Practice Test 28

You can refer this page to practice for the IELTS reading test and get a high IELTS band score. There are 3 sections in this particular series and have all types of questions that may appear in the Actual IELTS examination.

Reading Passage 1

Emigration to the US

A. American history has been largely the story of migrations. That of the hundred years or so between the Battle of Waterloo and the outbreak of the First World War must certainly be reckoned the largest peaceful migration in recorded history; probably the largest of any kind, ever. It is reckoned that some thirty-five million persons entered the United States during that period, not to mention the large numbers who were also moving to Argentina and Australia. Historians may come to discern that in the twentieth and later centuries this movement was dwarfed when Africa, Asia and South America began to send out their peoples; but if so, they will be observing a pattern, of a whole continent in motion, that was first laid down in nineteenth-century Europe. Only the French seemed to be substantially immune to the virus. Otherwise, all caught it, and all travelled. English, Irish, Welsh, Scots, Germans, Scandinavians, Spaniards, Italians, Poles, Greeks, Jews, Portuguese, Dutch, Hungarians, Czechs, Croats, Slovenes, Serbs, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Russians, Basques. There were general and particular causes.

B. As regards to the general causes, the rise in population meant that more and more people were trying to earn their living on the same amount of land; inevitably, some were squeezed off it. The increasing cost of the huge armies and navies, with their need for up-to-date equipment, that every great European power maintained, implied heavier and heavier taxes which many found difficult or impossible to pay, and mass conscription, which quite as many naturally wanted to avoid. The opening up of new, superbly productive lands in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, coupled with the availability of steamers and steam trains to distribute their produce, meant that European peasants could not compete effectively in the world market: they would always be undersold, especially as the arrival of free trade was casting down the old mercantilist barriers everywhere. Steam was important in other ways too. It became a comparatively easy matter to cross land and sea, and to get news from distant parts. The invention of the electric telegraph also speeded up the diffusion of news, especially after a cable was successfully laid across the Atlantic in 1866. New printing and papermaking machines and a rapidly spreading literacy made large-circulation newspapers possible for the first time. In short, horizons widened, even for the stay-at-home. Most important of all, the dislocations in society brought about by the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution and the various wars and tumults of nineteenth-century Europe shattered the old ways.

New states came into being, old ones disappeared, frontiers were recast, the laws of land-tenure were radically altered, internal customs barriers and feudal dues both disappeared, payment in money replaced payment in kind, new industries stimulated new wants and destroyed the self-sufficiency of peasant households and the salability of peasant products. The basic structure of rural Europe was transformed.

Bad times pushed, good times pulled American factories were usually clamoring for workers): small wonder that the peoples moved.

C. Particular reasons were just as important as these general ones. For example between 1845 and 1848 -eland suffered the terrible potato famine. A million people died of starvation or disease, a million more emigrated (1846-51). Matters were not much better when the Great Famine was over: it was followed by lesser ones, and the basic weaknesses of the Irish economy made the outlook hopeless anyway. Mass emigration was a natural resort, at first to America, then, in the twentieth century, increasingly, to England and Scotland. Emigration was encouraged, in me. Irish case as in many others, by letters sent home and by remittances of money. The first adventurers thus helped to pay the expenses of their successors. Political reasons could sometimes drive Europeans across the Atlantic too. In 1848 some thousands of Germans fled the failure of the liberal revolution of that year (but many thousands emigrated for purely economic reasons).

D. If such external stimuli faltered, American enterprise was more than willing to fill the gap. The high cost of labour had been a constant in American history since the first settlements; now, as the Industrial Revolution made itself felt, the need for workers was greater than ever. The supply of Americans was too small to meet the demand: while times were good on the family farm, as they were on the whole until the 1880s, or while there was new land to be taken up in the West, the drift out of agriculture (which was becoming a permanent feature of America, as of all industrialized, society) would not be large enough to fill the factories. So employers looked for the hands they needed in Europe, whether skilled, like Cornish miners, or unskilled, like Irish navvies. Then, the transcontinental railroads badly needed settlers on their Western land grants, as well as labourers: they could not make regular profits until the lands their tracks crossed were regularly producing crops that needed carrying to market. Soon every port in Europe knew the activities of American shipping lines and their agents, competing with each other to offer advantageous terms to possible emigrants. They stuck up posters, they advertised in the press, they patiently answered inquiries, and they shepherded their clients from their native villages, by train, to the dockside, and then made sure they were safely stowed in the steerage.

