IELTS Mock Test 2024 September

Reading Practice Test 4

HOW TO USE

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1. Open this URL **https://link.intergreat.com/FLBZY** on your computer
2. Use your mobile device to scan the QR code attached

READING PASSAGE 1

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

THE BAOBAB TREE

The baobab tree is an icon of the African continent. It can live for over a thousand years and is a vital source of food, water and shelter for indigenous peoples and wildlife alike. Given the tree's many practical uses, it is not surprising that the baobab features so prominently in traditional African folklore.

The baobab is a prehistoric species which predates both mankind and the splitting of the continents over 200 million years ago. It belongs to the genus Adansonia, which contains nine species. These are found in the drier parts of Africa, Madagascar, India, Sri Lanka and Australia. Of the nine species, six are native to Madagascar, two to mainland Africa and one to Australia. The African and Australian baobabs look very similar, even though they are not the same species. Baobabs grow in 32 African countries. In West Africa, the baobab's presence is often an indication of a human settlement nearby. The tree is most frequently found in dry, hot savannahs of sub-Saharan Africa, where the climate is extremely arid and rainfall is seasonal.

The baobab is a deciduous tree, which means that it loses its leaves during the dry season. It is a succulent, which means that during the rainy season it absorbs and stores water in its vast trunk. This water enables it to produce a nutrient-dense fruit in the dry season when all around is dry and arid. The trunk has a diameter of 10-14 metres and the tree has a height of 18-25 metres. The baobab tree is a strange looking tree that grows in low-lying areas in Africa. Its trunk is very wide and it has large white flowers that bloom at night. Its leaves are finger-like in shape. The baobab is a very versatile tree. Its leaves, bark, fruit and trunk are all useful to humans and animals.

The baobab's fruit is large and oval-shaped and it contains a mass of seeds. It is a rich source of vitamin C and its pulp can be used to make a refreshing drink. The pulp can also be used to treat fever, diarrhoea and malaria. The pulp can be stored until it is needed. The seeds of the fruit can be used to produce oil. This oil is used to protect the skin and it is also used in the cosmetic industry. The leaves of the baobab are also useful. They can be eaten fresh or they can be dried and stored. They are rich in iron and can be used as a medicine. The leaves can be used to treat asthma, insect bites and several other ailments. The leaves can also be used as a sauce for food. The bark of the baobab is also useful. It can be used to make cloth and rope. The bark can also be used to make musical instruments, waterproof hats and fishing lines. The bark has also been used to protect young plants from animals. The bark of the baobab is also used to treat fever. The trunk of the baobab is very wide and it can be used as a shelter. It is also used for storage and it can also be used as a source of water in dry periods. The baobab

can also be used to make a variety of things such as musical instruments, handcrafts, pots to grow plants in, and many other useful items. The tree also provides shade for animals and humans. The tree is also a source of fuel and is used as a firebreak as well.

The baobab is also known as the 'tree of life' because it can provide shelter, clothing, food, and water for the animal and human inhabitants of the African savannah regions. The tree is also an important source of food for many different creatures such as insects and animals. The flowers provide food for fruit bats, which play an important role in pollinating the flowers. The seeds are eaten by various mammals such as baboons, monkeys and warthogs. Elephants and eland eat the bark of the baobab tree. The flowers provide food for birds, bees and other insects. The baobab tree is home to snakes and tree frogs. The tree is also home to bush babies, which feed on the flowers. The tree is also home to birds such as the mottled spinetail, the grey-headed parrot and the mottled swift. The tree is also host to the African honey bee.

The baobab tree is under threat because of the increasing human population. The trees are being cut down for their bark, which is used to make rope, mats and baskets. The trees are also being cut down to make way for farmland. The baobab is also under threat from climate change.

Questions 1-7

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

In boxes **1-7** 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

1 [ ] . The baobab tree has been a part of African folklore because of its symbolic representation in ancient myths.

2 [ ] . Baobab trees are only found on the African continent.

3 [ ] . In West Africa, the presence of a baobab tree often indicates nearby human settlements.

4 [ ] . Baobab trees are commonly found in humid tropical rainforests.

5 [ ] . The baobab stores water in its trunk during the rainy season to survive dry periods.

6 [ ] . The leaves of the baobab tree can be used to make a medicinal sauce.

7 [ ] . Baobab trees are pollinated exclusively by fruit bats.

