

# IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 157

## Reading Passage 1

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 157 Reading Passage Our Vanishing Night below.*

### Our Vanishing Night

” Most city skies have become virtually empty of stars “

**{A}**. If humans were truly at home under the light of the moon and stars, it would make no difference to us whether we were out and about at night or during the day, the midnight world as visible to us as it is to the vast number of nocturnal species on this planet. Instead, we are diurnal creatures, meaning our eyes are adapted to living in the sun's light. This is a basic evolutionary fact, even though most of us don't think of ourselves as diurnal beings any more than as primates or mammals or Earthlings. Yet it's the only way to explain what we've done to the night: we've engineered it to meet our needs by filling it with light.

**{B}**. This kind of engineering is no different from damming a river. Its benefits come with consequences – called light pollution – whose effects scientists are only now beginning to study. Light pollution is largely the result of bad lighting design, which allows artificial light to shine outward and upward into the sky, where it is not wanted, instead of focusing it downward, where it is. Wherever human light spills into the natural world, some aspect of life – migration, reproduction, feeding – is affected. For most of human history, the phrase “light pollution” would have made no sense. Imagine walking toward London on a moonlit night around 1800, when it was one of Earth's most populous cities. Nearly a million people lived there, making do, as they always had, with candles and lanterns. There would be no gaslights in the streets or squares for another seven years.

**{C}**. Now, most of humanity lives under reflected, refracted light from overlit cities and suburbs, from light-flooded roads and factories. Nearly all of night-time Europe is a bright patch of light, as is most of the United States and much of Japan. In the South Atlantic, the glow from a single fishing fleet – squid fishermen luring their prey with metal halide lamps – can be seen from space, burning brighter on occasions than Buenos Aires. In most cities, the sky looks as though it has been emptied of stars, and taking their place is a constant orange glow. We've become so used to this that the glory of an unlit night – dark enough for the planet Venus to throw shadows on Earth – is wholly beyond our experience, beyond memory almost. And yet above the city's pale ceiling lies the rest of the universe, utterly undiminished by the light we waste.

**{D}**. We've lit up the night as if it were an unoccupied country when nothing could be further from the truth. Among mammals alone, the number of nocturnal species is astonishing. Light is a powerful biological force, and in many species, it acts as a magnet. The effect is so powerful that scientists speak of songbirds and seabirds being ‘captured’ by searchlights on land or by the light from gas flares on marine oil platforms, circling and circling in the thousands until they

drop. Migrating at night, birds are apt to collide with brightly lit buildings; immature birds suffer in much higher numbers than adults.

**{E}**. Insects, of course, cluster around streetlights, and feeding on those insects is a crucial means of survival for many bat species. In some Swiss valleys, the European lesser horseshoe bat began to vanish after street lights were installed, perhaps because those valleys were suddenly filled with night-feeding pipistrelle bats. Other nocturnal mammals, like desert rodents and badgers, are more cautious about searching for food under the permanent full moon of night pollution because they've become easier targets for the predators who are hunting them.

**{F}**. Some birds – blackbirds and nightingales, among others—sing at unnatural hours in the presence of artificial light. Scientists have determined that long artificial days — and artificially short nights — induce early breeding in a wide range of birds. And because a longer day allows for longer feeding, it can also affect migration schedules. The problem, of course, is that migration, like most other aspects of bird behaviour, is a precisely timed biological behaviour. Leaving prematurely may mean reaching a destination too soon for nesting conditions to be right.

**{G}**. Nesting sea turtles, which seek out dark beaches, find fewer and fewer of them to bury their eggs on. When the baby sea turtles emerge from the eggs, they gravitate toward the brighter, more reflective sea horizon but find themselves confused by artificial lighting behind the beach. In Florida alone, hatching losses number in the hundreds of thousands every year. Frogs and toads living on the side of major highways suffer nocturnal light levels that are as much as a million times brighter than normal, disturbing nearly every aspect of their behaviour, including their night-time breeding choruses.

**{H}**. It was once thought that light pollution only affected astronomers, who need to see the night sky in all its glorious clarity. And, in fact, some of the earliest civic efforts to control light pollution were made half a century ago to protect the view from Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona. In 2001 Flagstaff was declared the first International Dark Sky City. By now the effort to control light pollution has spread around the globe. More and more cities and even entire countries have committed themselves to reduce unwanted glare.

