

IELTSFever Academic Reading Test 93

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 93 Reading Passage. What are you laughing at? below.

What are you laughing at?

{A} We like to think that laughing is the height of human sophistication. Our big brains let us see the humour in a strategically positioned pun, an unexpected plot twist or a clever piece of word play. But while joking and wit are uniquely human inventions, laughter certainly is not. Other creatures, including chimpanzees, gorillas and even rats, chuckle. Obviously, they don't crack up at Homer Simpson or titter at the boss's dreadful jokes, but the fact that they laugh in the first place suggests that sniggers and chortles have been around for a lot longer than we have. It points the way to the origins of laughter, suggesting a much more practical purpose than you might think.

{B} There is no doubt that laughing typically involves groups of people. "Laughter evolved as a signal to others – it almost disappears when we are alone," says Robert Provine, a neuroscientist at the University of Maryland. Provine found that most laughter comes as a polite reaction to everyday remarks such as 'see you later', rather than anything particularly funny. And the way we laugh depends on the company we're keeping. Men tend to laugh longer and harder when they are with other men, perhaps as a way of bonding. Women tend to laugh more and at a higher pitch when men are present, possibly indicating flirtation or even submission.

{C} To find the origins of laughter, Provine believes we need to look at play. He points out that the masters of laughing are children, and nowhere is their talent more obvious than in the boisterous antics, and the original context is play,' he say. Well-known primate watchers, including Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall, have long argued that chimps laugh while at play. The sound they produce is known as a pant laugh. It seems obvious when you watch their behavior - they even have the same ticklish spots as we do. But remove the context, and the parallel between human laughter and a chimp's characteristic pant laugh is not so clear. When Provine played a tape of the pant laughs to 119 of his students, for example, only two guessed correctly what it was.

{D} These findings underline how chimp and human laughter vary. When we laugh the sound is usually produced by chopping up a single exhalation into a series of shorter with one sound produced on each inward and outward breath. The question is: does this pant laughter have the same source as our own laughter? New research lends weight to the idea that it does. The findings come from Elke Zimmerman, head of the Institute for Zoology in Germany, who

compared the sounds made by babies and chimpanzees in response to tickling during the first year of their life. Using sound spectrographs to reveal the pitch and intensity of vocalizations, she discovered that chimp and human baby laughter follow broadly the same pattern. Zimmerman believes the closeness of baby laughter to chimp laughter supports the idea that laughter was around long before humans arrived on the scene. What started simply as a modification of breathing associated with enjoyable and playful interactions has acquired a symbolic meaning as an indicator of pleasure.

{E} Pinpointing when laughter developed is another matter. Humans and chimps share a common ancestor that lived perhaps 8 million years ago, but animals might have been laughing long before that. More distantly related primates, including gorillas, laugh, and anecdotal evidence suggests that other social mammals may do too. Scientists are currently testing such stories with a comparative analysis of just how common laughter is among animals. So far, though, the most compelling evidence for laughter beyond primates comes from research done by Jaak Panksepp from Bowling Green State University, Ohio, into the ultrasonic chirps produced by rats during play and in response to tickling.

{F} All this still doesn't answer the question of why we laugh at all. One idea is that laughter and tickling originated as a way of sealing the relationship between mother and child. Another is that the reflex response to tickling is protective, alerting us to the presence of crawling creatures that might harm us or compelling us to defend the parts of our bodies that are most vulnerable in hand-to-hand combat. But the idea that has gained most popularity in recent years is that laughter in response to tickling is a way for two individuals to signal and test their trust in one another. This hypothesis starts from the observation that although a little tickle can be enjoyable, if it goes on too long it can be torture. By engaging in a bout of tickling, we put ourselves at the mercy of another individual, and laughing is a signal that we laughter is what makes it a reliable signal of trust according to Tom Flamson, a laughter researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles. 'Even in rats, laughter, tickle, play and trust are linked. Rats chirp a lot when they play,' says Flamson. 'These chirps can be aroused by tickling. And they get bonded to us as a result, which certainly seems like a show of trust.'

{G} We'll never know which animal laughed the first laugh, or why. But we can be sure it wasn't in response to a prehistoric joke. The funny thing is that while the origins of laughter are probably quite serious, we owe human laughter and our language-based humor to the same unique skill. While other animals pant, we alone can control our breath well enough to produce the sound of laughter. Without that control there would also be no speech and no jokes to endure.

Questions 1-6

Look at the following research findings (questions 1-6) and the list of people below.

Match each finding with the correct person, A, B, C or D.

