

READING 1

Reading: Summary completion with a wordlist

Skills focus

i

A common question type in IELTS Reading is completing a summary of the text, or of part of it. Sometimes you have a list of words to choose from to complete the summary, and sometimes you have to complete the summary using words in the text. This section will look at the technique for summaries with a wordlist.

1 Discuss these questions in pairs.

- 1 Look at the title of the text on page 101. Do you know what the Universal Basic Income is?
- 2 Does the government of your country give people money when they are sick, old or unemployed?
- 3 Do you think the government should spend more money to helping people who can't work?
- 4 What do you think about the idea of the government giving a regular sum of money to everyone, regardless of their income?

2 Look at the exam task below and discuss these questions in pairs.

- 1 What kind of word do you think should go in each gap (e.g. noun, adjective, verb)?
- 2 What are the key word(s) before each gap?
- 3 Can you think of any synonyms of the key word(s) near each gap?
- 4 Which words in the box do you think are possible answers?

benefits • citizens • food • men • money • poor • poverty •
tax • time • unemployment • women

The UBI is seen by some as the answer to the age-old issue of ¹____. The essential idea of the UBI is that it ensures that all ²____ are given enough money to live on throughout their life. Everyone would have a place to live, would be able to afford to clothe themselves and their family, and would have sufficient ³____. The UBI would be given throughout one's lifetime, no matter how much ⁴____ people have or what their circumstances are.

3 Read the first paragraph of the text on page 101 and complete the summary in the exam task in Exercise 2 with the words in the box.

4 Work in pairs. Compare your answers to Exercise 3 and discuss why you chose them.

5 Repeat steps 1–4 in Exercise 2 for this summary of the rest of the reading text.

benefits • considered • fluctuations • government • huge • income •
permanent • private • slight • tax • temporary • tried • universal laws

Making the UBI possible would mean considerable increases in ¹____ among more affluent members of society. It could also be paid for by eliminating a very costly system of ²____, and saving money by not employing thousands of ³____ workers to implement those benefits. Another issue is the psychological and health problems such as stress and depression caused by ⁴____ contracts and job insecurity. Supporters of UBI believe that the security of knowing you had the basics in life taken care of would result in ⁵____ falls in the cost of healthcare. Would it work? Some local authorities, like Glasgow, have ⁶____ pilot schemes, but no one has done it across a whole country yet.

Universal Basic Income – the way forward?

Is the Universal Basic Income (UBI) the solution to a problem that has plagued the world since time began – the problem of people being too poor to live comfortably? The basic idea of the UBI is that every single person in society is given a sum of money each month, from birth to death, to cover their basic needs, such as housing, clothing and nutrition. This is given regardless of their income, so in other words if they are working and earning a significant salary, they still receive the UBI each month, just the same as someone who is unemployed, a child or unable to work for other reasons, like ill health.

The obvious question is how can a society afford a UBI? It would seem to go against common sense – if everyone is given a lump sum of money throughout their life, the money has to come from somewhere. The short answer to this is that the UBI does require substantial tax rises among richer members of society to pay for it. What supporters argue is that although the rich would lose out in one way, by paying more tax, they and everyone else would gain by the lifetime security of knowing that you never had to worry about the future.

Another potential benefit of the UBI is that it would get rid of an expensive system of benefits that every country has developed in the last 100 years. What is known as 'means-testing', in which people who need money from the state have to have their income tested, to see if they qualify, is extraordinarily costly. There are hundreds of thousands of state-employed workers whose job it is to check if someone is entitled to a certain benefit or not. Often mistakes are made, and in addition to that, many people feel the stigma of means-tested benefits and do not apply for

them, even though they are entitled. Contrast that with a universal benefit like child benefit in the UK. This is money given to every mother with children, every week, from birth until the age of 16. Because it applies to everyone equally, the take-up is high and it is easy and quick to administer. When a woman has a child, it is a simple procedure to apply for child benefit and it does not require any regular checks. Supporters of the UBI point to child benefit as an example of how universal benefits are cost-effective and cheap to run.

