IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 114

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 114 Reading Passage Computer Games for Preschoolers below.

Computer Games for Preschoolers:

Nintendo's Research and Design Process

{A} Designing computer games for young children is a daunting task for game producers, who, for a long time, have concentrated on more "hard core" game fans. This article chronicles the design process and research involved in creating Nintendo DS for preschool gamers.

{B} After speaking with our producers who have a keen interest in designing for the DS, we finally agreed on three key goals for our project. First, to understand the range of physical and cognitive abilities of preschoolers in the context of handheld system game play; second, to understand how preschool gamers interact with the DS, specifically how they control the different forms of play and game mechanics offered by the games presently on the market for this platform; third, to understand the expectations of preschoolers' parents concerning the handheld systems as well as the purchase and play contexts within which game play occurs. The team of the research decided that in-home ethnographies with preschoolers and their families would yield comprehensive database with which to give our producers more information and insights, so we start by conducting 26 in-home ethnographies in three markets across the United States: an East coast urban/suburban area, a West coast urban/suburban area, and a Midwest suburban/rural area.

{C} The subjects in this study included 15 girls and 11 boys ranging from 3 years and 3 months old to 5 years and 11 months old. Also, because previous research had shown the effects of older siblings on game play (demonstrated, for example, by more advanced motor coordination when using a computer mouse), households were employed to have a combination of preschoolers with and without elder peers. In order to understand both “experienced” and “new” preschool users of the platform, we divided the sample so that 13 families owned at least one Nintendo DS and the others did not. For those households that did not own a DS, one was brought to the interview for the kid to play. This allowed us to see both the instinctive and intuitive movements of the new players (and of the more experienced players when playing new games), as well as the learned movements of the more experienced players. Each of those interviews took about 60 to 120 minutes and included the preschooler, at least one parent, and often siblings and another caregiver.

{D} Three kinds of information were collected after each interview. From any older siblings and the parents that were available, we gathered data about : the buying decisions surrounding game systems in the household, the family's typical game play patterns, levels of parental moderation with regard to computer gaming, and the most favorite games played by family members. We could also understand the ideology of gaming in these homes because of these in-home interviews: what types of spaces were used for game play, how the systems were installed, where the handheld play occurred in the house (as well as on-the-go play), and the number and type of games and game systems owned. The most important thing is, we gathered the game-playing information for every single kid.

{E} Before carrying out the interviews, the research team had closely discussed with the in-house game producers to create a list of game mechanics and problems tied to preschoolers' motor and cognitive capabilities that were critical for them to understand prior to writing the games. These ranged from general dexterity issues related to game controllers to the effectiveness of in-game instructions to specific mechanics in current games that the producers were interested in implementing for future preschool titles. During the interviews, the moderator gave specific guidance to the preschooler through a series of games, so that he or she could observe the interaction and probe both the preschooler and his or her parents on feelings, attitudes, and frustrations that arose in the different circumstances.

{F} If the subject in the experiment had previous exposure to the DS system, he or she was first asked to play his or her favorite game on that machine. This gave the researchers information about current of gaming skill related to the complexity of the chosen one, allowing them to see the child playing a game with mechanics he or she was already familiar with. Across the 26 preschoolers, the Nintendo DS selections scope were very broad, including New Super Mario Bros, Sonic Rush. Nintendo, and Tony Hawk's Proving Ground. The interviewer observed the child play, noting preferences for game mechanics and motor interactions with the device as well as the complexity level each game mechanic was for the tested subject. The researchers asked all of the preschoolers to play with a specific game in consultation with our producers, The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Undersea Adventure. The game was chosen for two major reasons. First, it was one of the few games on the market with characters that appeal to this young age group. Second, it incorporated a large variety of mechanics that highlighted the uniqueness of the DS platform, including using the microphone for blowing or singing

{G} The findings from this initial experiment were extensive. After reviewing the outcomes and discussing the implications for the game design with our internal game production team, we then outlined the designing needs and presented the findings to a firm specialising in game design. We worked closely with those experts to set the game design for the two preschool-targeted DS games under development on what we had gathered.

