IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168 Reading Passage child's play in medieval England below.

Child's Play in Medieval England

The history of childhood has been a topic of interest in social history since the highly influential 1960 book Centuries of Childhood, written by French historian Philippe Aries. He argued that "childhood" is a concept created by modern society.

{A} One of the most hotly debated issues in the history of childhood has been whether childhood is itself a recent invention. The historian Philippe Ares argued that in Western Europe during the Middle Ages (up to about the end of the fifteenth century) children were regarded as miniature adults, with all the intellect and personality that this implies. He scrutinized medieval pictures and diaries and found no distinction between children and adults as they shared similar leisure activities and often the same type of work. Aries, however, are forsaken or despised. The idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult.

{B} There is a long tradition of the children of the poor playing a functional role in contributing to the family income by working either inside or outside the home. In this sense, children are seen as useful. Back in the Middle Ages, children as young as 5 or 6 did important chores for their parents and from the sixteenth century, were often encouraged |(or forced) to leave the family by the age of 9 or 10 to work as servants for wealthier families or to be apprenticed to a trade.

{C} With industrialization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a new demand for child labor was created, and, many children were forced to work for long hours, in mines, wo9rkshops, and factories. Social reformers began to question whether laboring long hours from an early age would harm children's growing bodies. They began to recognize the potential of carrying out systematic studies to monitor how far these early deprivations might be affecting children's development.

{D} Gradually, the concerns of the reformers began to impact the working conditions of children. In Britain, the factory Act of 1833 signified the beginning of legal protection of children from exploitation and was linked to the rise of schools for factory children. The worst forms of child exploitation were gradually eliminated, partly through factory reform but also through the influence of trade unions and economic changes during the nineteenth century which made some forms of child labor redundant. Childhood was increasingly seen as a time for play and education for all children not just for a privileged minority. Initiating children into work as useful children became less of a priority. As the age for starting full-time work was delayed, childhood

was increasingly understood as a more extended phase of dependency, development, and learning. even so, work continued to play a significant, if less central role in children's lives throughout the later nineteenth and twentieth century. And the useful child has become a controversial image during the first decade of the twenty-first century, especially in the context of global concern about large numbers of the world's children engaged in child labor.

{E} The Factory act of 1833 established half-time schools which allowed children to work and attend school. but in the 1840s, a large proportion of children never went to school, and if they did, they left by the age of 10 or 11. the situation was very different by the end of the nineteenth century in Britain. the school becomes central to images of ` a normal childhood.

{F} Attending school was no longer a privilege and all children were expected to spend a significant part of their day in a classroom. By going to school, children's lives were now separated from domestic life at home and from the adult world of work. The school became an institution dedicated to shaping the minds, behaviors, and morals of the young. Education dominated the management of children's waking hours, not just through the hours spent in classrooms but through 'homework, the growth of 'after-school' activities, and the importance attached to parental involvement.

{G} Industrialization, urbanization, and mass schooling also set new challenges for those responsible for protecting children's welfare and promoting their learning. Increasingly, children were being treated as a group with distinctive needs and they were organized into groups according to their age. For example, teachers needed to know what to expect of children in their classrooms, what kinds of instruction were appropriate for different age groups and how best to assess children's progress. they also wanted tools that could enable them to sort and select children according to their abilities and potential.

Questions 1-7

Do the following statements agree with the information given in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168 Reading Passage 1?

Write your answers in boxes **1-7** on your answer sheet.

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

Question (1) Aries pointed out that children did different types of work as adults during the Middle Age.

Question (2) During the Middle Ages going to work necessarily means children were unloved indicated by Aries.

Question (3) Scientists think that overworked labor damages the health of young children.

Question (4) The rise of trade unions majorly contributed to the protection of children from exploitation in the 19th century.

Question (5) With the aid of half-time schools, most children went to school in the mid of 19 century.

Question (6) In 20 century almost all children need to go to school in a full-time schedule.

Question (7) Nowadays, children's needs were much differentiated and categorized based on how old they are.

Questions 8-13

Answer the questions below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168 Reading passage 1 for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 8-13 on your answer sheet.

Question (8) What is the controversial topic that arises with the French historian Philippe Aries's concept

Question (9) What image for children did Aries believe to be like in Western Europe during the Middle Ages

Question (10) What historical event generated the need for a great amount of child labor to work a long time in 18 and 19 centuries

Question (11) What legal format initial the protection of children from exploitation in 19th centenary

Question (12) what the activities were more and more regarded as being preferable for almost all children time in the 19th centenary

Question (13) Where has been the central area for children to spend largely of their day as people expect in modern society?

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on the IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168 Reading Passage How to Reduce Employee Turnover below.