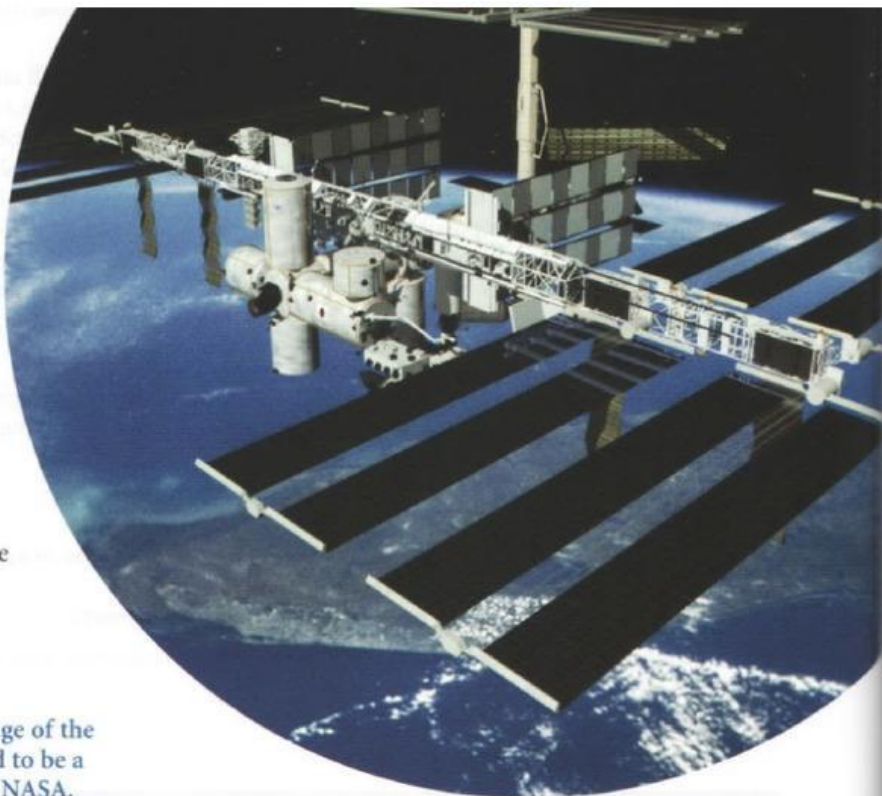
A further possible upside of the UBI is psychological. In a modern capitalist society, the stress of job insecurity for many people is immense. Not knowing if you will keep your job in the long term, because of short-term contracts, zero-hours contracts and frequent dramatic changes in the labour market, often leads to stress, illness and depression. On top of that, many people similarly worry about their accommodation – will they have enough money to pay the rent or mortgage, and as well as that, will they be able to feed their children? The UBI takes away all this insecurity, say its supporters, and as a result, as well as the improvements to human life, the savings to the healthcare and mental health services would be astronomical.

So, has it been tried? Some local councils, such as Glasgow in Scotland, and even the country of Finland have experimented with pilot schemes, but no country has launched a full-blown UBI scheme yet. Would it work? It would require a radical shift in our thinking about work, the state and the world, but in societies where the current benefit systems are not really fit for purpose, it is an idea certainly worth trying.

READING 2

1 Read these comments about space exploration and discuss how far you agree with each opinion.

- 1 Space exploration is ridiculously expensive, considering how little we get for the money wasted on it.
- 2 It's stimulating to think about what exists beyond, but what are the chances of getting something useful out of space exploration? It should be scaled down.
- 3 We've got our priorities wrong. It's about time science turned its eye back to this planet and set about doing something about poverty, disease and pollution. Once we've sorted out our own problems, let the exploration continue.



Reading

2 This passage is adapted from a web page of the Astronomical Data Center, which used to be a branch of the American space agency, NASA. Skim through it, and choose the best sentence A, B, C or D to summarise it.

- A Space exploration can encourage collaboration on earth.
B Space exploration is justified by the gains we have already made from it.

- C Space exploration may help us to avoid potential problems on earth.
D Space exploration provides better value for money than most people realise.

