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General

Reading

Practice Test

8

Reading (1 hour)

ielts reading practice test 9 general

PART 1

You are advised to spend 20 minutes on **Questions 1–14**.

Look at the article on page 131 about holidays and at the statements (1–8) below.

Questions 1–8

In boxes 1–8 on your answer sheet write

TRUE if the statement is true
FALSE if the statement is false
NOT GIVEN if the information is not given in the passage

- 1 Solving problems can be hard work for the holiday-maker.
- 2 The most common problem for holiday-makers is crowded airports.
- 3 Overall, holiday accommodation poses few problems.
- 4 Tour companies provide a satisfactory level of information to holiday-makers.
- 5 A low-cost holiday should still offer some high-quality services.
- 6 Hotel staff can advise you on who you should complain to.
- 7 Photographs may help to support an argument about a holiday problem.
- 8 If you are not good at writing letters, find someone to help you.

Having a Lovely Time?

A chance to relax and leave your worries behind? For some, holidays are nothing but trouble as the results of one survey showed

When you think about it, it's amazing that anyone gets away with a carefree holiday. It seems there is limitless potential for things to go wrong, from flight delays and lost luggage to poor accommodation.

A recent questionnaire showed that a third of people who replied had a complaint about their holiday last year. And when these unhappy holiday-makers discussed the problem with their tour company nearly half said it involved time and effort on their part to resolve things.

When asked exactly what the reasons were for their dissatisfaction top of the list was flight delays and 20 per cent of holiday-makers to Europe said they had to wait up to an hour.

More worrying is the fact that almost a third of holiday-makers who had complained said it was about the

apartment or hotel room they had been allocated. There is an enormous variety of holiday accommodation and we recommend that consumers look for places that have been inspected by the Tourist Boards; this way they can have the confidence that they will get the type of accommodation they are looking for. It seems that tour companies now offer more honest accurate brochures though. Eight-five per cent of holiday-makers who responded to our questionnaire said the description offered by the company matched the place they visited and the facilities provided.

This is good news for the industry and for holiday-makers. A holiday is a major purchase – yet it's one we can't try before we pay. All we have to go on is the brochure and it's a credit to tour operators that they now contain more detail.

OUR ADVICE

DO be realistic. No one should be palmed off with a poor standard of service, food or accommodation even if you paid a rock-bottom price for a last-minute break. However, be reasonable – you won't get a room with the best view in town if you've paid a budget price.

DO complain to the right person. Moaning to the

waiter about a week's worth of appalling food, then writing an indignant letter when you get back home won't have the same impact as airing your grievances at the time.

DO get evidence for a serious problem such as having a building site instead of the promised swimming pool below your window. Take a photo to back up your case.

DON'T write and complain for the sake of it. Letters can be powerful as long as they're about something you have a good reason to complain about.

DON'T lose your temper. Easier said than done, but you're more likely to get results if you state your case firmly, explain why you think there's a problem then suggest a reasonable solution.

Now read the information on page 133 and answer Questions 9–14.

Questions 9–14

Match the car-hire websites on page 133 to the statements 9–14.

Write the appropriate letters (A–H) in boxes 9–14 on your answer sheet.

NB Some of the websites may be chosen more than once.

Example

The company assures customers that their car hire is the cheapest.

Answer

D

- 9 It is possible to see what the cars look like.
- 10 Assistance is provided with some holiday routes.
- 11 You will get cheaper car hire if you have used the company before.
- 12 Attempts made by the writer to book a car were unsuccessful.
- 13 You can only hire a car in certain locations.
- 14 The site is suited to people with up-to-date hardware.

Hiring a Car Online

*Online car hire promises to be cheap, quick and convenient.
But is it? Neil McDougall revs up his mouse*

A Autos.com

Just click on the reservations button, fill in your home country, destination and dates, pick a car and you're into the booking form without any fuss and with all the charges, fixed and optional, laid out. There's also a detailed rental guide explaining your contract.

B Cash.com.uk

One to consider if you're going to the States, although, after I'd worked through half the booking process, it returned an error message without telling me which element of the procedure needed adjusting. I got there in the end. There is an inspirational section with detailed directions for some of the great drives of America.

C Expeed.org.uk

Book a flight with Expeed and when you continue on to the car-hire section, the software already knows where you are going and when. However, you seem to be restricted to cities with airports for your car hire, and additional taxes are presented in travel-agent speak.

