

## IELTS Reading Practice Test 2021-Test 2 (Question Booklet)

### IELTS Reading Practice Test 2021 pdf– Passage 1

You should spend about 20 mins on questions 1-14.

#### **THE DECLINE OF ANGKOR WAT**

**A.** Angkor is the epicentre of one of the greatest vanishing acts of all times. The ancient Khmer kingdom in modern Cambodia lasted from the 9th to 5th century, and at its height dominated a huge area of South-East Asia from today's Myanmar in the west to Vietnam in the east.

As many as 7,50,000 people lived in Angkor (capital city), making it the most extensive urban complex of the pre-industrial era by the late 16th century. When Portuguese missionaries came across the lotus-shaped towers of Angkor Wat (world's largest religious monument), the empire was in its final phase.

**B.** Exactly what caused the decline is unknown; invaders, a change of religion, a shift to maritime trade that degraded an inland city are all guesswork. The people of Angkor never spoke a single word explaining their kingdoms collapse. Recent excavations are suggesting a new answer. Angkor was doomed by the very ingenuity that originally gave rise to it – control of water, slipped away.

**C.** To ensure a steady water supply, stabilise rice production and control flooding, Khmer engineers had built a full network of canals, moats, reservoirs and ponds. Massive infrastructure slowed the wet-season deluge flowing from the Kulen Hills, moving it into canals that fed the barays (artificial bodies of water).

Spreading across the gently sloping land, the water gets finally drained into the Tonle Sap (the largest freshwater lake in South-East Asia). This system ensured a water supply that did not rely on the monsoon. But this reliability required massive skills of engineering, including a reservoir called the West Baray, which is 8 kilometres long and almost three wide.

To build this most sophisticated of Angkor's large reservoirs a 1000 years ago, as many as 2,00,000 Khmer workers were needed to stock nearly 16 million cubic yards of soil in embankments 300 feet wide and three stories tall. Till today, the rectangular reservoir is fed by water diverted from the Siem river.

**D.** Today's researchers have been amazed by the ambition of Angkor's early engineers. "The entire landscape is artificial" says people. Over several centuries and hundreds of miles of canals that relied on subtle differences in the land's natural inclination were constructed to divert water from three different rivers to the barays.

During the summer monsoons, overflow channels bled off excess water and after the rains petered out in October/November, irrigation channels dispensed the stored water. The barays helped renew soil moisture by allowing water to soak into the earth. In neighbourhood fields, surface evaporation would have drawn up the groundwater to supply crops.

**E.** The clever water system may have made all the difference between mediocrity and greatness. Most of the kingdom's rice was grown in fields with embankments that would otherwise have relied on monsoons or the seasonal flow of water on the floodplain. Irrigation may have boosted harvests. The system could also have helped in providing rations during a poor monsoon season.

The ability to divert and hold water flow have afforded a measure of protection from floods. Angkor's waterworks would have been an extremely valuable asset for the struggling South-East Asian kingdoms.

**F.** There is a strong evidence that says the system was destroyed by Angkor's own engineers; one of the huge spillways was destroyed that was used to remove excess water. However, why this was done is a mystery. The ruins are a vital clue to an epic struggle as Khmer engineers coped with even more complex and unruly water system.

Logically, the dam was failed; the river could have chewed into the dam, weakening it gradually. Perhaps, it was washed away by a heavy flood. the Khmer then ripped apart most of their stonework, salvaging the blocks for other things.

## Question 1-6

**Which paragraph contain the following information ?**

*Write the letter, A-F*

1. a mention of growing food production - .....
2. possible causes of destruction of an irrigation feature - .....
3. a brief portrayal of a civilisation at its peak - .....
4. a labour force estimation took part in construction of the water system - .....
5. modern-day reactions to a complex, man-made water system - .....
6. speculation about the decline of an empire - .....

## Question 7-10

*Write the correct letter, i-vi*

- i. the water system was able to compensate**
- ii. the stone blocks had disappeared**
- iii. it outpaced neighbouring systems**
- iv. a change was made that still lasts today**
- v. the system could use all of the supplied water**
- vi. the kingdom was in its final stages**

7. When visitors from the West parts arrived - .....
8. When Angkor's irrigation system worked well - .....
9. When the third reservoir was built - .....
10. When the monsoon failed - .....

## Questions 11-14

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

**TRUE** – if the statement agrees

**FALSE** – if the statement contradicts

**NOT GIVEN** – if there is no information

11. Missionaries accidentally destroyed some structures at Angkor Wat – .....
12. Angkor's inhabitants left manuscripts providing information about the collapse of their society – .....
13. The water system took a few 100 years to construct – .....
14. The irrigation system became harder to control over the years – .....

