

IELTSFever Academic Reading Test 90

READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-14, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 90 Reading Passage Plain English Campaign below.

Plain English Campaign

{A} We launched the Plain English Campaign in 1979 with a ritual shredding of appalling government and municipal council forms in Parliament Square, London. We had become so fed up with people visiting our advice centre in Salford, Greater Manchester, to complain about incomprehensible forms that we thought we ought to take action. At the time the shredding seemed like merely throwing sand in the eyes of the charging lion, but it briefly caught the public imagination and left an impression on government and business. Although we're pleased with the new plain English awareness in government departments, many local councils and businesses maintain a stout resistance to change. One council began a letter to its tenants about a rent increase with two sentences averaging 95 words, full of bizarre housing finance jargon and waffle about Acts of Parliament. The London Borough of Ealing sent such an incomprehensible letter to ISO residents that 40 of them wrote or telephoned to complain and ask for clarification. Many were upset and frightened that the council was planning to imprison them if they didn't fill in the accompanying form. In fact the letter meant nothing of the sort, and the council had to send another letter to explain.

{B} Plain legal English can be used as a marketing tactic. Provincial Insurance issued their plain English Home Cover policy in 1983 and sold it heavily as such. In the first 18 months its sales rocketed, drawing in about an extra £1.5 million of business. Recently, the Eagle Star Group launched a plain English policy to a chorus of congratulatory letters from policyholders. People, it seems, prefer to buy a policy they can understand.

{C} Two kinds of instructions give us a lot of concern - medical labels and do-it-yourself products. With medical labels there is a serious gap between what the professionals think is clear and what is really clear to patients. A survey by pharmacists Raynor and Sillito found that 31% of patients misunderstood the instruction on eye drops 'To be instilled', while 33% misunderstood 'Use sparingly!'. The instruction 'Take two tablets 4 hourly' is so prone to misunderstanding (for example, as 8 tablets an hour) that we think it should be banned. Unclear instructions on do-it-yourself products cause expense and frustration to customers. Writing the necessary instructions for these products is usually entrusted to someone who knows the product inside out, yet the best qualification for writing instructions is ignorance. The writer is then like a first-time user, discovering how to use the product in a step-by-step way. Instructions never seem to be tested with first-time users before being issued. So vital steps are missed out or components are mislabeled or not labelled at all. For example, the instructions for assembling a sliding door gear say: 'The pendant bolt centres are fixed and should be at an equal distance from the centre of the door.' This neglects to explain who should do the fixing and how the bolt

centres will get into the correct position. By using an imperative and an active verb the instruction becomes much clearer: 'Make sure you fix the centres of the pendant bolts at an equal distance from the centre of the door.'

{D} Effectively, the Plain English movement in the US began with President Jimmy Carter's Executive Order 12044 of 23 March 1978, that required regulations to be written in plain language. There were earlier government efforts to inform consumers about their rights and obligations, such as the Truth in Lending Act (1969) and the Fair Credit Billing Act (1975), which emphasized a body of information that consumers need in simple language. But President Carter's executive order gave the prestige and force of a president to the movement. All over the country isolated revolts or efforts against legalistic gobbledygook at the federal, state and corporate levels seemed to grow into a small revolution. These efforts and advances between the years 1978 and 1985 are described in the panel 'The Plain English Scorecard'.

{E} The Bastille has not fallen yet. The forces of resistance are strong, as one can see from the case of Pennsylvania as cited in the Scorecard. In addition, President Ronald Reagan's executive order of 19 February 1981, revoking President Carter's earlier executive order, has definitely slowed the pace of plain English legislation in the United States. There are three main objections to the idea of plain English. They are given below, with the campaign's answers to them:

{F} The statute would cause unending litigation and clog the courts. Simply not true in all the ten states with plain English laws for consumer contracts and the 34 states with laws or regulations for insurance policies. Since 1978 when plain English law went into effect in New York there have been only four litigations and only two decisions. Massachusetts had zero cases. The cost of compliance would be enormous. Translation of legal contracts into non-legal everyday language would be a waste of time and money. The experience of several corporations has proved that the cost of compliance is often outweighed by solid benefits and litigation savings. Citibank of New York made history in 1975 by introducing a simplified promissory note and afterwards simplified all their forms. Citibank counsel Carl Falsenfield says: 'We have lost no money and there has been no litigation as a result of simplification. The cost effectiveness of clarity is demonstrable. A satisfied customer more readily signs on the bottom line and thus contributes to the corporation's bottom line. Some documents simply can't be simplified. Only legal language that has been tested for centuries in the courts is precise enough to deal with a mortgage, a deed, a lease, or an insurance policy. Here, too, the experience of several corporations and insurance companies has proved that contracts and policies can be made more understandable without sacrificing legal effectiveness.'

