HEBREW PROFICIENCY TEST (YAEL)

This test is intended for examinees who take the Psychometric Entrance Test in a language other than Hebrew. The test takes approximately one and a half hours, and consists of two parts. The first part contains two or three sections with questions in multiple-choice format; in the second part, examinees are requested to write a composition.

Only two of the three multiple-choice sections are used to calculate your score. The other section is used for one of two purposes:

- a. Quality control of the questions
- b. To ensure that scores on all versions of the test are equivalent.

In the *Guide*, the instructions are translated into English. In the actual exam, the instructions appear in Hebrew <u>only</u>.

■ FIRST PART

This part consists of two or three sections.

Each section contains different types of questions: Sentence Completion, Restatement, and Reading Comprehension.

Below are examples of each type of question.

INSTRUCTIONS APPEARING AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH SECTION:

בפרק זה 22 שאלות.

הזמן המוקצב הוא 20 דקות.

בפרק שלושה סוגי שאלות: השלמת משפטים, ניסוח מחדש והבנת הנקרא.

This section contains 22 questions.

The time allotted is 20 minutes.

This section consists of three types of questions: Sentence Completion, Restatement, and Reading Comprehension.

SENTENCE COMPLETION

INSTRUCTIONS:

בכל אחד מן המשפטים הבאים חסרה מילה או יותר. עליכם לבחור מתוך ארבע התשובות המוצעות את התשובה שתשלים את המשפט באופן **הטוב ביותר**.

This part consists of sentences with one or more words missing in each. Choose from among the four possible responses the one which **best completes** the sentence.

EXAMPLES AND EXPLANATIONS:

- 1. התפתחות המחקר בחלל ____ על חיי היום-יום שלנו.
 - (1) כובשת
 - משפיעה (2)
 - (3) מזיקה
 - (4) מסייעת

The missing word is followed by the preposition על. The word כובשת (response 1) takes אמ as a preposition, and the words מזיקה (response 3) and מסייעת (response 4) take -ל as a preposition. Only משפיעה (response 2) takes על as its preposition and therefore it is the correct response.

- .2 הוא צחק ושר, ____ לא עבר חוויה נוראה כל כך.
 - -עוד ש (1)
 - (2) אילו
 - -עד ש (3)
 - (4) כאילו

Response (1) is grammatically correct, but creates an illogical sentence. Responses (2) and (3) do not fit the syntax of the sentence. The only appropriate word is כאילו, which is response (4).

RESTATEMENT

INSTRUCTIONS:

בכל שאלה נתון משפט, ואחריו ארבע אפשרויות תשובה. מתוך ארבע התשובות המוצעות, בחרו את התשובה שתוכנה הוא **הדומה ביותר** למשפט הנתון.

Each question consists of a sentence followed by four responses. Choose the one which **best expresses** the meaning of the original sentence.

EXAMPLES AND EXPLANATIONS:

1. ייתכן שנבוא מחר.

- .(1) כדאי שנבוא מחר
 - (2) אולי נבוא מחר.
- . ברור שנבוא מחר.
- (4) רצוי שנבוא מחר.

The word יתכן means "probably," "perhaps," "possibly," or "it could be." Of the four responses offered, אולי (perhaps) is the word that best replaces it. Therefore, response (2) is the correct response.

.2 אין לנו פרחים בגינה, אלא עצי פרי.

- (1) אין לנו פרחים, ואין לנו עצי פרי.
- (2) יש לנו פרחים, ואין לנו עצי פרי.
- . יש לנו גם פרחים וגם עצי פרי (3)
- (4) אין לנו פרחים, יש לנו עצי פרי.

The word אלא means "but" or "only." The sentence means that there are no flowers in the garden, only fruit trees. Thus, (4) is the correct response.

READING COMPREHENSION

INSTRUCTIONS:

לפניכם קטע, ובסופו שאלות. לכל שאלה מוצעות ארבע תשובות. עליכם לבחור את התשובה **המתאימה ביותר** לכל שאלה.

This part consists of a text followed by several questions. For each question, choose from among the four possible responses the one which is **most appropriate**, based on the text.

