IELTS Mock Test 2023 July

Reading Practice Test 2

HOW TO USE

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1. Open this URL **https://link.intergreat.com/UTg56** on your computer
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READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on ***Questions 1-13*** *, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.*

Mental Gymnastics

A. THE working day has just started at the head office of Barclays Bank in London. Seventeen staff are helping themselves to a buffet breakfast as young psychologist Sebastian Bailey enters the room to begin the morning's framing session. But this is no ordinary training session. He's not here to sharpen their finance or management skills. He's here to exercise their brains.

B. Today's workout, organised by a company called the Mind Gym in London, is entitled "having presence". What follows is an intense 90-minute session in which this rather abstract concept is gradually broken down into a concrete set of feelings, mental tricks and behaviours. At one point the bankers are instructed to shut then eyes and visualise themselves filling the room and then the building. They finish up by walking around the room acting out various levels of presence, from low-key to over the top.

C. It's easy to poke fun. Yet similar mental workouts are happening in corporate seminar rooms around the globe. The Mind Gym alone offers some 70 different sessions, including ones on mental stamina, creativity for logical thinkers and "zoom learning". Other outfits draw more directly on the exercise analogy, offering "neurobics" courses with names like "brain sets" and "cerebral fitness". Then there are books with titles like Pumping Ions, full of brainteasers that claim to "flex your mind", and software packages offering memory and spatial- awareness games.

D. But whatever the style, the companies' sales pitch is invariably the same— follow our routines to shape and sculpt your brain or mind, just as you might tone and train your body. And, of course, they nearly all claim that their mental workouts draw on serious scientific research and thinking into how the brain works.

E. One outfit, Brainergy of Cambridge, Massachusetts (motto: “Because your grey matter matters”) puts it like this: “Studies have shown that mental exercise can cause changes in brain anatomy and brain chemistry which promote increased mental efficiency and clarity. The neuroscience is cutting-edge.” And on its website, Mind Gym trades on a quote from Susan Greenfield, one of Britain’s best known neuroscientists: “It’s a bit like going to the gym, if you exercise your brain it will grow.”

F. Indeed, die Mind Gym originally planned to hold its sessions in a local health club, until its founders realised where the real money was to be made. Modem companies need flexible, bright thinkers and will seize on anything that claims to create them, especially if it looks like a quick fix backed by science. But are neurobic workouts really backed by science? And do we need them?

G. Nor is there anything remotely high-tech about what Lawrence Katz, co- author of Keep Your Brain Alive, recommends. Katz, a neurobiologist at Duke University Medical School in North Carolina, argues that just as many of US fail to get enough physical exercise, so we also lack sufficient mental stimulation to keep our brain in trim. Sine we are busy with jobs, family and housework. But most of this activity is repetitive routine. And any leisure time is spent slumped in front of the TV.

H. So, read a book upside down. Write or brush your teeth with your wrong hand. Feel your way around the room with your eyes shut. Sniff vanilla essence while listening intently to orchestral music. Anything, says Katz, to break your normal mental routine. It will help invigorate your brain, encouraging its cells to make new connections and pump out neuroteophins, substances that feed and sustain brain circuits.

I. Well, up to a point it will. “What I’m really talking about is brain maintenance rather than bulking up your IQ,” Katz adds. Neurobics, in other words, is about letting your brain fulfill its potential. It cannot create super-brains. Can it achieve even that much, though? Certainly the brain is an organ that can adapt to the demands placed on it. Tests on animal brain tissue, for example, have repeatedly shown that electrically stimulating the synapses that connect nerve cells thought to be crucial to learning and reasoning, makes them stronger and more responsive. Brain scans suggest we use a lot more of our grey matter when carrying out new or strange tasks than when we’re doing well-rehearsed ones. Rats raised in bright cages with toys sprout more neural connections than rats raised in bare cages— suggesting perhaps that novelty and variety could be crucial to a developing brain. Katz, And neurologists have proved time and again that people who lose brain cells suddenly during a stroke often sprout new connections to compensate for the loss—especially if they undergo extensive therapy to overcome any paralysis.

