IELTSFever Academic Reading Test 79

Reading Passage 1

Museum Blockbuster

{A} Since the 1980s, the term "blockbuster" has become the fashionable word for special spectacular museum, art gallery or science centre exhibitions.

These exhibitions have the ability to attract large crowds and often large corporate sponsors. Here is one of some existing definitions of blockbuster: Put by Elsen (1984), a blockbuster is a "... large scale loan exhibition that people who normally don't go to museums will stand in line for hours to see ... "James Rosenfield, writing in Direct Marketing in 1993, has described a successful blockbuster exhibition as a "... triumph of both curatorial and marketing skills ..." My own definition for blockbuster is "a popular, high profile exhibition on display for a limited period, that attracts the general public, who are prepared to both stand in line and pay a fee in order to partake in the exhibition." What both Elsen and Rosenfield omit in their descriptions of blockbusters, is that people are prepared to pay a fee to see a blockbuster, and that the term blockbuster can just as easily apply to a movie or a museum exhibition.

{B} Merely naming an exhibition or movie a blockbuster however, does not make it a blockbuster. The term can only apply when the item in question has had an overwhelmingly successful response from the public. However, in literature from both the UK and USA the other words that also start to appear in descriptions of blockbusters are "less scholarly", "non-elitist" and "popularist". Detractors argue that blockbusters are designed to appeal to the lowest common denominator, while others extol the virtues of encouraging scholars to cooperate on projects, and to provide exhibitions that cater for a broad selection of the community rather than an elite sector.

{C} Maintaining and increasing visitor levels is paramount in the new museology. This requires continued product development. Not only the creation or hiring of blockbuster exhibitions, but regular exhibition changes and innovations. In addition, the visiting publics have become customers rather than visitors, and the skills that are valued in museums, science centres and galleries to keep the new customers coming through the door have changed. High on the list of requirements are commercial, business, marketing and entrepreneurial skills. Curators are now administrators. Being a director of an art gallery no longer requires an Art Degree. As succinctly summarised in the Economist in 1994 "business nous and public relation skills" were essential requirements for a director, and the ability to compete with other museums to stage travelling exhibitions which draw huge crowds.

{D} The new museology has resulted in the convergence of museums, the heritage industry, and tourism, profit-making and pleasure-giving. This has given rise to much debate about the appropriateness of adapting the activities of institutions so that they more closely reflect the priorities of the market place and whether it is appropriate to see museums primarily as tourist attractions. At many institutions you can now hold office functions in the display areas, or have dinner with the dinosaurs. Whatever commentators may think, managers of

museums, art galleries and science centres worldwide are looking for artful ways to blend culture and commerce, and blockbuster exhibitions are at the top of the list. But while blockbusters are all part of the new museology, there is proof that you don't need a museum, science centre or art gallery to benefit from the drawing power of a blockbuster or to stage a blockbuster.

{E} But do blockbusters held in public institutions really create a surplus to fund other activities? If the bottom line is profit, then according to the accounting records of many major museums and galleries, blockbusters do make money. For some museums overseas, it may be the money that they need to update parts of their collections or to repair buildings that are in need of attention. For others in Australia, it may be the opportunity to illustrate that they are attempting to pay their way, by recovering part of their operating costs, or funding other operating activities with off-budget revenue. This makes the economic rationalists cheerful. However, not all exhibitions that are hailed to be blockbusters will be blockbusters, and some will not make money. It is also unlikely that the accounting systems of most institutions will recognise the real cost of either creating or hiring a blockbuster.

{F} Blockbusters require large capital expenditure, and draw on resources across all branches of an organisation;

However, the costs don't end there. There is a Human Resource Management cost in addition to a measurable 'real' dollar cost. Receiving a touring exhibition involves large expenditure as well, and draws resources from across functional management structures in project management style. Everyone from a general labourer to a building servicing unit, the front of house, technical, promotion, education and administration staff, are required to perform additional tasks. Furthermore, as an increasing number of institutions in Australia try their hand at increasing visitor numbers, memberships (and therefore revenue), by staging blockbuster exhibitions, it may be less likely that blockbusters will continue to provide a surplus to subsidise other activities due to the competitive nature of the market. There are only so many consumer dollars to go around, and visitors will need to choose between blockbuster products.

{G} Unfortunately, when the bottom-line is the most important objective to the mounting of blockbuster exhibitions, this same objective can be hard to maintain. Creating, mounting or hiring blockbusters is exhausting for staff, with the real costs throughout an institution difficult to calculate. Although the direct aims may be financial, creating or hiring a blockbuster has many positive spin-offs; by raising their profile through a popular blockbuster exhibition, a museum will be seen in a more favorable light at budget time. Blockbusters mean crowds, and crowds are good for the local economy, providing increased employment for shops, hotels, restaurants, the transport industry and retailers. Blockbusters expose staff to the vagaries and pressures of the marketplace, and may lead to creative excellence. Either the success or failure of a blockbuster may highlight the need for managers and policy makers to rethink their strategies. However, the new museology and the apparent trend towards blockbusters make it likely that museums, art galleries and particularly science centres will be seen as part of the entertainment and tourism industry, rather than as cultural icons deserving of government and philanthropic support.

{H} Perhaps the best pathway to take is one that balances both blockbusters and regular exhibitions. However, this easy middle ground may only work if you have enough space, and

have alternate sources of funding to continue to support the regular less exciting fare. Perhaps the advice should be to make sure that your regular activities and exhibitions are more enticing, and find out what your local community wants from you. The question (trend) now at most museums and science centres, is "What blockbusters can we tour to overseas venues and will it be cost effective?"

Questions 1-4

The reading Passage has seven paragraphs A-G.

Which paragraphs contain the following information?

Write the correct letter A-G, in boxes 1-4 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

Question 1: A reason for changing the exhibition programs.

Question 2: The time people have to wait in a queue in order to enjoy exhibitions.

Question 3: Terms people used when referring to blockbuster

Question 4: There was some controversy over confining target groups of blockbuster.

Questions 5-8

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 5-8 on your answer sheet.

Instead of being visitors, people turned out to be_____**5**_____, who require the creation or hiring of blockbuster exhibitions as well as regular exhibition changes and innovations. Business nous and _____**6**_____ simply summarized in a magazine are not only important factors for directors, but also an ability to attract a crowd of audiences. _____**7**_____ has contributed to the linking of museums, the heritage industry, tourism, profit-making and pleasure-giving. There is some controversy over whether it is proper to consider museums mainly as _____**8**_____.

Questions 9-10

Choose TWO letters A-E.

Write your answer in boxes 9-10 on your answer sheet.

The list below gives some advantages of blockbusters.

Which TWO advantages are mentioned by the writer of the text?

[A] To offer sufficient money to repair architectures.

[B] To maintain and increase visitor levels.

[C] Presenting the mixture in the culture and commerce of art galleries and science centres worldwide.

[D] Being beneficial for the development of local business.

[E] Being beneficial for the directors.

Questions 11-13

Choose THREE letters A-F.

Write your answer in boxes 11-13 on your answer sheet.

The list below gives some disadvantages of blockbusters.

Which THREE disadvantages are mentioned by the writer of the text?

[A] People felt hesitated to choose exhibitions.

[B] Workers have become tired of workloads.

[C] The content has become more entertaining rather than cultural.

[D] General labourers are required to perform additional tasks

[E] Huge amounts of capital invested in specialists. F Exposing staff to the fantasies and pressures of the marketplace.

Reading Passage 2

Development of Public management theory

Bureaucracy management: The classic one

{A} Several theorists bridged the gap between strictly private and public sector management. One good example is Max Weber exploring sociology, who explored the ideal bureaucracy in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. Bureaucratic Theory was developed by a German Sociologist and political economist Max Weber (1864-1920). According to him, bureaucracy is the most efficient form of organisation. The organisation has a well-defined line of authority. It has clear rules and regulations which are strictly

followed. According to Max Weber, there are three types of power in an organisation : Max Weber (1854-1920) [1]Traditional Power, Charismatic Power, and [3]Bureaucratic Power or Legal Power.

The characteristics or features of Bureaucratic Organisation

{B} Weber admired bureaucracy for its trustworthiness. The bureaucracy was constituted by a group of professional, ethical public officials. These servants dedicate themselves to the public in return for security of job tenure among the many advantages of public employment. There is a high degree of Division of Labour and Specialisation as well as a defined Hierarchy of Authority. There are well defined Rules and Regulations which follow the principle of Rationality, Objectively and Consistency. Their rules cover all the duties and rights of the employees. These rules must be strictly followed. Selection and Promotion is based on Technical qualifications. There are Formal and Impersonal relations among the members of the organisation. Interpersonal relations are based on positions and not on personalities

{C} **Bureaucratic organisation is criticised because of the following reasons :** Bureaucratic organisation is a very rigid type of organisation. Too much emphasis on rules and regulations which are rigid and inflexible. It does not give importance to human relations. No importance is also given to informal groups which nowadays play an important role in all business organisations. Yet, too much importance is given to the technical qualifications of the employees for promotion and transfers. Dedication commitment of the employee is not considered. It is suitable for government organisations. It is also suitable for organisations where change is very slow. There will be unnecessary delay in decision-making due to formalities and rules . It is appropriate for static organisations. There is difficulty in coordination and communication.

Management: A consolidated discipline

{D} **Herbert Simon, Chester Barnard, and Charles Lindblom** are among the first of those recognized as early American public administrators. These men ushered in an era during which the field gained recognition as independent and unique, despite its multidisciplinary nature. Simon contributed theoretical separation to discern management, decisions based upon fact versus those made based on values. Since one cannot make completely responsible decisions with public resources based solely on personal values, one must Morbidity & attempt to upon objectively determined facts. Simon developed other relevant theories as well. Similar to Lindblom's subsequently discussed critique of comprehensive rationality , Simon also taught that a strictly economic man, one who maximizes returns or values by making decisions based upon complete information in unlimited time, is unrealistic. Instead, most public administrators use a sufficient amount of information to make a satisfactory decision:, they“ satisfice."

{E} In decision-making, Simon believed that agents face uncertainty about the future and costs in acquiring information in the present. These factors limit the extent to which agents can make a fully rational decision, thus they possess only “bounded rationality" and must make decisions by "satisficing," or choosing that which might not be optimal which will make them happy enough. "Rational behavior, in economics, means that individuals maximizes his

utility function under the constraints they face (e.g., their budget constraint, limited choices, ...) in pursuit of their self-interest

{F} Chester Barnard was also one of the watershed scholars. Barnard published “The Economy of Incentives" (1938), in an attempt to explain individual participation in an organization. Barnard explained organizations as systems of exchange. Low-level employees must have more incentive to remain with the organization for which they exchange their labor and loyalty. The organization (and higher level employees) must derive sufficient benefit from its employees to keep them. The net pull of the organization is determined by material rewards, environmental conditions, and other intangibles like recognition. He gives great importance to persuasion, much more than to economic incentives. He described four general and four specific incentives including Money and other material inducements; Personal non-material opportunities for distinction; Desirable physical conditions of work; Ideal benefactions, such as pride of workmanship etc.

A new humanist era: Rethinking power and management

{G} Humanists embrace a dynamic concept of an employee and management techniques. This requires a theoretical shift away from the idea that an employee is a cog in the industrial machine. Rather, employees are unique individuals with goals, needs, desires, etc.

{H} The humanist era ushered in other possible interpretations of such topics as power and management. One of the most significant was Douglas McGregor's “Theory X and Theory Y.” McGregor's work provided a basis for a management framework (n. , a structure upon whose rungs the classic and new-aged management might be hung. First, commonly held by early management theorists, Theory X begins with the assumption (that humans possess an inherent aversion to work. Employees must therefore be coerced and controlled if management expects to see results. Further, lazy humans prefer direction bordering micromanagement whenever possible

{I} Theory Y is much more compatible with the humanist tradition. This begins with the assumption that work is as natural for humans as rest or play. Further, employees will direct and control themselves as they complete objectives Humans learn naturally and seek responsibility. Consequently, managers need only to steer employees in a cooperative manner toward goals that serve the organization. There is room for many to create and share power.

{J} The Z-Organization can be thought of as a complimentary third element to McGregor's dichotomy. Z-organizations are a Japanese organizational model. Similar to Theory-Y management, Z organizations place a large degree of responsibility upon the employees. Further, relatively low-level employees are entrusted with the freedom to be creative, "wander around the organization” and become truly unique, company-specific employees. However, employees achieve only after "agreeing on a central set of objectives and ways of doing business" In Z Organizations, decision-making is democratic and participatory . Despite the many advantages of this organizational model, there are several draw-backs. These include the depredation of a large professional distance--de-personalization is impossible in Z-organizations. Since, in reality, there is a higher percentage of workers who would like to work for the financial return than the job objectives. A high level of self-discipline is also necessary.

Questions 14-21

Choose Two appropriate letters and fill in boxes 14-15.

What are the features and advantages for Bureaucratic Management?

[A] There are equal opportunities coming from a little hierarchy of authority among companies.

[B] employees' promotion can be much fairer which is based on job duties not on characters

[C] employees enjoy a greater freedom of duties than their strict right

[D] Selection and Promotion is based on mastery of new technology.

[E] These employees can dedicate themselves to the public for stability of a long term job

Choose Two appropriate letters and fill in boxes 16-17.

What are the limitations for the ideas of Bureaucratic Management?

[A] Commitment of the employee is not taken into consideration enough.

[B] There is difficulty in decision-making based on formalities and rules.

[C] Employees are casually organized as no importance is given to formal groups.

[D] There is difficulty in enforcement of rules and regulations

[E] It is not applicable to dynamic organisations where change is very fast.

Choose Two appropriate letters and fill in boxes 18-19.

What are the aims of management as Douglas McGregor's work of the "Theory Y."

[A] Employees must be coerced and controlled if management expects to see results.

[B] Employees have a natural tendency for rest or play.

[C] Humans will not automatically seek responsibility.

[D] Managers may guide employees in a cooperative manner toward objectives.

[E] There is little room for a manager to designate or share his power.

Choose Two appropriate letters and fill in boxes 20-21.

What are the limitations for "Theory Z.

[A] decision-making is democratic and participatory

[B] organization mode has inherent design fault

[C] not all employee set higher interest in the job than that of wages

[D] Personalization remains un-eliminated in organizations

[E] self-discipline is an unnecessary quality

Questions 22-26

Use the information in the passage to match the people(listed A-E) with opinions or deeds below. Write the appropriate letters A-E in boxes 22-26 on your answer sheet.

NB Some people may match more than one ideas

A Mark weber

B McGregor

C Herbert Simon

D Chester Barnard

E Charles Lindblom

Question 22: Employees like to follow professional, ethical public officials to secure a job.

Question 23: Highly effective can be achieved only after "agreeing on a core of objectives and method of doing things

Question 24: Managers need to take the employees' emotional feeling, besides the material rewards, into an incentives system.

Question 25: Individuals can maximize their self-interest when all the budget and choices are utilised well

Question 26: The assumption that humans possess a natural dislike to work who ought to be forced and controlled

Reading Passage 3

Assessing the risk

{A} As a title for a supposedly unprejudiced debate on scientific progress, "Panic attack: interrogating our obsession with risk" did not bode well. Held last week at the Royal Institution in London, the event brought together scientists from

across the world to ask why society is so obsessed with risk and to call for a "more rational" approach. "We seem to be organising society around the grandmotherly maxim of "better safe than sorry'," exclaimed Spiked, the online publication that organised the event. "What are the consequences of this overbearing concern with risks?"

{B} The debate was preceded by a survey of 40 scientists who were invited to describe how awful our lives would be if the "precautionary principle" had been allowed to prevail in the past. Their response was: no heart surgery or antibiotics, and hardly any drugs at all; no aeroplanes, bicycles or high-voltage power grids; no pasteurisation, pesticides or biotechnology; no quantum mechanics; no wheel; no "discovery" of America. In short, their message was: no risk, no gain.

{C} They have absolutely missed the point. The precautionary principle is a subtle idea. It has various forms, but all of them generally include some notion of cost-effectiveness. Thus the point is not simply to ban things that are not known to be absolutely safe. Rather, it says: "Of course you can make no progress without risk. But if there is no obvious gain from taking the risk, then don't take it."

{D} Clearly, all the technologies listed by the 40 well-chosen savants were innately risky at their inception, as all technologies are. But all of them would have received the green light under the precautionary principle because they all had the potential to offer tremendous benefits - the solutions to very big problems - if only the snags could be overcome.

{E} If the precautionary principle had been in place, the scientists tell us, we would not have antibiotics. But of course we would - if the version of the principle that sensible people now understand had been applied. When penicillin was discovered in the 1920s, infective bacteria were laying waste to the world. Children died from diphtheria and whooping cough, every open drain brought the threat of typhoid, and any wound could lead to septicaemia and even gangrene.

{F} Penicillin was turned into a practical drug during the Second World War, when the many pesticides that result from war threatened to kill more people than the bombs. Of course antibiotics were a priority. Of course the risks, such as they could be perceived, were worth taking.

{G} And so with the other items on the scientists' list: electric light bulbs, blood transfusions, CAT scans, knives, the measles vaccine --the precautionary principle would have prevented all of them, they tell us. But this is just plain wrong. If the precautionary principle had been applied properly, all these creations would have passed muster, because all offered incomparable advantages compared to the risks perceived at the time.

{H} Another issue is at stake here. Statistics are not the only concept people use when weighing up risk. Human beings, subtle and evolved creatures that we are, do not survive to three-score years and ten simply by thinking like pocket calculators. A crucial issue is choice. In deciding whether to pursue the development of a new technology, the consumer's right to choose should be considered alongside considerations of risk and benefit. Clearly, skiing is more dangerous than genetically modified tomatoes. But people who ski choose to do so; they do not have skiing thrust upon them by portentous experts of the kind who now feel they have the right to reconstruct our crops. Even with skiing there is the matter of cost effectiveness to consider: skiing, I am told, is exhilarating. Where is the exhilaration in GM soya?

{I} Indeed, in contrast to all the other items on Spiked list, GM crops stand out as an example of a technology whose benefits are far from clear. Some of the risks can at least be

defined. But in the present economic climate, the benefits that might accrue from them seem dubious. Promoters of GM crops believe that the future population of the world cannot be fed without them. That is untrue. The crops that really matter are wheat and rice, and there is no GM research in the pipeline that will seriously affect the yield of either. GM is used to make production cheaper and hence more profitable, which is an extremely questionable ambition.

{J} The precautionary principle provides the world with a very important safeguard. If it had been in place in the past it might, for example, have prevented insouciant miners from polluting major rivers with mercury. We have come to a sorry pass when scientists, who should above all be dispassionate scholars, feel they should misrepresent such a principle for the purposes of commercial and political propaganda. People at large continue to mistrust science and the high technologies it produces partly because they doubt the wisdom of scientists. On such evidence as this, these doubts are fully justified.

Questions 27-32

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1? In boxes 27-32 on your answer sheet, write

YES	if the statement agrees with the writer
NO	if the statement does not agree with the writer
NOT GIVEN	if there is no information about this in the passage

Question 27: Title of the debate is not unbiased.

Question 28: All scientists invited to the debate were from the field of medicine.

Question 29: Those scientists who conducted the survey were people who shouldn't take risks.

Question 30: All listed technologies are riskier than other technologies.

Question 31: It is worth taking the risks to invent antibiotics.

Question 32: All other inventions on the list were also judged by the precautionary principle.

Questions 33-39

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 33-39 on your answer sheet.

When applying the precautionary principle in deciding whether to invent a new technology, people should also consider the**.....33.....,** along with the usual consideration of **.....34.....** For example, although risky and dangerous enough, people still enjoy **.....35.....**for the excitement that it provides. On the other hand, experts believe that the future population desperately needs **.....36.....**in spite of their undefined risks. However researches conducted have not been directed towards increasing the yield of **.....37.....**So far, to reduce the cost of **.....38.....**and to bring more profits out of it. In the end,such selfish use of precautionary principle for business and political gain has often led people to **.....39.....**science because they believe that scientists can not be trusted.

Questions 40

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

Write your answers in boxes 40 on your answer sheet.

Question 40: What is the main theme of the passage?

[A] people have right to doubt science and technologies

[B] the precautionary principle could have prevented the development of science and technology

[C] there are not enough people who truly understand the precautionary principle

[D] the precautionary principle bids us to take risks at all costs