How to Reduce Employee Turnover

{A} The chief executive of a large hotel became aware that his company was experiencing an annual employee turnover of about 60 percent, at an annual cost estimated between $10 to $15 million. This large amount of money had calculated based on three factors: the money spent hiring and training replacements; the cost to the business in lower productivity due to employees becoming familiar with the requirements of their new job; and reduced occupancy rates, due to poor guest satisfaction levels.

{B} The Chief Executive knew that in order to save his company, he had to reduce the high turnover costs. Making up for the lost income due to turnover is not an easy task and many companies have not declared war on unwanted employee turnover because they have not taken the time to work out the costs of lost revenues and productivity. But the hotel boss decided to tackle the issue head-on by implementing a 4-point plan, the hotel first took the time to calculate their turnover costs; secondly to evaluate the main causes for the staff turnover and; thirdly to discuss some of the solutions to the problems and lastly to prioritize actions and evaluate future returns following implemented changes.

{C} Within a two-year period, the results were significant. The annual employee turnover had reduced by 78 percent and this impacted downtime due to training and guest satisfaction. The result was a $10 million in savings for the company. Because most do not know the root causes of employee turnover and costs have often been estimated inaccurately, causes are usually not known. As a result, solutions have commonly not targeted a company's individual, specific causes. The following is an examination of what the Chief Executive did to turn the hotel around.

{D} Two factors had considered in relation to the calculation of costs: those departments that had the highest rates of turnover and those whose turnover had the greatest potential effect on profit. After some investigation, it had shown that some of the positions with the highest turnover rates such as cleaners and gardeners did not carry with them high associated costs. In fact, what had revealed- only 6 percent of employees accounted for 43 per cent of the turnover. Positions that involved a substantial amount of time in training were the ones that attracted the highest cost. The analysis revealed that those positions within the hotel had the greatest impact on profit- people like the front office receptionists and those working in accounts.

{E} As unusual as it may sound, it is now a common understanding that offering employees more money is not necessarily a good solution to high employee turnover – often they leave because they simply dislike the work. Therefore, it was important to tackle the analysis from the perspective of what were the chief causes for staff leaving. A holistic approach had undertaken and several key findings emerged. The hotel found that fundamentally they adopted poor recruiting and selection practices. For example, it had shown that almost 35 percent of the cleaning staff left after the first week and a further 25% during the first month. Candidates were being over-sold the job by recruiters and left soon after they encountered unrealistic job expectations.

{F} Devising solutions to these issues was the other half of the equation. As far as recruiting had concerned, they changed their approach by getting personnel from the hotel to handle it. Once this change was made, the attrition rates decreased substantially. To add to employee motivation, new staff were made aware of the mission and goals of the organization and how they would be paid above industry standards for striving to attain hotel values. New staff were shown where the hotel was heading and how they would have a guaranteed, stable employment situation with a major force in the hotel industry' – it was even suggested that after a period of employment, new staff might be given the opportunity to contribute to organizational goal setting.

{G} They had been losing many of their employees during the first month or two of employment, so they made new staff aware that bonuses would be offered to newly-hired employees at the end of their first three months which greatly assisted in goal-setting. Staff luncheons and the in-house volleyball and basketball competitions remained an effective part of staff unity and development and a support program was also introduced to help all staff with any job-related issues which gave employees a heightened sense of being cared for by the establishment. Another area of change that proved successful was the introduction of the Valuable Employee Program (VEP). When a person was employed in the past they were assigned a senior member of staff who assisted them with getting used to their new job.

{H} Due to the limitations of the senior member's position, however, they were often not in a position to explain any details regarding future advancement. Now, when staff is employed, they are clearly told what is expected in the job and where it might lead to the right candidate. Hotel surveys revealed that over 30 percent of employees were not satisfied with the career opportunities in their current jobs so the articulation of the definite and realistic opportunity for advancement through the VEP led to a major decrease in employee attrition. Once the ship had been righted and the relative returns on human resource investments had been calculated, setting priorities became a formality. Although at first a daunting task, the enormous cost of employee turnover offered an excellent opportunity for the hotel to improve profitability.

Question 14-18

Complete the summary below of paragraphs **A-D** of IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168 Reading Passage 2.

Choose **ONE OR TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **14-18** on your answer sheet.

> Training new employees; downtime as new employees get used to their new job, and unfavorable guest satisfaction levels all led to a large **(14)_____** for a large hotel. It was determined that the solution to these problems, was in the reduction of the company's **(15)_____.** The hotel addressed these issues in 4 ways through the implementation of a **(16)_____.** The efforts of the hotel chief executive decreased downtime and reduced employee turnover which, in turn, resulted in improvements in **(17)_____.** The company's position was improved by $10 million. It is not common for big companies to experience such **(18)_____.**

Question 19-21

Do the following statements reflect the claims of the writer in IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168 Reading Passage 2?

