IELTS Reading: True/False/Not Given

READING PASSAGE 1

Henry Moore (1898-1986)

Henry Moore was born in Castleford, a small town near Leeds in the north of England. He was the seventh child of Raymond Moore and his wife Mary Baker. He studied at Castleford Grammar School from 1909 to 1915, where his early interest in art was encouraged by his teacher Alice Gostick. After leaving school, Moore hoped to become a sculptor, but instead he complied with his father's wish that he train as a schoolteacher. He had to abandon his training in 1917 when he was sent to France to fight in the First World War.

After the war, Moore enrolled at the Leeds School of Art, where he studied for two years. In his first year, he spent most of his time drawing. Although he wanted to study sculpture, no teacher was appointed until his second year. At the end of that year, he passed the sculpture examination and was awarded a scholarship to the Royal College of Art in London. In September 1921, he moved to London and began three years of advanced study in sculpture.

Alongside the instruction he received at the Royal College, Moore visited many of the London museums, particularly the British Museum, which had a wide-ranging collection of ancient sculpture. During these visits, he discovered the power and beauty of ancient Egyptian and African sculpture. As he became increasingly interested in these 'primitive' forms of art, he turned away from European sculptural traditions.

After graduating, Moore spent the first six months of 1925 travelling in France. When he visited the Trocadero Museum in Paris, he was impressed by a cast of a Mayan sculpture of the rain spirit. It was a male reclining figure with its knees drawn up together, and its head at a right angle to its body. Moore became fascinated with this stone sculpture, which he thought had a power and originality that no other stone sculpture possessed. He himself started carving a variety of subjects in stone, including depictions of reclining women, mother-and-child groups, and masks.

Moore's exceptional talent soon gained recognition, and in 1926 he started work as a sculpture instructor at the Royal College. In 1933, he became a member of a group of young artists called Unit One. The aim of the group was to convince the English public of the merits of the emerging international movement in modem art and architecture.

Around this time, Moore moved away from the human figure to experiment with abstract shapes. In 1931, he held an exhibition at the Leicester Galleries in London. His work was enthusiastically welcomed by fellow sculptors, but the reviews in the press were extremely negative and turned Moore into a notorious figure. There were calls for his resignation from the Royal College, and the following year, when his contract expired, he left to start a sculpture department at the Chelsea School of Art in London.

Throughout the 1930s, Moore did not show any inclination to please the British public. He became interested in the paintings of the Spanish artist Pablo Picasso, whose work inspired him to distort the human body in a radical way. At times, he seemed to abandon the human figure altogether. The pages of his sketchbooks from this period show his ideas for abstract sculptures that bore little resemblance to the human form.

In 1940, during the Second World War, Moore stopped teaching at the Chelsea School and moved to a farmhouse about 20 miles north of London. A shortage of materials forced him to focus on drawing. He did numerous small sketches of Londoners, later turning these ideas into large coloured drawings in his studio. Tn 1942, he returned to Castleford to make a series of sketches of the miners who worked there.

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In 1944, Harlow, a town near London, offered Moore a commission for a sculpture depicting a family. The resulting work signifies a dramatic change in Moore's style, away from the experimentation of the 1930s towards a more natural and humanistic subject matter. He did dozens of studies in clay for the sculpture, and these were cast in bronze and issued in editions of seven to nine copies each. In this way, Moore's work became available to collectors all over the world. The boost to his income enabled him to take on ambitious projects and start working on the scale he felt his sculpture demanded.

Critics who had begun to think that Moore had become less revolutionary were proven wrong by the appearance, in 1950, of the first of Moore's series of standing figures in bronze, with their harsh and angular pierced forms and distinct impression of menace. Moore also varied his subject matter in the 1950s with such works as Warrior with Shield and Falling Warrior. These were rare examples of Moore's use of the male figure and owe something to his visit to Greece in 1951, when he had the opportunity to study ancient works of art.

In his final years, Moore created the Henry Moore Foundation to promote art appreciation and to display his work. Moore was the first modern English sculptor to achieve international critical acclaim and he is still regarded as one of the most important sculptors of the 20th century.

Questions 1-7

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1? Circle:

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

Specify the relevant information in the passage (e.g., passage 1, line 4)

1. On leaving school, Moore did what his father wanted him to do.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

2. Moore began studying sculpture in his first term at the Leeds School of Art.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

3. When Moore started at the Royal College of Art, its reputation for teaching sculpture was excellent.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

4. Moore became aware of ancient sculpture as a result of visiting London museums.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

5. The Trocadero Museum's Mayan sculpture attracted a lot of public interest.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

6. Moore thought the Mayan sculpture was similar in certain respects to other stone sculptures.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

7. The artists who belonged to Unit One wanted to make modern art and architecture more popular.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

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Relevant information: .....

