

國立臺北科技大學九十四學年度學士班轉學考試

應用英文系 英文閱讀與寫作試題

填 准 考 證 號 碼

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注意事項：

1. 本試題共 5 題，共 100 分。
2. 請按順序標明題號作答，不必抄題。
3. 全部答案均須答在試卷答案欄內，否則不予計分。

Read the following article and write short answers to the five questions that follow. [There are four pages in this section]:

In Defense of Voluntary Euthanasia

A few short years ago, I lay at the point of death. A congestive heart failure was treated for diagnostic purposes by an angiogram that triggered a stroke. Violent and painful hiccups, uninterrupted for several days and nights, prevented the ingestion of food. My left side and one of my vocal cords became paralyzed. Some form of pleurisy set in, and I felt I was drowning in a sea of slime. At one point, my heart stopped beating; just as I lost consciousness, it was thumped back into action again. In one of my lucid intervals during those days of agony, I asked my physician to discontinue all life-support services or show me how to do it. He refused and told me that someday I would appreciate the unwisdom of my request.

A month later, I was discharged from the hospital. In six months, I regained the use of my limbs, and although my voice still lacks its old resonance and carrying power I no longer croak like a frog.

My experience can be and has been cited as an argument against honoring requests of stricken patients to be gently eased out of their pain and life. I cannot agree. There are two main reasons. As an 80 year old, there is a reasonable likelihood that I may suffer another "cardiovascular accident" or worse. I may not even be in a position to ask for an end to the pain. It seems to me that I have already paid my dues to death—indeed, although time has softened my memories, they are vivid enough to justify saying that I suffered enough to warrant dying several times over. Why run the risk of more?

Secondly, I dread imposing on my family and friends another grim round of misery similar to the one my first attack occasioned. My wife and children have endured enough for one lifetime. To visit another prolonged spell of helpless suffering on them as my life ebbs away, or even worse, if I linger on into a comatose senility, seems altogether gratuitous.

I have always thought that a test of whether one had found happiness in life is whether one would be willing to relive it—whether, if it were possible, one would accept the opportunity to be born again. Having lived a full and relatively happy life, I would cheerfully accept the chance to be reborn, but certainly not as an infirm 80 year old. To some extent, my views reflect what I have seen happen to the aged and stricken who have been so unfortunate as to survive crippling paralysis. They suffer, and impose suffering on others, unable to make a request that their torment be ended.

Long ago, Seneca observed that “the wise man will live as long as he ought, not as long as he can.” One can envisage hypothetical circumstances in which one has a duty to prolong life despite the costs for the sake of others, but such circumstances are far removed from the ordinary prospects we are considering. If wisdom is rooted in the knowledge of the alternatives of choice, it must be reliably informed of the state one is in and the likely outcome. Scientific medicine is not infallible, but it is the best we have. Should a rational person be willing to endure acute suffering merely on the chance that a miraculous cure might presently be at hand? Each one should be permitted to make his own choice—especially when no one else is harmed by it.

The responsibility for the decision, whether deemed wise or foolish, must be with the chooser.

Based on the article, answer each of the following five questions in no more than one paragraph each:

1. Is the author in favor of voluntary euthanasia? (If yes, why? If not, why not?)
2. What do the words of Seneca, “the wise man will live as long as he ought, not as long as he can,” mean, and why are they important to the author?
3. Would the author like to be reborn and live his or her life again? (Why or why not?)
4. How important is his or her family to the author?
5. Do you agree or disagree with the argument of the author? (Why or why not?)