

# IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 154

## Reading Passage 1

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 154 Reading Passage Australian culture and culture shock below.*

### Australian culture and culture shock

**{A}** Sometimes work, study or a sense of adventure take us out of our familiar surroundings to go and live in a different culture. The experience can be difficult, even shocking. Almost everyone who studies, lives or works abroad has problems adjusting to a new culture. This response is commonly referred to as 'culture shock'. Culture shock can be defined as 'the physical and emotional discomfort a person experiences when entering a culture different from their own' (Weaver, 1993). For people moving to Australia, Price (2001) has identified certain values which may give rise to culture shock. Firstly, he argues that Australians place a high value on independence and personal choice. This means that a teacher or course tutor will not tell students what to do, but will give them a number of options and suggest they work out which one is the best in their circumstances. It also means that they are expected to take action if something goes wrong and seek out resources and support for themselves.

**{B}** Australians are also prepared to accept a range of opinions rather than believing there is one truth. This means that in an educational setting, students will be expected to form their own opinions and defend the reasons for that point of view and the evidence for it. Price also comments that Australians are uncomfortable with differences in status and hence idealise the idea of treating everyone equally. An illustration of this is that most adult Australians call each other by their first names. This concern with equality means that Australians are uncomfortable taking anything too seriously and are even ready to joke about themselves. Australians believe that life should have a balance between work and leisure time. As a consequence, some students may be critical of others who they perceive as doing nothing but study.

**{C}** Australian notions of privacy mean that areas such as financial matters, appearance and relationships are only discussed with close friends. While people may volunteer such information, they may resent someone actually asking them unless the friendship is firmly established. Even then, it is considered very impolite to ask someone what they earn. With older people, it is also rude to ask how old they are, why they are not married or why they do not have children. It is also impolite to ask people how much they have paid for something, unless there is a very good reason for asking. Kohls (1996) describes culture shock as a process of change marked by four basic stages. During the first stage, the new arrival is excited to be in a new place, so this is often referred to as the "honeymoon" stage. Like a tourist, they are intrigued by all the new sights and sounds, new smells and tastes of their surroundings. They may have

some problems, but usually, they accept them as just part of the novelty. At this point, it is the similarities that stand out, and it seems to the newcomer that people everywhere and their way of life are very much alike. This period of euphoria may last from a couple of weeks to a month, but the letdown is inevitable.

**{D}** During the second stage, known as the 'rejection' stage, the newcomer starts to experience difficulties due to the differences between the new culture and the way they were accustomed to living. The initial enthusiasm turns into irritation, frustration, anger and depression, and these feelings may have the effect of people rejecting the new culture so that they notice only the things that cause them trouble, which they then complain about. In addition, they may feel homesick, bored, withdrawn and irritable during this period as well.

**{E}** Fortunately, most people gradually learn to adapt to the new culture and move on to the third stage, known as 'adjustment and reorientation'. During this stage, a transition occurs to a new optimistic attitude. As the newcomer begins to understand more of the new culture, they are able to interpret some of the subtle cultural clues which passed by unnoticed earlier. Now things make more sense and the culture seems more familiar. As a result, they begin to develop problem-solving skills, and feelings of disorientation and anxiety no longer affect them.

**{F}** In Kohls's model, in the fourth stage, newcomers undergo a process of adaptation. They have settled into the new culture, and this results in a feeling of direction and self-confidence. They have accepted the new food, drinks, habits and customs and may even find themselves enjoying some of the very customs that bothered them so much previously. In addition, they realise that the new culture has good and bad things to offer and that no way is really better than another, just different.

### Questions 1-6

*Do the following statements agree with the information given in the reading passage?*

*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). Australian teachers will suggest alternatives to students rather than offer one solution.
- (2). In Australia, teachers will show interest in students' personal circumstances.
- (3). Australians use people's first names so that everyone feels their status is similar.
- (4). Students who study all the time may receive positive comments from their colleagues.
- (5). It is acceptable to discuss financial issues with people you do not know well.
- (6). Younger Australians tend to be friendlier than older Australians.

### Questions 7-13

Complete the table below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Stage	Name	Newcomers' reaction to problems
Stage 1	7.....	They notice the 8..... between different nationalities and cultures. They may experience this stage for up to 9.....
Stage 2	Rejection	They reject the new culture and lose the 10..... they had at the beginning.
Stage 3	Adjustment and reorientation	They can understand some 11 ..... which they had not previously observed. They learn 12..... for dealing with difficulties.
Stage 4	13.....	They enjoy some of the customs that annoyed them before.

### Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 154 Reading Passage *Flawed Beauty: the problem with toughened glass* below.

## Flawed Beauty: the problem with toughened glass

On 2nd August 1999, a particularly hot day in the town of Cirencester in the UK, a large pane of toughened glass in the roof of a shopping centre at Bishops Walk shattered without warning and fell from its frame. When fragments were analysed by experts at the giant glass manufacturer Pilkington, which had made the pane, they found that minute crystals of nickel sulphide trapped inside the glass had almost certainly caused the failure.

'The glass industry is aware of the issue,' says Brian Waldron, chairman of the standards committee at the Glass and Glazing Federation, a British trade association, and standards development officer at Pilkington. But he insists that cases are few and far between. 'It's a very rare phenomenon,' he says.

Others disagree. 'On average I see about one or two buildings a month suffering from nickel sulphide related failures,' says Barrie Josie, a consultant engineer involved in the Bishops Walk investigation. Other experts tell of similar experiences. Tony Wilmott of London-based consulting engineers Sandberg, and Simon Armstrong at CladTech Associates in Hampshire both say they know of hundreds of cases. 'What you hear is only the tip of the iceberg,' says Trevor Ford, a glass expert at Resolve Engineering in Brisbane, Queensland. He believes the reason is simple: 'No-one wants bad press.'

Toughened glass is found everywhere, from cars and bus shelters to the windows, walls and roofs of thousands of buildings around the world. It's easy to see why. This glass has five times the strength of standard glass, and when it does break it shatters into tiny cubes rather than large, razor-sharp shards. Architects love it because large panels can be bolted together to make transparent walls, and turning it into ceilings and floors is almost as easy.

It is made by heating a sheet of ordinary glass to about 620°C to soften it slightly, allowing its structure to expand, and then cooling it rapidly with jets of cold air. This causes the outer layer of the pane to contract and solidify before the interior. When the interior finally solidifies and shrinks, it exerts a pull on the outer layer that leaves it in permanent compression and produces a tensile force inside the glass. As cracks propagate best in materials under tension, the compressive force on the surface must be overcome before the pane will break, making it more resistant to cracking.

The problem starts when glass contains nickel sulphide impurities. Trace amounts of nickel and sulphur are usually present in the raw materials used to make glass, and nickel can also be introduced by fragments of nickel alloys falling into the molten glass. As the glass is heated, these atoms react to form tiny crystals of nickel sulphide. Just a tenth of a gram of nickel in the furnace can create up to 50,000 crystals.

These crystals can exist in two forms: a dense form called the alpha phase, which is stable at high temperatures, and a less dense form called the beta phase, which is stable at room temperatures. The high temperatures used in the toughening process convert all the crystals to the dense, compact alpha form.

But the subsequent cooling is so rapid that the crystals don't have time to change back to the beta phase. This leaves unstable alpha crystals in the glass, primed like a coiled spring, ready to revert to the beta phase without warning.

When this happens, the crystals expand by up to 4%. And if they are within the central, tensile region of the pane, the stresses this unleashes can shatter the whole sheet. The time that elapses before failure occurs is unpredictable. It could happen just months after manufacture, or decades later, although if the glass is heated – by sunlight, for example – the process is speeded up. Ironically, says Graham Dodd, of consulting engineers Arup in London, the oldest pane of toughened glass known to have failed due to nickel sulphide inclusions was in Pilkington's glass research building in Lathom, Lancashire. The pane was 27 years old.

Data showing the scale of the nickel sulphide problem is almost impossible to find. The picture is made more complicated by the fact that these crystals occur in batches. So even if, on average, there is only one inclusion in 7 tonnes of glass, if you experience one nickel sulphide failure in your building, that probably means you've got a problem in more than one pane. Josie says that in the last decade he has worked on over 15 buildings with the number of failures into double figures.

One of the worst examples of this is Waterfront Place, which was completed in 1990. Over the following decade the 40 storey Brisbane block suffered a rash of failures. Eighty panes of its toughened glass shattered due to inclusions before experts were finally called in. John Barry, an expert in nickel sulphide contamination at the University of Queensland, analysed every glass pane in the building. Using a studio camera, a photographer went up in a cradle to take photos of every pane.