SAMPLE TEXT:

- (1) במשפט שנערך לאחרונה בארה"ב, הועלה לדיון נושא עקרוני הקשור לאיזון העדין שבין הזכות לחופש הביטוי ובין זכותו של האדם לפרטיות. השאלה שבה עסק המשפט הייתה, באיזו מידה יכול ביוגרף להשתמש במכתבים של אדם שעליו הוא כותב, בלא הסכמתו. פסק הדין במשפט עורר הרהורים וחששות בקהילה הספרותית בארה"ב.
- (5) במשפט נידונה תביעתו של הסופר ג'.ד. סאלינג'ר נגד הוצאת ספרים ידועה. ההוצאה ביקשה לפרסם ביוגרפיה מקיפה על סאלינג'ר, אשר היה נערץ על אמריקנים רבים, בעיקר בשנות ה-50 וה-60 של המאה ה-20. סאלינג'ר, שידע על הכנת הביוגרפיה, סירב להתראיין או למסור מכתבים לכותב הביוגרפיה. למרות סירובו התקיף, המשיך הכותב לאסוף חומר לצורך כתיבת הביוגרפיה. לפיכך מיהר סאלינג'ר להוציא צו זכויות יוצרים המגן על התכתבויותיו האישיות, השמורות בכמה ארכיונים של אוניברסיטאות ידועות בארה"ב. לאחר
- (10) שהביוגרף סיים את מלאכתו והתברר שכלל בספרו ציטוטים נרחבים ממכתבים אלה על אף צו זכויות היוצרים, תבע סאלינג'ר את ההוצאה לאור בערכאות משפטיות, וזכה בסופו של דבר בערעורו האחרון לפני בית המשפט העליון. השופטים החליטו שאסור לצטט ציטוטים ארוכים ומדויקים מהמכתבים המוגנים על ידי זכויות יוצרים, כל עוד סאלינג'ר לא הסכים לכך, אולם ניתן להשתמש בחומר "שימוש הוגן", כלומר ללמוד ממנו על אירועים או על תהליכים בחייו של סאלינג'ר.
- (15) הצלחת התביעה של סאלינג'ר מדאיגה ביוגרפים ומוציאים לאור. הכותבים חוששים כי בעקבות תקדים זה יעמוד מעתה לרשותם חומר מצומצם ביותר. המוציאים לאור טוענים כי צפוי גל תביעות משפטיות, אשר יעלה את תעריפי הביטוח של חברותיהם. כך תיווצר מערכת שיקולים חדשה בבחירת נושאים לפרסום, ולאו דווקא לטובת הקוראים, האוהבים ביוגרפיות.

EXAMPLES AND EXPLANATIONS:

- בשורה 3 כתוב: "בלא הסכמתו". הכוונה היא להסכמה של
 - (1) בית המשפט
 - (2) המוציא לאור
 - (3) בעל המכתבים
 - (4) מחבר הביוגרפיה

The word הסכמתו (his agreement) refers to אדם שעליו הוא כותב (the person about whom he is writing). Lines 2-3 mention this person's letters. Thus, response (3) is the correct response.

Guide For Examinees ■ Inter-University Psychometric Entrance Test

- ביוגרפיה, שעליה מדובר בקטע, מתבססת בין השאר על
 - (1) ראיונות של הביוגרף עם סאלינג'ר
 - (2) מכתבים אישיים של סאלינג'ר
 - (3) הופעתו של סאלינג'ר בבית המשפט
- אות ידועות של סאלינג'ר עם אוניברסיטאות ידועות (4)

Lines 9-10 states that the biographer included extensive quotations from these letters in his book. These letters are from Salinger's personal correspondence mentioned in line 9. The correct response is therefore (2).

- .3 בשורות 17–18 כתוב: "ולאו דווקא לטובת הקוראים", וזאת משום שהקוראים מעוניינים ב-
 - (1) הופעת ביוגרפיות רבות
 - (2) העלאת תעריפי הביטוח
 - (3) יצירת מערכת שיקולים חדשה
 - (4) שימוש הוגן בחומר כתוב

Line 18 states that readers like biographies. From this we understand that they want many biographies to be available. The correct response is therefore (1).

SECOND PART

COMPOSITION חיבור

In this part of the Hebrew Proficiency Test you are required to write a composition on a given topic. The score on the composition constitutes a third of your total Hebrew Proficiency Test score.

