WEEK 2 UNIT 2

C. READING:

In this unit, you will answer IELTS Reading sentence completion questions and read a text about mammoths.

Exercise 1: In this text, there is a range of vocabulary about the natural world and the conservation of animals. Match the words with the definitions.

a population	*a skeleton*	*an ecosystem*	*to become extinct*	*to decrease*
to hunt	*to preserve*			

1. This happens when a type of bird, animal or plant doesn't exist anymore:	
2. to become smaller in size or number:	
3. to follow and kill an animal for food or for sport:	
4. to put something (e.g. food) in ice, salt, sugar or chemicals, so it can stay in good condition:	
5. all the people or animals that live in one place or area:	
6. all the living things in an area and the way they affect each other and the environment:	
7. the frame of bones supporting a human or animal body:	

Exercise 2: Complete the sentences about the natural world. Use the words in the box.

decrease	*ecosystem*	*extinct*	*hunt*	*population*	*preserve*
skeleton					

1. Pollution harms all the plants, fish and animals in the _____ .
2. The tutor showed the _____ to the medical students and asked which small bones were missing.
3. We expect the number of people living in the countryside will _____ as families move to the cities.
4. There are so few polar bears left that it is possible they will soon become _____ .
5. The _____ of my city has risen to 8 million people.
6. Lions often _____ other animals at night.

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7. Nowadays, most people use fridges to _____ their food.

Exercise 3: Match the words and phrases with the correct *synonyms* and *paraphrases*.

get smaller	*make*	*a possibility*	*both*	*some*	*lower (than)*	*the contents of*

1. *build or create*	
2. *inside of or within*	
3. *a pair of*	
4. *not as high as*	
5. *a little or an amount of*	
6. *decrease or fall*	
7. *might or may*	

Exercise 4: Complete the sentences below. Write **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Bringing the mammoth back to life

Mammoths once lived in large numbers across Asia, Africa, North America and Europe. However, over time, their numbers fell until the mammoth became extinct. Scientists think this happened for two reasons. Firstly, the mammoths' natural habitat decreased in size because of climate change. Secondly, many mammoths were killed by people who hunted them. The last population of mammoths lived on Wrangel Island, off north-east Siberia in the Chukchi Sea. These were woolly mammoths that could survive in very cold conditions, but they also died out around 4,000 years ago.

Prehistoric cave paintings show us that people ate the woolly mammoths they killed, but also used their bones and tusks. They used these to make simple animal and human figures, an early kind of art, and also to create some basic tools. We also know a lot about the woolly mammoth because the freezing conditions in Alaska and Siberia have preserved them. Researchers have studied their skeletons, their teeth and even the grass and plants that were still inside their

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stomachs. We know that their fur was an orange-brown colour, they had a thick layer of fat, and they had long, curved tusks. Their ears were short compared to an African or Asian elephant's we might see today, so they would not lose so much heat or get frostbite.

In recent years, some researchers have suggested that we could bring woolly mammoths back to life. Interestingly, not all scientists believe that bringing the mammoth back to life would be a good thing. They think it would be unfair to create a 'new' mammoth and then keep it in a small space. They think the right thing to do would be to give it a certain amount of freedom, perhaps in a wildlife park. But where would this be? And the mammoth would also be alone, and like elephants, mammoths were probably social in the way they behaved. This does seem to be a strong reason against bringing the mammoth back to life. Perhaps the 'new' mammoth might also develop an 'old' disease – and this might have an effect on the ecosystem that scientists cannot predict. Although the idea of bringing the mammoth back seems like an exciting one at first, there are many issues that we need to consider

1. The number of mammoths started to fall when their _____ got smaller.
2. Humans used mammoths for food, and to make art and _____ .
3. Scientists have examined the contents of mammoths' _____ .
4. Mammoths had smaller _____ than modern elephants.
5. Some scientists think that a 'new' mammoth should have some _____ .
6. Both elephants and mammoths are _____ animals.
7. There is a possibility that a 'new' mammoth could get a _____ .

Exercise 5: EXAM PRACTICE
Complete questions 1-8.

The honey badger

It looks harmless and vulnerable. But the honey badger is afraid of nothing…and will attack and eat almost anything.

The honey badger (*Melivora capensis*) is an African and south-Asian mammal that has a reputation for being one of the world's most fearless animals, despite its small size. And in spite of its gentle-sounding name, it is also one of its most aggressive. Honey badgers have been known to attack lions, buffalo, and snakes three times their size. Even humans are not safe from

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a honey badger if it thinks the human will attack or harm it. They are also extremely tough creatures and can recover quickly from injuries that would kill most other animals.

At first glance, honey badgers look like the common European badger. They are usually between 75cm and 1 meter long, although males are about twice the size of females. They are instantly recognizable by grey and white stripes that extend from the top of the head to the tail. Closer inspection, which is probably not a wise thing to do, reveals pointed teeth, and sharp front claws which can be four centimeters in length.

Honey badgers are meat-eating animals with an extremely varied diet. They mainly eat a range of small creatures like beetles, lizards and birds, but will also catch larger reptiles like snakes and small crocodiles. Some mammals, such as foxes, antelope and wild cats also form part of their diet.

The badgers locate their prey mainly using their excellent sense of smell, and catch most of their prey through digging. During a 24-hour period, they may dig as many as fifty holes, and travel more than 40 kilometers. They are also good climbers, and can easily climb very tall trees to steal eggs from birds' nests, or catch other tree-dwelling creatures.

As their name suggests, honey badgers have always been associated with honey, although they do not actually eat it. It is the highly nutritious bee eggs (called "brood") that they prefer, and they will do anything to find it. They usually cause a lot of damage to the hive in the process, and for this reason, humans are one of their main predators. Bee-keepers will often set special traps for honey badgers, to protect their hives.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the honey badger is its working relationship with a bird called the greater honeyguide (*Indicator indicator*). This bird deliberately guides the badger to beehives, then waits while the badger breaks into the hive and extracts the brood. The two creatures, bird and mammal, then share the brood between them.

1. Although they are not big animals, honey badgers are fearless, _____and tough.
2. Honey badgers will attack _____if they need to protect themselves.
3. The pattern and colors on the honey badger's back make it _____.
4. The food they eat is meat-based and _____.
5. _____form the biggest part of a honey badger's diet.
6. Honey badgers find the creatures they eat by their_____.
7. _____are often used to catch honey badgers which attack beehives.
8. For one particular type of food, the honey badger has a _____with another creature.

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