Write the correct letter, A, B, C or D, in boxes 1-6 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

(A) Tom Flamson

(B) Elke Zimmerman

(C) Robert Provine

(D) Jaak Panksepp

(1) Babies and chimps produce similar sounds of laughter.

(2) Primates are not the only animals who produce laughter Pan

(3) Laughter also suggests that we feel safe and easy with others.

(4) Laughter is a response to polite situations instead of humour.

(5) Animal laughter evolved before human laughter 6 Laughter is a social activity.

Questions 7 – 10

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

Write the correct letter, A-K, in boxes 7-10 on your answer sheet.

Some researchers believe that laughter first evolved out of ___7___ Investigation has revealed that human and chimp laughter may have the same ___8___. Besides, scientists have been aware that ___9___ laugh, however, it now seems that laughter might be more widespread than once we thought. Although the reasons why humans started to laugh are still unknown, it seems that laughter may result from the ___10___ we feel with another person.

A evolution	B chirps	C origins	D voice
E confidence	F rats	G primates	H response
I play	J children	K tickling	

Questions 11-13 Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1? In boxes 11-13 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

- (11) Both men and women laugh more when they are with members of the same sex.
- (12) Primates lack sufficient breath control to be able to produce laughs the way humans do.
- (13) Chimpanzees produce laughter in a wider range of situations than rats do.

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 93 Reading Passage The Farmers ! parade of history below.

The Farmers ! parade of history

{A} History of Farmer trading company: In 1909 Robert Laidlaw established mail-order company Laidlaw Leeds in Fort Street, Auckland. Then, Branch expansion: purchase of Green and Colebrook chain stores; further provincial stores in Auckland and Waikato to follow. Opening of the first furniture and boot factory. In 1920, the Company now had 29 branches; the Whangarei store was purchased. Doors open at Hobson Street for direct selling to the public. Firm establishes London and New York buying offices. With permission from the Harbour Board, the large FARMERS electric sign on the Wyndham Street frontage is erected.

{B} In 1935, if the merchandise had changed, the language of the catalogues hasn't. Robert Laidlaw, the Scottish immigrant who established the century-old business, might have been scripting a modern-day television commercial when he told his earliest customers: Satisfaction, or your money back. "It was the first money back guarantee ever offered in New Zealand by any firm," says Ian Hunter, business historian. "And his mission statement was, potentially, only the second one ever found in the world." Laidlaw's stated aims were simple: to build the greatest business in New Zealand, to simplify every transaction, to eliminate all delays, to only sell goods it would pay the customer to buy.

{C} This year, the company that began as a mail-order business and now employs 3500 staff across 58 stores turns 100. Its centenary will be celebrated with the release of a book and major community fundraising projects, to be announced next week. Hunter, who is writing the centenary history, says "coming to a Farmers store once a week was a part of the New Zealand way of life". By 1960, one in every 10 people had an account with the company. It was the place where teenage girls shopped for their first bra, where newlyweds purchased their first dinner sets, where first pay cheques were used to pay off hire purchase furniture, where Santa paraded every Christmas. Gary Blumenthal's mother shopped there, and so did he. The fondest memory for the Rotorua resident? "We were on holiday in Auckland ... I decided that up on the lookout tower on top of the Farmers building would be a unique place to fit the ring on my new fiancée's finger." The lovebirds, who had to wait for "an annoying youth" to leave the tower before they could enjoy their engagement kiss, celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary in June.

{E} Farmers, says Hunter, has always had a heart. This, from a 1993 North & South interview with a former board chairman, Rawdon Busfield: "One day I was in the Hobson Street shop and I saw a woman with two small children. They were clean and tidily dressed, but poor, you could tell. That week we had a special on a big bar of chocolate for one shilling. I heard the woman say to her boy, 'no, your penny won't buy that'. He wasn't wearing shoes. So I went up to the boy and said, 'Son, have you got your penny?' He handed it to me. It was hot he'd had it in his hand for hours. I took the penny and gave him the chocolate."

{F} Farmers was once the home of genteel tearooms, children's playgrounds and an annual sale of celebration for the birthday of Hector the Parrot (the store mascot died, aged 131, in the 1970s his stuffed remains still occupy pride of place at the company's head office). You could buy houses from Farmers. Its saddle factory supplied the armed forces, and its upright grand overstrung pianos offered "the acme of value" according to those early catalogues hand-drawn by Robert Laidlaw himself. Walk through a Farmers store today and get hit by bright lights and big brands. Its Albany branch houses 16 international cosmetics companies. It buys from approximately 500 suppliers, and about 30% of those are locally owned.

