TEST 02 - READING 03

NAME:…………..

Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 28–40**, which are based on Reading Passage 3 on the following pages.

Questions 28–33

Reading Passage 3 has seven paragraphs **A–G**.

Choose the correct heading for paragraphs A and C–G from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number, i–ix, in boxes 28–33 on your answer sheet.

List of Headings
i Some criticisms of video-conferencing
ii The future of conferencing by video
iii The transmission of education to remote areas
iv The first stages of video-conferencing
v The necessity of having two TVs
vi How video-conferencing can benefit organizations
vii How video-conferencing became more accessible to the general public
viii The various pieces of equipment needed
ix The lack of exploitation of video-conferencing in education

28 Paragraph A

Example	*Answer*
Paragraph **B**	*vii*

29 Paragraph C

30 Paragraph D

31 Paragraph E

32 Paragraph F

33 Paragraph G

Seeing the future in with video-conferencing

A Video-conferencing (or Video tele-conferencing–VTC) as a means of communication intra- and inter-business has essentially been possible since the dawn of television. But the early systems, first demonstrated in 1968, were in fact so prohibitively expensive and of such poor picture quality that they were not viable applications for general public use.

B However, in the 1980s, digital telephone networks like ISDN began to proliferate, so that by the 1990s the decrease in cost brought the equipment necessary for video-conferencing within the reach of the masses. The 1990s also saw the arrival of IP (Internet Protocol) based video-conferencing with more efficient video compression technologies being introduced, thus permitting desktop, or personal computer (PC)-based video-conferencing. VTC had come on the scene in a big way as free services, web plugins and software, such as NetMeeting, and MSN Messenger, Skype and others brought cheap, albeit low-quality, VTC to the public at large.

C Video-conferencing has been disparaged for the lack of eye-contact that can affect the efficacy of the medium and for the fact that participants can be camera conscious. But these obstacles

are not insurmountable. The size of modern televisions along with the vast improvement in picture quality as a result of the arrival of the digital age has enhanced the potential of the latest video-conferencing equipment, going somewhat towards solving the former problem. Early studies by Alphonse Chapanis found that the addition of video hindered rather than improved communication. However, as with video and sound recording of meetings, interviews etc, awareness of the presence of the techology diminishes with time to the point that its presence is not felt. A further drawback common to all technology is the ever present possibility of technical hitches. But in the end video-conferencing is no different from any electronic device like a PC or a telephone and so in time, any problems will be ironed out.

D Conferencing by video has enhanced the performance of different organizations through its efficiency and effectiveness, saving both time and money for businesses and, in this carbon-conscious age, by the reduction in the environmental cost of business travel from one corner of the world to another. These apart, video-conferencing has an immediacy that is difficult to challenge. It is now essential in any work situation where organizations with employees on different sites or in different parts of the globe can contact each other rapidly. Like a telephone line permanently connected it is easy to dial up a colleague in seconds anywhere in the world.

E And what about the equipment? The equipment for video-conferencing is relatively straightforward to use. It has, in fact, been commonplace in the news media for a number of years as corporations have broadcast live from the back of a truck or van in news

hotspots around the world. Two ISDN lines are needed at each location: one for video output and the other for video input; a high quality camera with omnidirectional micrphones or micophones which can be hand-held, clipped on or central are required; and for data transfer a LAN is also needed. And, of course, a televison screen at each end is essential.

F The potential use of video-conferencing in the educational field has yet to be fully exploited. In this day and age when academic institutions are supposed to be more revenue conscious and much more flexible, video-conferencing could be employed to bring business into the educational field and vice versa. The system can also be used to take expertise anywhere in the world. It is no longer necessary for experts to travel vast distances for conferences or to teach. In certain areas, say remote islands like the Outer Hebrides in Scotland or the Cape Verde Islands off West Africa, where it may be difficult to find teachers in specialist subjects like languages, video-conferencing is a perfect way to bring education within the reach of everyone. Video-conferencing is certainly not a panacea for every problem, not an end in itself, but a useful tool that can complement rather than supplant existing teaching methods.

