



International Schools
Association
School Examination Service for
English as a Foreign Language

Reading Comprehension

Examination Center:

Candidate Registration Number:

Level: **Senior Proficient**

Exam Section: **Reading Comprehension – Exam Sample**

Name and Surname:

Date:

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- ✓ The Reading Comprehension Section has five parts.
- ✓ There are thirty-two questions in total.
- ✓ Time to complete the Reading section: **90 minutes**.

- ✓ Do not open the exam paper until you are told to do so.
- ✓ Read the instructions for each part of the paper carefully.
- ✓ You will be given 2 empty pages to write a draft of the texts requested.
- ✓ Write clearly in **block letters with black pen**, not pencil.
- ✓ Make sure your work is easy to read.
- ✓ If you make a mistake do not erase, cross out the mistaken word or answer and rewrite it.
- ✓ Once finished, revise your work and hand in your exam paper.

Part I

Choose one option from the column in each case to make grammatically correct and meaningful sentences. Then highlight your options on your Answer Sheet.

Example:

0. The manager

works
is working
has been working
worked
was working

here for twenty years.

The right answer is *has been working*, so you must highlight that option on your Answer Sheet.

1. The teacher

says
tells
asks
told
said

us to be quiet because we were being noisy.

2. You

succeed
would have succeeded
would succeed
will succeed
had succeeded

if you had made an effort.

3. Hamlet

is
has
would
was
had

written by William Shakespeare.

/1.50

Part II

In this part you will read two different texts. After each text there are multiple-choice questions.

Please highlight the best option on your Answer Sheet.

Text 1

Imagine riding on a school bus with an engine that doesn't roar like an old lion or stink like a diesel spill. Quieter, cleaner transportation is on the way for some kids as school districts roll out electric buses.

Roughly 25 million American students ride 480,000 buses to and from school daily. Nearly all of these big, inefficient vehicles run on diesel fuel and emit more greenhouse gasses than other vehicles. They only get six miles per gallon of diesel, and the air quality inside and around them is poor.

Not so with electric vehicles, which are cheaper to maintain, don't pollute like diesel, and are so quiet they emit warning sounds to alert motorists and pedestrians. However, the high cost of electric buses, at least twice as much as diesels, along with the infrastructure needed to charge them, has prevented many cash-strapped school systems from purchasing them.

That's starting to change. The Biden administration's \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package includes \$5 billion for school buses. Meanwhile, school districts, facing pressure from parents and activists to address children's health concerns as well as the environment, are increasingly coming up with funding on their own to buy more electric buses.

The Montgomery County, Maryland, school board voted in 2021 to replace 25 diesel buses with electric ones and has committed to swapping out its entire fleet through a lease program by 2035. California's legislature has already paid for 1,167 electric buses and will purchase 1,000 more. In Florida, 12-year-old Holly Thorpe successfully lobbied Miami-Dade Public Schools to apply for a state grant to purchase 50 electric buses. The school board got the grant.

Source: <https://subjecttoclimate.org/>

Example

0. There will be more electric school buses in the USA in the future because...

A	the state is beginning to invest in electric buses.
B	There will be a lease program.
C	Molly Thorpe lobbied Miami public schools.
D	parents and activists are buying electric buses.

The right answer is A, so you must highlight the letter A on your answer sheet.

4. What is the main idea in the text?

A	There will be more electric school buses in the future.
B	School buses roar like lions.
C	Electric buses emit warning sounds.
D	Holly Thorpe applied for a state grant.

5. What is the main disadvantage of diesel buses?

A	They are too noisy.
B	They are expensive to keep.
C	They pollute the air in and around them.
D	They are too big.

6. What is the main advantage of electric vehicles?

A	They are cheaper to maintain than diesel buses.
B	They are quiet.
C	They emit warning sounds to pedestrians.
D	They are less harmful to people and the environment.

7. It is difficult for many schools to buy electric buses because...

A	they are very expensive.
B	roughly 25 million American students ride school buses every day.
C	there are 480,000 school buses driving children to school daily in the USA.
D	the schools lack infrastructure.

Text 2

An email from a friend

Hi!

I've been meaning to write for ages and finally today I'm actually doing something about it. Not that I'm trying to make excuses for myself, it's been really hard to sit down and write, as I've been moving around so much. Since we last saw each other, I've unpacked my bags in four different cities. This job has turned out to be more of a whirlwind than I expected, but it's all good!

I went from London to Prague to set up a new regional office there. You know I'd always wanted to go, but maybe I was imagining Prague in spring when I used to talk about that. Winter was really hard, with minus 15 degrees in the mornings and dark really early in the evening. But at least it was blue skies and white snow and not days on end of grey skies and rain, like at home. It's tough being away from home over Christmas, though, and Skype on Christmas Day wasn't really the same as being with everyone.

