

MML ADMISSIONS WRITTEN TEST specimen paper

Please read the following passage carefully and then answer the questions following it.

Your response to Section A **MUST** be in ONE of the languages that you are applying to study here. If you are studying at A-level (A2) or equivalent both of the languages you wish to study here, you are free to write in either language. Please write APPROXIMATELY 250 WORDS in your answer.

Your response to Section B **MUST** be in English. Please note that you will not be penalised if you don't know the correct terminology to describe the use of English in the passage.

My body is an electronic virgin. I incorporate no silicon chips, no retinal or cochlear implants, no pacemaker. I don't even wear glasses, but I am slowly becoming more and more a cyborg. So are you. Pretty soon, and still without the need for wires, surgery, or bodily alterations, we shall all be kin to the Terminator, to Eve 8, to Cable . . . just fill in your favorite fictional cyborg. Perhaps we already are. For we shall be cyborgs not in the merely superficial sense of combining flesh and wires but in the more profound sense of being human-technology symbionts: thinking and reasoning systems whose minds and selves are spread across biological brain and nonbiological circuitry.

This tendency toward hybridization is not a modern development. Rather, it is an aspect of our humanity that is as basic and ancient as the use of speech. It was about five years ago that I first realized we were, at least in that specific sense, all cyborgs. At that time I was busy directing a new interdisciplinary program in philosophy, neuroscience, and psychology at Washington University in St. Louis. The realization wasn't painful; it was, oddly, reassuring. A lot of things now seemed to fall into place: why we humans are so deeply different from the other animals, while being, quite demonstrably, not so very different in our neural and bodily resources; why the recent loss of my laptop had hit me like a sudden and somewhat vicious type of (hopefully transient) brain damage. The cyborg is a potent cultural icon of the late twentieth century. It conjures images of human-machine hybrids and the physical merging of flesh and electronic circuitry. My goal is to hijack that image and to reshape it, revealing it as a disguised vision of our own biological nature. For what is special about human brains, and what best explains the distinctive features of human intelligence, is precisely their ability to enter into deep and complex relationships with nonbiological constructs, props, and aids. Such mergers may be consummated without the intrusion of silicon and wire into flesh and blood, as anyone who has felt himself thinking via the act of writing already knows.

SECTION A

What are the main points of the author's argument? Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

Remember to answer this section in APPROXIMATELY 250 WORDS in a foreign language you intend to study at Cambridge.

You should spend approximately 40 minutes on this exercise.

[32 marks]

SECTION B

How does the writer persuade us of his point of view? Please give examples from the text to support your answer.

Remember to answer this section in English.

You should spend approximately 20 minutes on this exercise.

[16 marks]