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## ACADEMIC READING PRACTICE TEST 1

### Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1 - 13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

#### Learning a Second Language

Various studies of second language learning have all shown that the benefits of learning a second language are much broader than simply the ability to speak in another language. Research affirms the importance of second language education regarding intellectual potential, scholastic achievement, first language skills, citizenship and the economy.

Learning a second language in this context is not learning a second language as a natural process when one acquires a first language. After childhood, the areas of the brain that are responsible for language acquisition become more fixed, and the process of picking up additional languages becomes more academic and less organic. The specific context concerns a person who has learned his or her first language automatically and is now learning a new language through a teacher, self-teaching or teaching oneself with a book or maybe online.

School children can get unexpected benefits from learning a foreign language. Educational research shows that results in English and Science are better for students who study one. The reasons for this are not altogether clear: perhaps the study skills acquired and used for studying another language also strengthen study skills used in other areas and it could also strengthen the ability to analyse and interpret information. It also seems that knowledge of the grammar of students' native language is often made clearer to them through explicitly learning another language's grammar. A foreign language is a whole new system with distinct rules, etymology, and meaning, which are just a few of the complexities of a language. Learning a new one puts the brain to task by recognising this new language structure. As the brain works out meaning and makes full use of this new arsenal to express ideas, it seems that it sharpens skills on reading, negotiating, and problem-solving.

Multi-tasking is stressful to those who are not skilled at it. People who are multilingual are proficient at slipping from one language system to another and using totally different language mechanics. This is very distracting and demanding work, not only for the tongue and language faculties, but also especially for the brain. People who have developed multilingual ability are highly proficient multi-taskers and commit very few errors when juggling various activities.

Related to this, with other factors held constant, several pieces of research have also shown that multilingual adults experienced the onset of Alzheimer's and dementia at a later age of 75 compared to monolingual adults, who had the first signs at age 71. The studies were conducted with other variables such as gender, overall health, educational level, and economic status, but there were no significant results that contributed to the mentioned diseases as significantly as the number of languages spoken. It seems that the more the brain is used, the better its functions work. Learning a new language structure entails familiarising with vocabulary and rules, and converting this memorised information into communication. This strengthens memory, because the brain has built its ability to associate information with mnemonics in order to retain information better. Hence, multilingual people

have brains that are more exercised and quicker to recall.

Since a language is a doorway to a particular culture, learning a new language enables a person to have a broader understanding of the race or culture that speaks it. Opening up to a culture allows people to be more flexible and appreciative of other ways of doing and looking at things. As a result, if people are multilingual, they have the advantage of seeing the world from different vantage points. In today's interconnectedness, this is a valuable tool and with universal unemployment problems, a multilingual ability is definitely a competitive edge over others. Businesses are of course interested in people who have an ability that improves their intelligence, flexibility, openness to diverse people, and decision-making skills. And these are just bonuses to the evident ability to communicate in several languages and cross-cultural barriers. Additionally, speaking another language can simply give people a lot of pleasure, as they can communicate with others in their native language.

Finally, self-confidence is a normal consequence of learning a new language. By simply mastering one skill, the other faculties are developed. No matter their background, people tend to gravitate around multilingual people because of their skills; others simply find the openness and quick-mindedness of multi-lingual people naturally attractive. It is an interesting outcome, not at all something that is expected as a result when people embark to learn a new language, but trying to understand a language and the heritage that goes with it will put the learner in a position of self-discovery. It makes learners come to terms with how they view the world and other cultures, and have more appreciation of their own.

The cognitive and neurological benefits of learning a foreign language extend from early childhood to old age, as the brain more efficiently processes information and staves off cognitive decline. These cognitive and neurological benefits are instantly apparent, but there occurs a host of social, cultural and personal benefits, among them the ability to explore a culture through its native tongue or talk to someone with whom it might otherwise not be able to communicate. Learning a second language is best introduced at the earliest age possible, but learning it at a much later age is still very much worthwhile.

### Questions 6 - 9

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer of the text? In boxes 6 - 9 on your answer sheet write:

**YES**                    *if the statement agrees with the writer's views*

**NO**                      *if the statement doesn't agree with the writer's views*

**NOT GIVEN**        *if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this*

- 6 Other health issues can affect an individual's likeliness to avoid Alzheimer's disease as much as second language abilities.
- 7 Studies have shown salaries are significantly higher for those people who are multilingual.
- 8 Multilingual people have a better ability to make decisions.
- 9 Multilingual people have longer life expectancies.

