

UNIT 1: URBAN AND RURAL LIFE

A.READING

Exercise 1: Read the groups of words that begin with the same prefix. Match the meanings with the prefixes.

from one thing / place to another	future	make the opposite of	too much
under / less than	wrongly / incorrectly		

1 over- (*overweight, overpaid, overestimate*)

2 mis- (*misuse, misunderstand, mispronounce*)

3 sub- (*substandard, sub-zero, submarine*)

4 fore- (*foresee, forethought, forecast*)

5 de- (*deodorant, defrost, demystify*)

6 trans- (*transfer, transform, transcribe*)

Exercise 2: Read the comments made by different speakers. Match the descriptions of what the speakers are doing with the comments.

complaining about inaccurate information

complaining that something isn't good enough

criticising someone's lifestyle and health

describing someone's stage of life

explaining what someone approves and disapproves of

suggesting how to describe something's history

talking about the advantages of being prepared for what is going to happen

1 'He's overweight because he overeats.'

2 'The service I've received today has been substandard.'

3 'I was misquoted and my views were misrepresented.'

4 'She's always been pro-trade and anti-capitalist at the same time.'

5 'If you want to sell your old bike, don't call it "used". Call it "pre-owned and pre-loved".'

6 'My grandparents are enjoying their post-retirement years.'

7 'Forewarned is forearmed. That's always been a favourite idiom of mine.'

Exercise 3 : Read the information about the matching headings task in the IELTS Reading test. Then add the correct headings for the paragraphs. Use the headings in the box. There are two extra headings.

How being able to match headings can help in real life

One of the biggest challenges in the IELTS test

Skills you need to succeed at the task

What to watch out for

What you have to do

Why paraphrasing is important

1

The task involves choosing the most suitable headings for the paragraphs in a text. There are usually between five and seven paragraphs, and there are also two extra headings that you don't need.

2

Study the paragraphs before the headings. Don't try to find a paragraph for each heading, as two of the headings won't be used. As you do the task, keep track of which headings you've used, as you can only use a heading once. And as always, keep an eye on time, as you only have 20 minutes to answer all 13 or 14 questions on the whole text. And 20 minutes can go by very quickly!

3

Remember that just because you see the same word in the heading and one of the paragraphs, this doesn't mean you've found the answer. It's more important to look for matching meanings in headings and paragraphs, not just matching words. These reading tasks check that you can understand ideas expressed in different words, which is one of the key skills you really need in this task.

4

As well as identifying paraphrases, you need to be able to distinguish between headings, remembering that some of them might sound quite similar, so try to express them differently in your own words. When reading each paragraph, you also need to distinguish between the main idea of the paragraph and the extra detail. Bear in mind that the heading will probably relate to the main idea, rather than some minor detail. This central idea is often (but not always) referred to in the first and / or last sentence of the paragraph, so it's a good idea to check these.

Exercise 4 : Read the information. Then read the topic sentences. Choose the correct descriptions of what the paragraphs will be about.



The first sentence in a paragraph is called the *topic sentence*. This usually contains clues as to what the rest of the paragraph will be about. In this exercise, you will see five topic sentences (from a five-paragraph text, which you will read later) and predict what the rest of the paragraph is likely to be about.

Topic sentence A

One of the key challenges facing the world is going to be coping with the hundreds of millions who will flock to the growing number of overpopulated megacities, especially in developing countries.

The rest of paragraph A is likely to tell us about *another challenge that needs to be addressed / consequences of falling populations / examples of cities where this has happened / reasons why falling populations fall further / the lives of people living in the countryside*.

Topic sentence B

A drop in a city's population usually leads to a few empty or boarded-up and unoccupied homes, hardly enough to make the headlines or raise eyebrows.

The rest of paragraph B is likely to tell us about *another challenge that needs to be addressed / consequences of falling populations / examples of cities where this has happened / reasons why falling populations fall further / the lives of people living in the countryside*.

Topic sentence C

That's just the thing: once a population starts going down, that decline tends to continue.

The rest of paragraph C is likely to tell us about *another challenge that needs to be addressed / consequences of falling populations / examples of cities where this has happened / reasons why falling populations fall further / the lives of people living in the countryside*.

Topic sentence D

Many cities that are now declining relied heavily on a specific industry for employment of a large portion of the workforce.

The rest of paragraph D is likely to tell us about *another challenge that needs to be addressed / consequences of falling populations / examples of cities where this has happened / reasons why falling populations fall further / the lives of people living in the countryside*.