J. Guy Claxton, an educational psychologist at the University of Bristol, dismisses most of the neurological approaches as “neuro-babble”. Nevertheless, there are specific mental skills we can learn, he contends. Desirable attributes such as creativity, mental flexibility, and even motivation, are not the fixed faculties that most of US think. They are thought habits that can be learned. The problem, says Claxton, is that most of US never get proper training in these skills. We develop our own private set of mental strategies for tackling tasks and never learn anything explicitly. Worse still, because any learned skill— even driving a car or brushing our teeth-quickly sinks out of consciousness, we can no longer see the very thought habits we’re relying upon. Our mental tools become invisible to US.

K. Claxton is the academic adviser to the Mind Gym. So not surprisingly, the company espouses his solution-that we must return our thought patterns to a conscious level, becoming aware of the details of how we usually think. Only then can we start to practise better thought patterns, until eventually these become our new habits. Switching metaphors, picture not gym classes, but tennis or football coaching.

L. In practice, the training can seem quite mundane. For example, in one of the eight different creativity workouts offered by the Mind Gym—entitled “creativity for logical thinkers” one of the mental strategies taught is to make a sensible suggestion, then immediately pose its opposite. So, asked to spend five minutes inventing a new pizza, a group soon comes up with no topping, sweet topping, cold topping, price based on time of day, flat-rate prices and so on.

M. Bailey agrees that the trick is simple. But it is surprising how few such tricks people have to call upon when they are suddenly asked to be creative: “They tend to just label themselves as uncreative, not realising that there are techniques that every creative person employs.” Bailey says the aim is to introduce people to half a dozen or so such strategies in a session so that what at first seems like a dauntingly abstract mental task becomes a set of concrete, learnable behaviours. He admits this is not a short cut to genius. Neurologically, some people do start with quicker circuits or greater handling capacity. However, with the right kind of training he thinks we can dramatically increase how efficiently we use it.

N. It is hard to prove that the training itself is effective. How do you measure a change in an employee’s creativity levels, or memory skills? But staff certainly report feeling that such classes have opened their eyes. So, neurological boosting or psychological training? At the moment you can pay your money and take your choice. Claxton for one believes there is no reason why schools and universities shouldn’t spend more time teaching basic thinking skills, rather than trying to stuff heads with facts and hoping that effective thought habits are somehow absorbed by osmosis.

Questions 1-5

Do the following statements agree with the information given in ***Reading Passage 1***

In boxes 1-5 on your answer sheet, write:

YES	if the statement agrees with the views of the writer
NO	if the statement contradicts the views of the writer
NOT GIVEN	if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

1 [ ] Mind Gym coach instructed employees to imagine that they are the building

2 [ ] Mind Gym uses the similar marketing theory that is used all round

3 [ ] Susan Greenfield is the founder of Mind Gym

4 [ ] All business and industries are using Mind Gym's session globally

5 [ ] According to Mind Gym, extensive scientific background supports their mental training sessions

Questions 6-13

Use the information in the passage to match the people (listed A-D) with opinions or deeds below.

Write the appropriate letters A-D in boxes 6-13 on your answer sheet.

A	Guy Claxton
B	Sebastian Bailey
C	Susan Greenfield
D	Lawrence Katz

NB: You may use any letter more than once

6 [ ] We do not have enough inspiration to keep our brain fit.