Questions 8-13

Complete the notes below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **8-13** on your answer sheet.

USES OF THE BAOBAB TREE

Fruit

- contains a lot of vitamin C
- can be used to treat illness
- can be stored for a long time
- seeds can be used to produce oil

Leaves

- can be used fresh or dried
- can be used to treat illness
- can be used to make a 8 _____

Bark

- can be used to make cloth and musical instruments
- can be used to protect 9 _____ and to treat fever

Trunk

- can provide 10 _____ and water
- can be used to make 11 _____

General

- provides 12 _____ for animals and humans
- can be used to make 13 _____ to burn

READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on ***Questions 14-26****, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.*

THE BIRTH OF THE 10,000-HOUR RULE

A study on violinists in the early 1990s inspired the idea that 10,000 hours of practice is the key to success

A. The so-called 10,000-hour rule can be traced back to a 1993 paper, 'The Role of Deliberate Practice in the Acquisition of Expert Performance', co-authored by a Swedish psychologist and a US psychological scientist. The paper is one of the most cited in its field. Its most striking claim is that the difference between expert performers and normal adults is not due to innate talent, but rather is a reflection of the amount of deliberate practice they have undergone. 'Many characteristics once believed to reflect innate talent are actually the result of intense practice extended for a minimum of 10 years,' the authors wrote. They concluded: 'The maximal level of performance for individuals in a given domain is not attained automatically as a function of extended experience, but the level of performance can be increased even by highly experienced individuals as a result of deliberate efforts to improve.'

B. The study looked at three groups of violinists at the Music Academy of West Berlin, in Germany. The authors set out to find out what had caused the 'best' violinists to be better than the merely 'good' ones, who were in turn better than the 'least accomplished' ones. All of the violinists were asked how much they had practised, alone, with a teacher, and with others, every week, ever since they had first picked up a violin. What they found was that by the age of 20, the best violinists had practised an average of 10,000 hours, the good ones had practised 8,000 hours, and the least skilled had practised 4,000 hours. The psychologists concluded that what mattered was not the time spent obtaining any old experience, but the amount of time spent on 'deliberate practice', which they defined as an effortful activity designed to improve individual target performance. The authors also noted that the most accomplished individuals in their study had each followed the same learning structure, and had all acquired their skills in a similar way: 'All of the expert violinists had started playing at approximately five years of age, and had selected a music teacher who was a violinist. All of them had been admitted to a music academy by eight years of age, where they had been taught by skillful violin teachers. All of them had started solo practice at around the age of eight. All of them had been rated very highly by their violin teachers at the music academy, and had given their first public performance at around the age of eight.'

C. The theory of deliberate practice was popularised by the writer Malcolm Gladwell, who argued that talent is irrelevant to performance in his book Outliers, published in 2008. 'The striking thing about Ericsson's study is that he and his colleagues couldn't find any "naturals",

musicians who floated effortlessly to the top while practising a fraction of the time their peers did. Nor could they find any “grinds”, people who worked harder than everyone else, yet just didn’t have what it takes to break the top ranks,’ he wrote. ‘Their research suggests that once a musician has enough ability to get into a top music school, the thing that distinguishes one performer from another is how hard he or she works. That’s it. And what’s more, the people at the very top don’t work just harder or even much harder than everyone else. They work much, much harder.’

D. But while Ericsson and his colleagues had found a correlation between the number of hours spent on deliberate practice and the level of expertise achieved, their research didn’t determine whether practice was the cause of that expertise. The idea that 10,000 hours of practice will make you an expert is appealing, not least because it suggests that anyone can achieve anything if they just work hard enough. But while practice is undeniably important, it is not the only factor that contributes to performance. In 2014, a group of psychologists led by Brooke Macnamara of Princeton University re-analysed data from all of the studies they could find on the relationship between deliberate practice and performance in various domains, including music, sports and education, and estimated that the average amount that practice contributes to mastery of these is just 12 percent. That leaves a lot of the variance in expert performance unexplained, which means factors other than practice must be involved.

E. In a rejoinder, Ericsson argues that Macnamara’s analysis actually showed the opposite of what she claimed. In each of the domains she looked at, he says, practice was the single most important factor in predicting a person’s level of expertise. The problem, he argues, is that Macnamara’s analysis looked at the total number of hours of practice undertaken by the participants in the studies she reviewed, rather than the number of hours of deliberate practice. ‘The paper is important because it shows that the amount of time with relevant experience is not a good predictor of attained performance,’ he says. ‘But it does not invalidate the body of research on deliberate practice, nor its utility as the most important predictor of expertise.’