These were scanned under a modified microfiche reader for signs of nickel sulphide crystals. 'We discovered at least another 120 panes with potentially dangerous inclusions which were then replaced,' says Barry. 'It was a very expensive and time-consuming process that took around six months to complete.' Though the project cost \$1.6 million (nearly 700,000 Pounds), the alternative – re-cladding the entire building – would have cost ten times as much.

### Questions 14-17

*Look at the following people and the list of statements below.*

*Match each person with the correct statement.*

(14) Brian Waldron

(15) Trevor Ford

(16) Graham Dodd

(17) John Barry

**List of Statements**

- (A) suggests that publicity about nickel sulphide failure has been suppressed
- (B) regularly sees cases of nickel sulphide failure
- (C) closely examined all the glass in one building
- (D) was involved with the construction of Bishops Walk
- (E) recommended the rebuilding of Waterfront Place
- (F) thinks the benefits of toughened glass are exaggerated
- (G) claims that nickel sulphide failure is very unusual
- (H) refers to the most extreme case of delayed failure

**Questions 18-23**

Complete the summary with the list of words A-P below.

**Toughened Glass**

Toughened glass is favoured by architects because it is much stronger than ordinary glass, and the fragments are not as 18..... when it breaks. However, it has one disadvantage: it can shatter 19..... . This fault is a result of the manufacturing process. Ordinary glass is first heated, then cooled very 20..... .

The outer layer 21..... before the inner layer, and the tension between the two layers which is created because of this makes the glass stronger. However, if the glass contains nickel sulphide impurities, crystals of nickel sulphide are formed. These are unstable, and can expand suddenly, particularly if the weather is 22..... . If this happens, the pane of glass may break. The frequency with which such problems occur is 23..... by glass experts. Furthermore, the crystals cannot be detected without sophisticated equipment.

(A) numerous	(D) agreed	(G) expands	(J) removed	(M) cold	(P) calculated
(B) detected	(E) warm	(H) slowly	(K) contracts	(N) moved	
(C) quickly	(F) sharp	(I) unexpectedly	(L) disputed	(O) small	

## Questions 24-26

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2?

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

(24) Little doubt was expressed about the reason for the Bishops Walk accident.

(25) Toughened glass has the same appearance as ordinary glass.

(26) There is plenty of documented evidence available about the incidence of nickel sulphide failure.

## Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 154 Reading Passage Museums of fine art and their public below.

### Museums of fine art and their public

The fact that people go to the Louvre museum in Paris to see the original painting Mona Lisa when they can see a reproduction anywhere leads us to question some assumptions about the role of museums of fine art in today's world.

One of the most famous works of art in the world is Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. Nearly everyone who goes to see the original will already be familiar with it from reproductions, but they accept that fine art is more rewardingly viewed in its original form.

However, if Mona Lisa was a famous novel, few people would bother to go to a museum to read the writer's actual manuscript rather than a printed reproduction. This might be explained by the fact that the novel has evolved precisely because of technological developments that made it possible to print out huge numbers of texts, whereas oil paintings have always been produced as unique objects. In addition, it could be argued that the practice of interpreting or 'reading' each medium follows different conventions. With novels, the reader attends mainly to the meaning of words rather than the way they are printed on the page, whereas the 'reader' of a

painting must attend just as closely to the material form of marks and shapes in the picture as to any ideas they may signify.

Yet it has always been possible to make very accurate facsimiles of pretty well any fine art work. The seven surviving versions of Mona Lisa bear witness to the fact that in the 16th century, artists seemed perfectly content to assign the reproduction of their creations to their workshop apprentices as regular 'bread and butter' work. And today the task of reproducing pictures is incomparably more simple and reliable, with reprographic techniques that allow the production of high-quality prints made exactly to the original scale, with faithful colour values, and even with duplication of the surface relief of the painting.

But despite an implicit recognition that the spread of good reproductions can be culturally valuable, museums continue to promote the special status of original work. Unfortunately, this seems to place severe limitations on the kind of experience offered to visitors.

One limitation is related to the way the museum presents its exhibits. As repositories of unique historical objects, art museums are often called 'treasure houses'. We are reminded of this even before we view a collection by the presence of security guards, attendants, ropes and display cases to keep us away from the exhibits. In many cases, the architectural style of the building further reinforces that notion. In addition, a major collection like that of London's National Gallery is housed in numerous rooms, each with dozens of works, any one of which is likely to be worth more than all the average visitor possesses. In a society that judges the personal status of the individual so much by their material worth, it is therefore difficult not to be impressed by one's own relative 'worthlessness' in such an environment.

