

IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 Reading Passage The Creativity Myth below.

The Creativity Myth

{A}. It is a myth that creative people are born with their talents: gifts from God or nature. Creative genius is, in fact, latent within many of us, without our realising. But how far do we need to travel to find the path to creativity? For many people, a long way. In our everyday lives, we have to perform many acts out of habit to survive, like opening the door, shaving, getting dressed, walking to work, and so on. If this were not the case, we would, in all probability, become mentally unhinged. So strongly ingrained are our habits, though this varies from person to person, that sometimes when a conscious effort is made to be creative, automatic response takes over. We may try, for example, to walk to work following a different route, but end up on our usual path. By then it is too late to go back and change our minds. Another day, perhaps. The same applies to all other areas of our lives. When we are solving problems, for example, we may seek different answers, but, often as not, find ourselves walking along the same well-trodden paths.

{B}. So, for many people, their actions and behavior have been set in immovable blocks. Their minds are clogged with the cholesterol of habitual actions, preventing them from operating freely, and thereby stifling creation. Unfortunately, mankind's very struggle for survival has become a tyranny – the obsessive desire to give order to the world is a case in point. Witness people's attitude to time, social customs and the panoply of rules and regulations by which the human mind has now circumscribed.

{C}. The groundwork for keeping creative ability in check begins at school. School, later university and then work, teach us to regulate our lives, imposing a continuous process of restrictions which is increasing exponentially with the advancement of technology. Is it surprising then that creative ability appears to be so rare? It is trapped in the prison that we have erected. Yet, even here in this hostile environment, the foundations for creativity are being laid; because setting off on the creative path is also partly about using rules and regulations. Such limitations are needed so that once they are learnt, they can be broken.

{D}. The truly creative mind is often seen as totally free and unfettered. But a better image is of a mind, which can be free when it wants, and one that recognises that rules and regulations are parameters, or barriers, to be raised and dropped again at will. An example of how the human mind can be trained to be creative might help here. People's minds are just like tense muscles that need to be freed up and the potential unlocked. One strategy is to erect artificial barriers or

hurdles in solving a problem. As a form of stimulation, the participants in the task can be forbidden to use particular solutions or to follow certain lines of thought to solve a problem. In this way, they are obliged to explore unfamiliar territory, which may lead to some startling discoveries. Unfortunately, the difficulty in this exercise, and with creation itself, is convincing people that creation is possible, shrouded as it is in so much myth and legend. There is also an element of fear involved, however subliminal, as deviating from the safety of one's thought patterns is very much akin to madness. But, open Pandora's box and a whole new world unfolds before your very eyes.

{E}. Lifting barriers into place also plays a major part in helping the mind to control ideas rather than letting them collide at random. Parameters act as containers for ideas and thus help the mind to fix on them. When the mind is thinking laterally and two ideas from different areas of the brain come or have been brought together, they form a new idea, just like atoms floating around and then forming a molecule. Once the idea has been formed, it needs to be contained or it will fly away, so fleeting is its passage. The mind needs to hold it in place for a time so that it can recognise it or call on it again. And then the parameters can act as channels along which the ideas can flow, developing and expanding. When the mind has brought the idea to fruition by thinking it through to its conclusion, the parameters can be brought down and the idea allowed to float off and come in contact with other ideas.

Questions 1-5

IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 Reading Passage 1 has five paragraphs, A-E.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter A-E in boxes 1-5 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

- (1). the way parameters in the mind help people to be creative
- (2). the need to learn rules to break them
- (3). how habits restrict us and limit creativity
- (4). how to train the mind to be creative
- (5). how the mind is trapped by the desire for order

Questions 6-10

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

Question 6. According to the writer, creative people

- (A). are usually born with their talents
- (B). are born with their talents
- (C). are not born with their talents
- (D). are geniuses

Question 7. According to the writer, creativity is

- (A). a gift from God or nature
- (B). an automatic response
- (C). difficult for many people to achieve
- (D). a well-trodden path

Question 8. According to the writer

- (A). the human race's fight to live is becoming a tyranny
- (B). the human brain is blocked with cholesterol
- (C). the human race is now circumscribed by talents
- (D). the human race's fight to survive stifles the creative ability

Question 9. Advancing technology

- (A). holds creativity in check
- (B). improves creativity
- (C). enhances creativity
- (D). is a tyranny

Question 10. According to the author, creativity

- (A). is common
- (B). is increasingly common
- (C). is becoming rarer and rarer
- (D). is a rare commodity

Questions 11-14

Do the following statements reflect the claims of the writer?