Questions 14-18

Reading Passage 2 has five paragraphs, **A-E**.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

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

NB *You may use any letter more than once.*

14 [ ] . a reference to the time when a distinction was first made between two types of skills

15 [ ] . a reference to what a particular investigation failed to do

16 [ ] . a reference to the influence of the 10,000-hour rule outside the field of music

17 [ ] . A reference to how the study compared achievement levels based on practice time.

18 [ ] . a reference to a claim that was made without sufficient evidence

Questions 19-22

Look at the following statements (**Questions 19-22**) and the list of researchers below.

Match each statement with the correct researcher, **A, B** or **C**.

Write the correct letter, **A, B** or **C**, in boxes **19-22** on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

	List of Researchers
A	Ericsson and colleagues
B	Malcolm Gladwell
C	Brooke Macnamara and colleagues

19 [ ] . Their research involved innovative methods of measuring practice among participants.

20 [ ] . They made claims about the significance of practice which were not justified.

21 [ ] . They devised a sophisticated way of measuring the development of expertise.

22 [ ] . Their research generated an unexpected result.

Questions 23-24

Choose **TWO** letters, **A-E**.

Write the correct letters in boxes **23 and 24** on your answer sheet.

Which **TWO** of the following statements does the writer make about the study of violinists undertaken by Ericsson and his colleagues?

- A ☐ It was widely regarded as original.
- B ☐ Its aims were innovative.
- C ☐ It produced some unexpected findings.
- D ☐ It called into question the methods of other researchers.
- E ☐ Its scope was very limited.

Questions 25-26

Choose **TWO** letters, **A-E.**

Write the correct letters in boxes **25 and 26** on your answer sheet.

Which **TWO** of the following statements does the writer make about the theory of deliberate practice?

- A ☐ It was developed by combining data from several studies.
- B ☐ It is the only theory to attempt to calculate the number of hours required for expertise.
- C ☐ It is the first theory to link the acquisition of expertise with the number of hours spent practising.
- D ☐ It fails to take account of individual differences.
- E ☐ It has been challenged by some researchers.

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on ***Questions 27-40****, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.*

NUCLEAR FUSION: THE KEY TO LIMITLESS CLEAN ENERGY?

A. In December 2022, scientists at a laboratory in California announced a major breakthrough in nuclear fusion research. For the first time ever, scientists had managed to produce a nuclear fusion reaction that generated more energy than it consumed. The result was hailed as a major step forward in the development of nuclear fusion as a new source of energy. But what is nuclear fusion, and why is it so important?

B. When we think of nuclear power, we usually think of nuclear fission, the process of splitting the nucleus of an atom into two or more smaller nuclei. This is the reaction that occurs in nuclear power stations today. However, nuclear fission has a number of disadvantages. The fuel used is radioactive, and there is always a risk of nuclear accidents, such as the one that occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in 1986. In addition, nuclear fission produces radioactive waste, which remains dangerous for thousands of years and is difficult to dispose of safely. Nuclear fusion, on the other hand, is the process of fusing two atomic nuclei together to form a single heavier nucleus. This is the process that occurs in the sun and other stars. The reaction releases a huge amount of energy, and the fuel used is not radioactive. This makes nuclear fusion a potentially limitless source of clean energy.

C. The potential benefits of nuclear fusion are enormous. It could provide a virtually limitless supply of clean energy, with none of the problems associated with nuclear fission. It could help to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, and therefore help to combat climate change. It could also provide energy security, as the fuel used in nuclear fusion is abundant and widely available. However, there are significant challenges to be overcome before nuclear fusion can become a viable source of energy.

D. One of the biggest challenges is the high temperature and pressure required to achieve nuclear fusion. In order to fuse atomic nuclei together, they must be heated to temperatures of millions of degrees Celsius. This requires a huge amount of energy, and it is difficult to find materials that can withstand such high temperatures. In addition, the nuclei must be held together at high pressure for a long enough time to allow the fusion reaction to occur. This is difficult to achieve, as the high temperature and pressure tend to cause the nuclei to fly apart.