## IELTS Reading Practice Test 2021 pdf– Passage 2

### THE NEED FOR BUSHFIRES

The plant communities that grow on the arid sandy soils of the south-western Australia depend on fire for their survival. The land here is nutrient deficient and in summer so baked by the sun that a forest of tall trees cannot grow. Instead there is a low bush mixed with a scatter of trees, few of which are above 20 feet high. It is a wonderland with flowers of great beauty to botanists, very few of which have been seen growing in the wild before.

For this one corner of the continent contains no less than 12,000 different variety of plant species and 87 per cent of them grow nowhere else in the world. This individuality stems from the fact that, 50 million years ago, Australia was partly covered by a shallow sea that separated the western continent part from the rest. As Australia gradually warmed, this sea dried up, but it left behind a wide chunk of sand, so that the western corner is cut off by desert and its ancient isolation is still visible.

Fire has regularly destroyed this land throughout its recent geological history. The plants have evolved with it, so now they are able to survive this destruction and use it to their own advantage. The eucalypts or gum trees that grow there often take the peculiar form called mallee, Species that elsewhere become normal-looking trees, grow here in such a peculiar way that they are thought to be a completely different breed. Instead of a single trunk that only has branches, they have a massive rootstock from which rise half a dozen thin trunks of a similar height.

It looks as if they had been cut/trimmed to size. When fire sweeps through mallee, the slender trunks are totally burnt and destroyed. But the rootstock, bears a ring of strong buds from which new stems rapidly sprout. They grow more quickly than the old, partly because the ground has been fertilised by the ash of other plants recently, and partly because, there are few survivors having well-established root systems competing for those nutrients.

The bottlebrush related to the eucalypts, produces exceptional clusters of bright red flowers at the end of its

stems, which attract indigenous birds. But it will not shed any seed unless there is a fire. So, examining a bottlebrush can reveal how long it is since fire passed. You just have to count the number of clusters of seeds still attached along the branch.

The banksia, a tree from protea family, also relies on fire. It takes about one year for the seeds to mature. Like the bottlebrush, some banksias will not shed their seeds unless there is an incidence of fire. Indeed, it is impossible to remove them from the plant because they are held in hard woody capsules. But as the flames burn the branches, the intense heat open the capsules.

By releasing their seeds only after a fire, the banksias make sure that they fall on well-cleaned, brightly lit ground which was fertilised with ash recently. This country also headquarters 'grass tree', which is neither exactly a grass nor a tree. It's a distant relative of lilies. But it's long narrow leaves make it look like grass, and they are born in a great shock on the top of the stem that is just like the trunk of a tree and has about 10 feet height.

However, the core of this trunk is not timber, but fibre and what looks like a bark, is in fact the compacted bases of leaves, which are shed annually. A copious flow of gum keep the bases glued together and create heat insulation. Since the plant sheds one ring of leaves in a year, counting the rings gives proof of its age.

## Questions 15-18

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage.

15. The S-W part of Australia is called ..... for botanists.  
16. .... of different kinds of plants in S-W part of Australia can only be found in that area.  
17. .... divided the Australian continent once upon a time.  
18. When temperature slowly rose in Australia, the sea disappeared and leaves behind .....area.

## Questions 19-23

Choose the correct letter – **A,B,C or D**

**19. What is unusual about the land in S-W Australia ?**

- A. cut off from the rest of the continent  
B. nutrient deficient soil  
C. many endangered plants  
D. unchanged soil for many years

**20. What is the importance of fire to S-W Australia ?**

- A. it's an annual problem  
B. it caused permanent damage to soil few years ago  
C. vegetation depends on it  
D. it keeps the land isolated

**21. Mallee is a .....**

- A. type of a tree with multiple appendages rising from the ground
- B. a tree with strong base above ground
- C. part of a tree under the surface
- D. burnt remains of a tree

**22. How fire effect the bottlebrush tree ?**

- A. only grow in the ash left after a fire incident
- B. birdlife likes the burnt plant
- C. fire prevents birds by keeping them away
- D. fire helps the tree in releasing its seeds

**23. How fire effect banksia growth ?**

- A. fire carries seed to less fertile areas
- B. the ash from the fire destroys oxygen in the ground
- C. high intensity heat force the seed cases to open.
- D. fire destroys other plants