7 [ ] The more you exercise your brain like exercise in the gym, the more brain will grow

8 [ ] Exercise can keep your brain health instead of improving someone's IQ

9 [ ] It is valuable for schools to teach students about creative skills

besides basic known knowledge

10 [ ] We can develop new neuron connections when we lose old connections via certain treatment

11 [ ] People usually mark themselves as not creative before figuring out there are approaches for each person

12 [ ] An instructor in Mind Gym who guided the employees to exercise

13 [ ] Majority of people don’t have appropriate skills-training for brain

READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on ***Questions 14-27*** *, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.*

When the Tulip Bubble Burst

Tulips are spring-blooming perennials that grow from bulbs. Depending on the species, tulip plants can grow as short as 4 inches (10 cm) or as high as 28 inches (71 cm). The tulip's large flowers usually bloom on scapes or sub-scapose stems that lack bracts. Most tulips produce only one flower per stem, but a few species bear multiple flowers on their scapes (e.g. Tulipa turkestanica). The showy, generally cup or star-shaped tulip flower has three petals and three sepals, which are often termed tepals because they are nearly identical. These six tepals are often marked on the interior surface near the bases with darker colorings. Tulip flowers come in a wide variety of colors, except pure blue (several tulips with "blue" in the name have a faint violet hue)

A. Long before anyone ever heard of Qualcomm, CMGI, Cisco Systems, or the other high-tech stocks that have soared during the current bull market, there was Semper Augustus. Both more prosaic and more sublime than any stock or bond, it was a tulip of extraordinary beauty, its midnight-blue petals topped by a band of pure white and accented with crimson flares. To denizens of 17th century Holland, little was as desirable.

B. Around 1624, the Amsterdam man who owned the only dozen specimens was offered 3,000 guilders for one bulb. While there's no accurate way to render that in today's greenbacks, the sum was roughly equal to the annual income of a wealthy merchant. (A few years later, Rembrandt received about half that amount for painting The Night Watch.) Yet the bulb's owner, whose name is now lost to history, nixed the offer.

C. Who was crazier, the tulip lover who refused to sell for a small fortune or the one who was willing to splurge. That's a question that springs to mind after reading Tulip mania: The Story of the World's Most Coveted Flower and the Extraordinary Passions It Aroused by British journalist Mike Dash. In recent years, as investors have intentionally forgotten everything they

learned in Investing 101 in order to load up on unproved, unprofitable dot- com issues, tulip mania has been invoked frequently. In this concise, artfully written account, Dash tells the real history behind the buzzword and in doing so, offers a cautionary tale for our times.

D. The Dutch were not the first to go gaga over the tulip. Long before the first tulip bloomed in Europe-in Bavaria, it turns out, in 1559-the flower had enchanted the Persians and bewitched the rulers of the Ottoman Empire. It was in Holland, however, that the passion for tulips found its most fertile ground, for reasons that had little to do with horticulture.

E. Holland in the early 17th century was embarking on its Golden Age. Resources that had just a few years earlier gone toward fighting for independence from Spain now flowed into commerce. Amsterdam merchants were at the center of the lucrative East Indies trade, where a single voyage could yield profits of 400%. They displayed their success by erecting grand estates surrounded by flower gardens. The Dutch population seemed tom by two contradictory impulses: a horror of living beyond one's means and the love of a long shot.

F. Enter the tulip. "It is impossible to comprehend the tulip mania without understanding just how different tulips were from every other flower known to horticulturists in the 17th century," says Dash. "The colors they exhibited were more intense and more concentrated than those of ordinary plants." Despite the outlandish prices commanded by rare bulbs, ordinary tulips were sold by the pound. Around 1630, however, a new type of tulip fancier appeared, lured by tales of fat profits. These "florists," or professional tulip traders, sought out flower lovers and speculators alike. But if the supply of tulip buyers grew quickly, the supply of bulbs did not. The tulip was a conspirator in the supply squeeze: It takes seven years to grow one from seed. And while bulbs can produce two or three clones, or "offsets," annually, the mother bulb only lasts a few years.

G. Bulb prices rose steadily throughout the 1630s, as ever more speculators into the market. Weavers and farmers mortgaged whatever they could to raise cash to begin trading. In 1633, a farmhouse in Hoorn changed hands for three rare bulbs. By 1636 any tulip-even bulbs recently considered garbage-could be sold off, often for hundreds of guilders. A futures market for bulbs existed, and tulip traders could be found conducting their business in hundreds of Dutch taverns. Tulip mania reached its peak during the winter of 1636-37, when some bulbs were changing hands ten times in a day. The zenith came early that winter, at an auction to benefit seven orphans whose only asset was 70 fine tulips left by then father. One, a rare Violetten Admirael van Enkhuizen bulb that was about to split in two, sold for 5,200 guilders, the all-time record. All told, the flowers brought in nearly 53,000 guilders.

