

BELT Practice

Reading Comprehension

Reading 7: There are many types of hotel, big and small. Big hotels, which are part of a 'group', offer guests a standard that does not vary from one location to another. Hotels can be awarded 'Stars' if their facilities match the Tourist Boards specifications. The more stars, the higher the standards. There is also a 'Red Star' accolade awarded for excellent cuisine.

People expect rooms with ensuite facilities. There is also a choice of single, double or family rooms to book. Hotels in large busy cities often have triple glazed windows to help reduce the noise of passing traffic.

When you stay in a hotel, the facilities are reflected in the price of the accommodation. Many establishments have swimming pools, squash courts, health clubs, gymnasiums and indoor play areas for young family members. Some of these activities can be used by non-residents, providing they pay the subscription fee. There are hotels with golf courses in their grounds. Some have lakes that are offered to guests who wish to fish or take out a boat to fill their leisure time.

A good hotel with pleasant helpful staff contributes to making a holiday enjoyable and encourages return visits. Christmas cards are sent to regular guests from the hotel management. A varied choice of fresh food beautifully presented in a dining area with lovely views, all add to the holiday experience.

If the guests do not wish to dine in the restaurant, room service is an alternative. A menu is supplied in the room from which guests can order. When the food is ready, a member of staff will bring it to the room. If the guests have to leave early in the morning before the dining room is serving breakfast, an order can be placed the night before leaving and breakfast will be delivered to the room at the desired time. There is always a list of the restaurant opening times in the room.

Most hotels ask their guests to vacate their rooms by 10 o'clock on the day of their departure. This is so the staff have enough time to clean the room, make up the bed and generally tidy the area, before the next occupants arrive. New visitors to a hotel do not usually have access to their room until after mid-day.

1. Why are hotels awarded stars?

- They indicate the number of rooms in the building.
- The stars are a way of knowing what facilities they offer.
- They tell guests the hotel is open all year.
- The stars indicate the size of the grounds.

2. Why do hotels in busy cities have double and triple glazed windows?

- It helps to reduce noise levels.
- To stop the sun shining in.
- To keep the window cleaners busy.
- They give a clearer view.

3. What facilities are offered to non-residents?

- Only the bedrooms.
- Non-residents are not welcome.
- Only play areas for children.
- The dining room, adjacent golf courses and the fitness areas.

4. What does room service mean?

- Food and drink can be delivered to your room.
- The guests have to leave.
- An electrician comes to turn off the lights.
- The room is ready for cleaning.

5. Why are guests asked to vacate their rooms by 10 am on departure day?

- To check nothing has been stolen.
- So that the room can be cleaned ready for the next occupants.
- So the room can be repainted.
- To let the staff sit in it when they are tired.

Reading 8: We all need to eat to keep fit and healthy. Young children cannot grow tall and strong unless they eat a well-balanced diet. This means a selection of foods that provide protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins and mineral elements.

Some foods can be digested raw but other foods are heated and cooked to make digestion faster. Salad leaves, cucumber, tomatoes, vegetables such as carrots, and fruit do not need cooking. However, apples are an example of fruit that can be eaten raw and also cooked. Stewed apples, apples baked in the oven and apples in pies and topped with crumble are ways of eating the fruit. When food is cooked, it is heated.

Before people had electricity and gas, they cooked on wood and charcoal fires. A fairly recent addition to cooking is the microwave. This speeds up the cooking time. Fan ovens are also more efficient. Barbecue cooking outside in the garden on a warm day in summer, is very popular. In the kitchen, utensils are used to contain the food, and they vary from open pans to pans with lids, frying pans, steamers, pressure cookers and woks.

Before supermarkets sold ready cooked meals that just require re-heating, it was the tradition that men left the women in the home to prepare and cook food. Now both men and women share the tasks in well-designed kitchens. In restaurants, the chef, a few years ago, was nearly always male. Today however, there are as many female chefs as men.

There has been a great revival in the way food is cooked, mainly in part due to seeing a lot of cooking programs on television. These are often presented as competitions like Master Chef and the Great British bake-off. Also, people travel more to foreign countries and return home with exotic and interesting recipes. The availability of ingredients in the supermarkets also encourages experimentation.

The kitchen is now the 'hub' of the house. The family, friends and visitors when waiting for a meal to be prepared all gather in the kitchen and help to prepare the dishes or watch others doing the cooking. The utensils available to aid the food preparation are plentiful. Different types of knives for example. Aprons and oven gloves help to protect us from spills and heat when taking hot dishes from the oven.

Some people love cooking, planning the meal, assembling the ingredients and then preparing the food. Others however prefer to open a tin of food and heat up the contents.

1. Why do we need to eat a well-balanced diet?

- To keeps us fit and healthy and helps children grow.
- To help us balance on wet surfaces.
- We need a balanced diet to help us live to be 100.
- We can live well without a balanced diet.

2. Which food mentioned in the passage can be eaten raw?

- Dates
- Oranges
- Brazil nuts
- Apples

3. Where do people most often cook using a barbecue?

- Inside the house.
- In the garden
- In the garage.
- In the kitchen.

4. Where can you buy ready prepared meals for heating up at home?

- At airports.
- On the beach.
- In supermarkets.
- Only in London.

5. What is the main reason for using a microwave?

- To shorten cooking time.
- To teach young children how to cook.
- To melt ice-cream.
- To make food much smaller.

Reading 9: The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy, which means that the Queen is the head of state but she does not actively participate in politics. The British people vote for the members of parliament and they make the laws and run the country for the Queen. The Queen signs all the laws passed by the politicians but she does not have any responsibility for saying what the laws should be about.

The political leader of the UK is the Prime Minister, who is also called the PM. This person is the leader of the political party that has the most seats in the House of Commons. Normally in the UK there is one party with a majority in the House of Commons, which means they have more than half of the seats, that forms the government to run the country. Sometimes if one party does not have enough seats to form a majority it will need to form a coalition with another party, and they will run the country together.

The UK is divided into many different constituencies, and each constituency is represented by one member of parliament, also called an MP. Nearly all the MP in the UK belong to a political party. The two biggest parties are the Conservatives and Labor. There are then several smaller parties, such as the Liberal Democrats, Green Party, UK Independence

Party (UKIP) or SNP (Scottish Nationalist Party). Some MPs may also be independents, which means they are not linked to any party.

Normally there are elections every five years in the UK. The polling day is normally a Thursday. When there is an election, polling stations are set up all around the country so everyone can go and vote. Everyone who is on the electoral register has one vote. Most people go to polling stations where they get a ballot paper. On the ballot paper there is a list of all the candidates that are standing for election, and the person needs to make a mark by the name of the person they want to vote for. When they have done this, they put their ballot paper in the ballot box.

In the UK, the candidate with the most votes in a constituency is the winner. They get to go to London and become an MP in the Houses of Parliament. It is their job to represent their constituents and try to run the country in a fair and proper way.

1. Who is the head of state in the UK?

- The President
- The PM
- The Queen
- The King

2. What happens when no party has a majority in the House of Commons?

- There is another election.
- A coalition forms.
- The Queen runs the country.
- Nothing happens.

3. Who can vote in an election in the UK?

- Everyone over 25 years old.
- Everyone who is on the electoral register.
- Everyone who goes to a polling station.
- Everyone that pays some money.

4. Who is the winner in an election in the UK?

- The person with the most votes.
- The person who worked the hardest.
- The person who is a member of the winning party.
- The person chosen by the PM.

5. Normally, how often are elections held in the UK?

- Every 3 years
- Every 4 years
- Every 5 years
- Every 6 years