G Like the electronic or smart whiteboard, whose introduction in the classroom has met with resistance, video-conferencing may take some time to become mainstream, if ever. But, perhaps with the mounting concern about our carbon footprint, the environment will ultimately be the biggest spur. A sobering thought is whether classrooms and offices of the future will consist solely of TV screens.

Questions 34–36

Choose the correct letter A, B, C or D.

Write your answers in boxes 34–36 on your answer sheet.

34 Video-conferencing was not common initially because of

    A the cost and poor image quality.
    B poor advertising and marketing.
    C the lack of skilled technicians.
    D constant electronic failures.

35 Video-conferencing became more practical on personal computers once

    A the Internet became more widespread.
    B the picture quality became perfect.
    C the software became free for the general public.
    D video compression technology worked better.

36 Video-conferencing has been attacked for

    A several problems that cannot be solved.
    B the lack of large TV screens.
    C there not being direct eye contact.
    D the failure of new digital technology.

Questions 37–39

*Choose **THREE** letters A–F.*

Write your answers in boxes 37–39 on your answer sheet.

NB Your answers may be given in any order.

*Which **THREE** of the following statements are true of video-conferencing?*

    A It is cost-effective for businesses to use.

    B Operating VC equipment is not complicated.

    C It will solve many problems in the classroom.

    D More people now have the necessary skills to use video-conferencing.

    E Modern equipment rarely breaks down.

    F People in remote areas can have expertise taken to them.

Question 40

Choose the correct letter A, B, C or D.

Write your answer in box 40 on your answer sheet.

40 The writer concludes that the success of video-conferencing in the classroom

    A is less likely than that of the whiteboard.
    B will certainly be short-lived.
    C may be linked to many unknown factors.
    D may finally depend on the environment.

Before you check your answers to Reading Passage 3, go on to pages 57–58.

Further practice for Reading Passage 3

The questions below will help you make sure that you have chosen the correct answers for questions 34–40 in Reading Passage 3.

Multiple choice questions

Question 34

Look at Question 34 and answer the following:

1 Does the word *initially* relate to a heading i–ix above?

2 Look at the stem and the alternatives A–D. Which gives a cause and which gives an effect?

3 Where in the paragraph is a cause or effect given?

4 Which linking words are used to show the relationship between cause and effect?

5 Are the words *advertising, technicians, electronic* in the paragraph?

Question 35

Look at Question 35 and answer the following:

1 Which heading in the list i–ix does the stem relate to? Look at the word *more*.

2 Turn the alternatives into questions and answer the questions:

a Did the Internet make VC more practical on PCs?

b Did the perfection of the picture quality make VC more practical on PCs?

c Did the software becoming free make VC more practical on PCs?

d Did video compression technology have an effect?

3 Does the word *efficient* in the paragraph relate to 'worked better'?

4 Which gives a cause and which gives an effect, the stem or the alternatives A–D?

Question 36

Look at Question 36 and answer the following:

1 Which heading in the list i–ix does the word *attack* relate to?

2 Which word in the passage does *attack* relate to?

3 Which two of the alternatives are not given? Which one is false?

Finding true statements

This type of question is like *True/False/Not Given* questions combined with multiple choice questions.

Questions 37–39

Look at all the statements A–F.

1   Which paragraphs do the following words relate to, if any?

classroom	....
equipment	....
skills	....
remote areas	....
business	....

2   Choose the correct alternative for each statement:

A   Is there any information about   Yes/No
    saving money?

B   Is there a statement about   Yes/No
    using VC easily?

C   Is information given about   Yes/No
    solving many classroom
    problems?

D   Does the passage say clearly   Yes/No
    that people now have
    these skills?

E   Does the passage mention   Yes/No
    how often the equipment
    breaks down?

F   Does video-conferencing   Yes/No
    benefit people in remote areas?

Global multiple choice question

Question 40

Look at **Question 40** *and answer the following:*

1   Is the answer in the last paragraph? Yes/No

2   Does the word *perhaps* show the   Yes/No
    writer is certain?

3   Is the comparison of the VC with   Yes/No
    the whiteboard negative?

Now check your answers to these exercises. When you have done so, decide whether you wish to change any of your answers to Reading Passage 3. Then check your answers to Reading Passage 3.