

IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 Reading Passage Networking as a concept below.

Networking as a Concept

Networking as a concept has acquired what is in all truth an unjustified air of modernity. It is considered in the corporate world as an essential tool for the modern businessperson, as they trot round the globe drumming up business for themselves or a corporation. The concept is worn like a badge of distinction, and not just in the business world.

People can be divided basically into those who keep knowledge and their personal contacts to themselves, and those who are prepared to share what they know and indeed their friends with others. A person who is insecure, for example someone who finds it difficult to share information with others and who is unable to bring people, including friends, together does not make a good networker. The classic networker is someone who is strong enough within themselves to connect different people including close friends with each other. For example, a businessman or an academic may meet someone who is likely to be a valuable contact in the future, but at the moment that person may benefit from meeting another associate or friend.

It takes quite a secure person to bring these people together and allow a relationship to develop independently of himself. From the non-networker's point of view such a development may be intolerable, especially if it is happening outside their control. The unfortunate thing here is that the initiator of the contact, if he did but knew it, would be the one to benefit most. And why?

Because all things being equal, people move within circles and that person has the potential of being sucked into ever-growing spheres of new contacts. It is said that, if you know eight people, you are in touch with everyone in the world. It does not take much common sense to realise the potential for any kind of venture as one is able to draw on the experience of more and more people.

Unfortunately, making new contacts, business or otherwise, while it brings success, does cause problems. It enlarges the individual's world. This is in truth not altogether a bad thing, but it puts more pressure on the networker through his having to maintain an ever larger circle of people. The most convenient way out is, perhaps, to cull old contacts, but this would be anathema to our networker as it would defeat the whole purpose of networking. Another problem is the reaction of friends and associates. Spreading oneself thinly gives one less time for others who were perhaps closer to one in the past. In the workplace, this can cause tension with jealous colleagues, and even with superiors who might be tempted to rein in a more successful inferior. Jealousy and envy can prove to be very detrimental if one is faced with a very insecure manager, as this person may seek to stifle someone's career or even block it completely.

The answer here is to let one's superiors share in the glory; to throw them a few crumbs of comfort. It is called leadership from the bottom. In the present business climate, companies and enterprises

need to co-operate with each other in order to expand. As globalization grows apace, companies need to be able to span not just countries but continents. Whilst people may rail against this development it is for the moment here to stay. Without cooperation and contacts, specialist companies will not survive for long. Computer components, for example, need to be compatible with the various machines on the market and to achieve this, firms need to work in conjunction with others. No business or institution can afford to be an island in today's environment. In the not very distant past, it was possible for companies to go it alone, but it is now more difficult to do so.

The same applies in the academic world, where ideas have been jealously guarded. The opening-up of universities and colleges to the outside world in recent years has been of enormous benefit to industry and educational institutions. The stereotypical academic is one who moves in a rarefied atmosphere living a life of sometimes splendid isolation, a prisoner of their own genius. This sort of person does not fit easily into the mould of the modern networker. Yet even this insular world is changing. The ivory towers are being left ever more frequently as educational experts forge links with other bodies; sometimes to stunning effect as in Silicon Valley in America and around Cambridge in England, which now has one of the most concentrated clusters of high-tech companies in Europe.

It is the networkers, the wheeler-dealers, the movers and shakers, call them what you will, that carry the world along. The world of the Neanderthals was shaken between 35,000 and 40,000 BC; they were superseded by Homo Sapiens with the very 'networking' skills that separate us from other animals: understanding, thought abstraction and culture, which are inextricably linked to planning survival and productivity in humans. It is said the meek will inherit the earth. But will they?

Questions 1-5

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

- (1) Networking is not a modern idea.
- (2) Networking is worn like a badge exclusively in the business world.
- (3) People fall into two basic categories.
- (4) A person who shares knowledge and friends makes a better networker than one who does not.
- (5) The classic networker is physically strong and generally in good health.