### Questions 10 - 13

Complete each sentence with the correct ending (A - G) below. Write the correct letter (A - G) in answer boxes 10 - 13 on your answer sheet.

- 10 An additional benefit of learning a second language
  - 11 A successful second language learner
  - 12 A society's traditions are better understood by a learner who
  - 13 The time to learn a second language
- 
- A** does not have to be when a learner is young.
  - B** is something that cannot be experienced after approximately the age of 50.
  - C** is often instinctively appealing to those around him or her.
  - D** is that people feel better about themselves.
  - E** is a family experience that should not be avoided.
  - F** is open to study the society's language.
  - G** creates a severe feeling of inadequacy.

## Questions 1 - 5

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

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

- 1 Studies have shown that second language learning can even affect
- A a learner's health.
  - B a learner's life expectancy.
  - C a learner's ability in his or her mother tongue.
  - D a learner's stress levels.
- 2 The benefits that second language learning creates with children's study of other subjects
- A are more noticeable in Mathematics.
  - B do not have fully understood reasons.
  - C are usually apparent in studies of children's first language.
  - D show themselves more in secondary school children.
- 3 Switching from one language to another
- A is hard work for the brain.
  - B is not a natural process.
  - C can damage how the tongue shapes words.
  - D can cause confusion in older people.
- 4 The ability to switch from one language to another
- A can lead to confusion when multi-tasking.
  - B can lead to mistakes when people do too many things at the same time.
  - C is unlikely to help people with the physical aspects of sport.
  - D helps people develop multi-tasking skills.
- 5 Bilingualism
- A can delay the start of Alzheimer's disease.
  - B gives the same chance as anyone else of Alzheimer's disease after the age 71.
  - C means faster brain deterioration through more use than monolingualism.
  - D has been proved to have stopped Alzheimer's disease in some adults.

## Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 14 - 26**, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.

### Threats to the Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef is well known as the world's largest system of coral reefs. Lying off the east coast of Australia, it covers an area larger than 300,000 square kilometres and is a unique habitat hosting billions of sea creatures. It also is a major source of income to people near the Reef, with tourism now being the key industry in the local towns.

Not all is well with the Great Barrier Reef; there are growing threats, the most serious being climate change. Organisations are working hard to impress upon the world's governments the need for urgent action to address climate change globally. To help boost the Reef's resilience to climate change, efforts are also being made to take action on the local effects of coastal development, such as from ports and agriculture.

Climate change threatens the Great Barrier Reef in different ways. Firstly, it can increase severe weather events, such as repeated cyclones and flooding. Cyclones can have devastating effects on the Great Barrier Reef, the immediate effect being the physical damage. Fast maturing coral is easily destroyed by storms, while slow maturing, more solid coral generally is spared. All coral though can be affected by the flooding caused by cyclones. Flooding on land can lead to large flood plumes from rivers being expelled into the sea that supports the Great Barrier Reef. Freshwater flood plumes can have a number of effects, including killing coral at shallow depths. Large scale flooding can carry various land-based pollutants, such as fertilisers, herbicides and the worst, pesticides, out to the Reef, which can have a devastating effect. A lesser-known problem is that earth or residue that is carried out to sea can affect coral growing in the deep water, as it can block out the light that coral needs to survive. In some locations, approximately 10 per cent of corals have bleached in shallow waters, indicating that the run-off is causing stress to reefs. Australian scientists have also observed sunken logs and terrestrial debris breaking up fragile corals in wave-exposed sections of the reefs. Although flood plumes are natural events, scientists predict that climate change worsens their impact. Expected increases in cyclone intensity will increase the size and frequency of flood events and thus the quantity of land-based runoff and pollutants making it to the Reef.

In the long-term, ocean acidification is likely to be the most significant impact of a changing climate on the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem. The oceans absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and are estimated to have absorbed about half the excess carbon dioxide released by human activities in the past 200 years. This absorbed carbon dioxide is resulting in chemical changes in the ocean, which is referred to as ocean acidification. Although the chemistry is simple and well understood, its effect on marine life is much less well known, as the process has only been recognised for around a decade. Even relatively small increases in ocean acidity decrease the capacity of corals to build skeletons, which in turn decreases their capacity to create living environments for the Reef's marine life.

Climate change is also causing increases in sea surface temperatures and atmospheric temperatures. A lack of cloud cover and also freshwater run-off can all contribute to this. Temperature is a key environmental factor controlling the distribution and diversity of marine

life; it is critical to reef building and controls the rate of coral reef growth more than anything. All animals and plants have temperature limits and when these are exceeded, natural processes break down. On coral reefs, surface temperature changes affect the relationship of mutual dependence between some animals and the algae that live within their tissues. The temperature gradient along the Great Barrier Reef has shifted markedly over the last century and is likely to continue to rise over the present century. Whatever climate scenario is used, it is predicted that by 2035, the average sea surface temperature will be warmer than any previously recorded.