{G} "Eight, 10 years ago," says current chief executive Rod McDermott, "lots of brands wouldn't partner with us. The stores were quite distressed. We were first price point focused, we weren't fashion focused. "Remove the rose-tinted nostalgia, and Farmers is, quite simply, a business, doing business in hard times. Dancing with the Stars presenter Candy Lane launches a clothing line? "We put a trial on, and we thought it was really lovely, but the uptake wasn't what we thought it would be. It's got to be what the customer wants," says McDermott.

{H} He acknowledges retailers suffer in a recession: "We're celebrating 100 years because we can and because we should." Farmers almost didn't pull through one economic crisis. By the mid 1980s, it had stores across the country. It had acquired the South Island's Calder Mackay chain of stores and bought out Haywrights. Then, with sales topping \$375 million, it was taken over by Chase Corporation.

{I} Lincoln Laidlaw, now aged 88, and the son of the company's founder, remembers the dark days following the stock market crash and the collapse of Chase. "I think, once, Farmers was

like a big family and all of the people who worked for it felt they were building something which would ultimately be to their benefit and to the benefit of New Zealand... then the business was being divided up and so that kind of family situation was dispelled and it hasn't been recovered." For a turbulent few years, the stores were controlled, first by a consortium of Australian banks and later Deka, the Maori Development Corporation and Foodland Associated Ltd. In 2003, it went back to "family" ownership, with the purchase by the James Pascoe Group, owned by David and Anne Norman the latter being the great-granddaughter of James Pascoe, whose first business interest was jewellery.

{J} "Sheer power of the brand," says McDermott, "pulled Farmers through and now we're becoming the brand it used to be again." Farmers was the company that, during World War II, topped up the wages of any staff member disadvantaged by overseas service. Robert Laidlaw, a committed Christian who came to his faith at a 1902 evangelistic service in Dunedin concluded his original mission statement with the words, "all at it, always at it, wins success". Next week, 58 Farmers stores across the country will announce the local charities they will raise funds for in their centenary celebration everything from guide dog services to hospices to volunteer fire brigades will benefit. Every dollar raised by the community will be matched by the company. "It's like the rebirth of an icon," says McDermott.

Questions 14-18

The reading Passage has seven paragraphs A-J.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

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

- (14) Generosity offered in an occasion for helping the poor
- (15) Innovation of offer made ahead of modern-time business by the head of the company.
- (16) Fashion was not chosen as its strong point.
- (17) A romantic event at a memorial venue dedicated to Farmers.
- (18) Farmers were sold to a private owned company.

Questions 19-23

*Complete the sentence below. Complete the following summary of the paragraphs of Reading Passage, using **no more than two words** from the Reading Passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 19-23 on your answer sheet.*

Farmers was first founded as a _____ **19** _____ in Auckland by Mr. Laidlaw.

Farmers developed fast and bought one _____ **20** _____ then.

During oversea expansion, Farmers set up _____ **21** _____ in major cities outside New Zealand

Farmers held a _____ **22** _____ in a sale once a year for the company's mascot animal

Some senior employees considered Farmers as a _____ **23** _____ both for themselves and for the whole country.

Questions 24-26

Use the information in the passage to match the people listed A-C) with opinions or deeds below. Write the appropriate letters A-C in boxes 24-26 on your answer sheet.

NB you may use any letter more than once

(A) Lincoln Laidlaw

(B) Rod McDermott

(C) Tan Hunter

(24) Product became worse as the wrong aspect was focused.

(25) An unprecedented statement made by Farmers in New Zealand.

(26) Character of the company was changed.

Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 93 Reading Passage Mechanisms of Linguistic Change below.

Mechanisms of Linguistic Change

{A} The changes that have caused the most disagreement are those in pronunciation. We have various sources of evidence for the pronunciations of earlier times, such as the spellings, the treatment of words borrowed from other languages or borrowed by them, the descriptions of contemporary grammarians and spelling-reformers, and the modern pronunciations in all the

languages and dialects concerned. From the middle of the sixteenth century, there are in England writers who attempt to describe the position of the speech-organs for the production of English phonemes, and who invent what are in effect systems of phonetic symbols. These various kinds of evidence, combined with a knowledge of the mechanisms of speech-production, can often give us a very good idea of the pronunciation of an earlier age, though absolute certainty is never possible.

{B} When we study the pronunciation of a language over any period of a few generations or more, we find there are always large-scale regularities in the changes: for example, over a certain period of time, just about all the long [a:] vowels in a language may change into long [e:] vowels, or all the [b] consonants in a certain position (for example at the end of a word) may change into [p] consonants. Such regular changes are often called sound laws. There are no universal sound laws (even though sound laws often reflect universal tendencies), but simply particular sound laws for one given language (or dialect) at one given period.