D Cutprice.com

Is currently offering an aggressive lowest rates guarantee, an extra discount for former Holtravel clients and a package of free gifts to sweeten the deal. It also commits to no insurance excess on any of their rentals anywhere.

E Hot.org

Straightforward to navigate, with plenty of information on rental requirements and rules of operation. There are photographs of the types of vehicles available, leaving no doubt what a 'premium' or 'compact' car is. It took me just seconds to start reserving a car but then the whole thing ground to a halt and refused all attempts to access the reservation system.

F Cars.net

Another site offering discounts for booking online, but also special late deals (for example £35 off a Renault Megane in Majorca last week). Prices are fully inclusive of insurance and there is a reassuringly large small-print section.

G Cover.org

A three-step process to rent cars in 70 countries. Very flash and slick, so much so that people with older computers may have trouble getting this information. Limited selection of online tourist attractions (but that's more than most give you). Graphically complex but impressive booking system.

H Cheapandcheerful.net.uk

Avoids unnecessary embellishments online but the booking procedure is as good as it gets. Enter how many miles you expect to drive and tick your insurance, driver and child-seat choices and they will all be included in the final price. You must contact the location directly if you need a car within 3 days. And to hire a car abroad, there's a dull email form to fill in and they'll get back to you.

You are advised to spend 20 minutes on **Questions 15–26**. Look at the book extract on page 135.

Questions 15–20

From the list of headings below choose the most suitable heading for each paragraph A–G.

Write the appropriate numbers (i–x) in boxes 15–20 on your answer sheet.

List of headings

- i** Gathering source material
- ii** Open-ended essays
- iii** The importance of focusing on the task
- iv** Writing the essay
- v** Types of essay and their purpose
- vi** Learning from the essay
- vii** Making the support material relevant
- viii** Reviewing and amending the essay
- ix** Allocating your personal resources
- x** Writing a framework

15 Paragraph A

Example

Paragraph B

Answer

ix

16 Paragraph C

17 Paragraph D

18 Paragraph E

19 Paragraph F

20 Paragraph G

STUDY NOTES SERIES

Chapter Seven

ESSAY WRITING

- A** Essays, whether written as part of a secondary school programme or further education course, are designed to test your thinking, writing and study skills. Creative essays offer you the freedom to demonstrate your abilities to communicate effectively. Analytical essays, on the other hand, will require you to show that you have researched the topic and drawn on the work of others to come to your conclusion.
- B** The amount of time and effort you devote to writing an essay will depend on how it fits into the overall scheme of assessment and should be in direct proportion to the percentage of marks allotted. If the essay constitutes part of your coursework, the time and effort required will depend on what marks, if any, are going towards your overall mark and grade.
- C** However interesting and well prepared your essay may be, if it does not address the question, you will not receive a good mark. It is therefore essential that you examine the question and understand what is required. A list of key words which may appear in an essay question is provided in Appendix 4. Be sure you know what is being asked for and then consider what information is relevant and what is not.
- D** Use a variety of relevant background texts, refer to your lecture notes and heed any advice given by your lecturer. When you collect material, always ask yourself what questions need to be answered and then take good notes in your own words. Begin notes on each source on a new page and do not forget to record details of the author, title of the book and date of publication. Remember that copying words from another writer's work without acknowledging the source constitutes the serious crime of plagiarism.
- E** Once you have collected your source material you should then sketch out a plan. Begin by writing three or four sentences, which provide a summary of the essay. You can amend or add to the plan as you proceed and it provides a useful scaffold for your essay. It also ensures that you cover all the main themes and that your essay focuses on the question. Ideally you should plan to examine the question from all sides, presenting various views before reaching a conclusion based on the evidence.
- F** The introduction to the essay should explain to the reader how you are going to tackle the question and provide an outline of what will follow. Then move on to the main body of the essay. Refer to your notes and develop two or three logical arguments. Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence, which clearly states the subject to be discussed, and then use the remainder of the paragraph to fill out this opening sentence. A good essay should finish rather than simply stop. That is to say, the conclusion should provide a statement of your final position, summing up the arguments that your opinions are based upon.
- G** It is important to keep the essay relevant and to provide some examples, quotations, illustrations, diagrams or maps wherever appropriate. However, it is equally important to avoid the temptation to pad your essay with unwanted information: this wastes your time and undermines the relevant parts of the essay. In coursework and assessment essays not written under examination conditions, do not forget to acknowledge your sources in a bibliography.