From there I was on another three-month mission to oversee the set-up of the office in New York. Loved, loved, loved New York! It's like being in one big TV show, as everywhere looks just a little bit familiar. I did every tourist thing you can think of when I wasn't working, and must have spent most of my salary on eating out. It was really hard to leave for the next job, especially as I kind of met someone (!) More about Michael later ...

So, then I was posted to LA, which felt like a whole other country compared with the East Coast. I could definitely get used to that kind of outdoor, beach lifestyle, but I didn't spend as much time getting to know California as I could have because I was flying back to see Michael every other weekend. He came to see me when he could, but his job means he's often working at weekends, so he couldn't make the flight very often. Those three months flew by and then I was off again, to Frankfurt, which is where I am now. And ... so is Michael! He got a month off work and we're trying to work out how we can be in the same place at the same time for a while. We figure the first step in that direction is getting married, which is also why I wanted to write – I can't get married without my oldest friend there! The wedding's going to be at home in London in September and I hope you can come!

Anyway, tell me all your news and I promise not to leave it so long this time!
Lots of love,

Kath

Source: www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish

Example

0. Recently, Kath has been ...

A	making an effort to email people she knows.
B	too busy to even think about writing emails.
C	thinking about writing an email to her friend.
D	trying to make excuses for herself.

The right answer is C, so you must highlight the letter C on your Answer Sheet.

8. Prague was ...

A	better than Kath had imagined.
B	just as Kath had imagined.
C	not as nice as Kath had imagined.
D	hard in the spring.

9. Kath says Christmas was ...

A	exciting because she was in a new place.
B	difficult because she missed her family.
C	as good as usual thanks to technology.
D	better than usual because there were blue skies and white snow.

10. In New York, she spent most of her money on ...

A	tourist attractions.
B	restaurants.
C	a TV.
D	setting up an office there.

11. How did Kath feel about LA?

A	It's nice for a holiday but not to live in.
B	She would have enjoyed spending more time at the beach.
C	She didn't like it and wanted to go back to the East Coast.
D	She didn't really like the beach part of the LA lifestyle.

12. Kath and Michael are ...

A	thinking about how to spend more time together.
B	working out where to hold the wedding.
C	planning to get engaged.
D	together in London.

/4.50

Part III

Read the text. Then answer the questions. You must choose the best answers and highlight them on your Answer Sheet.

Personality and health

There is increasing evidence that health is linked to personality. However, until now, the relationship has not affected the way health care is delivered. There are several reasons for this. Some health workers doubt whether there is a direct link between health and personality or whether it's just a coincidence. Some feel it is their professional duty to treat all patients in the same way. Others argue that delivering health services according to patients' personalities will have minimal impact and therefore isn't worth the effort. However, some psychologists believe that applying different procedures to people with different personalities could have a significant, positive effect on health.

Research into personality has, in recent years, focused on the Big Five model of personality types. This model measures how neurotic, extrovert, open to experience, agreeable and conscientious a person is. Some of these personality types have been studied in relation to health. For example, conscientious people tend to be less likely to smoke, drink too much alcohol or be inactive. However, in other cases, the relationship is less clear. Neurotic behaviour, for instance, has been found in some studies to increase the risk of death, in others to protect people from illness and in others to have no link to health at all. Even so, if health workers applied an understanding of personality to the services they provide, they could influence the extent to which patients act on advice and follow their treatment. For example, high sensation-seeking individuals, who are extroverts and unconscientious in the Big Five model and tend to take part in risky activities, respond to drama, energy and emotion. Thus, to encourage those people to follow health advice, health promotions can be designed to incorporate those factors. Of course, this approach isn't always possible. It is often impractical and expensive to create several versions of a campaign to reach different personality types. However, recent developments in computer technology, cookies and targeted advertising may allow this approach to be used more in future.

Personality could also be considered when sending messages, information and guidance to specific patients. Already, health information is usually available in various forms – printed, digital, audio, and so on – to be suitable and accessible for different users, such as the blind, the elderly, and people with reading difficulties. Research has also shown that, by identifying different patients' motivations for treatment and then corresponding with them in a way that

reflects their motivations, patients will become more involved in their treatment, compared to when the same messages are sent to everyone. Correspondence could, therefore, be adapted to reflect patients' personality type, too. For example, less conscientious people could be sent phone reminders to attend appointments. So far, there has been very little research into the effectiveness of tailoring health guidance according to personality, so this area deserves further study.