Questions 6-10

Using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 passage, complete the sentences below.

- (6) Making new acquaintances but also has its disadvantages.
- (7) At work, problems can be caused if the manager is .
- (8) A manager can suppress, or even totally the career of an employee.
- (9) In business today, working together is necessary in order to grow.
- (10) Businesses that specialise will not last for long without .

Questions 11-15

Using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 passage, complete the sentences below.

- (11) In which sphere of life have ideas been protected by jealousy?
- (12) Which type of individual does not easily become a modern networker?
- (13) Where is one of the greatest concentrations of high tech companies in Europe?
- (14) Who replaced the Neanderthals?
- (15) What, as well as understanding and thought abstraction, sets us apart from other animals?

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 Reading Passage. Is it any wonder that there are teacher shortages? Below.

Is It any Wonder That There are Teacher Shortages?

Is it any wonder that there are teacher shortages? Daily, the press carries reports of schools going on four-day weeks simply because they cannot recruit enough teachers. But why? There is no straightforward answer. For a start, fewer students are entering teacher-training courses when they leave school. But can you blame young people after the barracking faced by the teaching profession in the UK over the last decade? The attack, relentless in the extreme, has been on several fronts. Government inspectors, by accident or design, have been feeding the media a constant stream of negative information about the teaching establishments in this country. Teachers also come in for a lot of flak from politicians. And the government wonders why there are problems in schools.

The government's obvious contempt for the teaching profession was recently revealed by one of the most powerful people in government when she referred to schools as 'bog standard comprehensives'. Hardly the sort of comment to inspire parents or careers advisers seeking to direct young people's future. Would you want to spend your working life in a dead-end profession? The government doesn't seem to want you to either.

On the administrative side, most teachers are weighed down by an increasing flow of bureaucracy. Cynicism would have me believe that this stops teachers from fomenting dissent as they are worn out by useless administrative exercises. Most teachers must then also be cynics!

Teacher bashing has, unfortunately, spread to youngsters in schools as the recent catalogue of physical attacks on teachers will testify. If grown-ups have no respect for the teaching profession, young people can hardly be expected to think any differently. The circle is then squared when, as well as experienced, competent teachers being driven out of the profession by the increased pressure and stress; fewer students are applying for teacher-training courses.

Increased salaries are certainly welcome, but they are not the complete answer to a sector in crisis. Addressing the standing of the profession in the eyes of the public is crucial to encourage experienced teachers to remain in the classroom and to make it an attractive career option for potential teachers once again. It might also be a good idea for the relevant ministers to go on a fact-finding mission and find out from teachers in schools, rather than relying too much on advisers, as to what changes could be brought about to improve the quality of the education service. Initiatives in the educational field surprisingly come from either politicians who know little about classroom practice or educational theorists who know even less, but are more dangerous because they work in the rarefied air of universities largely ignorant of classroom practice.

Making sure that nobody without recent classroom experience is employed as a teacher-trainer at any tertiary institution would further enhance the teaching profession. If someone does not have practical experience in the classroom, they cannot in all seriousness propound theories about it. Instead of being given sabbaticals to write books or papers, lecturers in teacher-training establishments should be made to spend a year at the blackboard or, these days, the whiteboard. This would give them practical insights into current classroom practice. Student teachers could then be given the chance to come and watch the specialists in the classroom: a much more worthwhile experience than the latter sitting thinking up ideas far removed from the classroom. Then we would have fewer initiatives like the recent government proposal to teach thinking in school. Prima facie, this is a laudable recommendation. But, as any practising teacher will tell you, this is done in every class. Perhaps someone needs to point out to the academic who thought up the scheme that the wheel has been around for some time.

In the educational field, there is surprisingly constant tension between the educational theorists and government officials on the one hand, who would like to see teachers marching in unison to some greater Utopian abstraction and, on the other, practising teachers. Any experienced classroom practitioner knows that the series of initiatives on teaching and learning that successive governments have tried to foist on schools and colleges do not work.