H. Soon after, the tulip market crashed utterly, spectacularly. It began in Haarlem, at a routine bulb auction when, for the first time, the greater fool refused to show up and pay. Within days, the panic had spread across the country. Despite the efforts of traders to prop up demand, the market for tulips evaporated. Flowers that had commanded 5,000 guilders a few weeks before now fetched one-hundredth that amount. Tulip mania is not without flaws. Dash dwells too

long on the tulip's migration from Asia to Holland. But he does a service with this illuminating, accessible account of incredible financial folly.

I. Tulip mania differed in one crucial aspect from the dot-com craze that grips our attention today: Even at its height, the Amsterdam Stock Exchange, well- established in 1630, wouldn't touch tulips. "The speculation in tulip bulbs always existed at the margins of Dutch economic life," Dash writes. After the market crashed, a compromise was brokered that let most traders settle then debts for a fraction of then liability. The overall fallout on the Dutch economy was negligible. Will we say the same when Wall Street's current obsession finally runs its course?

Questions 14-18

The reading Passage has seven paragraphs ***A-I****.*

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter ***A-I****, in boxes* ***14-18*** *on your answer sheet.*

14 [ ] Difference between bubble burst impacts by tulip and by *high*-tech shares

15 [ ] Spread of tulip before 17th century

16 [ ] Indication of money offered for rare bulb in 17th century

17 [ ] Tulip was treated as money in Holland

18 [ ] Comparison made between tulip and other plants

Questions 19-23

Do the following statements agree with the information given in ***Reading Passage 2****?*

In boxes ***19-23*** *on your answer sheet, write:*

TRUE	if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE	if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN	If there is no information on this

19 [ ] In 1624, all the tulip collection belonged to a man in Amsterdam.

20 [ ] Tulip was first planted in Holland according to this passage.

21 [ ] Popularity of Tulip in Holland was much higher than any other countries in 17th century.

22 [ ] Holland was the most wealthy country in the world in 17th century.

23 [ ] From 1630, Amsterdam Stock Exchange started to regulate Tulips exchange market.

Questions 24-27

Summary

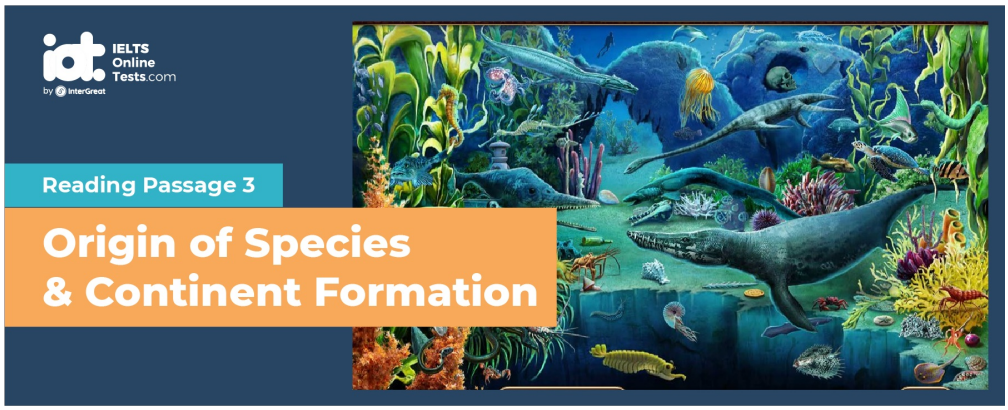
Complete the following summary of the paragraphs of Reading Passage, using **NO MORE THAN TWO WORD** *from the Reading Passage for each answer.*

Write your answers in boxes **24-27** *on your answer sheet.*

Dutch concentrated on gaining independence by 24 _____ against Spain in the early 17th century; consequently spare resources entered the area of 25 _____ . Prosperous traders demonstrated their status by building great 26 _____ and with gardens in surroundings. Attracted by the success of profit on tulip, traders kept looking for 27 _____ and speculator for sale.