In boxes 11-14 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

- (11). Rules and regulations are examples of parameters.
- (12). The truly creative mind is associated with the need for free speech and a free society.
- (13). One problem with creativity is that people think it is impossible.
- (14). The act of creation links with madness.

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 Reading Passage Contaminating the Arctic below.

Contaminating the Arctic

{A} Our perception of the Arctic region is that its distance from industrial centers keeps it pristine and clear from the impact of pollution. However, through a process known as transboundary pollution, the Arctic is the recipient of contaminants whose sources are thousands of miles

away. Large quantities of pollutants pour into our atmosphere, as well as our lakes, rivers, and oceans on a daily basis. In the last 20 years, scientists have detected an increasing variety of toxic contaminants in the North, including pesticides from agriculture, chemicals and heavy metals from industry, and even radioactive fall-out from Chernobyl. These are substances that have invaded ecosystems virtually worldwide, but they are especially worrisome in the Arctic.

{B} Originally, Arctic contamination was largely blamed on chemical leaks, and these leaks were thought to be “small and localized.” The consensus now is that pollutants from around the world are being carried north by rivers, ocean currents, and atmospheric circulation. Due to extreme conditions in the Arctic, including reduced sunlight, extensive ice cover and cold temperatures, contaminants break down much more slowly than in warmer climates. Contaminants can also become highly concentrated due to their significantly lengthened life span in the Arctic.

{C} Problems of spring run-off into coastal waters during the growth period of marine life are of critical concern. Spring algae blooms easily, absorbing the concentrated contaminants released by spring melting. These algae are in turn eaten by zooplankton and a wide variety of marine life. The accumulation of these contaminants increases with each step of the food chain or web and can potentially affect northerners who eat marine mammals near the top of the food chain. Pollutants respect no borders; transboundary pollution is the movement of contaminants across political borders, whether by air, rivers, or ocean currents. The eight circumpolar nations, led by the Finnish Initiative of 1989, established the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) in which participants have agreed to develop an Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP). AMAP establishes an international scientific network to monitor the current condition of the Arctic with respect to specific contaminants. This monitoring program is extremely important because it will give a scientific basis for understanding the scope of the problem.

{D} In the 1950's, pilots traveling on weather reconnaissance flights in the Canadian high Arctic reported seeing bands of haze in the springtime in the Arctic region. It was during this time that the term “Arctic haze” was first used, referring to this smog of unknown origin. But it was not until 1972, that Dr. Glenn Shaw of the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska first put forth ideas of the nature and long-range origin of Arctic haze. The idea that the source was long range was very difficult for many to support. Each winter, cold, dense air settles over the Arctic. In the darkness, the Arctic seems to become more and more polluted by a buildup of mid-latitude emissions from fossil fuel combustion, smelting and other industrial processes. By late winter, the Arctic is covered by a layer of this haze the size of the continent of Africa. When the spring light arrives in the Arctic, there is a smog-like haze, which makes the region, at times, look like pollution over such cities as Los Angeles.

{E} This polluted air is a well-known and well-characterized feature of the late winter Arctic environment. In the North American Arctic, episodes of brown or black snow have been traced to continental storm tracks that deliver gaseous and particulate-associated contaminants from Asian deserts and agricultural areas. It is now known that the contaminants originate largely from Europe and Asia. Arctic haze has been studied most extensively in Point Barrow, Alaska, across the Canadian Arctic and in Svalbard (Norway). Evidence from ice cores drilled from the ice sheet of Greenland indicates that these haze particles were not always present in the Arctic,

but began to appear only in the last century. The Arctic haze particles appear to be similar to smog particles observed in industrial areas farther south, consisting mostly of sulfates mixed with particles of carbon. It is believed the particles are formed when gaseous sulfur dioxide produced by burning sulfur-bearing coal is irradiated by sunlight and oxidized to sulfate, a process catalyzed by trace elements in the air. These sulfate particles or droplets of sulfuric acid quickly capture the carbon particles, which are also floating in the air. Pure sulfate particles or droplets are colourless, so it is believed the darkness of the haze is caused by the mixed-in carbon particles.