READING PASSAGE 2

Silbo Gomero – the whistle 'language' of the Canary Islands

La Gomera is one of the Canary Islands situated in the Atlantic Ocean off the northwest coast of Africa. This small volcanic island is mountainous, with steep rocky slopes and deep, wooded ravines, rising to 1,487 meters at its highest peak. It is also home to the best known of the world's whistle 'languages', a means of transmitting information over long distances which is perfectly adapted to the extreme terrain of the island.

This 'language', known as 'Silbo' or 'Silbo Gomero' – from the Spanish word for 'whistle' – is now shedding light on the language-processing abilities of the human brain, according to scientists. Researchers say that Silbo activates parts of the brain normally associated with spoken language, suggesting that the brain is remarkably flexible in its ability to interpret sounds as language.

'Science has developed the idea of brain areas that are dedicated to language, and we are starting to understand the scope of signals that can be recognized as a language,' says David Corina, co-author of a recent study and associate professor of psychology at the University of Washington in Seattle.

Silbo is a substitute for Spanish, with individual words recoded into whistles that have high- and low-frequency tones. A whistler – or silbador – puts a finger in his or her mouth to increase the whistle's pitch, while the other hand can be cupped to adjust the direction of the sound. 'There is much more ambiguity in the whistled signal than in the spoken signal,' explains lead researcher Manuel Carreiras, a psychology professor at the University of La Laguna on the Canary island of Tenerife. Because whistled 'words' can be hard to distinguish, silbadores rely on repetition, as well as awareness of context, to make themselves understood.

The silbadores of Gomera are traditionally shepherds and other isolated mountain folk, and their novel means of staying in touch allows them to communicate over distances of up to 10 kilometers. Carreiras explains that silbadores are able to pass a surprising amount of information via their whistles. 'In daily life, they use whistles to communicate short commands, but any Spanish sentence could be whistled.' Silbo has proved particularly useful when fires have occurred on the island and rapid communication across large areas has been vital.

The study team used neuroimaging equipment to contrast the brain activity of sobadores while listening to whistled and spoken Spanish. Results showed the left temporal lobe of the brain, which is usually associated with spoken language, was engaged during the processing of Silbo. The researchers found that other key regions in the brain's frontal lobe also responded to the whistles, including those activated in response to sign language among deaf people. When the experiments were repeated with non-whistlers, however, activation was observed in all areas of the brain.

'Our results provide more evidence about the flexibility of human capacity for language in a variety of forms,' Corina says. 'These data suggest that left-hemisphere language regions are uniquely adapted for communicative purposes, independent of the modality of a signal. The non-Silbo speakers were not recognising Silbo as a language. They had nothing to grab onto, so multiple areas of their brains were activated.'

Carreiras says the origins of Silbo Gomero remain obscure, but that indigenous Canary Islanders, who were of North African origin, already had a whistled language when Spain conquered the volcanic islands in the 15th century. Whistled languages survive today in Papua New Guinea, Mexico, Vietnam, Guyana, China, Nepal, Senegal, and a few

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mountainous pockets in southern Europe. There are thought to be as many as 70 whistled languages still in use, though only 12 have been described and studied scientifically. This form of communication is an adaptation found among cultures where people are often isolated from each other, according to Julien Meyer, a researcher at the Institute of Human Sciences in Lyon, France. 'They are mostly used in mountains or dense forests,' he says. 'Whistled languages are quite clearly defined and represent an original adaptation of the spoken language for the needs of isolated human groups.'

But with modern communication technology now widely available, researchers say whistled languages like Silbo are threatened with extinction. With dwindling numbers of Gomera islanders still fluent in the language, Canaries' authorities are taking steps to try to ensure its survival. Since 1999, Silbo Gomero has been taught in all of the island's elementary schools. In addition, locals are seeking assistance from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 'The local authorities are trying to get an award from the organization to declare [Silbo Gomero] as something that should be preserved for humanity,' Carreiras adds.

Questions 1-6

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2? Circle:

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

Specify the relevant information in the passage (e.g., passage 1, line 4)

1. La Gomera is the most mountainous of all the Canary Islands.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

2. Silbo is only appropriate for short and simple messages.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

3. In the brain-activity study, silbadores and non-whistlers produced different results.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

4. The Spanish introduced Silbo to the islands in the 15th century.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

5. There is precise data available regarding all of the whistle languages in existence today.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

6. The children of Gomera now learn Silbo.

Answer: TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Relevant information: .....

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