E. Another challenge is the cost of nuclear fusion research. The equipment and research required to achieve nuclear fusion are extremely expensive, and the cost of research and development is high. This has led to concerns that nuclear fusion may not be economically

viable, and that the money spent on research could be better spent on other forms of clean energy.

F. Despite these challenges, there has been significant progress in nuclear fusion research in recent years. Scientists have developed a number of different approaches to achieving nuclear fusion, and have made significant advances in understanding the physics of the process. The recent breakthrough in California is just one example of the progress that has been made.

G. One of the most promising approaches to achieving nuclear fusion is the use of magnetic confinement. In this approach, a plasma of hydrogen nuclei is confined within a magnetic field and heated to the required temperature. The magnetic field helps to keep the nuclei close together, increasing the chances of fusion occurring. This approach has been used in a number of experimental fusion reactors, and has shown promise in achieving the conditions required for nuclear fusion.

H. Another approach is inertial confinement, in which a small pellet of hydrogen fuel is compressed and heated using lasers or other forms of energy. The compression and heating cause the nuclei to fuse together, releasing energy. This approach has also shown promise, and has been used in a number of experimental fusion reactors.

I. Despite the progress that has been made, there is still a long way to go before nuclear fusion can become a viable source of energy. Scientists need to find ways to achieve the required temperature and pressure more efficiently, and to develop materials that can withstand the extreme conditions. They also need to find ways to reduce the cost of nuclear fusion research, such as by having cheaper, more durable materials for some components like the first wall and divertors.

J. In conclusion, nuclear fusion has the potential to be a virtually limitless source of clean energy, with none of the problems associated with nuclear fission. However, there are significant challenges to be overcome before it can become a viable source of energy. Scientists need to find ways to achieve the required conditions more efficiently, and to reduce the cost of research. Despite these challenges, there has been significant progress in nuclear fusion research in recent years, and the recent breakthrough in California is just one example of this progress. With continued research and development, nuclear fusion could become a major source of energy in the future.

Questions 27-32

Reading Passage 3 has ten paragraphs, **A-J**.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter, **A-J**, in boxes **27-32** on your answer sheet.

27 [ ] . a description of the method used by stars to generate energy

28 [ ] . a description of the process used to produce energy in nuclear power plants today

29 [ ] . an explanation of the advantages of nuclear fusion over nuclear fission

30 [ ] . a reference to the difficulty of achieving the conditions required for nuclear fusion

31 [ ] . a reference to a nuclear fusion experiment that has been successful

32 [ ] . a mention of the need to find a way of making nuclear fusion research more affordable

Questions 33-35

Complete the summary using the list of words, **A-K**, below.

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

MAGNETIC CONFINEMENT

In the magnetic confinement approach, a 33 [ ] is placed inside a magnetic field and heated. This method has been employed in various experimental 34 [ ], showing potential for generating fusion energy.

INERTIAL CONFINEMENT

In the inertial confinement approach, a small pellet of hydrogen fuel is compressed and heated using lasers or other forms of energy. This extreme compression and heat triggers a nuclear reaction during which the 35 [ ] are fused together, releasing a significant amount of energy.

A	plasma
B	nuclei
C	energy
D	reactors
E	fusion
F	reaction
G	hydrogen
H	atoms
I	nuclear fission
J	nuclear fusion
K	temperature

Questions 36-40

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 3?

In boxes 36-40 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

36 [ ] . The California experiment was the first time nuclear fusion had ever been achieved.

37 [ ] . Nuclear fusion could help to reduce the world's dependence on fossil fuels.

38 [ ] . The fuel used in nuclear fusion is rare and hard to find.

39 [ ] . The high cost of nuclear fusion is solely attributed to its equipment.

40 [ ] . The basic physics behind nuclear fusion is more advanced than scientists once thought.

Solution:

Part 1: Question 1 - 13

1. FALSE
2. FALSE
3. TRUE
4. FALSE
5. TRUE
6. TRUE
7. FALSE
8. sauce
9. plants
10. shelter
11. pots
12. shade
13. fuel

Part 2: Question 14 - 26

14. A
15. D
16. C
17. B
18. D
19. A
20. B
21. C
22. C
23/24. A,C

25 26 C,E

Part 3: Question 27 - 40

27 B

28 B

29 B

30 D

31 A

32 I

33 A

34 D

35 B

36 FALSE

37 TRUE

38 FALSE

39 FALSE

40 NOT GIVEN