### Questions 1-7:

*Do the following statements agree with the information given in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 157 Reading Passage 1? In boxes 1-7 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). Few people recognise nowadays that human beings are designed to function best in daylight.
- (2). Most light pollution is caused by the direction of artificial lights rather than their intensity.
- (3). By 1800 the city of London had such a large population, it was already causing light pollution.
- (4). The fishermen of the South Atlantic are unaware of the light pollution they are causing.
- (5). Shadows from the planet Venus are more difficult to see at certain times of the year.
- (6). In some Swiss valleys, the total number of bats declined rapidly after the introduction of streetlights.
- (7). The first attempts to limit light pollution were carried out to help those studying the stars.

Questions 8-13:

Complete the table below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 157 passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes

8-13 on your answer sheet.

CREATURE	EFFECTS OF LIGHT
Songbirds and seabirds bump into <b>9</b> .....	The worst-affected birds are those which are seabirds <b>8</b> ..... which stand out at night
Desert rodents and badgers	They are more at risk from <b>10</b> .....
Migrating birds not suitable on arrival.	Early migration may mean the <b>11</b> ..... are
Sea turtles	They suffer from a decreasing number of <b>12</b> .....
Frogs and toads	If they are near <b>13</b> ..... their routines will be upset.

## Reading Passage 2

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 157 Reading Passage Endless Harvest below.*

### Endless Harvest

More than two hundred years ago, Russian explorers and fur hunters landed on the Aleutian Islands, a volcanic archipelago in the North Pacific, and learned of a land mass that lay farther to the north. 'The islands' native inhabitants called this land mass Aleyska, the 'Great Land'; today, we know it as Alaska.

The forty-ninth state to join the United States of America (in 1959), Alaska is fully one-fifth the size of the mainland 48 states combined. It shares, with Canada, the second longest river system in North America and has over half the coastline of the United States. The rivers feed into the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska - cold, nutrient-rich waters which support tens of millions of seabirds, and over 400 species of fish, shellfish, crustaceans, and molluscs. Taking advantage of this rich bounty, Alaska's commercial fisheries have developed into some of the largest in the world.

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Alaska's commercial fisheries landed hundreds of thousands of tonnes of shellfish and herring, and well over a million tonnes of groundfish (cod, sole, perch and pollack) in 2000. The true cultural heart and soul of Alaska's fisheries, however, is salmon. 'Salmon,' notes writer Susan Ewing in The Great Alaska Nature Factbook, 'pump through Alaska like blood through a heart, bringing rhythmic, circulating nourishment to land, animals and people.' The 'predictable abundance of salmon allowed some native cultures to flourish,' and 'dying spawners\* feed bears, eagles, other animals, and ultimately the soil itself.' All five species of Pacific salmon - chinook, or king; chum, or dog; coho, or silver; sockeye, or red; and pink, or humpback - spawn\*\* in Alaskan waters, and 90% of all Pacific salmon commercially caught in North America are produced there. Indeed, if Alaska was an independent nation, it would be the largest producer of wild salmon in the world. During 2000, commercial catches of Pacific salmon in Alaska exceeded 320,000 tonnes, with an ex-vessel value of over \$US 260 million.

Catches have not always been so healthy. Between 1940 and 1959, overfishing led to crashes in salmon populations so severe that in 1953 Alaska was declared a federal disaster area. With the onset of statehood, however, the State of Alaska took over management of its own fisheries, guided by a state constitution which mandates that Alaska's natural resources be managed on a sustainable basis. At that time, statewide harvests totalled around 25 million salmon. Over the next few decades average catches steadily increased as a result of this policy of sustainable management, until, during the 1990s, annual harvests were well in excess of 100 million, and on several occasions over 200 million fish .

The primary reason for such increases is what is known as 'In-Season Abundance-Based Management'. There are biologists throughout the state constantly monitoring adult fish as they

show up to spawn. The biologists sit in streamside counting towers, study sonar, watch from aeroplanes, and talk to fishermen. The salmon season in Alaska is not pre-set. The fishermen know the approximate time of year when they will be allowed to fish, but on any given day, one or more field biologists in a particular area can put a halt to fishing. Even sport fishing can be brought to a halt. It is this management mechanism that has allowed Alaska salmon stocks - and, accordingly, Alaska salmon fisheries - to prosper, even as salmon populations in the rest of the United States are increasingly considered threatened or even endangered.

