Reading Comprehension Exercise

[Note: This is an extract from an Academic Reading passage on the subject of dung beetles. The text preceding this extract gave some background facts about dung beetles, and went on to describe a decision to introduce non-native varieties to Australia.] Extract retrieved from http://www.ielts-blog.com/ielts-preparation-tips/free-reading-samples-academic-module/ on June 20th,2015

1) Read the following text and answer the questions about it. Remember to use all possible reading strategies. Do not use a dictionary. You have 25 minutes to complete the READING exercise.

A Introducing dung[1] beetles into a pasture is a simple process: approximately 1,500 beetles are released, a handful at a time, into fresh cow pats[2] in the cow pasture. The beetles immediately disappear beneath the pats digging and tunnelling and, if they successfully adapt to their new environment, soon become a permanent, self-sustaining part of the local ecology. In time they multiply and within three or four years the benefits to the pasture are obvious.

B Dung beetles work from the inside of the pat so they are sheltered from predators such as birds and foxes. Most species burrow into the soil and bury dung in tunnels directly underneath the pats, which are hollowed out from within. Some large species originating from France excavate tunnels to a depth of approximately 30 cm below the dung pat. These beetles make sausage-shaped brood chambers along the tunnels. The shallowest tunnels belong to a much smaller Spanish species that buries dung in chambers that hang like fruit from the branches of a pear tree. South African beetles dig narrow tunnels of approximately 20 cm below the surface of the pat. Some surface-dwelling beetles, including a South African species, cut perfectly-shaped balls from the pat, which are rolled away and attached to the bases of plants.

C For maximum dung burial in spring, summer and autumn, farmers require a variety of species with overlapping periods of activity. In the cooler environments of the state of Victoria, the large French species (2.5 cms long), is matched with smaller (half this size), temperate-climate Spanish species. The former are slow to recover from the winter cold and produce only one or two generations of offspring from late spring until autumn. The latter, which multiply rapidly in early spring, produce two to five generations annually. The South African ball-rolling species, being a sub- tropical beetle, prefers the climate of northern and coastal New South Wales where it commonly works with the South African tunneling species. In warmer climates, many species are active for longer periods of the year.

Glossary
1. dung: the droppings or excreta of animals
2. cow pats: droppings of cows

Exercise designed for USTA_CLIL_course
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ILCE-USTA

Read the text and answer the following questions. Please read the instructions given for each section.

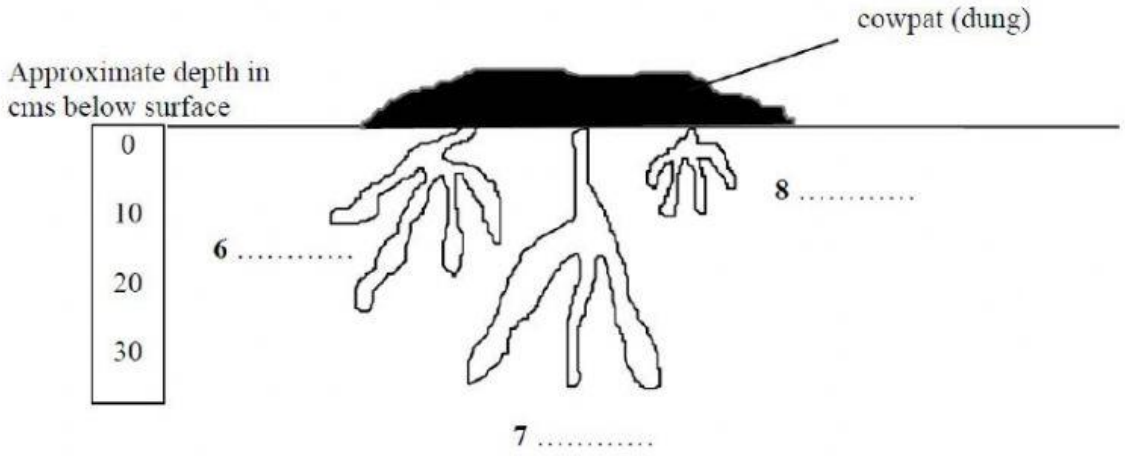
I. Questions 1-5

Complete the table below.
Write NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from the passage for each answer.
Write your answers in boxes 1-5.

Species	Size	preferred	Complementary species	Start of active period	Number of generations per year
French	2.5 cm	Cool	Spanish	Late spring	1-2
Spanish	1.25 cm	(1)_____		(2) _____	(3)_____
South African ball roller		(4)_____	(5) _____		

II. Questions 6-8

Write the tunnels on the diagram below using words from the box. Write your answers in boxes 6-8.



Dung Beetle Types

French	Spanish
Mediterranean	South African
Australian native	South African ball roller

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III. Questions 9-11

Decide whether the following statements are True (T) or False (F). Write TRUE or FALSE and think of the reasons to later discuss with your partners.

9. According to paragraph 1, the benefits of dung beetles' work can beseen immediately.
_____ Why?

10. From paragraph 3 it can be inferred that climate changes affects the dung beetle's productivity.
_____ Why?

11. The best dung beetle's species for our country, it can be deducted from the text, is the Spanish one.
_____ Why?

IV. Questions 12- 16

The passage has three paragraphs A-C.
Which paragraphs contains the following information?
Write the correct letter A-C next to sentences 12-16

12. ___ How climate conditions affect pats processing by beetles.
13. ___ A general explanation of how pats benefit from beetles.
14. ___ A short explanation of why farmers need different beetle species.
15. ___ An explanation of how different beetles dig into pats.
16. ___ Examples of how pats are used by different beetle species.

V. Questions 17-19

Read the passage and answer the following questions. Then, discuss them with your partner.

17. How do dung beetles work?

18. What can be inferred from farmers needing different species of beetles throughout the year?

19. Which Dung beetles species, from the ones named in the text, would you bring to implement this process in Colombian pastures and why?

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REFLECTIVE POINT

1 Now go back to the reading questions to classify them into the three levels of reading we have revised in this course. Write it by each question.

2. List the reading strategies you used to answer each of the sections of the reading exercise.

    a) Section I: _____
    b) Section II: _____
    c) Section III: _____
    d) Section IV: _____
    e) Section V: _____

3. As a teacher, how would you go about helping your students cope with this type of academic text?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____