{H} As the two DS games went into the development process, a formative research course of action was set up. Whenever we developed new game mechanics, we brought preschoolers into our in-house utility lab to test the mechanics and to evaluate both their simplicity, and whether they were engaging. We tested either alpha or beta versions of different elements of the game, in addition to looking at overarching game structure. Once a full version of the DS

game was ready, we went back into the field test with a dozen preschoolers and their parents to make sure that each of the game elements worked for the children, and that the overall objective of the game was understandable and the process was enjoyable for players. We also collected parents' feedback on whether they thought the game is appropriate, engaging, and worth the purchase.

Questions 1-5

Complete the sentences below.

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

Write your answers in boxes 1-5 on your answer sheet.

Exploratory Research Project

Main Objectives:

Determine the relevant **1**…….. in the context

Observe how preschoolers manage playing

Investigate attitudes of **2**……..towards games

Subjects:

26 children from different US **3**……....

Age range: 3 years and 3 months to 5 years and 11 months

Some children have older **4**…….. in the house as playing peers.

Equal number of new and **5**……players

Some households have Nintendo DS and some don't

Length of Interview: 1-2 hours

Questions 6-9

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

In boxes 6-9 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE	if the statement is True
FALSE	if the statement is false
NOT GIVEN	If the information is not given in the passage

(6) One area of research is how far mothers and fathers controlled children's playing after school.

(7) Some researchers are allowed access to the subjects' houses.

(8) The researchers regarded The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Undersea Adventure as likely to appeal to preschoolers.

(9) The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Undersea Adventure is entirely designed for preschool children.

Questions 10-13

Complete the flow-chart below.

*Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 10-13 on your answer sheet.*

Using the Results of the Study

Presentation of design requirements to a specialist **10**_____

⬇

Testing the mechanics of two new games in the Nintendo lab (assess **11**_____and interest)

⬇

A field test in **12**_____trailed by twelve children

⬇

Collection of **13**_____from parents

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 114 Reading Passage Success of Bluetooth wireless technology below.

Success of Bluetooth wireless technology

{A} IT WAS born amid a blaze of hype at the height of the dotcom boom, but initially failed to thrive. Indeed, Bluetooth, a short-range wireless technology used to interconnect portable devices, has been declared dead on many occasions. Early versions of the technology suffered from compatibility problems; an ambitious demonstration of the technology at a trade show in 2001 failed to work. And while Bluetooth struggled despite all the hype from its backers, another wireless technology, WiFi, took off on its own. Obituaries of Bluetooth have appeared many times in the technology press, usually attributing its demise to the success of Wi-Fi. "Bluetooth is in full retreat," declared Sean Maloney, an Intel executive, in 2001. "Bluetooth is dead," said Craig Mathias, an analyst at the Farpoint Group, in 2003. Other analysts issued similar verdicts.

{B} But reports of the death of Bluetooth proved to be premature: today it is in rude health. Sales of Bluetooth devices more than doubled in 2005 to reach 320m units, and the figure is expected to exceed 520m this year-equivalent to more than 10m units a week and far outstripping sales of Wi-Fi chips, for those who insist on the comparison. Around one in four mobile phones sold now support Bluetooth. And after years of insisting that Bluetooth was more than just a way to link a wireless headset to a mobile phone, its backers seem to have been vindicated, as other uses for Bluetooth have at last begun to emerge. Last year 60% of Bluetooth chips went into mobile handsets and 15% into wireless headsets, says Scott Smyser of iSuppli, a market-research firm, but the other 25% went into other devices, from laptop computers, keyboards and mice to Bluetooth-enabled clothing.

{C} This success, after its rocky start, is due to a combination of factors, says Stuart Carlaw, an analyst at ABIResearch. In many countries Bluetooth's fortunes were boosted by new legislation banning the use of mobile phones without a hands-free kit while driving. This prompted many people to buy Bluetooth headsets. Several carmakers, led by Audi, also began to incorporate microphones and speakers, capable of connecting to a handset via Bluetooth, into their vehicles. As consumers became more aware of Bluetooth and began to ask for it, handset makers started to include it as a means of differentiating their products and increasing their margins. Adding a Bluetooth chip to a phone now costs very little around $2, says Mr Carlaw, down from $20 in 2001—but allows the manufacturer to increase the price of the handset by far more, and opens up a new market for high-margin accessories. Finally, operators began offering Bluetooth headsets (typically end-of-line products that cost very little) as incentives to new customers. Again, the perceived value of the headset is far higher than its cost to the operator, so this increases margins.