Questions 16-22

Complete the summary below of the first four paragraphs of IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 Passage 2.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 16-22 on your answer sheet.

Is it surprising that there are (16)..... teachers? Schools do not have enough teachers, but what are the reasons for this? To begin with, fewer students are going into (17)..... after finishing school. But this is not the young people's fault. The (18)..... of teaching has been under constant attack over the last ten years. The government's lack of respect for the profession is (19)..... . Moreover, administratively, the flow of bureaucracy is (20)..... Even pupils in schools have no respect for those who teach them, as a (21)..... series of assaults on teachers shows. The growing strain and stress means that, as well as fewer applications for teacher-training courses, teachers who have experience and are (22)..... are also being driven out.

Questions 23-29

In boxes 23-29 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

(23) More students are entering teacher-training courses.

(24) The government is right to be surprised that there are problems in schools.

(25) Teachers are too weighed down by administrative duties to stir up trouble.

(26) All teachers are cynics.

(27) Politicians are not as dangerous as educational theorists, who know even less than the former about educational theory.

(28) Any experienced classroom practitioner knows that the initiatives on teaching and learning that governments have tried to impose on schools do not work.

(29) The government's attitude with regard to teachers is of great interest to the general public.

Question 30

Choose the appropriate letter A-D and write it in box 30 on your answer sheet.

Question 30 Which one of the following is the most suitable title for the passage?

(A) Politicians and teachers.

(B) A profession undervalued.

(C) Recruitment difficulties in the teaching profession.

(D) Teacher-training needs improvement.

Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 Reading Passage Persistent bullying below.

Persistent Bullying

Persistent bullying is one of the worst experiences a child can face. How can it be prevented? Peter Smith, Professor of Psychology at the University of Sheffield, directed the Sheffield Anti-Bullying Intervention Project, funded by the Department for Education. Here he reports on his findings

{A}. Bullying can take a variety of forms, from the verbal -being taunted or called hurtful names- to the physical- being kicked or shoved- as well as indirect forms, such as being excluded from social groups. A survey I conducted with Irene Whitney found that in British primary schools up to a quarter of pupils reported experience of bullying, which in about one in ten cases was persistent. There was less bullying in secondary schools, with about one in twenty-five suffering persistent bullying, but these cases may be particularly recalcitrant.

{B}. Bullying is clearly unpleasant and can make the child experiencing it feel unworthy and depressed. In extreme cases, it can even lead to suicide, though this is thankfully rare. Victimised pupils are more likely to experience difficulties with interpersonal relationships as adults, while children who persistently bully are more likely to grow up to be physically violent, and convicted of anti-social offences.

{C}. Until recently, not much was known about the topic, and little help was available to teachers to deal with bullying. Perhaps as a consequence, schools would often deny the problem. 'There is no bullying at this school' has been a common refrain, almost certainly all true. Fortunately, more schools are now saying: There is not much bullying here, but when it occurs we have a clear policy for dealing with it.'

{D}. Three factors are involved in this change. First is an awareness of the severity of the problem. Second, a number of resources to help tackle bullying have become available in Britain. For example, the Scottish Council for Research in Education produced a package of materials, Action Against Bullying, circulated to all schools in England and Wales as well as in Scotland in summer 1992, with a second pack, Supporting Schools Against Bullying, produced the following year. In Ireland, Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour in Post-Primary Schools was published in 1993. Third, there is evidence that these materials work, and that schools can achieve something. This comes from carefully conducted 'before and after' evaluations of interventions in schools, monitored by a research team. In Norway, after an intervention campaign was introduced nationally, an evaluation of forty-two schools suggested that, over a two-year period, bullying was halved. The Sheffield investigation, which involved sixteen primary schools and seven secondary schools, found that most schools succeeded in reducing bullying.