{F} The impact of the haze on Arctic ecosystems, as well as the global environment, has not been adequately researched. The pollutants have only been studied in their aerosol form over the Arctic. However, little is known about what eventually happens to them. It is known that they are removed somehow. There is a good degree of likelihood that the contaminants end up in the ocean, likely into the North Atlantic, the Norwegian Sea and possibly the Bering Sea — all three very important fisheries. Currently, the major issue among researchers is to understand the impact of Arctic haze on global climate change. The contaminants absorb sunlight and, in turn, heat up the atmosphere. The global impact of this is currently unknown but the implications are quite powerful.

Questions 15 – 20

Read the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 Reading passage and look at the statements below.

In boxes 15 – 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

(15) Arctic conditions mean that the breakdown of pollutants is much accelerated

(16) Pollution absorbed by Arctic algae can eventually affect humans.

(17) The AEPS has set up scientific stations in the Arctic to monitor pollution.

(18) Arctic pollution can sometimes resemble US urban pollution.

(19) Evidence that this smog has only occurred in the 20th Century has been found in the ice on the polar ice cap.

(20) Research has shown that aerosol arctic pollutants remain in the air indefinitely.

Questions 21 – 26

Complete the summary relating to Arctic Haze below.

Choose your answers from the box below the summary and write them in boxes 21 – 26 on your answer sheet.

NB There are more words than spaces, so you will not use them at all.

Example	Answer
..... that the origins of spring, arctic haze, first seen over the ice cap...	Theories

(eg) _____ that the origins of spring, arctic haze, first seen over the ice cap in the 1950s, came from far away were at first not **(21)** _____. This haze is a smog formed in the dark, arctic winter by pollution delivered to the Arctic by storms **(22)** _____ in Europe and Asia. It is known to be a recent phenomenon as proof from **(23)** _____ shows it only starting to occur in the 20th Century. The smog consists of sulphates and carbon, the latter creating the **(24)** _____ of the haze. Due to lack of research, the final destination of the pollution is unknown but it probably ends up in the **(25)** _____ and therefore into the food chain. Scientists are presently more worried about the **(26)** _____ effect it has on climate change.

density	unknown	darkness	gases	accepted
terrible	originating	dissipating	air	bird life
burning	theories	destroying	certain	valid
decided	agriculture	ice cores	sea	

Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 Reading Passage HOW DOES THE BIOLOGICAL CLOCK TICK? below.

HOW DOES THE BIOLOGICAL CLOCK TICK?

{A} Our life span is restricted. Everyone accepts this as 'biologically' obvious. 'Nothing lives forever!' However, in this statement, we think of artificially produced, technical objects, products which are subjected to natural wear and tear during use. This leads to the result that at some time or other the object stops working and is unusable ('death' in the biological sense). But are the wear and tear and loss of function of technical objects and the death of living organisms really similar or comparable

{B} Our 'dead' products are 'static', closed systems. It is always the basic material which constitutes the object and which, in the natural course of things, is worn down and becomes 'older'. Ageing, in this case, must occur according to the laws of physical chemistry and of thermodynamics. Although the same law holds for a living organism, the result of this law is not inexorable in the same way. At least as long as a biological system has the ability to renew itself it could actually become older without ageing; an organism is an open, dynamic system through which new material continuously flows. Destruction of old material and formation of new material are thus in permanent dynamic equilibrium. The material of which the organism is formed changes continuously. Thus our bodies continuously exchange old substances for new, just like a spring which more or less maintains its form and movement, but in which the water molecules are always different.