{C} It is also possible that fashion plays a part in the process of change. It certainly plays a part in the spread of change: one person imitates another, and people with the most prestige are most likely to be imitated, so that a change that takes place in one social group may be imitated (more or less accurately) by speakers in another group. When a social group goes up or down in the world, its pronunciation may gain or lose prestige. It is said that, after the Russian Revolution of 1917, the upper-class pronunciation of Russian, which had formerly been considered desirable, became on the contrary an undesirable kind of accent to have, so that people tried to disguise it. Some of the changes in accepted English pronunciation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have been shown to consist in the replacement of one style of pronunciation by another style already existing, and it is likely that such substitutions were a result of the great social changes of the period: the increased power and wealth of the middle classes, and their steady infiltration upwards into the ranks of the landed gentry, probably carried elements of middle-class pronunciation into upper-class speech.

{D} A less specific variant of the argument is that the imitation of children is imperfect: they copy their parents' speech, but never reproduce it exactly. This is true, but it is also true that such deviations from adult speech are usually corrected in later childhood. Perhaps it is more significant that even adults show a certain amount of random variation in their pronunciation of a given phoneme, even if the phonetic context is kept unchanged. This, however, cannot explain changes in pronunciation unless it can be shown that there is some systematic trend in the failures of imitation: if they are merely random deviations they will cancel one another out and there will be no net change in the language.

{E} One such force which is often invoked is the principle of ease, or minimization of effort. The change from fussy to fuzzy would be an example of assimilation, which is a very common kind of change. Assimilation is the changing of a sound under the influence of a neighbouring one. For example, the word *scant* was once *skamt*, but the /m/ has been changed to /n/ under the influence of the following /t/. Greater efficiency has hereby been achieved, because /n/ and /t/ are articulated in the same place (with the tip of the tongue against the teeth-ridge), whereas /m/ is articulated elsewhere (with the two lips). So the place of articulation of the nasal

consonant has been changed to conform with that of the following plosive. A more recent example of the same kind of thing is the common pronunciation of football as foopball.

{F} Assimilation is not the only way in which we change our pronunciation in order to increase efficiency. It is very common for consonants to be lost at the end of a word: in Middle English, word-final [-n] was often lost in unstressed syllables, so that baken 'to bake changed from [ˈba:kən] to [ˈba:kə], and later to [ba:k]. Consonant-clusters are often simplified. At one time there was a [t] in words like castle and Christmas, and an initial [k] in words like knight and know. Sometimes a whole syllable is dropped out when two successive syllables begin with the same consonant (haplology): a recent example is temporary, which in Britain is often pronounced as if it were tempory.

Questions 27-30

Complete the summary below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 27-30 on your answer sheet.

The pronunciation of living languages undergoes changes throughout thousands of years. Large scale regular Changes are usually called **27**_____. There are three reasons for these changes. Firstly, the influence of one language on another; when one person imitates another pronunciation (the most prestige's), the imitation always partly involving factor of **28**_____. Secondly, the imitations of children from adults' language sometimes are **29**_____, and may also contribute to this change if there are insignificant deviations though later they may be corrected. Finally, for those random variations in pronunciation, the deeper evidence lies in the **30**_____ or minimization of effort.

Questions 31-37

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 3? In boxes 31-37 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

(31) it is impossible for modern people to find pronunciation of words in an earlier age

(32) The great change of language in Russian history is related to the rising status and fortune of the middle classes.

(33) All the children learn speeches from adults while they assume that certain language is difficult to imitate exactly.

(34) Pronunciation with causal inaccuracy will not exert a big influence on language changes.

(35) The link of 'mt' can be influenced by being pronounced as 'nt'

(36) The [g] in gnat not being pronounced will not be spelt out in the future.

(37) The sound of 'temporary cannot wholly present its spelling.

Questions 38-40

Look at the following sentences and the list of statements below. Match each statement with the correct sentence, A-D. Write the correct letter, A-D, in boxes 38-40 on your answer sheet

- (A) Since the speakers can pronounce it with less effort
- (B) Assimilation of a sound under the influence of a neighbouring one
- (C) It is a trend for changes in pronunciation in a large scale in a given period
- (D) Because the speaker can pronounce [n] and [t] both in the same time

(38) As a consequence, 'b' will be pronounced as 'p'

(39) The pronunciation of [mt] changed to [nt]

(40) The omit of 't' in the sound of Christmas