## Questions 24-28

**Do the following statements agree with the given information ?**

**TRUE** – if the statement agrees

**FALSE** – if the statement contradicts

**NOT GIVEN** – if there is no information

24. Majority of the plants are familiar to botanists in S-W Australia – .....

25. Eucalyptus in S-W Australia has a different appearance than others – .....

26. Fire affects Eucalyptus in S-W Australia – .....

27. You can tell the age of a bottlebrush by looking at it – .....

28. The physical composition of grass tree is different from how it looks – .....

## IELTS Reading Practice Test 2021 pdf– Passage 3

### REACHING THE STARS

**A.** Our nearest star, Proxima Centauri, is 4.2 light years away from us – more than 200,000 times the distance from the planet Earth to the Sun. Such huge distances would seem to put the stars well beyond the reach of human explorers. Suppose we were able to ride aboard NASA's Voyager 1, the fastest interstellar space probe build till date. Voyager 1 is now heading out of the solar system at about 17 Km/s. At this rate it would take 74,000 years for it to reach Proxima Centauri.

**B.** What would it take for humans to reach the stars within this lifetime? For a start, we would need a spacecraft that can travel as close as to speed of light. There has been plenty of proposals: vehicles propelled by repeated blasts, from hydrogen bombs, or from the destruction of matter. Others looks huge sailing ships with giant reflective sails, pushed along by powerful lasers. All of these ambitious schemes have their disadvantages, and it is doubtful they could really go such a vast distance.

**C.** Now there are two radical possibilities on the table that might just enable us to reach the stars. One physicist has outlined his design for a spacecraft driven by dark matter, which is apparently extremely abundant. And two mathematicians have outlined a craft powered by an artificial black hole.

**D.** Everybody agrees that building a ship powered by black holes or dark matter would be extremely difficult. Yet, there seems to be nothing in our present understanding of physics to prevent us from doing so. Most astronomers are convinced about dark matter because of the way it's gravity pulls on the stars and galaxies. Such observations prove that dark matter outweighs the universe's visible matter by a factor of six. So a dark matter starship could pick up its fuel on its way and would therefore will not need to carry any.

**E.** It is speculated that dark matter particles could be possibly made to collide, thus annihilating each other and converting their mass into energy. One kilogram of dark matter could release 10 billion times extra energy than 1 Kilo grain of dynamite. The matter could be collected and compressed, which would raise its annihilation rate, and the faster it travels, the faster it would scoop up its fuel and accelerate. It is thought that such a rocket might be able to come close to the speed of light within a some days.

**F.** Another possibility consists of the constructing a rocket using a black hole as fuel. Very small black holes emit massive radiation as compared to large, stellar-mass black holes, according to the equations describing black holes. A black hole weighing about a million tonnes would make a best energy source. It is small enough to generate powerful radiation to power a starship, yet large enough to survive without radiating all its mass during a typical stellar journey of about 100 years duration.

**G.** One possibility is to look for a pre-existing black hole, but theories have been skeptical and prefer another proposal of making one. 20 cubic meters of tremendous energy is required to create a black hole. Solar energy would be collected in panels, orbiting the Sun and soaking up the sunlight. The resulting million-tonne black hole would be about the equivalent of an atomic nucleus. The next phase is to get it into the focal range of parabolic mirror attached to the back of the starship.

The Gamma ray photos would be the starship's exhaust and push it forwards. A black hole starship could fly at the light speed in a few decades.

## Questions 29-35

Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings.

- i. More attractive plans for long-range space travel
- ii. An ideal dimension of a possible source of power
- iii. Stars are far away to reach with current technology
- iv. Plentiful power supply in space
- v. unlikely suggestion for interstellar transport
- vi. process of ageing for space travellers
- vii. risks of using dark matter as fuel source
- viii. an artificial power source
- ix. energy and speed generated using dark matter

- 29. Paragraph A - .....
- 30. Paragraph B - .....
- 31. Paragraph C - .....
- 32. Paragraph D - .....
- 33. Paragraph E - .....
- 34. Paragraph F - .....
- 35. Paragraph G - .....

## Questions 36-37

Which TWO proposals to power superships might allow humans to travel to the stars ?

- A. hydrogen bombs
- B. laser-driven sails
- C. black holes
- D. dark matter
- E. solar energy

## Questions 38-40

Choose **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD** from the passage.

One theory suggests a collision of dark matter **(38)** ....., which would be mutually destroyed, thus resulting in a physical transformation into **(39)** ..... Such a process would be capable of producing massive force than using a conventional explosive. Acquisition and compression of the matter would increase its **(40)** ....., and the vehicle might approach light speed in a short interval.