{C} Thus ageing and death should not be seen as inevitable, particularly as the organism possesses many mechanisms for repair. It is not, in principle, necessary for a biological system to age and die. Nevertheless, a restricted life span, ageing, and then death are basic characteristics of life. The reason for this is easy to recognise: in nature, the existent organisms either adapt or are regularly replaced by new types. Because of changes in the genetic material (mutations), these have new characteristics and in the course of their individual lives, they are tested for optimal or better adaptation to the environmental conditions. Immortality would disturb this system — it needs room for new and better life. This is the basic problem of evolution.

{D} Every organism has a life span which is highly characteristic. There are striking differences in lifespan between different species, but within one species the parameter is relatively constant. For example, the average duration of human life has hardly changed in thousands of years. Although more and more people attain an advanced age as a result of developments in medical care and better nutrition, the characteristic upper limit for most remains 80 years. A further argument against the simple wear and tear theory is the observation that the time within which organisms age lies between a few days (even a few hours for unicellular organisms) and several thousand years, as with mammoth trees.

{E} If a life span is a genetically determined biological characteristic, it is logically necessary to propose the existence of an internal clock, which in some way measures and controls the ageing process and which finally determines death as the last step in a fixed programme. Like the life span, the metabolic rate has for different organisms a fixed mathematical relationship to the body mass. In comparison to the lifespan this relationship is 'inverted': the larger the organism the lower its metabolic rate. Again this relationship is valid not only for birds, but also, similarly on average within the systematic unit, for all other organisms (plants, animals, unicellular organisms).

{F} Animals which behave 'frugally' with energy become particularly old, for example, crocodiles and tortoises. Parrots and birds of prey are often held chained up. Thus they are not able to 'experience life' and so they attain a high lifespan in captivity. Animals which save energy by hibernation or lethargy (e.g. bats or hedgehogs) live much longer than those which are always active. The metabolic rate of mice can be reduced by a very low consumption of food (hunger diet). They then may live twice as long as their well-fed comrades. Women become distinctly (about 10 per cent) older than men. If you examine the metabolic rates of the two sexes you establish that the higher male metabolic rate roughly accounts for the lower male life span. That means that they live life 'energetically' — more intensively, but not for as long.

{G} It follows from the above that sparing use of energy reserves should tend to extend life. Extreme high-performance sports may lead to optimal cardiovascular performance, but they quite certainly do not prolong life. Relaxation lowers metabolic rate, as does adequate sleep and in general an equable and balanced personality. Each of us can develop his or her own 'energy saving programme' with a little self-observation, critical self-control and, above all, logical consistency. Experience will show that to live in this way not only increases the lifespan but is also very healthy. This final aspect should not be forgotten.

Questions 27-32

IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 Passage 3 has seven paragraphs, A—G.

Choose the correct heading for paragraphs B—G from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number, i—x, in boxes 27-32 on your answer sheet.

List of Headings

- (i) The biological clock
- (ii) Why dying is beneficial
- (iii) The ageing process of men and women
- (iv) Prolonging your life
- (v) Limitations of life span

- (vi) Modes of development of different species
- (vii) A stable lifespan despite improvements
- (viii) Energy consumption
- (ix) Fundamental differences in ageing of objects and organisms
- (x) Repair of genetic material

Example Answer

Paragraph A v

(27) Paragraph B

(28) Paragraph C

(29) Paragraph D

(30) Paragraph E

(31) Paragraph F

(32) Paragraph G

Questions 33-36

Complete the notes below.

*Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 passage for each answer.*

Write your answers in boxes 33-36 on your answer sheet.

- Objects age in accordance with principles of **(33)** and of **(34)**.....
- Through mutations, organisms can **(35)** better to the environment
- **(36)** would pose a serious problem for the theory of evolution

Questions 37-40

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 163 Passage 3?

In boxes 37-40 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

(37) The wear and tear theory applies to both artificial objects and biological systems.

(38) In principle, it is possible for a biological system to become older without aging.

(39) Within seven years, about 90 percent of a human body is replaced as new.

(40) Conserving energy may help to extend a human's life.