{D} Greater adoption has, in turn, cleared the way for the inclusion of Bluetooth in all kinds of new products. In addition to Bluetooth-enabled jackets, motorcycle helmets and sunglasses with built-in wireless headsets, the controllers for two next-generation video-games consoles due to be launched later this year, Sony's PlayStation 3 and Nintendo's Wii, will use Bluetooth. Because Bluetooth is an industry standard, both console-makers can buy chips and software off the shelf, which is quicker and cheaper than developing their own proprietary technologies, says Mr Carlaw. Other new applications include stereo wireless headphones for use with MP3 players-Apple is rumoured to be working on a Bluetooth iPad and connecting MP3 players to in-car stereo systems via Bluetooth. “Bluecasting", the beaming of information to handsets from Bluetooth-enabled posters, once a science-fiction scenario, has also become feasible, now that a large proportion of consumers have Bluetooth-capable phones.

{E} In March the Bluetooth Special Interest Group, the not-for-profit body that promotes and directs the development of the technology,announced that version 3.0 of Bluetooth would be based on ultra wideband radio technology, which allows for data-transfer rates hundreds of times faster than is possible today. “This will open up completely new application areas from 2008,” says Alan Woolhouse of Cambridge Silicon Radio, a British company that is the leading manufacturer of Bluetooth chips. Higher data rates will, for example, make it possible to transfer music to MP3players, or beam photographs or video from digital cameras to televisions, without using wires.

{F} All of which provides a valuable lesson about the nature of standards wars. Too often such fights are portrayed as "winner take-all" contests in which only one victor can emerge. This makes for more exciting headlines, but very few standards battles (the fight over high-definition video-disc formats springs to mind) are actually like this. Supposedly rival technologies often end up coexisting and serving different needs, as happened with Wi-Fi and Bluetooth. “I don't think they were ever really on the same battlefield," declares Mr Carlaw. "We see them as complementary—they do different things,” says Mr Woolhouse. "It's horses for courses."

{G} Although declarations of the death of Bluetooth have now subsided, there is no shortage of predictions that other technologies are doomed. Wi-Fi and WiMax, some people believe, fatally undermine the case for third-generation (3G) mobile networks; ever-more-elaborate smartphones are, it is frequently predicted, turning into “iPod killers” or “BlackBerry killers”; and the proponents of software-asa-service, delivered via the web as a subscription service, say it will wipe out traditional software. But the lesson of Bluetooth's quiet success is that such predictions should be taken with a grain of salt. In each case, coexistence is more likely than an outright victory for any single approach. Remember that next time someone declares one new technology to be dead at the hands of another.

Questions 14-18

The reading Passage has seven paragraphs A-G.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

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

(14) Mobile phone earned increasing profit

(15) Pessimistic prediction on bluetooth

(16) Wide application assured success

(17) Assumption proved wrong

(18) Every technology has its own advantage

(19) Inspiring news on fast transfer speed

Questions 20-22

Choose THREE correct letter

Write your answers in boxes 20-22 on your answer sheet.

Question 20-22 What are the reasons that make bluetooth successful? please choose THREE reasons mentioned in this passage.

(A) Motor makers provide free platform for bluetooth

(B) Legislation forbids hand use of mobile when driving

(C) Bluetooth headsets are given free to customers

(D) Bluetooth installation cost little while profit enlarged

(E) Variety of application guarantees its expansion

(F) MP3players transfer data faster than an ipod player.

Questions 22-25

Summary Complete the following summary of the paragraphs of Reading Passage, using no more than three words from the Reading Passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 22-25 on your answer sheet.