Topic sentence E

It's this desire to enjoy many of the aspects of an imagined utopia that is prompting many urban dwellers to pack up and move out to the country.

The rest of paragraph E is likely to tell us about *another challenge that needs to be addressed / consequences of falling populations: examples of cities where this has happened / reasons why falling populations fall further / the lives of people living in the countryside*.

Exercise 5: Later in the unit, you will complete an IELTS Reading matching headings task. First, read the descriptions and choose the correct answers to complete the sentences.

- 1 One of the heading options is *The perks of rural life*. A paragraph with this heading is likely to be about ...
- ☐ statistics concerning numbers of people living in the countryside.
 - ☐ the benefits of living in the countryside.
- 2 Another heading option is *A widely publicised phenomenon*. This paragraph probably focuses on something that people ...
- ☐ do a lot.
 - ☐ know about.
- 3 *Divided generations* is another option. A paragraph with this heading is likely to focus on reasons why ...
- ☐ people of different ages spend less time together.
 - ☐ younger and older people behave differently from each other.
- 4 A paragraph with the heading *More common than you might think* would be about ...
- ☐ something that happens a lot.
 - ☐ something that people think about a lot.
- 5 The heading *The reasons why populations fall* could be used with a paragraph looking at ...
- ☐ the causes of falling populations.
 - ☐ the results of falling populations.
- 6 A paragraph headed *The impact of migration on rural infrastructure* will focus on ...
- ☐ the causes of migration.
 - ☐ the effects of migration.
- 7 The heading *The effects of economic downturn* suggests that the accompanying paragraph will be about ...
- ☐ what happens when a town gets poorer.
 - ☐ why some towns are poor and others are rich.

Exercise 6 : The article has five paragraphs, A–E. Read the article and match the paragraphs with the headings. There are two extra headings.

Paragraph A

One of the key challenges facing the world is going to be coping with the hundreds of millions who will flock to

the growing number of overpopulated megacities, especially in developing countries. This has received a great deal of media attention; books have been written, conferences organised and committees established to debate the causes of urbanisation, and more importantly, what can be done to improve the fate of those making the move into these continually growing conurbations. But the same is not true of a second, and closely related trend, which raises a serious dilemma: what to do about the cities that are losing people.

Paragraph B

A drop in a city's population usually leads to a few empty or boarded-up and unoccupied homes, hardly enough to make the headlines or raise eyebrows. But they're hardly unusual. One in ten US cities is actually shrinking. In Japan, larger cities are thriving – and growing – while many of the smaller ones are in decline, both demographically and economically. In Latvia, many young adults have turned remarkably anti-provincial and have headed for the capital, Riga, in large numbers, leaving a number of ghost towns. Almost silently, this trend is being repeated right across the globe, almost without anyone noticing. Several South Korean cities are also becoming smaller, and this trend will continue unless birth rates there increase.

Paragraph C

That's just the thing: once a place starts getting smaller, the decline tends to continue. There are several explanations for this. When young adults leave the town of their birth and don't return, the town loses not just those adults, but also the children that they would have had later had they stayed. As populations drop, the average age of the inhabitants increases until most people are post-childbearing age. This is what has happened to towns like Christchurch in the UK. It's a vicious cycle; it means, of course, fewer youngsters to bring down the average age, and consequently, the trend gathers momentum and accelerates. Additionally, of course, higher average age is closely linked with increased mortality, with each death further reducing the population.

Paragraph D

Many cities that are now declining relied heavily on a specific industry for the employment of a large portion of the workforce. A classic example is Detroit, once the centre of America's thriving car industry, but now a sparsely populated urban wasteland. Flint, another ex-industrial powerhouse, can no longer provide the jobs its residents need and so many have left, driven away by unemployment and the prospect of better opportunities elsewhere. For others, a rural life has a greater appeal and this tempts them to leave the city; living in the countryside typically affords lower property prices, healthier living and lower rates of crime.

Paragraph E

It's this desire to enjoy many of the aspects of an imagined utopia that is prompting many urban dwellers to pack up and move out to the country. Once there, they can grow their own potatoes, have time to talk to their neighbours and not worry about what their kids are up to. Technological changes mean that for many professionals, there's not so much difference between being in the city and living miles from anywhere, as long as they have a car and a decent internet connection. Many city-to-country migrants, such as Helen Dobson, who recently moved out of Manchester, find that they have to put up with substandard wi-fi anyway – but that's a different story.