Furthermore, consideration of the 'value' of the original work in its treasure house setting impresses upon the viewer that, since these works were originally produced, they have been assigned a huge monetary value by some person or institution more powerful than themselves. Evidently, nothing the viewer thinks about the work is going to alter that value, and so today's viewer is deterred from trying to extend that spontaneous, immediate, self-reliant kind of reading which would originally have met the work.

The visitor may then be struck by the strangeness of seeing such diverse paintings, drawings and sculptures brought together in an environment for which they were not originally created. This 'displacement effect' is further heightened by the sheer volume of exhibits. In the case of a major collection, there are probably more works on display than we could realistically view in weeks or even months.

This is particularly distressing because time seems to be a vital factor in the appreciation of all art forms. A fundamental difference between paintings and other art forms is that there is no prescribed time over which a painting is viewed. By contrast, the audience encourage an opera or a play over a specific time, which is the duration of the performance. Similarly novels and poems are read in a prescribed temporal sequence, whereas a picture has no clear place at which to start viewing, or at which to finish. Thus art works themselves encourage us to view them superficially, without appreciating the richness of detail and labour that is involved.



Consequently, the dominant critical approach becomes that of the art historian, a specialised academic approach devoted to 'discovering the meaning' of art within the cultural context of its time. This is in perfect harmony with the museums function, since the approach is dedicated to seeking out and conserving 'authentic', original, readings of the exhibits. Again, this seems to put paid to that spontaneous, participators criticism which can be found in abundance in criticism of classic works of literature, but is absent from most art history. The displays of art museums serve as a warning of what critical practices can emerge when spontaneous criticism is suppressed. The museum public, like any other audience, experience art more rewardingly when given the confidence to express their views. If appropriate works of fine art could be rendered permanently accessible to the public by means of high-fidelity reproductions, as literature and music already are, the public may feel somewhat less in awe of them. Unfortunately, that may be too much to ask from those who seek to maintain and control the art establishment.

Write the correct letter, A-L, in boxes 27-31 on your answer sheet.

**The value attached to original works of art**

People go to art museums because they accept the value of seeing an original work of art. But they do not go to museums to read original manuscripts of novels, perhaps because the availability of novels has depended on **27** ..... for so long, and also because with novels, the **28** ..... are the most important thing.

However, in historical times artists such as Leonardo were happy to instruct **29** ..... to produce copies of their work and these days new methods of reproduction allow excellent replication of surface relief features as well as colour and **30** ..... It is regrettable that museums still promote the superiority of original works of art, since this may not be in the interests of the **31** .....

(A) institution	(E) paints	(I) basic technology
(B) mass production	(F) artist	(J) readers
(C) mechanical processes	(G) size	(K) picture frames
(D) public	(H) underlying ideas	(L) assistants

**Questions 32-35**

Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D. Write the correct letter in boxes 32-35 on your answer sheet

**Question 32** The writer mentions London's National Gallery to illustrate

- (A) the undesirable cost to a nation of maintaining a huge collection of art.
- (B) the conflict that may arise in society between financial and artistic values.
- (C) the negative effect a museum can have on visitors' opinions of themselves.
- (D) the need to put individual well-being above large-scale artistic schemes.

**Question 33** The writer says that today, viewers may be unwilling to criticise a because

- (A) they lack the knowledge needed to support an opinion.
- (B) they fear it may have financial implications.
- (C) they have no real concept of the work's value.
- (D) they feel their personal reaction is of no significance.

**Question 34** According to the writer, the 'displacement effect' on the visitor is caused by

- (A) the variety of works on display and the way they are arranged.
- (B) the impossibility of viewing particular works of art over a long period.
- (C) the similar nature of the paintings and the lack of great works.
- (D) the inappropriate nature of the individual works selected for exhibition.

**Question 35** The writer says that unlike other forms of art, a painting does not

- (A) involve direct contact with an audience.
- (B) require a specific location for a performance.
- (C) need the involvement of other professionals.
- (D) have a specific beginning or end.

## Questions 36-40

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in Reading Passage 3? In boxes 36-40 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

(36) Art history should focus on discovering the meaning of art using a range of media.

(37) The approach of art historians conflicts with that of art museums.

(38) People should be encouraged to give their opinions openly on works of art.

(39) Reproductions of fine art should only be sold to the public if they are of high quality.

(40) In the future, those with power are likely to encourage more people to enjoy art.