In 1999, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) \*\*\* commissioned a review of the Alaska salmon fishery. The Council, which was founded in 1996, certifies fisheries that meet high environmental standards, enabling them to use a label that recognises their environmental responsibility. The MSC has established a set of criteria by which commercial fisheries can be judged. Recognising the potential benefits of being identified as environmentally responsible, fisheries approach the Council requesting to undergo the certification process. The MSC then appoints a certification committee, composed of a panel of fisheries experts, which gathers information and opinions from fishermen, biologists, government officials, industry representatives, non-governmental organisations and others.

Some observers thought the Alaska salmon fisheries would not have any chance of certification when, in the months leading up to MSC's final decision, salmon runs throughout western Alaska completely collapsed. In the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers, chinook and chum runs were probably the poorest since statehood; subsistence communities throughout the region, who normally have priority over commercial fishing, were devastated.

The crisis was completely unexpected, but researchers believe it had nothing to do with impacts of fisheries. Rather, they contend, it was almost certainly the result of climatic shifts, prompted in part by cumulative effects of the el nino/la nina phenomenon on Pacific Ocean temperatures, culminating in a harsh winter in which huge numbers of salmon eggs were frozen. It could have meant the end as far as the certification process was concerned. However, the state reacted quickly, closing down all fisheries, even those necessary for subsistence purposes .

In September 2000, MSC announced that the Alaska salmon fisheries qualified for certification. Seven companies producing Alaska salmon were immediately granted permission to display the MSC logo on their products. Certification is for an initial period of five years, with an annual review to ensure that the fishery is continuing to meet the required standards.

## Questions 14-20

*Do the following statements agree with the information given in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 157 Reading Passage 2?*

*In boxes 14-20 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

(14) The inhabitants of the Aleutian islands renamed their islands 'Alyeska'.

(15) Alaska's fisheries are owned by some of the world's largest companies.

(16) Life in Alaska is dependent on salmon.

(17) Ninety per cent of all Pacific salmon caught are sockeye or pink salmon.

(18) More than 320,000 tonnes of salmon were caught in Alaska in 2000.

(19) Between 1940 and 1959, there was a sharp decrease in Alaska's salmon population.

(20) During the 1990s, the average number of salmon caught each year was 100 million.

### Questions 21-26

Complete each sentence with the correct ending, A-K, below.

Write the correct letter, A-K, in boxes 21-26 on your answer sheet.

(21) In Alaska, biologists keep a check on adult fish

(22) Biologists have the authority

(23) In-Season Abundance-Based Management has allowed the Alaska salmon fisheries

(24) The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) was established

(25) As a result of the collapse of the salmon runs in 1999, the state decided

(26) In September 2000, the MSC allowed seven Alaska salmon companies



- (A) to recognise fisheries that care for the environment.
- (B) to be successful.
- (C) to stop fish from spawning.
- (D) to set up environmental protection laws.
- (E) to stop people fishing for sports
- (F) to label their products using the MSC logo.
- (G) to ensure that fish numbers are sufficient to permit fishing.
- (H) to assist the subsistence communities in the region.
- (I) to freeze a huge number of salmon eggs.
- (J) to deny certification to the Alaska fisheries.
- (K) to close down all fisheries.

### Reading Passage 3

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 150 Reading Passage Film Noir below.*

#### Film Noir

After the Second World War, a curious change came over the outlook of Hollywood films. Rather than the positive, happy-ending stories that dominated the silver screen before the war, pessimism and negativity had entered American cinema. This post-war disillusionment was evident in Hollywood and the movement became known as film noir.

One would be mistaken to call film noir a genre. Unlike westerns or romantic comedies, film noir cannot be defined by conventional uses of setting or conflict in a way that is common to genre films. Film noir is more of a movement, pinned to one specific point in time in much the same way as Soviet Montage or German Expressionism was. Instead, the defining quality of film noir was linked to tone, lighting and an often sombre mood.

True film noir refers to Hollywood films of the 1940s and early 1950s that dealt with dark themes such as crime and corruption. These films were essentially critiquing certain aspects of American society in a way film had never done before. Since that time there have occasionally been other great noir films made, such as Chinatown, but the mood and tone are often different to the original film noir movies. One possible reason for this is the time in which the films were made. A common perception of art is that it reflects the society and time in which it is made. That makes film noir of the Forties and Fifties quite inimitable because, luckily, the world has not had to endure a war of the scale and destruction of the Second World War again.

Paul Schrader, a writer of films like Taxi Driver and Raging Bull, sees film noir as one of Hollywood's best and least-known periods. In his essay Notes on Film Nair, he admits that classifying film noir is almost impossible because many films considered as film noir vary greatly in style. He observed that there were four main traditions in film noir. First were the films specifically about war and post-war disillusionment. Schrader believes these films were not only

a reflection of the war but also a delayed reaction to the great economic depression of the 1930s.

The trend in Hollywood throughout this period and into the war was to produce films aimed at keeping people's spirits up, hence the positivity. As soon as the war ended, crime fiction started to become popular, which mirrored growing disillusionment in America. Films such as *The Blue Dahlia* and *Dead Reckoning* picked up on a trend that started during the war with *The Maltese Falcon* in 1941, which is seen as the first example of film noir.

Another film noir tradition was post-war realism. This style of the film was similar to some European films of the same era, such as Italy's neorealist films like Vittorio De Sica's *Bicycle Thieves* and Roberto Rossellini's *Open City*. Part of this style was created by filming in real locations and away from constructed sets. The honesty of this style of film suited the post-war mood in America and is demonstrated well in Jules Dassin's *Night and the City*, much of which was filmed in and around London.

The third tradition of film noir according to Paul Schrader involves what he characterises as 'The German Influence'. Especially during the 1920s German Expressionism was one of the most unique and creative firms of cinema. Many German, Austrian and Polish directors immigrated to America before or during the rise of Hitler and in part due to the increasing control and prevention of artistic freedom. Many of them, such as Fritz Lang and Billy Wilder, would find their way into the Hollywood system and to this day remain some of the most celebrated directors of all time.

It was the lighting developed in German Expressionism, in particular, that was most influential on film noir. The interplay of light and shadow created by chiaroscuro was highly suggestive of hidden darkness and was largely responsible for creating the mood and feeling of film noir. But it was the coupling of expressionist lighting with realistic settings that really gave film noir its authenticity. It is no surprise then that two of the most popular film noir feature films, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Ace in the Hole*, were both directed by Billy Wilder.

The final tradition of film noir noted by Schrader is what he dubs 'The Hard-Boiled Tradition'. He notes how American literature of the time was the driving force behind much of this style of film noir. Ernest Hemingway, Raymond Chandler and James M. Cain were tough, cynical and uncompromising and their work reflects this type of attitude. If German Expressionism influenced the visual aspect of film noir, it was this hard-boiled writing style that influenced the characters, stories and scripts depicted on screen. Raymond Chandler adapted the screenplay for the film noir classic *Double Indemnity* from a James M. Cain story. This writing team, with Billy Wilder, again directing, was the perfect combination for one of Hollywood's most celebrated films.

Questions 27-32



*Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 157 Reading Passage 3?*

*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

(27) The First World War had a big influence on the types of films being made in Hollywood.

(28) Film noir is an official genre.

(29) True film noir can be from any time and be about any kind of social issue.

(30) Filmmaker Paul Schrader believes that film noir is almost impossible to classify.

(31) Mixing light and shadow was mainly responsible for creating a unique mood and feeling of film noir.

(32) During the 1950s film noir was the most successful type of film at the box office.

Questions 33-37

*Complete the notes below.*

*Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.*

*Write your answers in boxes 33-37 on your answer sheet.*

## THE FOUR TRADITIONS OF FILM NOIR

### War and post-war disillusionment:

A delayed **33** ..... to the great economic depression.

The Hollywood trend during the depression and war was to produce films aimed at keeping people's spirits up.

### Post-war realism:

Part of the style was created by shooting the films in real locations instead of on sets. Similar to European film styles such as **34** ..... in Italy.

### The German Influence:

Many directors from Germany, Austria and Poland **35** ..... to America during the 1920s and 1930s.

The use of lighting styles developed by German Expressionist films was very influential on film noir.

Combining chiaroscuro lighting with filming in real locations gave film noir its **36**.....

### The hard-boiled tradition:

These films were heavily influenced by popular literature of the time by writers like Ernest Hemingway.

The hard-boiled writing style influenced the depiction of **37** ....., stories and scripts in film noir.

### Questions 38-40

*Complete each sentence with the correct ending, A-F*

*Write your answers in boxes 38-40 on your answer sheet.*

**(38)** After the war, instead of the positive films that existed in Hollywood before

**(39)** The honesty of post-war realism in film noir

**(40)** Double Indemnity, directed by Billy Wilder, is

- (A) suited the mood in America well.
- (B) one of Hollywood's most notable films.
- (C) there were a lot more romantic comedies released in America.
- (D) was something most people were not ready for.
- (E) negativity had entered Hollywood films.
- (F) a film that very few people know about today.

