

# IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 161

## Reading Passage 1

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-14, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 161 Reading Passage How to handle the Sun below.*

### How to handle the Sun

**{A}**. The medical world appears to be divided on the effects of the sun upon the human body. From statements like, “There is no known relationship between a tan and health” to “perhaps sun-tanned skin absorbs the ultraviolet rays and converts them into helpful energy”, there are some things which are still the topic of research. Doctors agree on one of the benefits of the sun – vitamin D. It is well known that vitamin D is acquired from the direct rays of the sun – an entirely separate miracle from sun tanning. The sun’s ultraviolet rays penetrate only a tiny amount into the human skin, but in the process, they irradiate an element in the skin called ergosterol, which is a substance that stores up reserves of vitamin D received from the sun. This is both healthy and beneficial for human skin.

**{B}**. All around the Western World, people have developed an obsession with the sun. In many western countries, a suntan has become the trade-mark of a healthy, active, outdoor person. The basic reddish hue just beneath the surface of our skin is the outward reflection of the millions of red corpuscles flowing through tiny blood vessels. This is most noticeable in the pure skin of a baby which can change in a moment from porcelain white (with anger or a switch in temperature) to crimson. In Caucasians, this colouring is somewhat hidden by an acquired layer of sun-made pigment, which varies in tone according to the complexion and occupation of the individual.

**{C}**. Locale plays a big part in the effectiveness of the suntan. Mountain tops and beaches are nonpareil sun spas because they receive far purer sunlight than the rest of the land. Urban areas with their smoke and smog act as a filter removing all the healthy properties of the sun. Perhaps the seashore is best of all, with its air estimated to have at least a fifth of a per cent more oxygen than inland ether – free of city and inland dust, tars, pollen, and allergens.

**{D}**. The sun has long been called nature’s greatest health giver and healer and has played a chief role at health resorts ever since August Rollick, the Swiss father of heliotherapy, opened his first high-Alps sanatorium in 1903. Dr. W. W. Coblenz suggests that the sun cure is a major factor in the treatment of at least 23 skin diseases, ranging from acne and eczema to ulcers and wounds. Another specialist, Dr. Richard Kovacs writes, “Sun treatment is often helpful to persons suffering from general debility – repeated colds, respiratory diseases, influenza and the like”. After a long winter, the return to the sun, writes Dr. Leonard Dodds, the British sunlight

scholar, "is a general stimulus to the body, more potent if applied after a period when it has been lacking which gradually loses its effect if exposure is over prolonged, even when not excessive".

**{E}**. Over many years of study, dermatologists have proven that excessive exposure to sunlight for years is responsible for a large proportion of skin cancer amongst the population. Those with the greatest chance of doing permanent damage to their skin are the year-round outdoor workers – 90% of which occurs on the heavily exposed hands and face. The first line of defense against permanent sun damage is the skin's own natural fatty matter and sweat, which combine to form an oily acid surface shield against the ultraviolet rays. At the beach, the saltwater washes away this natural oily coat, the hot sun overworks the sweat glands so that the excess becomes ineffective and the dry wind and hot sun combine to dehydrate the skin itself. Over the years, women have shown far greater wisdom in the care of their skin than men. Since the ladies of ancient Egypt first began to apply the fat of the so-called sacred temple cats to their faces, women have been tireless in waging this battle against damage to the skin from the sun. Both sexes now contribute annually to a multi-million dollar global sunscreen business.

**{F}**. Other parts of the human body which tend to suffer from exposure to the sun are the eyes and hair. Many years ago, optometrists undertook studies in America to examine the influence of the sun upon the eyes by studying Atlantic City lifeguards and found that even a few hours in the bright sun without sunglasses could cause a significant loss of vision – a loss that might take several weeks from which to recover. So gradual was the change that the lifeguards were unaware that their sight had been affected. The solution to this problem was to introduce sunglasses as a standard part of the lifeguard uniform. These were dark enough to absorb the sun's harmful UV rays and most of its infrared and ultraviolet rays.

**{G}**. Of a lesser impact is the effect of the sun upon the hair. The penalty of the sun parching is a brittle dryness. Haircare professionals recommend a nutritional cream treatment with a substance containing lanolin to bring your hair back its natural softness, these usually come in the form of leave-in conditioners, and should be applied frequently, just as you would a sunscreen for the skin. Or, easier still, wear a hat. Wearing a hat has a dual effect: it protects the hair and helps to prevent the most dangerous of outdoor afflictions: sunstroke.

### Question 1-4

*Look at the following people (Questions 1-4) and the list of statements below.*

*Match each person with the correct statement.*

*Write the correct letter A-H in boxes 1-4 on your answer sheet.*

**(1)**. Richard Kovacs

**(2)**. August Rollier

**(3)**. W. Coblenz

**(4)**. Leonard Dodds

- (A). believes that the benefits of the sun are not scientifically provable
- (B). claims to have discovered the vitamin released in the skin by the sun
- (C). suggests that the sun is an excellent healer
- (D). invented the first sunscreen
- (E). suggests that the sun assists with common illnesses
- (F). thinks that initially, the sun is of benefit to the body
- (G). is unsure about the benefits of the sun
- (H). thinks the location is very important in maximizing the benefit from the sun

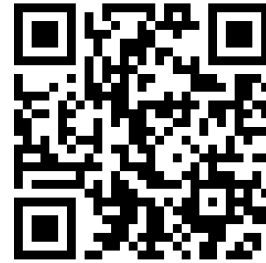
### Question 5-9

Do the following statements agree with the information given in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 161 Passage 1?

In boxes 5-9 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

- (5). Most doctors agree when it comes to the health benefits of the sun.
- (6). Beaches are best for a suntan because the air has far less pollution.
- (7). Women applied fat to their skin for protection from the sun.
- (8). Extended exposure of the eyes to the sun can lead to blindness.
- (9). The human eye cannot heal itself when it is damaged by the sun.



Question 10-14

Complete the summary using the words from the box.

Write your answers in boxes 10-14 on your answer sheet.

Handling the Sun

Many doctors agree that skin cancer can be caused by excessive exposure to the sun. As far as the human body is concerned, it is primarily the face and hands that are (10)\_\_\_\_\_. When human skin is exposed to the sun, the body has a defense: an (11)\_\_\_\_\_ of the skin's natural oils and acids. For some time, women have been more effective than men in (12)\_\_\_\_\_ for their skin. Eyes are a significant part of the body that are negatively affected by the sun. The damage often goes undetected because it happens quite (13)\_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, hair becomes quite dry and brittle when exposed to the sun for an extended period. A lanolin-based conditioner is recommended by hair care professionals to (14)\_\_\_\_\_ this problem. Perhaps a simple hat may be the best solution for hair.

overcome	triumph	caring	arrangement	combined
maintaining	mixed	minding	surprisingly	
located	quickly	prolonged	affected	
slowly	extended	blend	succeed	

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 15-27, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 161 Reading Passage Irish Potato Famine below.

## Irish Potato Famine

**{A}** In the ten years following the Irish potato famine of 1845, over 750,000 Irish people died, including many of those who attempted to immigrate to countries such as the United States and Canada. Prior to the potato blight, one of the main concerns in Ireland was overpopulation. In the early 1500s, the country's population was estimated at less than three million, but by 1840 this number had nearly tripled. The bountiful potato crop, which contains almost all of the nutrients that a person needs for survival, was largely to blame for the population growth. However, within five years of the failed crop of 1845, the population of Ireland was reduced by a quarter. A number of factors contributed to the plummet of the Irish population, namely the Irish dependency on the potato crop, the British tenure system, and the inadequate relief efforts of the English.

**{B}** It is not known exactly how or when the potato was first introduced to Europe, however, the general assumption is that it arrived on a Spanish ship sometime in the 1600s. For more than one hundred years, Europeans believed that potatoes belonged to a botanical family of a poisonous breed. It was not until Marie Antoinette wore potato blossoms in her hair in the mid-eighteenth century that potatoes became a novelty. By the late 1700s, the dietary value of the potato had been discovered, and the monarchs of Europe ordered the vegetable to be widely planted.

**{C}** By 1800, the vast majority of the Irish population had become dependent on the potato as its primary staple. It wasn't uncommon for an Irish potato farmer to consume more than six pounds of potatoes a day. Families stored potatoes for the winter and even fed potatoes to their livestock. Because of this dependency, the unexpected potato blight of 1845 devastated the Irish. Investigators at first suggested that the blight was caused by static energy, smoke from railroad trains, or vapours from underground volcanoes; however, the root cause was later discovered as an airborne fungus that travelled from Mexico. Not only did the disease destroy the potato crops, it also infected all of the potatoes in storage at the time. Their families were dying from famine, but weakened farmers had retained little of their agricultural skills to harvest other crops. Those who did manage to grow things such as oats, wheat, and barley relied on earnings from these exported crops to keep their rented homes.

**{D}** While the potato blight generated mass starvation among the Irish, the people were held captive to their poverty by the British tenure system. Following the Napoleonic Wars of 1815, the English had turned their focus to their colonial land holdings. British landowners realised that the best way to profit from these holdings was to extract the resources and exports and charge expensive rents and taxes for people to live on the land. Under the tenure system, Protestant landlords owned 95 percent of the Irish land, which was divided up into five-acre plots for the people to live and farm on. As the population of Ireland grew, however, the plots were continuously subdivided into smaller parcels. Living conditions declined dramatically, and families were forced to move to less fertile land where almost nothing but the potato would grow.

**{E}** During this same period of colonisation. The Penal Laws were also instituted as a means of weakening the Irish spirit. Under the Penal Laws, Irish peasants were denied basic human

rights, such as the right to speak their own native language, seek certain kinds of employment, practice their faith, receive education, and own land. Despite the famine that was devastating Ireland, the landlords had little compassion or sympathy for tenants unable to pay their rent. Approximately 500,000 Irish tenants were evicted by their landlords between 1845 and 1847. Many of these people also had their homes burned down and were put in jail for overdue rent.

**{F}** The majority of the British officials in the 1840s adopted the laissez-faire philosophy, which supported a policy of non-intervention in the Irish plight. Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel was an exception. He showed compassion toward the Irish by making a move to repeal the Corn Laws, which had been put in place to protect British grain producers from the competition of foreign markets. For this hasty decision, Peel quickly lost the support of the British people and was forced to resign. The new Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, allowed assistant Charles Trevelyan to take complete control over all of the relief efforts in Ireland. Trevelyan believed that the Irish situation should be left to Providence. Claiming that it would be dangerous to let the Irish become dependent on other countries, he even took steps to close food depots that were selling corn and to redirect shipments of corn that were already on their way to Ireland. A few relief programs were eventually implemented, such as soup kitchens and workhouses; however, these were poorly run institutions that facilitated the spread of disease, tore apart families, and offered inadequate food supplies considering the extent of Ireland's shortages.

**{G}** Many of the effects of the Irish potato famine are still evident today. Descendants of those who fled Ireland during the 1840s are dispersed all over the world. Some of the homes that were evacuated by absentee landlords still sit abandoned in the Irish hills. A number of Irish descendants still carry animosity toward the British for not putting people before politics. The potato blight itself still plagues the Irish people during certain growing seasons when weather conditions are favourable for the fungus to thrive.

**The IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 161 passage has seven paragraphs, A-G.**

**Which paragraph contains the following information?**

**Write the correct letter in boxes 15-19 on your Answer Sheet**

- (15).** the position of the British government towards the potato famine
- (16).** a description of the system of land ownership in Ireland
- (17).** early European attitudes toward the potato
- (18).** explanation of the lack of legal protection for Irish peasants
- (19).** the importance of the potato in Irish society



## Questions 20-27

Complete each sentence with the correct ending, A-L from the box at the top of the nextpage. Write the correct letter in boxes 20-27 on your Answer Sheet. There are more endings than sentences, so you won't use them all.

### Sentence Beginnings

- (20). At first Europeans didn't eat potatoes
- (21). European monarchs encourage potato growing
- (22). The potato blight was devastating to the Irish
- (23). Farmers who grew oats, wheat, and barley didn't eat these crops
- (24). Many Irish farmers lived on infertile plots
- (25). Many Irish farmers were arrested
- (26). Sir Robert Peel lost his position as prime minister
- (27). Soup kitchens and workhouses didn't relieve the suffering

### Sentence Endings

- (A) because they couldn't pay the rent on their farms.
- (B) because railroad trains caused air pollution.
- (C) because potatoes were their main source of food.
- (D) because Charles Trevelyan took over relief efforts.
- (E) because they needed the profits to pay the rent.
- (F) because they weren't well-managed.
- (G) because there wasn't enough land for the increasing population.
- (H) because his efforts to help the Irish were unpopular among the British.
- (I) because they believed that potatoes were poisonous.
- (J) because the British instituted penal laws.
- (K) because it was discovered that potatoes are full of nutrients.
- (L) because Marie Antoinette used potato blossoms as decoration

## Reading Passage 3

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 161 Reading Passage A neuroscientist reveals how to think differently below.*

### A neuroscientist reveals how to think differently

In the last decade a revolution has occurred in the way that scientists think about the brain. We now know that the decisions humans make can be traced to the firing patterns of neurons in specific parts of the brain. These discoveries have led to the field known as neuroeconomics, which studies the brain's secrets to success in an economic environment that demands innovation and being able to do things differently from competitors. A brain that can do this is an iconoclastic one. Briefly, an iconoclast is a person who does something that others say can't be done.

This definition implies that iconoclasts are different from other people, but more precisely, it is their brains that are different in three distinct ways: perception, fear response, and social intelligence. Each of these three functions utilizes a different circuit in the brain. Naysayers might suggest that the brain is irrelevant, that thinking in an original, even revolutionary, way is more a matter of personality than brain function. But the field of neuroeconomics was born out of the realization that the physical workings of the brain place limitations on the way we make decisions. By understanding these constraints, we begin to understand why some people march to a different drumbeat.

The first thing to realize is that the brain suffers from limited resources. It has a fixed energy budget, about the same as a 40 watt light bulb, so it has evolved to work as efficiently as possible. This is where most people are impeded from being an iconoclast. For example, when confronted with information streaming from the eyes, the brain will interpret this information in the quickest way possible. Thus it will draw on both past experience and any other source of information, such as what other people say, to make sense of what it is seeing. This happens all the time. The brain takes shortcuts that work so well we are hardly ever aware of them. We think our perceptions of the world are real, but they are only biological and electrical rumblings. Perception is not simply a product of what your eyes or ears transmit to your brain. More than the physical reality of photons or sound waves, perception is a product of the brain.

Perception is central to iconoclasm. Iconoclasts see things differently to other people. Their brains do not fall into efficiency pitfalls as much as the average person's brain. Iconoclasts, either because they were born that way or through learning, have found ways to work around the perceptual shortcuts that plague most people. Perception is not something that is hardwired into the brain. It is a learned process, which is both a curse and an opportunity for change. The brain faces the fundamental problem of interpreting physical stimuli from the senses. Everything the brain sees, hears, or touches has multiple interpretations. The one that is ultimately chosen is simply the brain's best theory. In technical terms, these conjectures have their basis in the statistical likelihood of one interpretation over another and are heavily influenced by past experience and, importantly for potential iconoclasts, what other people say.

The best way to see things differently to other people is to bombard the brain with things it has never encountered before. Novelty releases the perceptual process from the chains of past experience and



forces the brain to make new judgments. Successful iconoclasts have an extraordinary willingness to be exposed to what is fresh and different. Observation of iconoclasts shows that they embrace novelty while most people avoid things that are different. The problem with novelty, however, is that it tends to trigger the brain's fear system. Fear is a major impediment to thinking like an iconoclast and stops the average person in his tracks. There are many types of fear, but the two that inhibit iconoclastic thinking and people generally find difficult to deal with are fear of uncertainty and fear of public ridicule. These may seem like trivial phobias. But fear of public speaking, which everyone must do from time to time, afflicts one-third of the population. This makes it too common to be considered a mental disorder. It is simply a common variant of human nature, one which iconoclasts do not let inhibit their reactions.

Finally, to be successful iconoclasts, individuals must sell their ideas to other people. This is where social intelligence comes in. Social intelligence is the ability to understand and manage people in a business setting. In the last decade there has been an explosion of knowledge about the social brain and how the brain works when groups coordinate decision making. Neuroscience has revealed which brain circuits are responsible for functions like understanding what other people think, empathy, fairness, and social identity. These brain regions play key roles in whether people convince others of their ideas. Perception is important in social cognition too. The perception of someone's enthusiasm, or reputation, can make or break a deal. Understanding how perception becomes intertwined with social decision making shows why successful iconoclasts are so rare.

Iconoclasts create new opportunities in every area from artistic expression to technology to business. They supply creativity and innovation not easily accomplished by committees. Rules aren't important to them. Iconoclasts face alienation and failure, but can also be a major asset to any organization. It is crucial for success in any field to understand how the iconoclastic mind works.

### Questions 28-31:

*Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D. Write the correct letter in boxes 28-31 on your answer sheet.*

**Question 28** According to the writer, iconoclasts are distinctive because

- (A) they create unusual brain circuits.
- (B) their brains function differently.
- (C) their personalities are distinctive.
- (D) they make decisions easily.

**Question 29** According to the writer, the brain works efficiently because

- (A) it uses the eyes quickly.
- (B) it interprets data logically.
- (C) it generates its own energy.
- (D) it relies on previous events.

**Question 30** The writer says that perception is

- (A) a combination of photons and sound waves.
- (B) a reliable product of what your senses transmit.
- (C) a result of brain processes.
- (D) a process we are usually conscious of.

**Question 31** According to the writer, an iconoclastic thinker

- (A) centralises perceptual thinking in one part of the brain.
- (B) avoids cognitive traps.
- (C) has a brain that is hardwired for learning.
- (D) has more opportunities than the average person.

**Questions 32-37:**

*Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 161 Passage 3?*

*In boxes 32-37 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

(32) Exposure to different events forces the brain to think differently.

(33) Iconoclasts are unusually receptive to new experiences.

(34) Most people are too shy to try different things.

(35) If you think in an iconoclastic way, you can easily overcome fear.

(36) When concern about embarrassment matters less, other fears become irrelevant.

(37) Fear of public speaking is a psychological illness.

**Questions 38-40:**

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

*Write the correct letter, A-E, in boxes 38-40 on your answer sheet.*

**(38)** Thinking like a successful iconoclast is demanding because it

**(39)** The concept of the social brain is useful to iconoclasts because it

**(40)** Iconoclasts are generally an asset because their way of thinking

- (A)** requires both perceptual and social intelligence skills.
- (B)** focuses on how groups decide on an action.
- (C)** works in many fields, both artistic and scientific.
- (D)** leaves one open to criticism and rejection.
- (E)** involves understanding how organisations manage people.