School of Design

COURSE GUIDELINES

2.1 Assignments

Coursework assignments will involve the production of an artefact (something shaped by human beings rather than by nature) OR an investigation of some kind followed by a report. This is to demonstrate the relevance of your study to society today. If you opt to produce an artefact, (e.g. a working model or piece of machinery) you will also be expected to provide some written explanation of how and why you produced it.

You need to follow these steps:

- Find out precisely what is expected of you. Talk to your tutor and refer to the syllabus document.
- Be aware of what skills and abilities you must demonstrate.
- Always plan a project thoroughly before you begin it but be realistic about how much time you can seriously devote to it.

Choosing a topic

Remember that this course is essentially concerned with the achievement of desired ends. So first identify a real-life problem, then consider it in detail, specify a precise need and then define your design task. As you plan, wherever possible, consider using new materials, techniques and technology such as computer-aided design (CAD).

There is nothing wrong with talking to knowledgeable people about your project; in fact, this shows initiative. However, the project is yours so you must do the work yourself.

You will need a fairly flexible plan because sometimes resources, apparatus and consumables may not be available when you need them. It is a good idea to work backwards when planning so you know you will meet your final deadline. Finally, when you plan the various stages of your project give due regard to safety and costs.

Look at the Course Guidelines for students on how to approach a design project.

Complete the sentences below using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 21–26.

- 21 There are types of assignment to choose from.
- 22 A working model must be accompanied by of some sort.
- 23 In order to understand the purpose of the assignment, students are advised to read
- 24 Topics must be based on
- 25 To avoid handing the assignment in late, it is suggested that students
- 26 As well as being cost effective, the method chosen must also be

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27–40 which are based on the reading passage below.

A Stone Age Approach to Exercise

Forget those long arduous sessions in the gym. If you want to stay fighting fit, try a modern Stone Age workout* instead

Art De Vany is 62, but physical fitness tests three years ago showed he had the body of a 32-year-old. Although De Vany is sceptical of such assessments, he knows he's in good shape. His former career as a professional baseball player may have something to do with it, but he attributes his physical prowess to an exercise regime inspired by the lifestyles of our Palaeolithic ancestors.

De Vany's advice to the modern exercise freak is to cut duration and frequency, and increase intensity. 'Our muscle fibre composition reveals that we are adapted to extreme intensity of effort,' says De Vany, a professor of economics at the Institute of Mathematical Behavioral Sciences at the University of California, Irvine. His approach to fitness combines Darwinian thinking with his interest in chaos theory and complex systems.

This new science, which De Vany calls evolutionary fitness, is part of growing efforts to understand how the human body has been shaped by evolution, and to use this knowledge to improve our health and fitness. Proponents believe the key lies in the lifestyle of our hunter-gatherer ancestors because, they say, the vast majority of the human genome is still adapted to an ancient rhythm of life which swung between intense periods of activity and long stretches of inertia.

Across the Palaeolithic age – which covers the period between 2.6 million and 10,000 years ago – prey animals were large, fast on their feet, or both. For men, this would have meant lots of walking or jogging to find herds, dramatic sprints, jumps and turns, perhaps violent struggles, and long walks home carrying the kill. Women may not have had such intense exercise, but they would have spent many hours walking to sources of water or food, digging up tubers, and carrying children. If modern hunter-gatherers are anything to go by, men may have hunted for up to four days a week and travelled 15 kilometres or more on each trip. Women may have gathered food every two or three days. There would also have been plenty of other regular physical activities for both sexes such as skinning animals and tool making, and probably dancing.

Our ancestors must have evolved cardiovascular, metabolic and thermoregulatory systems capable of sustaining high-level aerobic exertion under the hot African sun, according to Loren Cordain of the Human Performance Laboratory at Colorado State University. And given that the Palaeolithic era ended only an evolutionary blink of an eye ago, we ignore its legacy at our peril. Cordain and his colleagues point out that in today's developed societies, inactivity is associated with disease. Contemporary hunter-gatherer societies rarely experience these modern killers, they say.

This is where De Vany's exercise ideas come in. 'The primary objectives for any exercise and diet programme must be to counter hyper-insulinaemia (chronically elevated insulin) and hypoexertion (wasting of the body's lean mass through inactivity),' he writes in his forthcoming book about

evolutionary exercise. Exercise and diet are linked. For example, says De Vany, our appetite control mechanisms work best when our activity mimics that of our ancestors. But he feels that most modern exercise regimes are not hitting the mark.