🕒 about 625 words

Why do we explore space?

Why should mankind explore space? Why should money, time and effort be spent exploring, investigating and researching something with so few apparent benefits? Why should resources be spent on space rather than on conditions and people on Earth?

5 These are questions that, understandably, are very often asked.

Perhaps the best answer lies in our genetic makeup as human beings. What drove our distant ancestors to move from the trees into the plains, and on into all possible areas and environments? It appears that we are driven to ensure the success and

10 continuation of not just our own genes, but of the species as a whole. The wider the distribution of a species, the better its chance of survival. Perhaps the best reason for exploring space is this genetic predisposition to expand wherever possible.

Nearly every successful civilisation has explored, because by doing so, any dangers in surrounding areas can be identified and prepared for. These might be enemies in neighbouring cultures, physical features of the area, a change in the area which might affect food supplies, or any number of other factors. They all pose a real danger, and all can be made less threatening if certain preparations are made. Without knowledge, we may be completely destroyed by the danger. With knowledge, we can lessen its effects.

Exploration also allows minerals and other potential resources to be located. Additional resources are always beneficial when used wisely, and can increase our chances of survival. Even if we have no immediate need of them, they will perhaps be useful later.

Resources may be more than physical assets. Knowledge or techniques acquired through exploration, or preparing to explore, filter from the developers into society at large. The techniques may have medical applications which can improve the length or quality of our lives. Techniques may be social,

allowing members of society better to understand those within or outside the culture. Better understanding may lead to more efficient use of resources, or a reduction in competition for resources. We have already benefited from other spin-offs, including improvements in earthquake prediction – which has saved many lives – in satellites used for weather forecasting and in communications systems. Even non-stick saucepans and mirrored sunglasses are by-products of technological developments in the space industry!

While many resources are spent on what seems a small return, the exploration of space allows creative, brave and intelligent members of our species to focus on what may serve to save us. While space may hold many wonders and explanations of how the universe was formed or how it works, it also holds dangers. The chances of a large comet or asteroid hitting the Earth are small, but it could happen in time. Such strikes in the past may account for the extinction of dinosaurs and other species. Human technology is reaching the point where it might be able

to detect the possibility of this happening, and enable us to minimise the damage, or prevent it completely, allowing us as a species to avoid extinction. The danger exists, but knowledge can help human beings to survive. Without the ability to reach out across space, the chance to save ourselves might not exist.

In certain circumstances, life on Earth may become impossible: over-population or epidemics, for instance, might eventually force us to find other places to live. While Earth is the only planet known to sustain life, surely the adaptive ability of humans would allow us to inhabit other planets and moons. It is true that the lifestyle would be different, but human life and cultures have adapted in the past and surely could in the future.

The more a culture expands, the less chance there is that it will become extinct. Space allows us to expand and succeed: for the sake of everyone on the Earth, now and in the future, space exploration is essential.

3 Questions 1–3

Choose **THREE** letters, **A–F**.

Which **THREE** of the following reasons for exploring space are mentioned by the writer?

- A It is natural for us to do so.
- B We may find new sources of food.
- C It will help us to prevent earthquakes.
- D It has side-effects that improve the quality of our lives.
- E It may enable us to find alternative homes.
- F We will discover whether other planets are inhabited.

Questions 4–11

Complete the summary below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

One example is given.

Test spot

When you are asked to complete a summary by choosing words from the passage, you must use the exact words that are given, and must write no more than the maximum number of words. The answers usually follow the order of the passage, but may not. Read the summary before you start completing it. ...TF10

Reasons for exploring space

One reason for exploring space is that we have a 0 *genetic* tendency to ensure the 4 of the species into neighbouring regions. Exploration will allow us to make suitable 5 for dealing with any 6 that we might face, and we may be able to find physical resources such as 7 , for present or future use. It is possible that new knowledge and techniques will provide social or 8 benefits. Further, exploration might one day enable us to prevent impact by a 9 or , making the 10 of the human race less likely. It will make it possible for us to live on other 11 and , should the need arise.

