: I’m happy to say they are. I can confidently say we have more students attending than in any other class. We do have a laugh. I think that’s important. But from talking one to one with my students, it’s easy to identify the common factor. I mean, why they all turn up. I think many of them are finding it difficult to navigate life, and they’re trying really hard to find solutions. No one really wants to be stuck in that kind of rut. I also think they appreciate my honesty. I mean, when I do occasionally find myself slipping into bad habits and doing things that undermine my happiness, I’m open about that.

**Interviewer**: And you’re now working together on a regular podcast on the science of happiness, I believe. Has recording the podcast affected you in any way?

**Jesse**: Well, it’s been helpful for me because I have to practice what I preach now. You know, if I’m telling people to be mindful and meditate, if I’m constantly telling them to spend more time with their loved ones and talk to strangers, then I have to do that too.

**Rowena**: Same for me, because otherwise my students or anyone that knows us from the podcast, they’re going to be like, Professor Gray, I saw you on the train and you weren’t talking to people. So in a way, I’m forced to do what I’m suggesting other people ought to do. But then I also feel better as a result.

**Jesse**: Exactly. It doesn’t mean I’m in a permanent state of joy, but from tracking my happiness over the last few months, I definitely see I’m a pointer to happier.

**Task 2**

**Interviewer**: Today we’re looking at the science of happiness. My guests are Rowena Gray and Jesse Mulligan, both professors of psychology. Jesse, you believe there are things people can do to make themselves happier, but you’re not talking about setting goals, are you?

**Jesse**: Not the kind of typical goals people think they should set. For example, they feel dissatisfied with their life, and they say, I need to get that promotion. I’ve got to get those perfect grades. I’ve got to find the perfect partner. They put pressure on themselves because they believe that accomplishing something like that will make a huge difference. But you know, even if they do, the thrill wears off. They just get used to the new situation, and their happiness level drops back to what it was before.

**Interviewer**: So what can people do to feel happier?

**Jesse**: Look, I went to Chile for a short break this year. It would have been nice if the trip had been longer. But anyway, my point is, I bought an experience, not a thing. And so whether that’s a vacation, a beach walk, or laughing over a meal with friends, it’s not subject to social comparison. I can look back and remember the fun I had, and nobody can take that joy away from me. With material goods, it’s true. People feel pleasure from buying a phone or a pair of sneakers, for instance. But then they’re always aware that someone else’s phone might be superior, or their sneakers are starting to wear out. It’s little things too that can make a difference. The science shows that even a couple of minutes chatting to a stranger can lift your spirits.

**Interviewer**: And fewer people do that nowadays, right? Rowena, I know you’re particularly interested in levels of happiness amongst teenagers.

**Rowena**: Yes, and some of my public talks are aimed specifically at teens. You see, all of us, we’re constantly assessing where we are in life, but not objectively. When we ask, how good looking am I? We’re thinking about ourselves in relation to someone who’s extremely attractive, or at least has a team of makeup artists and stylists on hand to ensure they look that way. Or when we wonder, how wealthy am I? We’re rating ourselves against multimillionaires. And because teenagers are online so much, this negative way of evaluating yourself is exacerbated, and they feel inadequate. So, I’m saying choose different reference points and realize that, hey, I’m actually doing all right. Don’t be so harsh on yourself.

**Interviewer**: Spending time with friends is something you advocate, isn’t it?

**Rowena**: Yes, it’s important to get out and socialize. But one thing to bear in mind is that happy people talk about happy stuff. And I know that for myself, when I meet up with my friends, I’ll often start with all the stuff that’s bothering me, that I want to get off my chest, because I think it’ll cheer me up. But the research shows, if you touch on a piece of luck you’ve had, something fortunate that happened, just by actively recalling it, it’ll give your mood a real lift. I mean, I still catch myself moaning about colleagues or an academic paper I’m drafting, but I then make a conscious effort to switch back to positive mode. And let’s be honest, even those closest to you can only tolerate so much negativity.

**Interviewer**: And I understand that your lectures on happiness are extremely popular.

**Rowena**: I’m happy to say they are. I can confidently say we have more students attending than in any other class. We do have a laugh. I think that’s important. But from talking one to one with my students, it’s easy to identify the common factor. I mean, why they all turn up. I think many of them are finding it difficult to navigate life, and they’re trying really hard to find solutions. No one really wants to be stuck in that kind of rut. I also think they appreciate my honesty. I mean, when I do occasionally find myself slipping into bad habits and doing things that undermine my happiness, I’m open about that.

**Interviewer**: And you’re now working together on a regular podcast on the science of happiness, I believe. Has recording the podcast affected you in any way?

**Jesse**: Well, it’s been helpful for me because I have to practice what I preach now. You know, if I’m telling people to be mindful and meditate, if I’m constantly telling them to spend more time with their loved ones and talk to strangers, then I have to do that too.

**Rowena**: Same for me, because otherwise my students or anyone that knows us from the podcast, they’re going to be like, Professor Gray, I saw you on the train and you weren’t talking to people. So in a way, I’m forced to do what I’m suggesting other people ought to do. But then I also feel better as a result.

**Jesse**: Exactly. It doesn’t mean I’m in a permanent state of joy, but from tracking my happiness over the last few months, I definitely see I’m a pointer to happier.