Until now, the focus of personality-health research has been to explore the link between personality and health and has had very little practical application. Thus, health workers have not engaged deeply with it. However, by suggesting, trialling and implementing practices to engage patients with different personalities, the relationship between psychology researchers and health workers could improve, along with the health of the general public.

Source: from test-english.com

Example

0. Who is the article most likely aimed at?

A	Conscientious people.
B	Health workers outside psychology
C	Patients at a clinic.
D	Psychologists.

The right answer is *B*, so you must highlight the letter *B* on your Answer Sheet.

13. What is the main idea of the article? Research into the link between health and personality...

A	has not been studied in great depth until recently.
B	has shown that sensation-seeking individuals often risk their health.
C	can be practically applied to improve public health.
D	should be carried out by both clinicians and psychologists

14. Which of these is NOT a reason why clinicians do not currently consider personality in their approach to healthcare?

A	They think the effect on a patient's health will be hardly noticeable.
B	They lack sufficient training in psychology.
C	They consider it their duty to treat all patients equally.
D	They doubt whether a person's personality directly affects their health.

15. What can be concluded from the text about neurotic patients?

A	They are at greater risk from early death than non-neurotic patients.
B	They are more likely than non-neurotic patients to report illness.
C	Their neurosis protects them from becoming sick.
D	There is no consistent link between a patient's level of neurosis and their health.

16. The writer believes that improving computer technology...

A	can help health workers deliver appropriate messages to different types of people.
B	will affect the number of high sensation-seeking people in the population.
C	can help psychologists better understand the link between personality and health.
D	will ensure that more people are aware of public health campaigns.

17. In paragraph 4, the writer refers to a study that found that...

A	adapting letter-writing style can encourage patients with different goals to participate.
B	adapting correspondence to suit different personalities can have a positive impact on health.
C	information in audio form helps blind people to access health information.
D	phone reminders ensure that unconscientious patients attend appointments.

18. In the final paragraph, what does the writer advise researchers in health/personality to do?

A	Give more practical suggestions to health workers.
B	Do more research before giving advice to health workers.
C	Explore the link between personality and health.
D	Talk directly to the general public.

Part IV

Read what four people have to say about their working hours. Then, choose the best answers to the questions below and fill in the answers on your Answer Sheet.

Ronan

I work in a fairly traditional office environment doing a typical nine-to-five job. I like my job, but it's annoying that my commute to work takes an hour and a half each way and most of my work could really be done online from home. But my boss doesn't seem to trust that we will get any work done if left to our own devices, and everyone in the company has to clock in and out every day. It's frustrating that they feel the need to monitor what we do so closely instead of judging us based on our task performance, like most companies do these days.

Jo

I used to do a typical five-day week, but after I came out of my parental leave, I decided that I wanted to spend more time with my children before they start school. After negotiating with my boss, we decided to cut my working week down to a three-day work week. This of course meant a significant cut in my pay too, as I'm paid on a pro-rata basis. I've since noticed, though, that my workload hasn't decreased in the slightest! I'm now doing five days' worth of work in three days, but getting paid much less for it! I find myself having to take work home just so that I can meet the deadlines. It's wearing me out trying to juggle work with looking after my children and my family, but I don't dare to bring this up with my boss because I think he feels he's made a huge concession letting me come in only three days a week.

Marcus

I work for a global IT company, but because their headquarters is in the States, I do all my work online from home. That means that I don't waste time commuting or making idle chit-chat with colleagues. I work on a project basis, and this flexibility is very valuable to me because it means that I can easily take some time off when my children need me to go to their school performances or if I need to schedule an appointment with the dentist. The downside is that without clear office hours, I tend to work well into the evening, sometimes skipping dinner to finish a task. It can also get quite lonely working on my own, and I sometimes miss sharing ideas with colleagues.

Lily

I'm a freelancer and work for myself. This is great because I am in control of what I do and how I spend my time. At first, I was working from home, but I found it really hard to concentrate. There were just too many distractions around: housework that needed doing, another cup of tea, my family members wanting my attention for various things. So, I started to go to a nearby café to work, but the Wi-Fi connection wasn't ideal and I found myself drinking too much coffee. In the end, I decided to rent a desk in a co-working space with five other freelancers like myself. I liked getting dressed to go to work in the morning and being able to focus in an office environment. The other freelancers do similar kinds of web-based work to me and so it's nice to have workmates to bounce ideas off as well.

Source: from <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/>

Example

0. Who finds it annoying for the boss to watch his employees' work?

A	Ronan
B	Jo
C	Marcus
D	Lily

The right answer is A, so you must highlight the letter A on your Answer Sheet.