{G} What does the future hold for the Plain English movement? Today, American consumers are buffeted by an assortment of pressures. Never before have consumers had as many choices in areas like financial services, travel, telephone services, and supermarket products. There are about 300 long-distance phone companies in the US. Not long ago, the average supermarket carried 9,000 items; today, it carries 22,000. More important, this expansion of options - according to a recent report- is faced by a staggering 30 million Americans lacking the reading

skills to handle the minimal demands of daily living. The consumer's need, therefore, for information expressed in plain English is more critical than ever.

{H} What is needed today is not a brake on the movement's momentum but another push toward plain English contracts from consumers. I still hear plain English on the TV and in the streets, and read plain English in popular magazines and best-sellers, but not yet in many functional documents. Despite some victories, the war against gobbledygook is not over yet. We do well to remember the warning of Chrissie Maher, organizer of the Plain English Campaign in the UK: 'People are not just injured when medical labels are written in gobbledygook- they die. Drivers are not just hurt when their medicines don't tell them they could fall asleep at the wheel - they are killed.'

Questions 1-6

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1? In boxes 1-6 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

- (1) In the marketing area, the spread of Plain English can generate economic benefits.
- (2) Because doctors tend to use jargon when they talk with patients, thereafter many patients usually get confused with medicine dose.
- (3) After successive elections over U.S president Jimmy Carter, the effect of the Plain English Campaign is less distinctive than that of the previous one.
- (4) The Plain English campaigner has a problem of talking with the officials.
- (5) Word check is made regularly by the judge in the court scenario.
- (6) Compared with the situation of the past, consumers are now facing less intensity of label reading pressure in supermarkets in America.

Questions 7-14

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 7-14 on your answer sheet.

Campaigners experienced a council renting document full of strange.....7.....of housing in terms of an Act. They are anxious in some other field, for instance, when reading a label of medicine, there was an obvious.....8.....for patients.

Another notable field was on9.....products, it not only additionally cost buyers, but caused.....10....., thus writer should regard himself as a.....11..... However, oppositions against the Plain English Campaign under certain circumstances, e.g.....12.....language had been embellished as an accurate language used in the13..... Author suggested that nowadays a new compelling force is needed from14.....

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 15-27, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 90 Reading Passage Numeracy: Can Animal Tell Numbers below.

Numeracy :

Can Animals Tell Numbers ?

{A} Prime among basic numerical faculties is the ability to distinguish between a larger and a smaller number, says psychologist Elizabeth Brannon. Humans can do this with ease - providing the ratio is big enough - but do other animals share this ability? In one experiment, rhesus monkeys and university students examined two sets of geometrical objects that appeared briefly on a computer monitor. They had to decide which set contained more objects. Both groups performed successfully but, importantly, Brannon's team found that monkeys, like humans,

make more errors when two sets of objects are close in number. The students' performance ends up looking just like a monkey's. It's practically identical, 'she says.

{B} Humans and monkeys are mammals, in the animal family known as primates. These are not the only animals whose numerical capacities rely on ratio, however. The same seems to apply to some amphibians. Psychologist Claudia Uller's team tempted salamanders with two sets of fruit flies held in clear tubes. In a series of trials, the researchers noted which tube the salamanders scampered towards, reasoning that if they had a capacity to recognise number, they would head for the larger number. The salamanders successfully discriminated between tubes containing 8 and 16 flies respectively, but not between 3 and 4, 4 and 6, or 8 and 12. So it seems that for the salamanders to discriminate between two numbers, the larger must be at least twice as big as the smaller. However, they could differentiate between 2 and 3 flies just as well as between 1 and 2 flies, suggesting they recognise small numbers in a different way from larger numbers.

{C} Further support for this theory comes from studies of mosquitofish, which instinctively join the biggest shoal they can. A team at the University of Padova found that while mosquitofish can tell the difference between a group containing 3 shoal-mates and a group containing 4, they did not show a preference between groups of 4 and 5. The team also found that mosquitofish can discriminate between numbers up to 16, but only if the ratio between the fish in each shoal was greater than 2:1. This indicates that the fish, like salamanders, possess both the approximate and precise number systems found in more intelligent animals such as infant humans and other primates.

{D} While these findings are highly suggestive, some critics argue that the animals might be relying on other factors to complete the tasks, without considering the number itself. 'Any study that's claiming an animal is capable of representing number should also be controlling for other factors, 'says Brannon. Experiments have confirmed that primates can indeed perform numerical feats without extra clues, but what about the more primitive animals?

{E} To consider this possibility, the mosquitofish tests were repeated, this time using varying geometrical shapes in place of fish. The team arranged these shapes so that they had the same overall surface area and luminance even though they contained a different number of objects. Across hundreds of trials on 14 different fish, the team found they consistently discriminated 2 objects from 3. The team is now testing whether mosquitofish can also distinguish 3 geometric objects from 4.