De Vany views the body as non-linear and dynamic and says exercise should mix order and chaos. 'Chronic aerobic exercise overstrains the heart, reducing the chaotic variation in the heart rate which is essential to health,' he says. Likewise, most weight training is governed too much by routine and is too time-consuming. He gives his own workout a chaotic character with ascending weights and descending repetitions. To these brief but intense gym workouts he adds a wide variety of other activities that vary randomly in intensity and duration. These include roller blading, bicycling, walking, sprinting, tennis, basketball, power walking, hitting softballs and trekking with a grandson on his shoulders.

He also argues that most people do not train the right muscles for that ultimately attractive – and adaptive – quality of symmetry. 'Symmetry is a reliable evolutionary clue to health,' he says. 'Tumours and pathologies produce gross asymmetries, and our love of symmetry reflects the reproductive success of our ancestors, who were sensitive to these clues.' He strives for the X-look – a symmetrical balance of mass in the shoulder girdle, upper chest and back, the calves and lower quads, two of the four large muscles at the front of the thighs. This also makes men look taller, he adds, 'another reliable evolutionary clue that women use to find good genes'.

The hunter-gatherer lifestyle indicates that women should exercise only a little less intensely than men, says De Vany. 'Women are opportunistic hunters who go after small game when they come across it. They also climb trees to capture honey and snare birds. And have you ever seen how much work it is to dig out a deep tuber?' Women benefit enormously from strength work, he says. It increases their bone density and they get and stay leaner by building muscle mass. 'Today's women are so weak [compared with their female ancestors].'

Of course, people vary. De Vany acknowledges that our ancestors were adapted to a variety of terrains and climates. Cordain points out that genetic differences between populations lead to different physical strengths. East Africans, for example, seem to be better endurance runners, West Africans better sprinters. But human genetic similarity greatly outweighs the variations. And because our genes have changed so very little since Palaeolithic times, if you want to be a lean, mean, survival machine why not try exercising like a caveman?

*Workout = physical exercise session.

Choose the appropriate letters **A–D** and write them in boxes 27–28 on your answer sheet.

- 27 What do you learn about Art De Vany in the first paragraph?
- ✓ **A** He frequently tests his health.
 - B** He works as a professional sports player.
 - C** He is older than he appears to be.
 - D** He believes he has inherited a strong body.
- 28 In the second paragraph, De Vany recommends that people should
- A** exercise less frequently.
 - B** exercise harder but for less time.
 - C** give their muscles more time to recover from exercise.
 - D** learn more about how the human body reacts to exercise.

Questions 29–31

Choose **THREE** letters **A–G** and write them in boxes 29–31 on your answer sheet.

Which **THREE** of the following does the writer highlight when discussing the lifestyle of our Palaeolithic ancestors?

- A** the difficulties involved in finding food
- B** their size compared to that of modern man
- C** the sudden movements required during their daily activities
- D** the aggressive nature of their negotiations with others
- E** the fact that life was equally energetic for both sexes
- F** the predictable frequency of physical activity
- G** the long distances between neighbours' homes

Question 32

Choose the appropriate letter **A–D** and write it in box 32 on your answer sheet.

- 32 Cordain compares modern hunter-gatherer societies to Paleolithic societies in terms of their
- A** ability to withstand high temperatures.
 - B** resistance to certain fatal illnesses.
 - C** healthy mix of work and leisure activities.
 - D** refusal to change their way of life.

Using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS**, answer the following questions.

Write your answers in boxes 33–36 on your answer sheet.

- 33 What term does De Vany use to describe his approach to physical exercise?
- 34 Which TWO opposing factors does De Vany say an exercise programme should include?
- 35 Which type of activity does de Vany criticise as being harmful?
- 36 Which type of exercise does De Vany practise on a regular basis?

Questions 37–40

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the reading passage?

In boxes 37–40 on your answer sheet write

TRUE if the statement is true
FALSE if the statement is false
NOT GIVEN if the information is not given in the passage

- 37 Our Palaeolithic ancestors were constantly active.
- 38 Female exercise programmes should vary according to the shape of the individual.
- 39 Geographical features have played a role in human physical development.
- 40 The importance of genetic differences in deciding on an exercise programme is minimal.