Unit 7  Exam practice

Reading

1 Choose the correct answers.

1 Other countries:
   A admire Sweden’s high standard of living.
   B disapprove of the Swedish welfare state.
   C think that Swedish people are too secretive.

2 Sweden:
   A has always been a wealthy country.
   B improved its farming industry in the nineteenth century.
   C has always had a large population.

3 The Swedish government:
   A encourages people to own their businesses.
   B controls most industries in the country.
   C has refused to introduce high tax rates.

2 Answer the questions using your own words.

1 Why do other countries sometimes think about using the ‘Swedish model’?

2 What attitude do Swedish citizens have towards their government?

Use of English

3 Translate the following words into your own language.

1 welfare state (paragraph A) __________________

2 sparsely-populated (paragraph B) ______________

3 compromise (paragraph C) _________________

4 retirement (paragraph C) _________________

4 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the bold verbs.

1 Sweden _________________ to be a poor country. (use)

2 The country’s population _________________ in the early twentieth century. (increase)

3 Ikea _________________ its furniture abroad for many years. (sell)

4 Some people think that the Swedish model _________________ in other countries. (not work)

Writing

5 Choose one of the tasks. Write 100–150 words.

1 Would you like to live in Sweden? Why? / Why not?

2 Compare Sweden to your own country, highlighting their similarities and differences.

The Swedish model

A When someone mentions Sweden, you might think of stereotypical images of healthy people enjoying outdoor life, relaxing in saunas or living in modern homes surrounded by minimalist furniture. Sweden is considered by many to be an ideal nation, with a healthy economy which has recovered well from the recent economic crisis, little poverty, a strong workforce, and a welfare state almost unequalled in the rest of the world. These things have helped to create one of the highest standards of living on the planet and are often referred to as the ‘Swedish model’ – something that other countries occasionally talk about importing and using. But what is Sweden’s secret, and why is this nation considered to be different from most other countries?

B It is interesting to note that wealth came relatively late to Sweden, which was a sparsely-populated nation of poor farmers until well into the nineteenth century. That had changed by the early twentieth century, when improvements in health and farming boosted the economy and caused a big increase in the population. In the 1930s, the country began marketing itself as a modern nation with a speciality in design. This aspect of Swedish culture is clearly evident today through the Swedish company, Ikea, whose stores sell attractive and functional furniture at a low price.

C Economically, the country favours a compromise between capitalism and socialism. Although government policies support private ownership of property and businesses, its citizens also enjoy a strong welfare state. Sweden’s income tax rates may be some of the highest in the world, but these provide long-term benefits for unemployed people, a comfortable retirement for old people, guaranteed places in kindergarten for young children, and an excellent healthcare system.

D For such a society to work, a high level of trust is required, which can be seen between citizens. There is also trust in the country’s government, which is typically viewed as a supporter rather than an enemy. In general, Swedes have little interest in gaining superiority over other people. Their main motivation is equality, and their relationships are based on respect for each other’s independence, not on relying on each other for help. Perhaps this is the reason why the Swedish model is much admired but has not yet been copied worldwide. It relies on some factors which might be considered unachievable or unwelcome in other countries.
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Listening

1. Check you know the meaning of the words in the list.
   - ostrich
   - refugee
   - resistant
   - widespread

2. Read questions 1–8. Then listen to the radio interview and choose the correct answers.

   1. The first man to be interviewed says that:
      A. social media has been around for over 20 years.
      B. young people aren’t aware of how much communication has improved.
      C. it used to be much harder to find a working telephone 20 years ago.

   2. The first man thinks that, in the future:
      A. people will find it harder to use social media.
      B. we might find it harder to communicate with people face-to-face.
      C. social media will isolate us from the rest of the world.

   3. The first man believes that:
      A. people are less polite when they communicate on social media.
      B. some people say rude things about people who don’t use social media.
      C. social media forces people to stand further apart.

   4. The woman being interviewed says that:
      A. there isn’t enough space on the planet for more humans.
      B. genetically modified food needs more space to grow than normal food.
      C. genetically modified food will become more popular because it’s safer to eat than other foods.

   5. The woman believes that:
      A. red meat will be cheaper than other meats.
      B. ostrich meat contains more fat than other meats.
      C. ostriches are cheaper to feed than other animals.

   6. The second man to be interviewed predicts that:
      A. more people are going to build their own homes.
      B. more people are going to lose their homes.
      C. governments are going to build more homes for refugees.

   7. The second man thinks that:
      A. many places will disappear under water.
      B. entire cities will be built under water.
      C. it will become more popular to live by the sea.

   8. The second man says that:
      A. there will be 50 million environmental refugees in 25 years.
      B. in the future, refugees asking for help will never be turned away.
      C. it may become harder for environmental refugees to find new homes.

Speaking

1. Look at the photo and answer the questions.

   1. Describe what you can see in the photo. In what part of the world might this place be?
   2. With a partner, prepare and practise a role-play in which you evaluate the above aspects of community life in your own country. Use the language of evaluation below.

   **Language of evaluation**
   - I can see that …
   - I’d imagine that life here is …
   - It would appear that …
   - This is more / less …
   - There are more / fewer …
   - I think this is smaller / bigger / better than …
   - It must be wonderful / difficult / terrible …
   - I’d think that it was more / less important than …

   3. Prepare a presentation in which you evaluate your country’s society, using the points discussed in exercises 1 and 2. Use the language of evaluation from exercise 2, and use photos and examples of different events or institutions in society to illustrate your argument(s).