	☒	The reasons why populations fall
1 Paragraph A	☒	More common than you might think
2 Paragraph B	☒	The effects of economic downturn
3 Paragraph C	☒	The impact of migration on rural infrastructure
4 Paragraph D	☒	The perks of rural life
5 Paragraph E	☒	A widely publicised phenomenon
	☒	Divided generations

Exercise 7: Read the sentences from the article. Choose the correct definitions of the words and phrases in bold.

- This has received **a great deal of** media attention; books have been written, conferences organised and committees established to debate the causes of urbanisation ...
 - ☐ a good arrangement for
 - ☐ a large amount of
- Several South Korean cities are also becoming smaller, and this trend will continue unless the **birth rate** increases.
 - ☐ number of babies being born
 - ☐ quality of healthcare
- It means, of course, fewer youngsters to bring down the average age, and consequently, the trend gathers momentum and **accelerates**.
 - ☐ becomes more widely understood
 - ☐ gets faster
- A classic example is Detroit, once the centre of America's **thriving** car industry, but now a sparsely populated urban wasteland.
 - ☐ busy and financially successful
 - ☐ declining
- Many cities that are now declining relied heavily on a specific industry for the employment of a large **portion** of the workforce.
 - ☐ payment
 - ☐ percentage
- Flint, another ex-industrial **powerhouse**, can no longer provide the jobs its residents need, and so many have left ...
 - ☐ place that produces electricity
 - ☐ place with lots of energy, activity and skill
- ... and so many have left, **driven away** by unemployment and the prospect of better opportunities ...
 - ☐ forced to leave
 - ☐ travelling by car

Exercise 8 : Read the information. Then read the blog post and statements 1–4. Choose False or Not Given.

In the IELTS Reading test, you might see a True / False / Not Given task.

Deciding whether a statement is true should be reasonably clear. But many students are unsure about the differences between statements that are false (i.e. we know they are not true) and statements that are not given (i.e. they could be true, or they could be false; we don't have enough information to know). In this exercise, the bold sections of the text are the bits you need to think about.

Meet lifestyle blogger Helen Dobson, who swapped city life for a move out to the country.

A year ago, my husband and I made the move out of **Manchester, where we'd spent virtually our entire lives**, and relocated to a tiny village in the hills, miles away from anywhere. It was **a move prompted by lots of different things: the birth of our baby son**, changes to our jobs and the desire to have more space.

Having lived in a nice part of Manchester for ages, I realised that for years I'd been taking the ready availability of everything for granted. **When the population is greatly reduced, inevitably so is choice, from schools to types of cheese.** There isn't a decent Indian restaurant for miles, and we **have to drive 30 minutes to get decent handmade organic bread.** But, of course, these are **outrageously first-world problems.**

- 1 Helen was born in Manchester. *False/Not Given*
- 2 Helen's baby was born after she moved out to the countryside. *False/Not Given*
- 3 The schools near Helen's new home aren't very good. *False/Not Given*
- 4 Helen considers the limited shopping facilities a major problem. *False/Not Given*

Exercise 9 : Read the information. Then read the article again. Do the statements agree with the information in the article? Choose True, False or Not Given.

Choose
True if the statement agrees with the information
False if the statement contradicts the information
Not Given if there is no information on this.

Paragraph A

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Paragraph B

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Paragraph C

That's just the thing: once a place starts getting smaller, the decline tends to continue. There are several explanations for this. When young adults leave the town of their birth and don't return, the town loses not just those adults, but also the children that they would have had there later had they stayed. As populations drop, the average age of the inhabitants increases until most people are post-childbearing age. This is what has happened to towns like Christchurch in the UK. It's a vicious cycle; it means, of course, fewer youngsters to bring down the average age, and consequently, the trend gathers momentum and accelerates. Additionally, of course, higher average age is closely linked with increased mortality, with each death further reducing the population.

Paragraph D

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Paragraph E

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- 1 Too many people are moving to large cities.
- ☐ True
- ☐ False
- ☐ Not Given
- 2 Young Latvian adults would prefer to stay in their hometowns than move to the capital.
- ☐ True
- ☐ False
- ☐ Not Given
- 3 The birth rate in Christchurch is dropping.
- ☐ True
- ☐ False
- ☐ Not Given
- 4 Fewer people now work in factories in Flint.
- ☐ True
- ☐ False
- ☐ Not Given
- 5 Helen Dobson's internet is poor.
- ☐ True
- ☐ False
- ☐ Not Given

B.GRAMMAR&VOCABULARY

Exercise 1: Read the information. Then match the words with the definitions.