{F} Even more primitive organisms may share this ability. Entomologist Jurgen Tautz sent a group of bees down a corridor, at the end of which lay two chambers - one which contained sugar water, which they like, while the other was empty. To test the bees' numeracy, the team marked each chamber with a different number of geometrical shapes - between 2 and 6. The bees quickly learned to match the number of shapes with the correct chamber. Like the salamanders and fish, there was a limit to the bees' mathematical prowess - they could differentiate up to 4 shapes, but failed with 5 or 6 shapes.

{G} These studies still do not show whether animals learn to count through training, or whether they are born with the skills already intact. If the latter is true, it would suggest there was a strong evolutionary advantage to a mathematical mind. Proof that this may be the case has emerged from

an experiment testing the mathematical ability of three- and four-day-old chicks. Like mosquitofish, chicks prefer to be around as many of their siblings as possible, so they will always head towards a larger number of their kin. If chicks spend their first few days surrounded by certain objects, they become attached to these objects as if they were family. Researchers placed each chick in the middle of a platform and showed it two groups of balls of paper. Next, they hid the two piles behind screens, changed the quantities and revealed them to the chick. This forced the chick to perform simple computations to decide which side now contained the biggest number of its "brothers". Without any prior coaching, the chicks scuttled to the larger quantity at a rate well above chance. They were doing some very simple arithmetic, claim the researchers.

{H} Why these skills evolved is not hard to imagine, since it would help almost any animal forage for food. Animals on the prowl for sustenance must constantly decide which tree has the most fruit, or which patch of flowers will contain the most nectar. There are also other, less obvious, advantages of numeracy. In one compelling example, researchers in America found that female coots appear to calculate how many eggs they have laid - and add any in the nest laid by an intruder - before making any decisions about adding to them. Exactly how ancient these skills are is difficult to determine, however. Only by studying the numerical abilities of more and more creatures using standardised procedures can we hope to understand the basic preconditions for the evolution of number

Questions 15-21

Answer the table below. Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 15-21 on your answer sheet

Animal numeracy		
Subjects	Experiments	Results
Mammals and birds		
rhesus monkeys and humans	looked at two sets of geometrical objects on a computer screen	Performance of the two groups is almost 15
chicks	choose between two sets of 16 which are altered	chicks can do calculations in order to choose a larger group
coots	behaviour of female birds was observed	A bird seems to have the ability to 17
Amphibians, fish and insects		
salamanders	offered clear tubes containing different quantities of 18	salamanders distinguish between numbers over four if the bigger number is at least two times larger
19	shown real shoals and later artificial ones of geometrical shapes; these are used to check the influence of total 20 and brightness	subjects know the difference between two and three and possibly three and four, but not between four and five
bees	Had to learn where 21 was stored	could soon choose the correct place

Questions 22-27

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2? In boxes 22-27 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

(22) Primates are better at identifying the larger of two numbers if one is much bigger than the other.

(23) Jurgen Tautz trained the insects in his experiment to recognise the shapes of individual numbers.

(24) The research involving young chicks took place over two separate days.

(25) The experiment with chicks suggests that some numerical ability exists in newborn animals.

(26) Researchers have experimented by altering quantities of nectar or fruit available to certain wild animals.

(27) When assessing the number of eggs in their nest, coots take into account those of other birds.

Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 28-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 90 Reading Passage Tools for Ancient Writing below.

Tools for Ancient Writing

{A} With time, the record-keepers developed systematized symbols from their drawings. These symbols represented words and sentences, but were easier and faster to draw and universally recognized for meaning. The discovery of clay made portable records possible (you can't carry a

cave wall around with you). Early merchants used clay tokens with pictographs to record the quantities of materials traded or shipped. These tokens date back to about 8,500 B.C. With the high volume and the repetition inherent in record keeping, pictographs evolved and slowly lost their picture detail. They became abstract-figures representing sounds in spoken communication. The alphabet replaced pictographs between 1700 and 1500 B.C. in the Sinaitic world. The current Hebrew alphabet and writing became popular around 600 B.C. About 400 B.C. the Greek alphabet was developed. Greek was the first script written from left to right. From Greek followed the Byzantine and the Roman (later Latin) writings. In the beginning, all writing systems had only uppercase letters, when the writing instruments were refined enough for detailed faces, lowercase was used as well (around 600 A.D.)

{B} The earliest means of writing that approached pen and paper as we know them today was developed by the Greeks. They employed a writing stylus, made of metal, bone or ivory, to place marks upon wax-coated tablets. The tablets are made in hinged pairs, closed to protect the scribe's notes. The first examples of handwriting (purely text messages made by hand) originated in Greece. The Grecian scholar, Cadmus invented the written letter - text messages on paper sent from one individual to another.