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 28-40** *, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.*



Origin of Species & Continent Formation

A

THE FACT THAT there was once a Pangean supercontinent, a Panthalassa Ocean, and a Tethys Ocean, has profound implications for the evolution of multicellular life on Earth. These considerations were unknown to the scientists of the 19th century – making their scientific deductions even more remarkable. Quite independently of each other, Charles Darwin and his young contemporary Alfred Russel Wallace reached the conclusion that life had evolved by natural selection. Wallace later wrote in *My Life* of his own inspiration:

B

Why do some species die and some life? The answer was clearly that on the whole the best fitted lived. From the effects of disease the most healthy escaped; from enemies the strongest, the swiftest or the most cunning from famine the best hunters – then it suddenly flashed on me that this self-acting process would improve the race, because in every generation the inferior would inevitably be killed off and the superior would remain, that is, the fittest would survive.

C

Both Darwin's and Wallace's ideas about natural selection had been influenced by the essays of Thomas Malthus in his *Principles of Population*. Their conclusion, however, had been the direct result of their personal observation of animals and plants in widely separated geographic locations: Darwin from his experiences during the voyage of the *Beagle*, and particularly during the ship's visit to the Galapagos Islands in the East Pacific in 1835; Wallace during his years of travel in the Amazon Basin and in the Indonesia-Australian Archipelago in the 1850s.

D

Darwin had been documenting his ideas on natural selection for many years when he received

a paper on this selfsame subject from Wallace, who asked for Darwin's opinion and help in getting it published. In July 1858, Charles Lyell and J. D Hooker, close friends of Darwin, pressed Darwin to present his conclusions so that he would not lose priority to an unknown naturalist. Presiding over the hastily called but now historic meeting of the Linnean Society in London, Lyell and Hooker explained to the distinguished members how "these two gentlemen" (who were absent: Wallace was abroad and Darwin chose not to attend), had "independently and unknown to one another, conceived the same very ingenious theory,"

E

Both Darwin and Wallace had realized that the anomalous distribution of species in particular regions had profound evolutionary significance. Subsequently, Darwin spent the rest of his days in almost total seclusion thinking and writing mainly about the origin of species. In contrast, Wallace applied himself to the science of biogeography, the study of the pattern and distribution of species, and its significance, resulting in the publication of a massive two-volume work the *Geographical Distribution of Animals* in 1876.

F

Wallace was a gentle and modest man, but also persistent and quietly courageous. He spent years working in the most arduous possible climates and terrains, particularly in the Malay archipelago, he made patient and detailed zoological observations and collected a huge number of specimens for museums and collectors-which is how he made a living. One result of his work was the conclusion that there is a distinct faunal boundary, called "Wallace's line," between an Asian realm of animals in Java, Bronco and the Philipiones and an Australian realm in New Guinea and Australia. In essence, this boundary posed a difficult question: How on Earth did plants and animals with a clear affinity to the Northern Hemisphere meet with their Southern Hemispheric counterparts along such a distinct Malaysian demarcation zone? Wallace was uncertain about demarcation on one particular island-Celebes, a curiously shaped place that is midway between the two groups. Initially, he assigned its flora-fauna to the Australian side of the line, but later he transferred it to the Asian side. Today we know the reason for his dilemma. 200MYA East and West Celebes were islands with their own natural history lying on opposite sides of the Tethys Ocean. They did not collide until about 15 MYA. The answer to the main question is that Wallace's Line categorizes Laurasia-derived flora-fauna (the Asian) and Gondwana-derived flora-fauna (the Australian), fauna that had evolved on opposing shares of the Tethys. The closure of the Tethys Ocean today is manifested by the ongoing collision of Australia/New Guinea with Indochina/Indonesia and the continuing closure of the Mediterranean Sea – a remnant of the Western Tethys Ocean.