The following instructions appear at the beginning of the composition section:

בפרק זה נתון נושא לחיבור. עליכם לכתוב 15-12 שורות על נושא זה. שימו לב שהחיבור יתאים לנושא, והשתדלו לכתוב באופן מסודר ובלשון נכונה. יש לכתוב את החיבור בעיפרון בלבד, על צידו השני של גיליון התשובות. אם אתם זקוקים לדף טיוטה, השתמשו בעמוד שמימין לעמוד זה (הטיוטה לא תיבדק). הזמן המוקצב לכתיבה הוא 15 דקות. אנא העתיקו את נושא החיבור.

In this section you are given a topic for a composition. Write 12-15 lines on this topic.

Make sure that the composition is relevant to the topic. Try to write in an organized manner, using grammatically correct language.

You may only write in pencil. Write the composition on the back of the answer sheet.

You may write your draft on the facing page (the draft will not be marked).

The time allotted for writing the composition is **15** minutes.

Copy the topic of the composition.

Hebrew proficiency is required for studies at institutions of higher learning in Israel. Not only will you need to understand the lectures, which are given in Hebrew, and the Hebrew reading material, but you will also need to complete exercises, take exams, and write papers in Hebrew.

In this section you are required to write a short composition (12-15 lines) that will reflect your ability to express your view on a given topic, develop an idea or present an argument. It makes no difference what idea you choose to express, as long as it is well supported and clearly worded. Writing in a personal vein or presenting personal experiences is generally inappropriate for the type of writing required in studies at institutions of higher education.

The compositions are evaluated by experienced raters, all of whom teach Hebrew as a foreign language. The raters have received professional training designed to ensure that their evaluations are objective and fair. Two raters independently evaluate each composition. Each composition is evaluated on the basis of four components: content, organization, richness of language and precise use of language (see below).

Each of these components is given a score on a scale of 1 to 7. If the content is very poor, it will receive a score of 1, if it is excellent it will receive a score of 7. The same holds true for the other components. The composition score is the sum of the evaluations of the two raters. In the case of a major discrepancy between raters of any composition, the composition will be evaluated by a third rater.

A composition that does not relate to the topic or that is totally incomprehensible will be disqualified.

Raters follow detailed guidelines in evaluating the compositions.

Below is a sample guide for composition raters:

General explanation

Compositions are evaluated in terms of four components: content, organization, richness of language and precise use of language. Each component is evaluated separately and independently of the other components.

Each component is given a score on a scale ranging from 1 (the lowest) to 7 (the highest).

Evaluation

Content

Determine to what extent the composition expresses an idea, focuses on the assigned topic, and makes its intended meaning clear to the reader. In other words, does the composition cover the topic in a detailed manner and are the details it contains relevant?

- * A composition that meets the above requirements will receive a score of 7.
- * Points will be deducted for failures and shortcomings in the above requirements, down to a score of 1.

Note: The writer's viewpoint regarding the topic is not at all relevant for purposes of evaluation.

Organization

Determine to what extent the composition has a clear structure, there is a logical connection between the sentences, each sentence adds something new to the previous sentence without being unnecessarily repetitious or wordy, and the writing is organized according to the allotted space.

- * A composition that meets the above requirements will receive a score of 7.
- * Points will be deducted for failures and shortcomings in the above requirements, down to a score of 1.

Richness of language

For this component, the starting point is a score of 1. The richer the language, the greater the number of points that are added.

Evaluate the following:

Semantics: varied vocabulary; word choice that is appropriate for the context; use of diverse words, expressions, idioms, and figures of speech, where appropriate for the style of writing and the topic – all contribute to a high score.

On the other hand, repetition of the same words; use of vague words instead of more precise ones; exaggerated use of reference words, such as "הנושא," "הדבר," "מה" and so on; poor vocabulary (even if not incorrect) – all detract from the score.

Morphology: Correct and appropriate use of the construct state and verbal nouns will raise the score.

Syntax: Use of a variety of sentence types – simple, compound, complex – will raise the score. Unnecessarily complex sentences, or long, cumbersome sentences will not raise the score.

* A composition that meets the above requirements will receive a score of 7.

