Reading Skills 5-6

Skill # 5 > Find factual information. Study each passage and choose the best answer.

Passage 1

Paragraph	Lake Baikal
1	Crescent-shaped Lake Baikal, in Siberia, is only the ninth largest lake in area at 385 miles (620 km) in length and 46 miles (74 km) in width, yet it is easily the largest body of fresh water in the world. It holds one-fifth of the world's total fresh water, which is more than the total of all the water in the five Great Lakes; it holds so much fresh water in spite of its less-than-impressive area because it is by far the world's deepest lake. The average depth of the lake is 1,312 feet (400 meters) below sea level, and the Olkhon Crevice, the lowest known point, is more than 5,250 feet (1,600 meters) deep.
2	Lake Baikal, which today is located near the center of the Asian peninsula, is most likely the world's oldest lake. It began forming 25 million years ago as Asia started splitting apart in a series of great faults. The Baikal Valley dropped away, eventually filling with water and creating the deepest of the world's lakes.

1. What is stated in the paragraph 1 about the shape of Lake Baikal?

a. It is wider than it is long.
c. Its width is one-half of its length.
b. It is circular in shape.
d. It is shaped like a new moon.

2. It is indicated in the paragraph 1 that the area of Lake Baikal

a. is less than the area of eight other lakes.
b. is one-ninth of the area of Siberia.
c. is greater than the area of any other freshwater lake.
d. is equal to the area of the five Great Lakes.

3. According to paragraph 1, Lake Baikal

a. holds one-fifth of the world's water.
c. holds one-ninth of the world's water.
b. holds 5 times the water of the Great Lakes.
d. holds 20% of the world's freshwater.

4. According to paragraph 1, the Olkhon Crevice is

a. outside of Lake Baikal.
c. the deepest part of Lake Baikal.
b. 400 meters below sea level.
d. 5,000 meters deep.

5. It is mentioned in the paragraph 2 that Lake Baikal

a. is not as old as the other lakes.
b. formed when sections of the Earth were moving away from each other.
c. was fully formed 25 million years ago.
d. is today located on the edge of the Asian peninsula.

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Passage 2

Paragraph	**The Postage Stamp**
1	The postage stamp has been around for only a relatively short period of time. The use of stamps for postage was first proposed in England in 1837, when Sir Rowland Hill published a pamphlet entitled "Post Office Reform: Its Importance and Practicability" to put forth the ideas that postal rates should not be based on the distance that a letter or package travels but should instead be based on the weight of the letter or package and that fees for postal services should be collected in advance of the delivery, rather than after, through the use of postage stamps.
2	The ideas proposed by Hill went into effect in England almost immediately, and other countries soon followed suit. The first English stamp, which featured a portrait of then Queen Victoria, was printed in 1840. This stamp, the "penny black," came in sheets that needed to be separated with scissors and provided enough postage for a letter weighing 14 grams or less to any destination. In 1843, Brazil was the next nation to produce national postage stamps, and various areas in what is today Switzerland also produced postage stamps later in the same year. Postage stamps in five- and ten-cent denominations were first approved by the U.S. Congress in 1847, and by 1860 postage stamps were being issued in more than 90 governmental jurisdictions worldwide.

6. According to paragraph 1, post stamps were first suggested

a. in the first half of the 18th century.
c. in the first half of the 19th century.
b. in the second half of the 18th century.
d. in the second half of the 19th century.

7. It is indicated in paragraph 1 that Sir Rowland Hill believed that postage fees

a. should be paid by the sender.
b. should be related to distance.
c. should have nothing to do with how heavy a package is.
d. should be collected after the package is delivered.

8. What is stated in paragraph 2 about the first English postage stamp?

a. It was designed by Queen Victoria.
c. It contained a drawing of a black penny.
b. It was produced in sheets of 14 stamps.
d. It could be used to send a lightweight letter.

9. According to paragraph 2, Brazil introduced postage stamps

a. before England. **b.** before Switzerland. **c.** after the US. **d.** after Switzerland.

10. It is mentioned in paragraph 2 that in 1847

a. postage stamps were in use in 90 different countries.
b. it cost fifteen cents to mail a letter in the U.S.
c. two different nominations of postage stamps were introduced in the U.S.
d. the U.S. Congress introduced the 'penny black' stamp.

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Passage 3

Paragraph	The Clovis Culture
1	Archeologists have found sites all over North America that contain similar tools dating from a period about 12,000 years ago. The culture that developed these tools has been named Clovis after the site near Clovis, New Mexico, where the first tools of this sort were discovered in 1932. The tools are quite sophisticated and are unlike any tools that have been found in the Old World.
2	In the years since the first tools of this sort were discovered in New Mexico, archeologists have discovered Clovis tools in areas ranging from Mexico to Montana in the United States and Nova Scotia in Canada. All of the Clovis finds date from approximately the same period, a fact which suggests that the Clovis spread rapidly throughout the North American continent.
3	From the evidence that has been discovered, archeologists have concluded that the Clovis were a mobile culture. They traveled in groups of 40 to 50 individuals, migrating seasonally and returning to the same hunting camps each year. Their population increased rapidly as they spread out over the continent, and they were quite possibly motivated to develop their sophisticated hunting tools to feed their rapidly expanding populace.