Question 1

Choose the correct letter A, B, C or D Write it on your answer sheer.

1 Which of the following does the writer state in the first paragraph?

A The extent of emigration in the nineteenth century is unlikely to be repeated.

B Doubts may he cast on how much emigration there really was in the nineteenth century.

C It is possible that emigration from Europe may be exceeded by emigration from outside Europe

D Emigration can prove to be a better experience tor some nationalities than for others.

Questions 2-9

Complete the sentences below with words taken from Reading Passage 1.

Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each

Write the answer, your answers in blank spaces next to 2-9 on your answer sheet.

General causes of emigration to the US

Population increases made it impossible for some to live in agriculture. In Europe, countries kept 2…… that were both big, and this resulted in increases in 3…… and in 4……., which a lot of people wanted to escape. It became impossible for 5…….. in Europe to earn a living because c developments in other countries and the introduction of 6…… People knew more about the world beyond their own countries because there was greater 7……. 8…….. had been formed because of major historical events. The creation of 9…… caused changes in dem

Questions 10-13

Complete each sentence with the correct ending A-H from the box below.

Write the correct letter A-H in boxes 10-13 on your answer sheet.

10 The end of the potato famine in Ireland

11 People who had emigrated front Ireland

12 Movement off the land in the US

13 The arrival of railroad companies in the West of the US-made

A people reluctant to move elsewhere.

B resulted in a need for more agricultural workers.

C provided evidence of the advantages of emigration.

D created a false impression of the advantages of moving elsewhere.

E did little to improve the position of much of the population.

F took a long time to have any real effect.

G failed to satisfy employment requirements.

H created a surplus of people, who had emigrated.

Reading Passage 2

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

How bugs hitch-hike across the galaxy

A. Mankind's search for alien life could be jeopardized by ultra-resilient bacteria from Earth. David Derbyshire reports. What was the most important discovery of the Apollo programme? Some have argued that it was the rocks that explained how the Moon was formed. Others believe it was technological spin-offs. But according to Captain Peter Conrad, who led the 1969 Apollo 12 mission, it was life.

B. On the apparently dead lunar surface, a colony of bacteria was thriving. The organisms were not native to the Moon but were visitors from Earth who had hitch-hiked a ride onboard one of Nasa's five Surveyor probes from the 1960s. To the astonishment of biologists, between 50 and 100 Streptococcus bacteria survived the journey across space, at an average temperature 20 degrees above absolute zero with no source of energy or water, and stayed alive on the Moon in a camera for three years. Captain Conrad, who returned the bacteria to Earth, was later to confess: 'I always thought the most significant thing we ever found on the whole Moon was the little bacteria that came back and lived'.

C. The ability of life to survive, adapt and evolve never fails to astonish. Over the past three decades, bacteria and archaea have been found in some of the most inhospitable places on Earth. Known as extremophiles, these organisms have coped with life in a vacuum, pressure as high as 70 tons per square inch, depths of four miles beneath the surface and scorching waters around deep-sea volcanic vents. They have also survived 25

million years inside a bee preserved in resin. Their resilience has renewed enthusiasm for the search for alien life – a quest that many had assumed had been banished to fantasy fiction. Mars and the moons Titan, Europa and Callisto are once again plausible candidates for extraterrestrials.