19. Ronan would prefer it if he ...

A	wasn't left to his own devices.
B	could spend more time commuting and less time in the office.
C	could work from home and be judged based on task performance.
D	could trust his boss more.

20. Jo wanted to reduce her working hours because she ...

A	thought she would be more efficient when she was at the office.
B	wanted to bring her work home.
C	wanted to go on parental leave.
D	wanted to spend time with her children.

21. The new arrangement didn't work out for Jo because...

A	she is paid the same for a five-day work week as for a three-day week.
B	she feels exhausted trying to manage a five-day workload and childcare.
C	she can't meet the deadlines.
D	her boss thinks she is working less.

22. Jo is unhappy with her three-day work week because ...

A	she didn't realize how much the change would affect her economically.
B	she now has to spend more time looking after her children and her family.
C	she has more deadlines to meet.
D	her workload has remained the same although she's reduced her hours.

23. In Marcus's opinion, which of these is a disadvantage of working from home?

A	You spend a lot of time in the house.
B	It's easy to get distracted by your family.
C	You tend to work later.
D	You end up eating more as you have access to the fridge all day.

24. Why did Lily not like working from home?

A	She found it lonely.
B	Her family didn't like her working.
C	She didn't have a good Wi-Fi connection.
D	There were a lot of distractions.

Part V

Here is a text in which 9 parts have been cut out. You must match the missing parts with the correct place in the text (A to I), and then mark the answers on your Answer Sheet. The first one has been done for you (Example).

A Plastic Ocean is a film to make you think. Think, (A) _____. We need to take action on our dependence on plastic. We've been producing plastic in huge quantities since the 1940s. Drink bottles, shopping bags, toiletries and even clothes are made with plastic. B) _____. What happens to all the rest? This is the question the film *A Plastic Ocean* answers. It is a documentary that looks at the impact that plastic waste has on the environment. Spoiler alert: the impact is devastating.

The film begins as a journey to film the largest animal on the planet, the blue whale. But during the journey the filmmakers (journalist Craig Leeson and environmental activist Tanya Streeter) make the shocking discovery of a huge, thick layer of plastic floating in the middle of the Indian Ocean. C) _____. In total, they visited 20 locations around the world during the four years it took them to make the film. The documentary premiered in 2016, and is now on streaming services such as Netflix.

It's very clear that a lot of research went into the film. There are beautiful shots of the seas and marine life. D) _____. We see how marine species are being killed by all the plastic we are dumping in the ocean. The message about our use of plastic is painfully obvious.

E) _____. In the second half, the filmmakers look at what we can do to reverse the tide of plastic flowing around the world. They present short-term F) _____. These include avoiding plastic containers and 'single-use' plastic products as much as possible. Reuse your plastic bags and recycle as much as you can. The filmmakers also stress the need for governments to work more on recycling programmes, and look at how technology G) _____, is developing.

We make a staggering amount of plastic. In terms of plastic bags alone, we use five hundred billion worldwide annually. H) _____ are produced every year, and at least 8 million of those are dumped into the oceans. I) _____. Once you've seen *A Plastic Ocean*, you'll realize the time is now and we all have a role to play.

Source: from *learn english.british council.org*

Example

0. and then act

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

The right answer is A, so you must highlight A on your Answer Sheet.

25. and long-term solutions.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

26. The results are disastrous, but it isn't too late to change.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

27. This prompts them to travel around the world to look at other areas that might have been affected.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

28. But the film doesn't only present the negative side.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

29. These are contrasted with scenes of polluted cities and dumps full of plastic rubbish.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

30. We live in a world full of plastic, and only a small proportion is recycled.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

31. Over 300 million tons of plastic

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

32. that can convert plastic into fuel

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

/8

Total: /20

- End of the Reading Comprehension Section -

SENIOR PROFICIENT READING COMPREHENSION - ANSWER SHEET

PART I

1)	says	2)	succeed	3)	is
	tells		would have succeeded		has
	asks		would succeed		would
	told		will succeed		was
	said		had succeeded		had

PART II

Text 1

4)	A	B	C	D
5)	A	B	C	D
6)	A	B	C	D
7)	A	B	C	D

Text 2

8)	A	B	C	D
9)	A	B	C	D
10)	A	B	C	D
11)	A	B	C	D
12)	A	B	C	D

PART III

13)	A	B	C	D
14)	A	B	C	D
15)	A	B	C	D
16)	A	B	C	D
17)	A	B	C	D
18)	A	B	C	D

PART IV

19)	A	B	C	D
20)	A	B	C	D
21)	A	B	C	D
22)	A	B	C	D
23)	A	B	C	D
24)	A	B	C	D

PART V

25)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
26)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
27)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
28)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
29)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
30)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
31)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
32)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I