In boxes **19-21** 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 passage

Question (19) It was surprising that positions with the highest turnover were not connected to high costs.

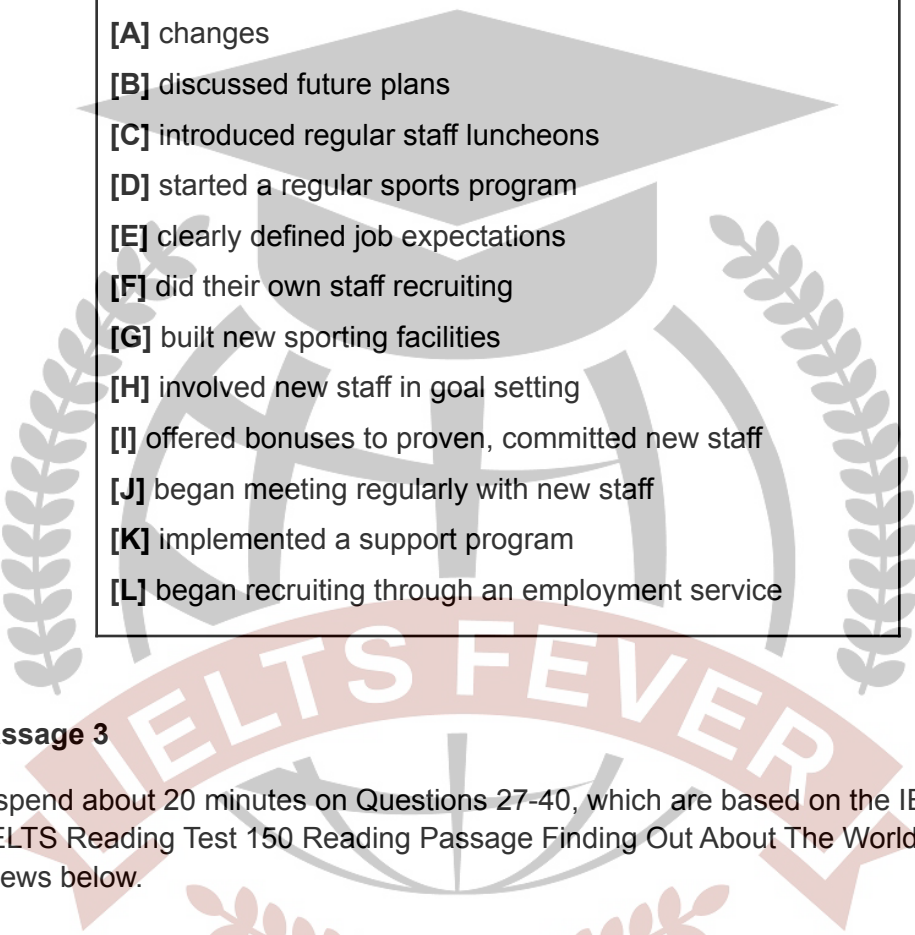**Question (20)** There was a clear connection between high costs and length of training.

Question (21) New employees were given an incorrect description of their job.

Question 22-26

IELTSFever Academic IELTS Reading Test 168 Reading Passage 2 gives **FIVE** effective changes that the hotel introduced for staff

Choose these changes from list **A-L** below.

Write the appropriate letters **A-K** in boxes **22-26** on your answer sheet.

[A] changes

[B] discussed future plans

[C] introduced regular staff luncheons

[D] started a regular sports program

[E] clearly defined job expectations

[F] did their own staff recruiting

[G] built new sporting facilities

[H] involved new staff in goal setting

[I] offered bonuses to proven, committed new staff

[J] began meeting regularly with new staff

[K] implemented a support program

[L] began recruiting through an employment service

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 Finding Out About The World From Television News below.

Finding Out About The World From Television News

{A} The Ideological Octopus (1991). Justin Lewis points to an important issue concerning the formal structure of television news. As he notes, television news lacks the narrative element which, in other genres, serves to capture viewer interest and thus motivate viewing. Lewis posts this as one of the key reasons why television news often fails to interest people and why, when they do watch it. People often cannot understand it. Lewis argues that one fundamental problem with watching television news is that its narrative structure means that the viewer is offered the punchline before the joke – because the main point (the headline) comes right at the beginning, after which the program, by definition, deals with less and less important things. Thus, in television news our interest is not awakened by an enigma that is then gradually solved, to

provide a gratifying solution – as so often happens in fictional narratives. In Lewis's terms, in television news, there is no enigma, the solution of which will motivate the viewing process. As he baldly states, 'If we decided to try to design a television program with a structure that would completely fail to capture an audience's interest, we might (finally) come up with the format of the average television news show' (Lewis 1991).

{B} What Lewis also does is offers an interesting contrast, in this respect, between the high-status phenomenon of television news and the low-status genre of soap operas. The latter, he observes, offers the most highly developed use of effective narrative codes. To that extern soap opera, with its multiple narratives, could be seen, in formal terms, as the most effective type of television for the cultivation of viewer interest, and certainly as a far more effective form than that of television news for this purpose. Clearly, some of Lewis's speculation here is problematic. There are counter examples of his arguments (e.g. instances of programmes such as sports news that share the problematic formal features he points to but which are nonetheless popular – at least among certain types of viewers). Moreover, he may perhaps overstress the importance of structure as against content relevance in providing the basis for program appeal. Nonetheless, I would suggest that his argument, in this respect, is of considerable interest.

{C} Lewis argues not only that soap opera is more narratively interesting than television news, in formal terms, but, moreover, that the world of television fiction, in general, is much closer to most people's lives than that presented in the news. This, he claims, is because the world of television fiction often feels to people like their own lives. They can, for example, readily identify with the moral issues and personal dilemmas faced by the characters in a favorite soap opera. Conversely, the world of television news is much more remote in all senses; it is a socially distant world populated by another race of special or 'elite' persons, the world of them not. This is also why 'most people feel more able to evaluate TV fiction than TV news … because it seems closer to their own lives and to the world they live in … [whereas] the world of television news might almost be beamed in from another planet (Lewis 1991). It is as if the distant world of 'the news' is so disconnected from popular experience that it is beyond critical judgment for many viewers. Hence, however, alienated they feel from it, they nonetheless lack any alternative perspective on the events it portrays.

{D} One consequence of this, Lewis argues, is that precisely, because of this distance, people who feel this kind of alienation from the 'world news' nonetheless use frameworks to understand news items that come from within the news themselves. This, he argues, is because in the absence of any other source of information or perspective they are forced back into using the media's own framework. Many viewers are simply unable to place the media's portrayal of events in any other critical framework (where would they get it from?). To this extent, Lewis argues. Gerbner and his colleagues (see Gerbner et al. 1986; Signorielli and Morgan 1990) may perhaps be right in thinking that the dominant perspectives and 'associative logics' offered by the media may often simply be soaked up by audiences of their repetition. This is not to suggest that such viewers necessarily believe, or explicitly accept these perspectives, but simply to note that they have no other place to start from, however cynical they may be, at a general level,

about not believing what you see on television, and they may thus tend, in the end, to fall back on 'what it said on TV'.

{E} In one sense, this could be said to be the converse of Hall's negotiated code' (1980), as taken over from Parkin (1973). Parkin argued, that many working-class people display a 'split consciousness', whereby they accept propositions from the dominant ideology at an abstract level, but then 'negotiate' or 'discount' the application of these ideological propositions to the particular circumstances of their own situation. Here, by contrast, we confront a situation where people often express cynicism in general (so that Hot believing what you see in the media is no more than common sense), but then in any particular case, they often find themselves pushed back into reliance on the mainstream media's account of anything beyond the realm of their direct personal experience, simply for lack of any alternative perspective.

Questions 27-34

Complete the summary below using words from the box.

Write your answers in boxes **27-34** on your answer sheet.

The structure of television news.

Justin Lewis says that television news does not have the **(27)_____** feature that other types of the program have. As a result, many viewers do not find it interesting and may find it **(28)_____** This is because the **(29)_____** information comes first and after that **(30)_____** matters are covered, in television news, there is no **(31)_____** progress towards a conclusion and nothing **(32)_____** to find out about. In fact, he believes that television news is an example of how the **(33)_____** process in the field of television could result in something that is **(34)_____** to what constitutes an interesting program.

upsetting	contrary	crucial	repetitive	creative
opinionated	story-telling	informative	secondary	routine
additional	related	controversial	step-by-step	overwhelming
contusing	fast-moving	informal	mysterious	diverse

Questions 35-40

Do the following statements agree with the information given in IELTSFever Academic IELTS

Reading Test 150 Reading Passage 3.

In boxes **35—40** 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 passage

Question (35) Lewis concentrates more on the structure of programs than on what is actually in them.

Question (36) Lewis regrets viewers' preference for soap operas over television news.

Question (37) Lewis suggests that viewers sometimes find that television news contradicts their knowledge of the world.

Question (38) Lewis believes that viewers have an inconsistent attitude toward the reliability of television news.

Question (39) Parkin states that many working-class people see themselves as exceptions to general beliefs.

Question (40) The writer of the text believes that viewers should have a less passive attitude towards what they are told by the media.

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