D. As interest in alien life has grown, so have concerns that mankind could spread its own microscopic bugs, contaminating the places we want to explore. In 2003, Nasa ended the Galileo probe's mission by smashing it into Jupiter. The fear was that it could be carrying bacteria that might contaminate Europa's oceans. The team behind Beagle 2 — the British probe that went to search for life on Mars in 2003 – was forced to take contamination particularly seriously. If Beagle carried to Mars life or dead spores picked up during the manufacture of the spacecraft, its science would be jeopardised. Prof Colin Pillinger, the Open University scientist who headed the Beagle project, said: 'What we've learnt since the Apollo missions and the Viking Mars missions of the 1970s is that bugs are far more tenacious than we ever imagined. They seem to be very tolerant of high temperatures, they lie dormant at low temperatures for long periods, they are immune to salt, acid and alkali, they seem to survive on the substrate and are not what people expect. Extremophiles are extremely adapted to hanging on to life.'

E. Beagle had to be assembled in a 'clean room' – and one was specially put together in a converted BBC outside broadcast van garage in Milton Keynes. It had enough room to include an enormous set of fans that circulated and filtered the air 500 times an hour. Only a handful of trained researchers were allowed inside. 'I wasn't allowed in,' says Prof Pillinger. 'There was special training for people going in there and special conditions. There was a ban on beards and a limit of four people at any one time. The team kept samples of everything that could have contaminated the craft and monitored every stage of assembly.'

F. To reduce the workload, the idea was to build as much as possible before sterilising it and banishing it to the difficult working conditions inside the cleanroom. The easy stuff was heated to 115C for 52 hours, more than enough to kill off Dugs. Electronic equipment can't cope with those sorts of temperatures, so the team used a hydrogen peroxide plasma, created in a microwave, to kill off bugs at low temperatures. Parachutes and gas bags were zapped with gamma radiation. It wasn't just facial hair that was banned. 'You've heard of the paperless office,' says Prof Pillinger. 'We had the paperless assembly line. The guys normally go in armed with loads of papers and diagrams, but we didn't allow any of that. They were given information through a glass wall, over mikes and monitors. And sometimes on a piece of paper stuck to the glass with sticky tape.'

G. Beagle's heat shield doubled as its biological shield. So once the instruments were encased and sealed, the craft could be brought back into the real world. The shield heated up to 1,700 degrees on its descent through the Martian atmosphere, so bugs on the casing were not a worry. Mars Express – the craft carrying Beagle – did not need sterilising. Its trajectory was designed so that if something went wrong, the craft would not simply crash into the planet. Its course could be corrected enroute.

H. Eventually, space scientists hope to return samples of Mars to Earth. While the risks of alien bacteria proving hazardous on Earth may be remote, the rocks will still need to be quarantined. Moon rocks from Apollo were analysed in vacuum glove boxes for the first two missions. Later, researchers stored rocks in nitrogen. Prof Pillinger believed the first Mars rocks should be sterilised before they are studied on Earth. ‘For security purposes, it would be the most sensible thing to do. You don’t have to sterilise it all, you can contain some of it and then sterilise the sample you want to look at, but it would lower the risk and make it easier to analyse.’

Questions 14-20

Look at the statements (Questions 14—20) arid the list of spacecraft below.

Match each statement with the spacecraft it applies to.

Write the correct letter A-E in boxes 14-20 on your answer sheet.

14 provided transport from Earth tor bacteria

15 led to the realisation of how tenacious bacteria are

16 was created so that there could be no bacteria on the outer structure

17 was capable of changing direction in the event of a problem

18 brought material which was kept in more than one kind of container

19 required action because of the possibility of the introduction of harmful bacteria

20 resulted in disagreement as to the relative value of what was found

List of Spacecraft

A Apollo craft
B Surveyor probe
C Galileo probe
D Beagle 2
E Mars Express

Questions 21-26

Label the diagram below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the reading passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 21 —26 on your answer sheet.

The Assembly of Beagle 2

21

22

23

24

25

26

Reading Passage 3

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

Finding out about the world from television news

A. The Ideological Octopus (1991). Justin Lewis points to an important issue concerning the formal structure of television news. As he notes, television news lacks the narrative element which, in other genres, serves to capture viewer interest and thus motivate viewing. Lewis posts this as one of the key reasons why television news often fails to interest people and why, when they do watch it. People often cannot understand it. Lewis argues that one fundamental problem with watching television news is that its narrative structure means that the viewer is offered the punchline before the joke – because the main point (the headline) comes right at the beginning, after which the programme, by definition, deals with less and less important things. Thus, in television news our interest is not awakened by an enigma which is then gradually solved, to provide a gratifying solution – as so often happens in fictional narratives. In Lewis's terms, in television news, there is no enigma, the solution of which will motivate the viewing process. As he baldly states, 'If

we decided to try to design a television programme with a structure that would completely fail to capture an audience's interest, we might (finally) come up with the format of the average television news show' (Lewis 1991).