Hebrew Proficiency Test

Precise use of language

Check for errors in the following:

Semantics: Inappropriate word choice, incorrect prepositions, etc., such as: 5:00 אמרתי לו שהפגישה בשעה (instead of 5:00 דיברתי לו שהפגישה בשעה (12:00 אמרתי לו שהפגישה בשעה 12:00); הקונצרט ייגמר בשעה (instead of 12:00 הכיתה הראשונה שלי מתחילה בשעה (instead of 8:00 הייגמר בשעה שלי מתחיל בשעה (instead of (עזרתי לו (עזרתי לו)); אירתי אותו (instead of (השתמשתי עם את)).

Morphology: Errors in conjugation of prepositions (אצלהם), verbs, verbal stems (התלבישתי) and nouns (כסאיו).

Syntax: Errors in the use of articles, agreement, the use of tenses that fit the syntactical structure, (such as רציתי שהוא הולך אתי לקולנוע; הלכתי לאוניברסיטה כדי אלמד), incorrect word order, missing conjunctions (אני חושב כדי לי ללכת לאוניברסיטה).

Poor spelling, handwriting and punctuation that interfere with the smooth reading and understanding of the written material will lead to a deduction of 1 or 2 points, at most.

- * A composition that meets the above requirements will receive a score of 7.
- * Points will be deducted for failures and shortcomings in the above requirements, down to a score of 1.

Sample Topic:

איך, לדעתך, משפיעות תכניות הטלוויזיה על בני הנוער?

How in your opinion, do television programs influence teenagers?

Below are several examples of compositions written on this topic and evaluations.

COMPOSITION 1

Content:

The composition expresses an idea that relates to the assigned topic. The writer describes what he feels to be the negative influence of television programs on teenagers. The writer expresses the idea clearly, relates to the topic in detail, and the details presented throughout the composition are relevant: addiction to television programs, the desire to be like celebrities, the negative influence of programs which broadcast violence. But even though the writer notes at the beginning of the composition that opinions are divided on this topic, he presents only those aspects that relate to the harm that television programs cause teenagers; he does not discuss the positive aspects of television programs, which would relate to the other opinions he refers to at the beginning of the composition. As a result, one point is deducted in the content evaluation.

Score: 6 (very good)

Organization:

The composition has a clear structure. The writer presents the topic in general terms, and then discusses the negative aspects of television programs on teenagers. Each sentence adds something new to the previous sentence. However, although there are logical connections between the sentences, no conjunctions are used. For example,

ההתמכרות של בני נוער לתכניות הטלוויזיה היום מזיקה ואף חמורה כאחד. תכניה של הטלוויזיה אשר מוקרנים בכל שעות היממה הולכים והופכים לאלימים יותר ויותר (lines 3-6).

The composition is not unnecessarily repetitious or wordy, and the writing is organized according to the allotted number of lines.

Score: 6 (very good)

Richness of language:

The composition contains a variety of expressions, idioms, and figures of speech that are appropriate for the style of writing. For example,

(line 11), עקב היצע האשרויות האין סופי (line 3) ... ההתמכרות של בני הנוער לתכניות טלוויזיה... (line 3), עקב היצע האשרויות האין סופי (The writer uses a variety of sentence types – simple, compound and complex. For example,

מחקרים רבים נערכו ועדיין נערכים בנושא השפעת ... אך הדעות בנושא חלוקות (lines 1-2).

Score 7 (excellent)

Precise use of language:

The composition uses clear, readable language and contains no mistakes that necessitate the deduction of points.

Score 7 (excellent)

COMPOSITION 2

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Content:

The composition begins with the assertion that televisions are found in every house, and sometimes even in every room. This introduction leads to a discussion about the influence of television on teenagers. The writer argues that children should be supervised in their television viewing, and should be allowed to watch only programs that are educational and instructive, but not programs that could be harmful. The idea is expressed clearly and is well developed, and most of the details are relevant. The content, however, is not well organized and the writer jumps from one point to another. The concluding sentence is unclear and it is difficult to understand what the writer is trying to say in that sentence.

Score: 6 (very good)

Organization:

The composition is structured as one long paragraph. While there is an introductory sentence that presents the topic and a concluding sentence, there is little punctuation, and the conjunctions are not always appropriate. For example,

... כי הציפיה לשעות ארוכות תוך שימוש ראייה ושמיעה וכמעט רוב החושים זה נגמר בלמידה (lines 8-9)... There are occasional repetitions, and the short conclusion is written in a low register. The last sentence is fragmented, requiring the reader to reread the composition.

Score: 5 (good)

Richness of language:

The vocabulary is rich and varied, but not over the entire composition. The writer uses a complex, though flawed, syntactical structure. For example,

ולא לכל הילדים יש הורים שמשגיחים על ילדיהם ואלו ילמדו חברים שלהם איך לצפות בתוכניות אחרות שיכולות לגרום נזק לילדים ... (lines 10-11).

There is also inappropriate use of certain expressions. For example, לא קיבלו עליהם (line 12) is incorrect in the context in which it is used, and therefore no points will be given for use of this expression.

Score: 5 (good)

Precise use of language:

The language is fluent, with correct conjugation of verbs and nouns and correct correlation of tenses and articles. Syntax is sometimes incorrect, subordinate words are missing and wrong prepositions are used. For example,

c) (lines 8-9). כי הציפייה לשעות ארוכות תוך שימוש ראייה ושמיעה וכמעט רוב החושים. There are several sentence fragments, the sentence subject is not repeated where necessary, and punctuation is poor.

Score: 5 (good)

COMPOSITION 3

	ולבי דעתי תבניות בללויביב משביעה על בני פנוער
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Hebrew Proficiency Test

Content:

The composition expresses an idea – that television is a harmful influence on teenagers: Teenagers forget to do their homework, television harms the eyes, and the programs which are broadcast are not very good. Parents should prevent their children from watching too much television. However, the writer does not substantiate his statements and hardly discusses the effect of the television programs themselves on teenagers. He repeatedly states that television is disturbing, but does not clarify or explain why.

Score: 4 (average)

Organization:

The composition is organized to fit the space allotted to it, but is poorly structured. The ideas are scattered throughout the text and are not closely connected. There are unnecessary repetitions, some of the sentences add nothing to the previous sentences, the conjunction גום is used repeatedly to connect sentences. For example, וגם הטלוויזיה היא משפיעה (line 7), וגם הטלוויזיה היא סכנה (line 9). Correct conjunctions are missing.

Score: 4 (average)

Richness of language:

Vocabulary is poor and word choice is repeatedly imprecise. The television מפריעה (instead of נומים בטלוויזיה), מסתכלים על הטלוויזיה (instead of צופים בטלוויזיה). There is no variation of sentence types, verbal nouns are incorrect, and the construct state and pronominal suffixes are not used.

Score: 3 (low average)

Precise use of language:

All of the sentences in the composition are written improperly. Many of the prepositions are wrong. For example, הטלוויזיה היא נזק על עיניים (line 5). There are many mistakes in verb conjugations, agreement and tenses throughout the composition. Word choices and word order are poor. For example, חייב על הנוער להסתכל על הטלוויזיה רק אחרי השיעור ולפני הישונה (lines 12-13). Subordinate markers are absent and there is almost no punctuation. Nonetheless, the large number

of mistakes does not affect smooth reading and comprehension of the material.

Score: 3 (low average)

COMPOSITION 4

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Content:

From the little that can be understood from the material, the influence of television on teenagers seems to be both positive (in the areas of sports and studies) and negative, but no explanation or details are provided. The conclusion states that we musty את הטוב ולזרוק את ה

Score: 2 (poor)

Organization:

It is difficult to evaluate the organization component because of the incomprehensible language. Conjunctions are wrong and incomprehensible. There is some attempt to summarize.

Score: 2 (poor)

Richness of language:

There are very few clear words. Two points are given for the little that is understandable.

Score: 2 (poor)

Hebrew Proficiency Test

Precise use of language:

The language is totally incorrect; there are no proper sentences.

Score: 1 (very poor)

In summary, a good composition is one that presents one idea or several connected ideas that relate directly to the topic of the composition. There is a logical connection between sentences and each sentence adds something new to the previous sentence. The writing is organized according to the allotted space and is not unnecessarily repetitious or wordy. The language is rich and appropriate to the required style, sentences are syntactically varied, there are no sentence fragments or sentences that are unnecessarily cumbersome, and there are no mistakes.