Rising sea levels are another significant danger, because much of the Great Barrier Reef coastline is low-lying. Predictions of a future increase in sea levels are highly variable, but large changes in sea levels can mean land inundation, which will cause significant changes in tidal habitats, such as saltwater intrusion into low-lying freshwater habitats like mangroves. Sea levels on the Great Barrier Reef have already risen by approximately three millimetres per year since 1991, due to a combination of thermal expansion in the oceans and, most significantly, glaciers melting. Changes in sea levels from temperature increases are time-dependent and uncertain, because they are partly linked to the collapse of the Earth's great ice shelves. Reefs will probably be able to accommodate a sea level rise of three millimetres, however, as the rate of sea level rise increases, the Reef's coral will be more and more affected.

It seems that local people are motivated to change in order to protect the Great Barrier Reef, however, the worst threats to the Reef are because of climate change issues. As long as this continues, the Great Barrier Reef will continue to be in danger and with many countries in the world refusing to take action that might threaten their economies, it does not really matter how behaviours are changed in Australia.

#### Glossary

Flood plume            A body of water that spreads out in a feather shape

Inundation            Flooding

## Questions 14 - 20

Look at the different results of climate change (questions 14 - 20) and match them to the effects they have (A - G).

Write your answers in boxes 14 - 20 on your answer sheet.

### Results of Climate Change

- 14 Cyclones
  - 15 Fresh water plumes
  - 16 Sediment in the water
  - 17 Ocean acidification
  - 18 Rising ocean surface temperatures
  - 19 Significant changes in sea levels
  - 20 A sea level rise of only 3 millimetres
- 
- A Ocean organisms have a smaller habitat, as coral growth can be hindered.
  - B Few or no negative consequences will take place in reefs.
  - C Coral growing in shallow water can be killed.
  - D Freshwater ecosystems will be damaged by sea water.
  - E Damage can occur to coral that grow quickly.
  - F The reliance of certain organisms on each other can be affected.
  - G Coral in deeper water die due to a lack of sunlight.

## Questions 21 - 26

Answer the questions below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **21 - 26** on your answer sheet.

- 21 What contributes most to the economies of towns next to the Great Barrier Reef?
- 22 Which is the most dangerous agricultural pollutant that can be taken to the Great Barrier Reef through flooding?
- 23 For how long has it been known that ocean acidification has been taking place?
- 24 What is the most important influence on the growth of coral in the Great Barrier Reef?
- 25 What has been the key factor leading to sea levels rising in the Great Barrier Reef?
- 26 Who are interested in making changes to help protect the Great Barrier Reef?



### Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 27 - 40**, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

#### The Power of Music

Of the estimated sixty billion broadcast advertising hours encountered by North Americans each year, approximately three-quarters employ music in some manner.

Since the Ancient Greeks, music has been recognised as a powerful emotional force. They believed that music was such a powerful force that it could stir men into bravery on the battlefields or it could impose moral order and civilising harmony on unruly pupils. The rhythms and melodies of music can help words to stick in the brain much more effectively than if those words were delivered as speech alone, and music can also convey a particular mood.

By the twentieth century, music's emotional force was irresistible to advertisers, who wanted to influence their audiences into buying their products. Mass advertising using soundtracks began in the 1920's and 1930's with commercial radio in the United States, and, by the 1950's, most radio advertisements included an advertising jingle, which would help promote the products.

Music has also been central to television advertising since the 1950's, particularly because music can convey an emotional or subliminal message. A recently-published book describes how music was used in a TV commercial to sell Ford cars in 1959. Ford wanted to sell a particular car as an economy model, and they wanted to point out to potential buyers that it would actually save them lots of money on miles per gallon and other money-saving features. However, they worried that this might make the vehicle be perceived as low quality. To avoid this, the advertisers accompanied the advertisement with a soundtrack using lush string music, not usually associated with low price items, and the sales rocketed. The advert was judged a massive success because of the high quality subliminal message given by the music.

Music can serve the overall promotional goals in one or more of several capacities. Good music can contribute to the effectiveness of an advertisement merely by making it more attractive. A good advertisement engages the attention of an audience, and the most straightforward way of achieving this is to make it entertaining. Music serves to engage listeners' attention and render the advertisement less of an unwanted intrusion.