{C} Writing was advancing beyond chiseling pictures into stone or wedging pictographs into wet clay. The Chinese invented and perfected 'Indian Ink'. Originally designed for blacking the surfaces of raised stone-carved hieroglyphics, the ink was a mixture of soot from pine smoke and lamp oil mixed with the gelatin of donkey skin and musk. The ink invented by the Chinese philosopher, Tien-Lcheu (2697 B.C.), became common by the year 1200 B.C. Other cultures developed inks using the natural dyes and colors derived from berries, plants and minerals. In early writings, different colored inks had ritual meaning attached to each color.

{D} The invention of inks paralleled the introduction of paper. The early Egyptians, Romans, Greeks and Hebrews, used papyrus and parchment papers. One of the oldest pieces of writing on papyrus known to us today is the Egyptian "Prisse Papyrus" which dates back to 2000 B.C. The Romans created a reed-pen perfect for parchment and ink, from the hollow tubular-stems of marsh grasses, especially from the jointed bamboo plant. They converted bamboo stems into a primitive form of fountain pen. They cut one end into the form of a pen nib or point. A writing fluid or ink filled the stem, squeezing the reed forced fluid to the nib

{E} By 400 A.D. a stable form of ink developed, a composite of iron-salts, nutgalls and gum, the basic formula, which was to remain in use for centuries. Its color when first applied to paper was a bluish-black, rapidly turning into a darker black and then over the years fading to the familiar dull brown color commonly seen in old documents. Wood-fiber paper was invented in China in 105 A.D. but it only became known about (due to Chinese secrecy) in Japan around 700 A.D. and brought to Spain by the Arabs in 711 A.D. Paper was not widely used throughout Europe until paper mills were built in the late 14th century

{F} The writing instrument that dominated for the longest period in history (over one-thousand years) was the quill pen. Introduced around 700 A.D., the quill is a pen made from a bird feather. The strongest quills were those taken from living birds in the spring from the five outer left wing feathers. The left wing was favored because the feathers curved outward and away

when used by a right-handed writer. Goose feathers were most common; swan feathers were of a premium grade being scarcer and more expensive. For making fine lines, crow feathers were the best, and then came the feathers of the eagle, owl, hawk and turkey.

{G} There were also disadvantages associated with the use of quill pens, including a lengthy preparation time. The early European writing parchments made from animal skins, required much scraping and cleaning. A lead and a ruler made margins. To sharpen the quill, the writer needed a special knife (origins of the term "pen-knife".) Beneath the writer's high-top desk was a coal stove, used to dry the ink as fast as possible.

H Plant-fiber paper became the primary medium for writing after another dramatic invention took place: Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press with replaceable wooden or metal letters in 1436. Simpler kinds of printing e.g. stamps with names, used much earlier in China, did not find their way to Europe. During the centuries, many newer printing technologies were developed based on Gutenberg's printing machine e.g. offset printing.

{I} Articles written by hand had resembled printed letters until scholars began to change the form of writing, using capitals and small letters, writing with more of a slant and connecting letters. Gradually writing became more suitable to the speed the new writing instruments permitted. The credit of inventing Italian 'running hand' or cursive handwriting with its Roman capitals and small letters, goes to Aldus Manutius of Venice, who departed from the old set forms in 1495 A.D. By the end of the 16th century, the old Roman capitals and Greek letterforms transformed into the twenty-six alphabet letters we know today, both for upper and lower-case letters. When writers had both better inks and paper, and handwriting had developed into both an art form and an everyday occurrence, man's inventive nature once again turned to improving the writing instrument, leading to the development of the modern fountain pens

Questions 28-30

Choose the correct letter, A, B, C, D, E ? Write your answers in boxes 28-30 on your answer sheet.

Question 28-29 What two features do record retention possess in nature?

- (A) Easier and faster
- (B) Capaciousness
- (C) portable
- (D) convenient
- (E) Iterance

Question 30 What hurt the technique of producing wooden paper from popularity for a long time?

- (A) Scarcity

- (B) Complexity
- (C) Confidentiality by the inventors
- (D) High cost

Questions 31-37

The reading Passage has eleven paragraphs A-I.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter A-I, in boxes 31-37 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

- (31) the working principle of the primitive pens made of plant stems
- (32) a writing tool commonly implemented for the longest time
- (33) liquid for writing firstly devised by Chinese
- (34) majuscule scripts as the unique written form originally
- (35) the original invention of today's correspondences
- (36) the mention of two basic writing instruments being invented coordinately
- (37) a design to safeguard the written content

Questions 38-40

Answer the questions below.

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

- (38) What makes it not so convenient to use the quill pens?
- (39) When did one more breakthrough occur following the popularity of paper of plant fibers?
- (40) What inventions were the results from human's creative instinct of developing writing tools?

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