



ICM

MARCH 2016

NEWSPAPER REPORTING

Instructions to candidates:

- a) Time allowed: Three hours (plus an extra ten minutes' reading time at the start – do not write anything during this time)
 - b) Answer any FIVE questions
 - c) All questions carry equal marks. Marks for each question are shown in []
1. The following information has been passed to you from a series of sources. Write them up into a lead story of between 250 and 300 words based on the information provided. (Note: marks will not be awarded for just repeating the sentences set out below – the information must be used to produce a concise and coherent story).
- British Royal family will be getting new jet aircraft for flights around the world
 - Royal Air Force spending millions of pounds on new executive jets
 - Will be used by Royal family, government ministers, senior military figures
 - New aircraft will replace the four BAe 146 jets that make up the 'royal flight'
 - Royal flight is part of the RAF's 32 Squadron
 - Existing jets only have a range of 1,800 miles which requires refuelling for long flights
 - Officials looking at new jets with a range of up to 7,000 miles
 - Plans also announced to refit an RAF refuelling aircraft
 - New fleet of aircraft and refit would save £735,000 a year
 - Other plans are also being considered as an alternative to buying the aircraft
 - One option being looked at is leasing aircraft
 - The Royal family has scaled back its use of the BAe 146 jets after criticism of cost
 - The Queen and Prince of Wales use commercial charter companies for official tours
 - 32 Squadron is based at RAF Northolt in west London
 - Senior military figures and politicians currently use the fleet of aircraft for journeys
 - The BAe 146 can accommodate 30 VIPs with four crew
 - The aircraft have countermeasures to stop them being shot down
 - The aircraft have also been used to fly reconnaissance teams to war zones, transport war criminals
 - The plans for new aircraft were announced as part of a major defence review
 - The review promised in total an extra £12bn in new equipment [20]
2. Journalists should understand the techniques and approaches that are effective in drawing out a hidden story. Analyse these techniques and approaches. [20]
3. Analyse the widely recognised duties that a journalist is considered to owe their informants. Comment on the limitations on these duties. [20]
4. The introduction and opening paragraph of a story are key in grabbing the attention of the reader. Write the headline and a coherent opening paragraph (of no more than 50 words) to BOTH the news stories below:

Story 1

- Spanish galleon found
- £1bn treasure rumoured to be on board
- Wreck, with gold, silver and emeralds on board, found off Colombia
- Ship sunk by Royal Navy 300 years ago
- Ship called the San Jose sunk in 1708 during battle with a Royal Navy squadron
- Treasure was destined for mainland Europe when the ship was sunk
- Gunpowder on board exploded causing ship to sink
- Ship found 700 feet below the surface
- Ship found by team made up of Colombian Navy, archaeologists and international experts
- Colombian President, Juan Manuel Santos, said "there is no doubt that this is the San Jose" [10]

continued overleaf

Story 2

- Astronauts risk brain damage
- Scientists found that astronauts spending long spells in space experience pressure surges in their skull
- Can cause memory loss and permanent damage to vision
- Two astronauts have come back from the International Space Station (ISS) with serious eye problems
- Research has found that about 60% of astronauts suffer eye problems
- Scientists say problems are so serious they may stop plans for a mission to Mars
- Weightlessness in space causes the problems
- Robert Marchbanks, scientist with NASA, said, “the problems have only recently been identified”
- Latest mission to ISS involves carrying out tests to try and limit damage to vision
- Astronauts, including the UK’s Tim Peake, will have multiple brain tests [10]

5. Explain the widely held view that ‘good sports writing is a mixture of fact and interpretation spiced with comment’. [20]

6. Analyse the key constraints and limitations under which journalists typically operate. [20]

7. Explain the skills, techniques and approaches that a good local reporter should be able to display. [20]

8. You are a reporter sent to interview the Chief Executive of a major food producer in your country. The brief you have is as follows:

A confidential source has told your newspaper that the latest method of crop production developed by the company has failed a number of safety tests. This will, at best, delay the completion of the project. It may, however, call into question the very survival of the company if potential purchasers lose confidence in the new method. Your editor has asked you to find out if the rumours about the safety tests are true, if they are, how long the problems will take to sort out and the consequences for the company.

Set out:

- a) the strategy you would adopt to build the interviewee’s confidence in you [10]
- b) the interviewing strategy you would adopt and the questions you would ask [10]