Music may also be employed in various structural roles. Perhaps the most important structural role is in tying together a sequence of visual images and/or a series of dramatic episodes, narrative voice-overs, or a list of product appeals. Historically originating in film music, advertising music can also be structurally employed as simply an uninterrupted background, or to heighten or highlight dramatic moments.

A third important function for music is to intensify the familiarity of a product. Consumers are known to favour products that elicit some degree of memory, even if it is merely the product's name. It is one of the peculiarities of human audition and cognition that music tends to linger in the listener's mind. Surprisingly, such musical lingering may occur even when the mind is

an unwilling host. Thus, the association of music with the identity of a certain product may substantially aid product recall.

A fourth technique of musical enhancement is the use of lyrical language. Vocal music permits the conveyance of a verbal communication in a non-spoken way. Language utterances can sound much less naive or self-indulgent when couched within a musical phrase rather than being simply spoken. An individual can respectably sing things that would sound utterly trite if said.

Last is the use of music to enhance an advertisement's credibility and authority. Indeed, it may be the case that effective targeting is merely the result of the formation of proper authority. A simple way of creating this is through specialist testimony or employing celebrities. However, over periods of time, consumers become resistant to the means by which advertisers establish authority. One sophisticated way of getting round this is through music. Musical authority can be established most readily through quotation, allusion, or plagiarism.

The role of music in advertising recognises that music is a really powerful tool for selling things and this success has created added responsibilities to those people who wish to become music composers. From the middle of the twentieth century, composers have increasingly had to face extreme constraints if they have written music for films or TV or other media. In the 1930's, the rise of films with soundtracks led to a new type of commission for composers, where they had to tailor their music to a film scenario, to its narrative pace, and to the emotions of a character. They had to write music that was of a precise length, down to the nearest second, and more recently, film and TV composers have written so-called library music, where their soundtrack is categorised by describing its emotional evocation, and can be used in a variety of programmes. Viewers may have had the experience of watching a television programme and thinking, "I actually recognise that music from a previous series or a completely different programme." This is because the programme is using this so-called library music, where a composer has written music that is supposed to represent joy or the sun rising, and that music will then be reused whenever the producer of a film or a TV programme enters those particular emotional keywords into the database of library music.

However one measures good music, it must be acknowledged that, on a second-for-second basis, music created for the media, and especially for advertising, is perhaps the most meticulously crafted music in history. Nationally produced television advertisements in particular may be considered among the most highly polished cultural artifacts ever created. Whether this is ethical or not is an altogether different question.

### Questions 27 - 29

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the text?

In boxes 27 – 29 on your answer sheet write:

**TRUE** *if the statement agrees with the information*

**FALSE** *if the statement contradicts the information*

**NOT GIVEN** *if there is no information on this*

- 27 One civilisation felt that music could help create stability with school children.
- 28 Music was not used in US radio advertising until the 1930's.
- 29 Complaints were made about the Ford Company's manipulative use of music in their advertising.

### Questions 30 - 36

Complete the table below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 30 - 36 on your answer sheet.

| <b>Music's Roles in Advertising</b> |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Entertainment                       | * Music can increase an advertisement's (30) _____ – it makes it more attractive and therefore engaging.<br>* Music can prevent the advertisement becoming an (31) _____.                                  |
| Structure                           | * Music can merge various media images or episodes.<br>* Music can create a continuous setting.<br>* Music can emphasise (32) _____.   |
| Recall                              | * Music can increase a product's (33) _____.<br>* Music can remain in a subject's memory, even when the target subject is (34) _____.  |
| Lyrical Beauty                      | * Music can make a spoken message's conveyance sound more meaningful and less silly than if it were spoken.  |
| Credibility                         | * This is often done in advertising by establishing authority using experts or (35) _____.<br>* (36) _____, however, become accustomed and resist this.<br>* Music can create authority in different ways. |

### Questions 37 - 40

Complete the summary using the words in the box below.

Write your answers in boxes **37 - 40** on your answer sheet.

#### ***Music's Influence in Advertising on Composers***

Music's influence in advertising has led to added (37) \_\_\_\_\_ for aspiring composers. Since music has been written for the media, composers have been faced with restrictions. Music has to undergo (38) \_\_\_\_\_ to the media's different requirements. Library music is collected to present any (39) \_\_\_\_\_ that is required and therefore viewers can hear the music in different media. The right music for a situation can be accessed in a database using a particular (40) \_\_\_\_\_ that expresses the needed emotion.

destruction

mood

adjustment

study

observation

pressure

term

program