Attractive headlines usually describe the war of technological products as -------**22**---------- competition. Unfortunately, several competitors would be ----------**23**---------- rather than happen like this. Nevertheless, negative predictions still exist about some technology's disappearance. For example, they insist that Wi-Fi and WiMax pose a destructive threat to mobile networks of ----------**24**---------- or popular ----------**25**-------- would be the terminator to ipod or blackberry. However, lessons from bluetooth indicate that they are " horses for course".

Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 114 Reading PassageSave Endangered Language below.

Save Endangered Language

"Obviously we must do some serious rethinking of our priorities, lest linguistics go down in history as the only science that presided obviously over the disappearance of 90 percent of the very field to which it is dedicated." - Michael Krauss, "The World's Languages in Crisis".

{A} Ten years ago Michael Krauss sent a shudder through the discipline of linguistics with his prediction that half the 6,000 or so languages spoken in the world would cease to be uttered within a century. Unless scientists and community leaders directed a worldwide effort to stabilize the decline of local languages, he warned, nine tenths of the linguistic diversity of humankind would probably be doomed to extinction. Krauss's prediction was little more than an educated guess, but other respected linguists had been clanging out similar alarms. Keneth L. Hale of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology noted in the same journal issue that eight languages on which he had done fieldwork had since passed into extinction. A 1990 survey in Australia found that 70 of the 90 surviving Aboriginal languages were no longer used regularly by all age groups. The same was true for all but 20 of the 175 Native American languages spoken or remembered in the US., Krauss told a congressional panel in 1992.

{B} Many experts in the field mourn the loss of rare languages, for several reasons. To start, there is scientific self-interest: some of the most basic questions in linguistics have to do with the limits of human speech, which are far from fully explored. Many researchers would like to know which structural elements of grammar and vocabulary—if any-are truly universal and probably therefore hardwired into the human brain. Other scientists try to reconstruct ancient migration patterns by comparing borrowed words that appear in otherwise unrelated languages. In each of these cases, the wider the portfolio of languages you study, the more likely you are to get the right answers.

{C} Despite the near constant buzz in linguistics about endangered languages over the past 10 years, the field has accomplished depressingly little. "You would think that there would be some organized response to this dire situation." some attempt to determine which language can be saved and which should be documented before they disappear, says Sarah G. Thomason, a linguist at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. "But there isn't any such effort organized in the profession. It is only recently that it has become fashionable enough to work on endangered languages." Six years ago, recalls Douglas H. Whalen of Yale University, "when I asked linguists who was raising money to deal with these problems, I mostly got blank stares." So Whalen and a few other linguists founded the Endangered Languages Fund. In the five years to 2001 they were able to collect only $80,000 for research grants. A similar foundation in England, directed by Nicholas Ostler, has raised just $8,000 since 1995.

{D} But there are encouraging signs that the field has turned a corner. The Volkswagen Foundation, a German charity, just issued its second round of grants totaling more than $2 million. It has created a multimedia archive at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in the Netherlands that can house recordings, grammars, dictionaries and other data on endangered languages. To fill the archive, the foundation has dispatched field linguists to document Aweti (100 or so speakers in Brazil), Ega (about 300 speakers in Ivory Coast), Waima'a (a few hundred speakers in East Timor), and a dozen or so other languages unlikely to survive the century. The Ford Foundation has also edged into the arena. Its contributions helped to reinvigorate a master-apprentice program created in 1992 by Leanne Hinton of Berkeley and Native Americans worried about the imminent demise of about 50 indigenous languages in California. Fluent speakers receive $3,000 to teach a younger relative (who is also paid) their native tongue through 360 hours of shared activities, spread over six months. So far about 5 teams have completed the program, Hinton says, transmitting at least some knowledge of 25 languages. "It's too early to call this language revitalization," Hinton admits. "In California the death rate of elderly speakers will always be greater than the recruitment rate of young speakers. But at least we prolong the survival of the language." That will give linguists more time to record these tongues before they vanish.