11. According to paragraph 1, Clovis tools

a. date from around 10,000 B.C.
b. have been in use for 12,000 years.
c. have been found at only one location.
d. were discovered hundreds of years ago.

12. According to paragraph 1, the town of Clovis

a. is in Mexico.
b. was found in 1932.
c. is where all members of the Clovis culture lived.
d. is where the first remnants of an ancient culture were found.

13. It is indicated in paragraph 1 that tools found near Clovis, New Mexico were

a. very rudimentary.
b. like others found prior to 1932.
c. rather advanced.
d. like others found in Africa and Europe.

14. According to paragraph 2, what conclusion have archeologists drawn from the Clovis finds?

a. That the Clovis tended to remain in one place.
b. That the Clovis expanded relatively quickly.
c. That the Clovis live throughout the world.
d. That the Clovis were a seafaring culture.

15. It is mentioned in paragraph 3 that it is believed that the Clovis

a. lived in familiar groups of four or five people.
b. had a relatively stable population.
c. lived only in New Mexico.
d. spent summers and winters in different places.

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Skill # 6 > Understand Negative Facts. Study each passage and choose the best answer.

Passage 1

Flatfish

Members of the flatfish family, sand dabs and flounders, have an evolutionary advantage over many colorfully decorated ocean neighbors in that they are able to adapt their body coloration to different environments. These aquatic chameleons have flattened bodies that are well-suited to life along the ocean floor in the shallower areas of the continental shelf that they inhabit. They also have remarkably sensitive color vision that registers the subtlest gradations on the sea bottom and in the sea life around them. Information about the coloration of the environment is carried through the nervous system to chromatophores, which are pigment-carrying skin cells. These chromatophores are able to accurately reproduce not only the colors but also the texture of the ocean floor. Each time that a sand dab or flounder finds itself in a new environment, the pattern on the body of the fish adapts to fit in with the color and texture around it.

1. It is NOT stated in the passage that sand dabs

a. are a type of flatfish.
b. are in the same family as flounders.
c. have evolved.
d. are colorfully decorated.

2. According to the passages, it is NOT true that sand dabs and flounders

a. have flattened bodies.
b. live along the ocean floor.
c. live in the deepest part of the ocean.
d. live along the continental shelf.

3. All of the following are stated about the vision of sand dabs and flounders EXCEPT that they

a. are overly sensitive to light.
b. are able to see colors.
c. are able to see the sea bottom.
d. are aware of their surroundings.

4. It is NOT true that chromatophores

a. are skin cells.
b. carry pigment.
c. adapt to surrounding colors.
d. change the ocean floor.

5. It is NOT mentioned in the passage that sand dabs and flounders

a. move to new environments.
b. adapt their behavior.
c. can change color.
d. adapt to textures around them.

Passage 2

Paragraph

Limestone Caves

1 Limestone caves can be spectacular structures filled with giant stalactites and stalagmites. These caves are formed when rainwater, which is a weak acid, dissolves calcite, or lime, out of limestone. Over time, the lime-laden water drips down into cracks, enlarging them into caves. Some of the lime is then redeposited to form stalactites and stalagmites.

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Stalactites, which grow down from cave ceilings, are formed in limestone caves when groundwater containing dissolved lime drips from the roof of the cave and leaves a thin deposit as it evaporates. Stalactites generally grow only a fraction of an inch each year, but over time a considerable number may grow to be several yards long. In cases where the supply of water is seasonal, they may actually have growth rings resembling those on tree trunks that indicate how old the stalactites are.

3 Stalagmites are formed on the floor of a limestone cave where water containing dissolved lime has dripped either from the cave ceiling or from a stalactite above. They develop in the same way as stalactites, when water containing dissolved limestone evaporates. In some limestone caves with mature limestone development, stalactites and stalagmites grow together, creating limestone pillars that stretch from the cave floor to the cave ceiling.

6. It is indicated in paragraph 1 that all of the following are part of the process of forming limestone caves EXCEPT that

a. rainwater dissolves lime from limestone.

b. the time-filled water seeds into the breaks in the ground.

c. the lime in the water evaporates.

d. the cracks in the ground develop into caves.

7. According to paragraph 2, it is NOT true that stalactites

a. enlarge cave ceilings.

b. are found in limestones caves.

c. grow in a downward direction.

d. grow quite slowly.