Prefixes are letters that can be added to the beginning of words to form new words with different meanings. It is important to learn the meanings of prefixes as this will help you to better understand the overall meaning of words. For example:

Word	Prefix	Meaning of prefix
understand	mis understand	incorrectly, badly
heading	sub heading	under, below
vitamin	multi vitamin	many, several
cook	under cook	too little, beneath
charge	over charge	too much, above
clockwise	anti clockwise	against, opposite
pay	pre pay	before

antisocial

mislead

multicultural

overcrowded

preview

substandard

underestimate

- 1 to cause someone to believe something that is not true:
- 2 below a satisfactory standard:
- 3 including people who have many different customs and beliefs:
- 4 to fail to guess or understand the real cost, size, difficulty of something:
- 5 containing too many people or things:
- 6 harmful to society:
- 7 an opportunity to see something such as a film before it is shown to the public:

Exercise 2: Complete the sentences. Use the words in the box.

antisocial

mislead

multicultural

overcrowded

preview

substandard

underestimated

- 1 She lives with her parents and five sisters. Their one-room flat is .
- 2 The building materials they used to build the village hall were of poor quality. In particular, the roof tiles were .
- 3 People from all over the world live in that part of the city. It's very .
- 4 We have very neighbours who play music all night and leave rubbish everywhere.
- 5 We went to see a of the film a week before it opened to the general public.
- 6 Some companies deliberately people by making false claims about their products in their advertisements.
- 7 The builders originally thought the project would cost £4,000, but they the price of the equipment, and now they think it will cost £8,000.

Exercise 3: Choose the correct prepositions to complete the sentences.

- 1) The town will have grown considerably at / by / for the year 2050.
- 2) He has been living on that farm by / for / since 1998.
- 3) They went to the local village school at / from / since 2000 to 2005.
- 4) My grandparents have lived in the same house for / from / since ages.
- 5) I intend to live in this rural area at / between / for the next two or three years.
- 6) We rented a house near the lake at / between / for 2012 and 2014.
- 7) I'm not sure where my friend is. She should be here by / since / until now.
- 8) We want to stay here between / by / for at least two more years.

Exercise 4: Read the information. Then complete the sentences. Use the words and phrases in the box.

as long as as soon as by the time provided that supposing unless

- 1 My bank will lend me the money _____ I agree to pay it back in five years.
- 2 I think you will get that job _____ you don't do badly at the interview.
- 3 The police wouldn't let me park there _____ I showed them proof that I lived in the street.
- 4 I hope to have travelled around Asia _____ I am 50 years old.
- 5 _____ I get home, I will book our tickets for the theatre.
- 6 _____ the car park is full when we arrive, will we be able to find alternative parking?

Exercise 5: Choose the correct tenses to complete the sentences.

Conjunctions are linking words that help you to connect your ideas. It is important to use conjunctions in your written and spoken English correctly as this will improve your Cohesion and Coherence mark in the IELTS test. Future time phrases such as *provided that*, *as long as* and *as soon as* are called *subordinating conjunctions*.

One purpose of a subordinating conjunction is to reduce the importance of one of the clauses so that the reader knows which of the ideas is more important to the writer. Typically in English, the less important idea is introduced by the subordinating conjunction. For example:

As soon as the new tramway is built, there will be less traffic on the roads.

In the example, the writer's aim is to show that less traffic on the roads is more important than the new tramway being built.

- 1) As soon as the new road is completed, traffic congestion in the city centre was / will be / would be reduced.
- 2) As long as you continue to cycle to work every day, your fitness and health improves / improved / will improve.
- 3) By the time the shopping centre is open, the multistorey car park was / will / would be finished.
- 4) Unless the planning department gives permission for the supermarket to be built soon, it wasn't / won't / wouldn't be built this year.
- 5) Provided that we all work together, the project is / will / would be finished on time.
- 6) Apparently, they are thinking of closing the railway station in my village. If it was closed, it will / won't / would cause problems for lots of commuters.
- 7) Supposing we don't arrive until late at night, is / will / would the guest house still be open?

Exercise 6: Match the words and phrases with the definitions.

affordable

budget hotel

charge

closure

commuter

congestion

exhaust fumes

pollution

season ticket

- 1 overcrowding on the roads:
- 2 gases coming from an engine as waste products:
- 3 the price you have to pay for something:
- 4 when something is shut down or closed:
- 5 not expensive:
- 6 an establishment that provides accommodation at a reasonable price:
- 7 the contamination of soil, water or the atmosphere by harmful substances:
- 8 something you buy for a number of journeys within a specific time:
- 9 somebody who travels regularly from one place to another for work: