

Feedback

"And God said 'let there be light,' and there was light!" Discuss.

This is not practical cosmology. It is, if anything, theoretical cosmology, but in making this mistake R. G. Ware, of Morecambe, at least departed from the masses; most of the entrants for our Question of the Future competition were practical alright, but don't know what cosmology is.

Some general observations first. To most of you, The Rain in Spain is the essence of applied climatology. And quite a few have read, and admire *1066 and all that*; . . . perforate one side of the tape only . . . impart your answer to both sides of the disc . . . and so on.

As is fast becoming tradition, let us start with a selection of good single efforts, grouped in subjects:

Practical cosmology

Consider Olber's paradox in the light of . . . a fine suggestion from A. J. Speyer of Marcham

Draw a black hole (infant school exam)
Sica Chhuom, London

You are provided with a large energy source and a suitable vacuum. Prepare a system yielding intelligent life within 1.5×10^{10} years. Estimate the probability of a false positive. [Not practical, but no matter.]

Jim Rowan, Bromsgrove

Applied climatology

Consider what proportion of a given area's population must decide on a picnic on a given day to ensure precipitation, and discuss the possibilities for desert reclamation.

Martin Lewis, Kenilworth

What major types of climatic improvement are brought about by the application of fluorocarbons to the stratosphere?

S. C. Penny, Oxford

Advanced techniques in genetics

Owing to the monotony of canine conversation, the contemporary species is on the verge of extinction. State how the original "dumb" strain might be reconstituted.

J. M. Grant, Gerrards Cross

Enumerate the human genes which determine political allegiance, and calculate the lowest mutation frequency which would produce a Liberal majority in the House of Commons within 100 years.

Margaret Thorpe, Preston

Neuroengineering

A neuroengineer needs the following equipment: a) sharp knife b) wires c) hacksaw d) nervous patient e) all of these.

Susan Jenkins, Ware

"Two heads are better than one." Discuss, using examples from your own experience

Margaret Thorpe, again

Sketch the circuit diagram of a commercial prosthesis for converting gut reaction into considered opinions.

John Thorpe, Preston (family entry in one envelope—very frugal)

Compare and contrast the use of electronic and bacterial signal boosters in inter-personal neuron junctions. Transmit your answer only when required.

Jim Rowan, again

The prize winners we reprint in full. They will be getting their book tokens in due course. We would draw attention to the exceptional brilliance of Alan Jones's superb entry. Such cleverness deserves to be specially rewarded, so he gets a £10 token. No space this week for another competition, but we will have one next week. Thanks to all who entered.

Practical cosmology

"... to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway star or two."

Byron, *Vision of Judgement*

Q. Compare and contrast the projects.

Applied climatology

"... the air; which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
And made a gap in nature."

Shakespeare, *Anthony and Cleopatra*

Q. Calculate what might have been a new position for the subtropical anticyclone.

Advanced techniques in genetics

"The Child is father of the Man"

Wordsworth, *My heart leaps up*

Q. Discuss, with examples.

Neuroengineering

"I am a Bear of Very Little Brain and long words Bother me"

A. A. Milne, *Winnie the Pooh*

Q. Describe the neuro-pathways which could be connected to alleviate this condition.

C. F. Carter, Northampton

Practical cosmology

The small container holds a mini black hole. Use it to convert the two left-handed gloves provided into a pair. Candidates unable to return the black hole after the experiment will be disqualified.

Applied climatology

"The rain in Spain stays mainly on the plain." Describe and explain the measures necessary to ensure this without affecting the climate of British Columbia.

Advanced techniques in genetics

Many married couples of different skin colour are known to speculate facetiously on the skin colour of their children. Describe the procedures necessary to;

- produce black and yellow vertical stripes
- produce either blue or green
- justify your activities to the children concerned

Neuroengineering

Design and construct from the materials provided an interface between your own CNS and that of the crab supplied. Describe how the aquarium and its surroundings appear to the crab.

IMPORTANT. The CNS link must be broken before beginning the answer. Papers which appear to have been written by the crab will not be marked.

J. M. Woodgate, Rayleigh

University of Creation Institute of Advanced Theology Final Year Examination Paper I: Practical

Candidates must attempt all sections in the order given.

Section 1 Practical cosmology

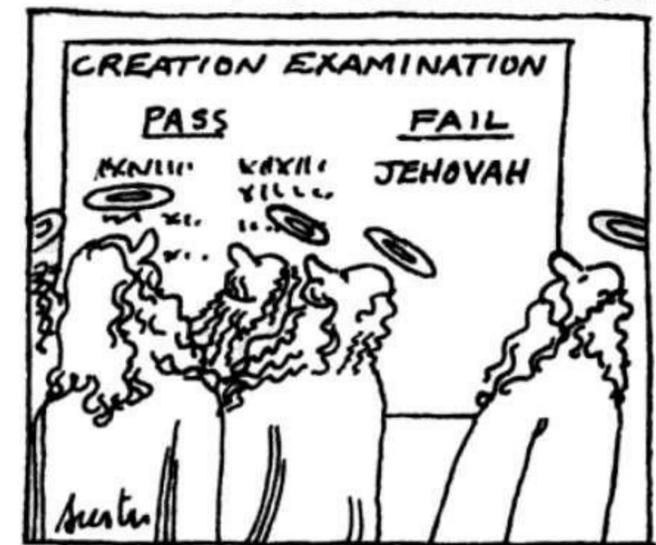
In the container No 1 provided, you will find one void. From this you are to create a universe with an inhabitable planet. This planet should have earth, sky, water, night and day as an absolute minimum. Marks will be awarded for originality. NB Candidates are advised to create a handful of dust for use in section 3.

(Time allowed: 2 days)

Section 2 Applied climatology

Devise a system of zoned climate and weather bands for the planet created in section 1. The weather created should be seasonable, with seasons varying with locality, and should be suitable for the propagation of the vegetation provided in container 2.

(Time allowed: 2 days)



Section 3 Advanced techniques in genetics

Using any raw materials you wish, create a varied collection of wildlife for the planet. There is no limit on variety, but your collection must include aquatic, amphibious, air breathing, and flying creatures which must be able to reproduce their own kind. Other forms may be created provided they are able to thrive and multiply in the location in which you place them. Marks will be deducted for any imbalance introduced between sections 2 and 3. The handful of dust from section 1 is to be used to create a living being in your own image together with a breeding partner. These will be needed in section 4.

(Time allowed: 1 day)

Section 4 Neuroengineering

The life forms created at the end of section 3 are to be provided with the ability to think and reason, using a heuristic central nervous system. Candidates are warned to take extreme care in this section, as the slightest error could damage the delicate balance created in sections 2 and 3.

(Time allowed: 1 day)

Candidates will be allowed one day's grace before Paper II; THEORY.

Alan Jones, Dartford