B. What Lewis also does is offer an interesting contrast, in this respect, between the high-status phenomenon of television news and the low-status genre of soap opera. The latter, he observes, offers the most highly developed use of effective narrative codes. To that extern soap opera, with its multiple narratives, could be seen, in formal terms, as the most effective type of television for the cultivation of viewer interest, and certainly as a far more effective form than that of television news for this purpose. Clearly, some of Lewis's speculation here is problematic. There are counter examples of his arguments (e.g. instances of programmes such as sports news which share the problematic formal features he points to but which are nonetheless popular – at least among certain

types of viewers). Moreover, he may perhaps overstress the importance of structure as against content relevance in providing the basis for programme appeal. Nonetheless, I would suggest that his argument, in this respect, is of considerable interest.

C. Lewis argues not only that soap opera is more narratively interesting than television news, in formal terms, but, moreover, that the world of television fiction, in general, is much closer to most people's lives than that presented in the news. This, he claims, is because the world of television fiction often feels to people like their own lives. They can, for example, readily identify with the moral issues and personal dilemmas faced by the characters in a favourite soap opera. Conversely, the world of television news is much more remote in all senses; it is a socially distant world populated by another race of special or 'elite' persons, the world of them not. This is also why 'most people feel more able to evaluate TV fiction than TV news … because it seems closer to their own lives and to the world they live in … [whereas] the world of television news might almost be beamed in from another planet (Lewis 1991). It is as if the distant world of 'the news' is so disconnected from popular experience that it is beyond critical judgement for many viewers. Hence, however, alienated they feel from it, they nonetheless lack any alternative perspective on the events it portrays.

D. One consequence of this, Lewis argues, is that precisely, because of this distance, people who feel this kind of alienation from the 'world news' nonetheless use frameworks to understand news items which come from within the news themselves. This, he argues, is because in the absence of any other source of information or perspective they are forced back on using the media's own framework. Many viewers are simply unable to place the media's portrayal of events in any other critical framework (where would they get it from?). To this extent, Lewis argues. Gerbner and his colleagues (see Gerbner et al. 1986; Signorielli and Morgan 1990) may perhaps be right in thinking that the dominant perspectives and 'associative logics' offered by the media may often simply be soaked up by audiences of their repetition. This is not to suggest that such viewers necessarily believe, or explicitly accept these perspectives, but simply to note that they have no other place to start from, however cynical they may be, at a general level, about not believing what you see on television, and they may thus tend, in the end, to fall back on 'what it said

on TV'.

E. In one sense, this could be said to be the converse of Hall's negotiated code' (1980), as taken over from Parkin (1973). Parkin had argued, that many working-class people display a 'split consciousness', whereby they accept propositions from the dominant ideology at an abstract level, but then 'negotiate' or 'discount' the application of these ideological propositions to the particular circumstances of their own situation. Here, by contrast, we confront a situation where people often express cynicism in general (so that Hot believing what you see in the media' is no more than common sense), but then in any particular case, they often find themselves pushed back into reliance on the mainstream media's account of anything beyond the realm of their direct personal experience, simply for lack of any alternative perspective.

Questions 27-34

Complete the summary below using words from the box.

Write your answers in blank spaces next to 27-34 on your answer sheet.

The structure of television news.

Justin Lewis says that television news does not have the 27……..feature that other types of the programme have. As a result, many viewers do not find it interesting and may find it 28……. This is because the 29…….information comes first and after that 30……. matters are covered, in television news, the is no 31…….. progress towards a conclusion and nothing 32 ……. to find out about. In fact, he believes that television news is an example how the 33……. process in the field of television could result in something that is 34……. to what constitutes an interesting programme.