{E} But the master-apprentice approach hasn't caught on outside the U.S., and Hinton's effort is a drop in the sea. At least 440 languages have been reduced to a mere handful of elders, according to Ethnologue, a catalogue of languages produced by the Dallas-based group SIL International that comes closest to global coverage. For the vast majority of these languages, there is little or no record of their grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation or use in daily life. Even if a language has been fully documented, all that remains once it vanishes from active use is a fossil skeleton, a scattering of features that the scientist was lucky and astute enough to capture. Linguists may be able to sketch an outline of the forgotten language and fix its place on the evolutionary tree, but little more. "How did people start conversations and talk to babies? How did husbands and wives converse?" Hinton asks. "Those are the first things you want to learn when you want to revitalize the language."

{F} But there is as yet no discipline of "conservation linguistics," as there is for biology. Almost every strategy tried so far has succeeded in some places but failed in others, and there seems to be no way to predict with certainty what will work where. Twenty years ago in New Zealand,

Maori speakers set up "language nests," in which preschoolers were immersed in the native language. Additional Maori-only classes were added as the children progressed through elementary and secondary school. A similar approach was tried in Hawaii, with some success—the number of native speakers has stabilized at 1,000 or so, reports Joseph E. Grimes of SIL International, who is working on Oahu. Students can now get instruction in Hawaiian all the way through university.

{G} One factor that always seems to occur in the demise of a language is that the speakers begin to have collective doubts about the usefulness of language loyalty. Once they start regarding their own language as inferior to the majority language, people stop using it for all situations. Kids pick up on the attitude and prefer the dominant language. In many cases, people don't notice until they suddenly realize that their kids never speak the language, even at home. This is how Cornish and some dialects of Scottish Gaelic are still only rarely used for daily home life in Ireland, 80 years after the republic was founded with Irish as its first official language.

{H} Linguists agree that ultimately, the answer to the problem of language extinction is multilingualism. Even uneducated people can learn several languages, as long as they start as children. Indeed, most people in the world speak more than one tongue, and in places such as Cameroon (279 languages), Papua New Guinea (823) and India (387) it is common to speak three or four distinct languages and a dialect or two as well. Most Americans and Canadians, to the west of Quebec, have a gut reaction that anyone speaking another language in front of them is committing an immoral act. You get the same reaction in Australia and Russia. It is no coincidence that these are the areas where languages are disappearing the fastest. The first step in saving dying languages is to persuade the world's majorities to allow the minorities among them to speak with their own voices.

Questions 27-33

The reading passage has eight paragraphs, A-H

Choose the correct heading for paragraphs A-H from the list below.

Write the correct number, i-xi, in boxes 27-33 on your answer sheet.

List of Headings

(i) data consistency needed for language

(ii) Solution for dying out language

(iii) positive gains for protection

(iv) minimum requirement for saving a language

(v) Potential threat to minority language

(vi) Value of minority language to linguists.

(vii) native language program launched

(viii) Subjective doubts as a negative factor

(ix) Practise in several developing countries

(X) Value of minority language to linguists.

(xi) government participation in language field

(27) Paragraph A

(28) Paragraph B

Example: Paragraph C vi

(29) Paragraph D

(30) Paragraph E

(31) Paragraph F

(32) Paragraph G

(33) Paragraph H

Questions 34-38

Use the information in the passage to match the people (listed A-F) with opinions or deeds below. Write the appropriate letters A-F in boxes 34-38 on your answer sheet.

(A) Nicholas Ostler

(B) Michael Krauss

(C) Joseph E. Grimes

(D) Sarah G. Thomason

(E) Keneth L. Hale

(F) Douglas H. Whalen

(34) Reported language conservation practice in Hawaii

(35) Predicted that many languages would disappear soon

(36) Experienced languages die out personally

(37) Raised language fund in England

(38) Not enough effort on saving until recent work

Questions 39-40

Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.

Write your answers in boxes 39-40 on your answer sheet.

Question 39 What is the purpose of the master-apprentice program sponsored by The Ford Foundation?

(A) Teach children how to speak

(B) Revive endangered language

(C) Preserve endangered language

(D) Increase communication between students

Question 40 What should the majority language speaker do according to the last paragraph?

(A) They should teach their children endangered language

(B) They should learn at least four languages

(C) They should show their loyalty to a dying language

(D) They should be more tolerant to minority language speaker