LISTENING 1

- 2 **Underline** the key ideas in Questions 1–5 (but not options A–C).

Questions 1–5

Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

- 1 What problem does Fumiko have with her psychology project?
A She isn't interested in the topic.
B She can't find enough information.
C She doesn't know what to focus on.
- 2 What point does Victor make about Fumiko's tutor?
A He explores his students' key interests.
B He is a very hard-working member of staff.
C He uses a limited range of project titles.
- 3 What has Fumiko already read on her topic?
A book extracts
B journal articles
C internet material
- 4 According to Mr Dresden, Fumiko's project must include
A some graphic data.
B a bibliography.
C a public survey.
- 5 Victor and Fumiko arrange to
A get in contact in half an hour.
B meet up in the library.
C have lunch together.

- 3 Speakers in IELTS Listening tests often use signals to help candidates know when the answer to a question is coming. Match Questions 1–5 above to these signals (a–e).

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| a The thing about Mr Dresden is ... | ☐ |
| b That's the trouble ... | ☐ |
| c He said that the important thing was ... | ☐ |
| d Look, tell you what, I'll text you ... | ☐ |
| e So what reading have you done so far? | ☐ |

Exam advice Listening Sections 1–4

- Look quickly at the number of tasks and the number of questions in each task.
- Use the signals you hear and the key ideas you underline to help you answer the questions.
- Leave any questions you cannot do; try to answer them when the recording has finished.

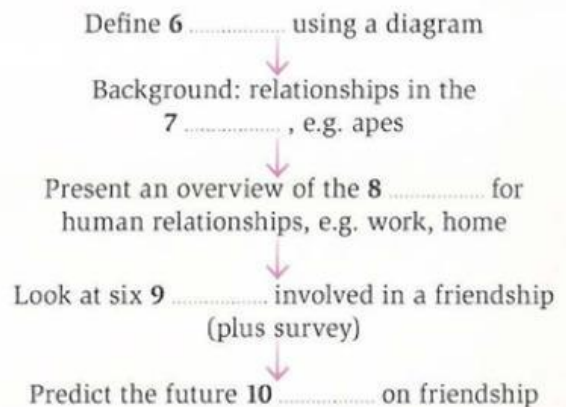
- 4 Quickly read through Questions 6–10 and think about the type of word and type of information that you will need.

Questions 6–10

Complete the flow chart below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

Fumiko's plan



- 5 Now listen and do Questions 1–10.
- 6 Complete the speaker's signals for each of the answers in Questions 6–10 by writing one word in each gap. Then listen again to check your answers.

- 6 I think the very thing you need to do is ...
- 7 After , you could do ...
- 8 'You mean ... ?' 'Yes, ... the word.'
- 9 The thing might be to ...
- 10 Why don't I by ... , or better still, ...

- 7 **Work in pairs. Take turns to speak for a minute or two on this topic.**

Describe someone who is a really good friend. Say who they are, how you met them and why they are such a good friend.

LISTENING 2

- 1 You will hear two students talking about a presentation. Look at the second task, Questions 6–10. What kind of word will be required for all of the questions? Circle A, B or C.

A adverbs B verbs C nouns

- 2 Now listen and answer Questions 1–10.

Questions 1–5

Choose the correct letter, A, B or C.

- 1 Maya chose the topic of lifelong friendships because
 - A it was an unusual area of research.
 - B she had a particular interest in it.
 - C someone suggested it to her.
- 2 Maya says that the sample of people she used
 - A was smaller than she wanted it to be.
 - B was typical of the population in general.
 - C was the basis for further work.
- 3 The problem with the questionnaire was that
 - A it wasn't well constructed.
 - B the subjects couldn't engage with it.
 - C too much time was required to complete it.
- 4 Maya says that when she conducted the interviews,
 - A she kept brief notes.
 - B the subjects were all very relaxed.
 - C they followed a clear structure.
- 5 What does Maya say about other research in the area?
 - A A lot of it contradicted her findings.
 - B It wasn't very easy to find.
 - C It was carried out in the same way as hers.



Questions 6–10

Complete the flow chart below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