{E}. Evidence suggests that a key step is to develop a policy on bullying, saying clearly what is meant by bullying, and giving explicit guidelines on what will be done if it occurs, what record will be kept, who will be informed, what sanctions will be employed. The policy should be developed through consultation, over a period of time- not just imposed from the head teacher's office! Pupils, parents and staff should feel they have been involved in the policy, which needs to be disseminated and implemented effectively. Other actions can be taken to back up the policy. There are ways of dealing with the topic through the curriculum, using video, drama and literature. These are useful for raising awareness, and can best be tied into early phases of development while the school is starting to discuss the issue of bullying. They are also useful in renewing the policy for new pupils or revising it in the light of experience. But curriculum work alone may only have short-term effects; it should be an addition to policy work, not a substitute.

{G}. There are also ways of working with individual pupils, or in small groups. Assertiveness training for pupils who are liable to be victims is worthwhile, and certain approaches to group bullying such as 'no blame', can be useful in changing the behaviour of bullying pupils without confronting them directly, although other sanctions may be needed for those who continue with persistent bullying. Work in the playground is important, too. One helpful step is to train lunchtime supervisors to distinguish bullying from playful fighting and help them break up conflicts. Another possibility is to improve the playground environment so that pupils are less likely to be led into bullying from boredom or frustration.

{F}. With these developments, schools can expect that at least the most serious kinds of bullying can largely be prevented. The more effort put in and the wider the whole school involvement, the more substantial the results are likely to be. The reduction in bullying – and the consequent improvement in pupil happiness- is surely a worthwhile objective.

Questions 31-34

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

Write the correct letter in boxes 31-34 on your answer sheet.

Question 31 A recent survey found that in British secondary schools

- (A) there was more bullying than had previously been the case.
- (B) there was less bullying than in primary schools.
- (C) cases of persistent bullying were very common.
- (D) indirect forms of bullying were particularly difficult to deal with.

Question 32 Children who are bullied

- (A) are twice as likely to commit suicide as the average person.
- (B) find it more difficult to relate to adults.
- (C) are less likely to be violent in later life.
- (D) may have difficulty forming relationships in later life.

Question 33 The writer thinks that the declaration 'There is no bullying at this school'

- (A) is no longer true in many schools.
- (B) was not in fact made by many schools.
- (C) reflected the school's lack of concern.
- (D) reflected a lack of knowledge and resources.

Question 34 What were the findings of research carried out in Norway?

- (A) Bullying declined by 50% after an anti-bullying campaign.
- (B) Twenty-one schools reduced bullying as a result of an anti-bullying campaign
- (C) Two years is the optimum length for an anti-bullying campaign.
- (D) Bullying is a less serious problem in Norway than in the UK.

Questions 35-39

Complete the summary below

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 passage for each answer

Write your answers in boxes 35-39 on your answer sheet.

What steps should schools take to reduce bullying?

The most important step is for the school authorities to produce a **(35)** which makes the school's attitude towards bullying quite clear. It should include detailed **(36)**..... as to how the school and its staff will react if bullying occurs. In addition, action can be taken through the **(37)** This is particularly useful in the early part of the process, as a way of raising awareness and encouraging discussion. On its own, however, it is insufficient to bring about a permanent solution. Effective work can also be done with individual pupils and small groups. For example, potential **(38)** of bullying can be trained to be more self-confident. Or again, in dealing with group bullying, a 'no blame' approach, which avoids confronting the offender too directly, is often effective. Playground supervision will be more effective if members of staff are trained to recognise the difference between bullying and mere **(39)**

Question 40

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

Write the correct letter in box 40 on your answer sheet.

Which of the following is the most suitable title for IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 162 Passage 3?

- (A) Bullying: what parents can do
- (B) Bullying: are the media to blame?
- (C) Bullying: the link with academic failure
- (D) Bullying: from crisis management to prevention