

Mid-Year Exam Workbook

SECTION A:

Text A – Plight of the Pangolin (an extract)

35 marks

Plight of the Pangolin

March 22, 2019

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1 On February 7, authorities in **Malaysia** made the biggest pangolin trafficking bust in the country's history ever seen. Pangolins, also known as scaly anteaters, are native to Asia and Africa. **Malaysia** is the largest hub of buying and selling.

Police raided a warehouse and a factory in the state of Sabah, on the island of Borneo. They seized more than 30 tons of pangolin products. These included 1,800 boxes of frozen meat and nearly 800 pounds of **pangolin** scales. The haul was worth at least \$2 million.

A group called Traffic, which monitors the global wildlife trade, says that a major hub in pangolin **trafficking** from Africa to Asia. Since August 2017, more than 100 tons of pangolins have passed through Sabah. From there, illegal shipments might go to China and Vietnam. Demand has increased so sharply in recent decades that the pangolin is thought to be the world's most **threatened** mammal.

In some Asian countries, pangolin meat is a delicacy. In Africa, pangolin scales are so highly prized. They are made into powder **and** used as medicine, even though there is no proof of its effectiveness. For these reasons, the pangolin is irresistible to poachers. Experts say that more pangolins have been poached in the past decade. The International Union for Conservation of Nature says all eight pangolin **species** are at risk of extinction.

"The humble pangolin is one of the most endangered animals on the planet," says British royal Prince William in a United for Wildlife video. He is president of the conservation group. "Pangolins run the risk of becoming extinct before most people have even heard of them."

Pangolin scales are made of keratin, the same material that hair and nails are made of. In the wild, the animal's scales help protect it from predators. But they also protect it from poachers.

The pangolins seized in Sabah came from Africa. But pangolins are disappearing from Asia. So smugglers have turned to Africa for their supply. In August 2017, Malaysian authorities have recovered more than 13 tons of African pangolin scales in a warehouse. In the past January, agents in Hong Kong stopped a cargo ship coming from Nigeria with nine tons of pangolin scales. Officials estimate that the scales **seized** were plucked from 14,000 pangolins.

Peter Knights leads the conservation group WildAid. He told TIME for Kids that farmers in Africa could benefit from protecting pangolins. "They're eating ants that **destroy** crops," Knights says of the creatures. "They're a natural form of pest control."

He adds that one way to save the pangolin is to reduce demand. WildAid and other groups are teaching people how to treat ailments without using keratin. Such efforts have worked to reduce demand for rhino horn. It is no longer made into medicine.

The illegal pangolin trade is a global problem. Today, most pangolin products on the world market are shipped out of Africa. Some shipments make **their** way to Europe and the United States.

By far, the biggest market for pangolins is Asia. Seven of the top 10 countries or territories most involved in pangolin trafficking are in Asia. They are China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. The remaining three are Germany, Nigeria, and the U.S.

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<https://www.timeforkids.com/1084/pigme-pangolin/>

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