G

IN HIS ORIGIN OF CONTINENTS AND OCEANS, Wegener quoted at length from Wallace's Geographical Distribution of Animals. According to Wegener's reading, Wallace had identified three clear divisions of Australian animals, which supported his own theory of continental

displacement. Wallace had shown that animals long established in southwestern Australia had an affinity with animals in South Africa, Madagascar, India, and Ceylon, but did not have an affinity with those in Asia. Wallace also showed that Australian marsupials and monotremes are clearly related to those in South America, the Moluccas, and various Pacific islands and that none are found in neighboring Indonesia. From this and related data, Wegener concluded that the then broadly accepted “landbridge” theory could not account for this distribution of animals and that only this theory of continental drift could explain it.

H

The theory that Wegener dismissed in preference to his own proposed that plants and animals had once migrated across now-submerged intercontinental landbridges. In 1885, one of Europe’s leading geologists, Eduard Suess, theorized that as the rigid Earth cools, its upper-crust shrinks and wrinkles like the withering skin of an aging apple. He suggested that the planet’s seas and oceans now fill the wrinkles between once-contiguous plateaus.

I

Today, we know that we live on a dynamic Earth with shifting, colliding and separating tectonic plates, not a “withering skin”, and the main debate in the field of biogeography has shifted. The discussion now concerns “dispersalism” versus “vicarianism”: unrestricted radiation of species on the one hand and the development of barriers to migration on the other. Dispersion is a short-term phenomenon – the daily or seasonal migration of species and their radiation to the limits of their natural environment on an extensive and continuous landmass. Vicarian evolution, however, depends upon the separation and isolation of a variety of species within the confines of natural barriers in the form of islands, lakes, or shallow seas – topographical features that take a long time to develop.

Questions 28-32

Use the information in the passage to match the people (listed **A-E**) with opinions or deeds below.

Write the appropriate letters **A-E** in boxes **28-32** on your answer sheet.

A	Suess
B	Wallace
C	Darwin and Wallace
D	Wegener
E	Lyell and Hooker

28 [ ] urged Darwin to publish his scientific findings

29 [ ] Depicted physical feature of earth's crust.

30 [ ] believed in continental drift theory while rejecting another one

31 [ ] Published works about wildlife distribution in a different region.

32 [ ] Evolution of species is based on selection by nature.

Questions 33-35

The Reading Passage has nine paragraphs **A-I**

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter **A-I**, *in boxes* **33-35** *on your answer sheet.*

33 [ ] Best adaptable animal survived on the planet.

34 [ ] Boundary called Wallace's line found between Asia and Australia.

35 [ ] Animal relevance exists between Australia and Africa.

Questions 36-40

Complete the following summary of the paragraphs of Reading Passage.

Using **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the Reading Passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **36-40** *on your answer sheet.*

Wegener found that continental drift instead of "land bridge" theory could explain strange species' distribution phenomenon. In his theory, vegetation and wildlife 36 _____ intercontinentally. However, Eduard Suess compared the wrinkle of crust to 37 _____ of an old apple. Now it is well known that we are living on the planet where there are 38 _____ in constant mobile states instead of what Suess described. Hot spot in biogeography is switched to concerns between two-terms: " 39 _____ " and " 40 _____ "

Solution:

Part 1: Question 1 - 13

1. NO
2. YES
3. NO
4. NO
5. NOT GIVEN
6. D
7. C
8. D
9. A
10. D
11. B
12. B
13. A

Part 2: Question 14 - 27

14. I
15. D
16. B
17. G
18. F
19. TRUE
20. FALSE
21. TRUE
22. NOT GIVEN
23. FALSE

24 fighting

25 commerce

26 estates

27 flower lovers

Part 3: Question 28 - 40

28 E

29 A

30 D

31 B

32 C

33 B

34 F

35 G

36 migrated

37 withering skin

38 plates

39 dispersalism

40 vicarisanism