8. It is NOT mentioned in paragraph 2

a. how long stalactites may grow.

b. how the age of a stalactite is determined.

c. what one of the effects of a limited water supply is.

d. what causes stalactites to disappear.

9. According to paragraph 3, stalagmites are NOT formed

a. on cave floors.

b. from lime dissolved in water.

c. above stalactites.

d. as water containing lime evaporates.

10. It is NOT mentioned in paragraph 3 that limestones pillars

a. result when a stalactite and a stalagmite grow together.

b. are attached to both the floor and the ceiling of a cave.

c. are relatively aged limestones formations.

d. are more durable than stalactites and stalagmites.

Level B2

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

CLICK LEARN & PRACTICE
LIVEWORKSHEETS

Passage 3

Paragraph	Wrigley's Chewing Gum
1	Wrigley's chewing gum was actually developed as a premium to be given away with other products rather than as a primary product for sale. As a teenager, William Wrigley Jr. was working for his father in Chicago selling soap that had been manufactured in his father's factory. The soap was not very popular with merchants because it was priced at five cents, and this selling price did not leave a good profit margin for the merchants. Wrigley convinced his father to raise the price to ten cents and to give away cheap umbrellas as a premium for the merchants. This worked successfully, confirming to Wrigley that the use of premiums was an effective sales tool.
2	Wrigley then established his own company; in his company he was selling soap as a wholesaler, giving baking soda away as a premium, and using a cookbook to promote each deal. Over time, the baking soda and cookbook became more popular than the soap, so Wrigley began a new operation selling baking soda. He began hunting for a new premium item to give away with sales of baking soda; he soon decided on chewing gum. Once again, when Wrigley realized that demand for the premium was stronger than the demand for the original product, he created the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company to produce and sell chewing gum.
3	Wrigley started out with two brands of gum, Vassar and Lotta Gum, and soon introduced Juicy Fruit and Spearment. The latter two brands grew in popularity, while the first two were phased out. Juicy Fruit and Spearment are two of Wrigley's main brands to this day.

11. It is indicated in paragraph 1 that young William was working

a. in Chicago.
b. for his father.
c. as a soap salesman.
d. in his father's factory.

12. According to paragraph 1, it is NOT true that the soap that young Wrigley was selling

a. was originally well-liked.
b. was originally priced at 5 cents.
c. originally provided little profit for merchants.
d. eventually became popular with merchants.

13. According to paragraph 2, it is NOT true that, when Wrigley first founded his own company,

a. he was selling soap.
b. he was selling chewing gum.
c. he was giving away cookbooks.
d. he was using baking soda as a premium.

14. It is NOT mentioned in paragraph 2 that Wrigley later

a. sold baking soda.
b. used chewing gun as a premium to sell baking soda.
c. sold chewing gum.
d. used baking soda as a premium to sell chewing gum.

15. According to paragraph 3, the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company did all of the following EXCEPT

a. begin with two brands gum.
b. add new brands to the original two.
c. phase out the last two brands.
d. phase out the first two brands.

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Test Reading Skills 5-6

John Muir

Paragraph

1 John Muir (1838–1914), a Scottish immigrant to the United States, is today recognized for his vital contributions in the area of environmental protection and conservation of the wilderness. As such, he is often referred to as the unofficial "Father of National Parks."

2 Muir came to his role as an environmentalist in a rather circuitous way. Born in Dunbar, Scotland, Muir came to the United States with his family at the age of eleven. The family settled on a Wisconsin farm, where Muir was educated at home rather than in public school because his father felt that participation in an education in a public school would violate his strict religious code. Young Muir did read considerably at home and also developed some interesting mechanical devices by whittling them from wood; when some of his inventions were put on display at a state fair, they were noted by officials from the University of Wisconsin, and Muir was invited to attend the university in spite of his lack of formal education. He left the university after two and a half years; later, while working in a carriage factory, he suffered an injury to his eye. His vision did recover, but following the accident he decided that he wanted to spend his life studying the beauty of the natural world rather than endangering his health working in a factory. He set out on a 1,000-mile walk south to the Gulf of Mexico, and from there he made his way to Yosemite, California, lured by a travel brochure highlighting the natural beauty of Yosemite.

3 He arrived in California in 1868, at the age of thirty, and once there, he took a number of odd jobs to support himself, working as a laborer, a sheepherder, and—after he had become familiar with the wilderness area—a guide. He also began a writing campaign to encourage public support for the preservation of the wilderness, particularly the area around Yosemite. He married in 1880, and for the years that followed he was more involved in family life and in running the ranch given to him and his wife by her parents than in preservation of the environment.

4 He had been away from the environmentalist movement for some time when, in 1889, he was asked by an editor of the magazine *The Century* to write some articles in support of the preservation of Yosemite. The editor, well aware of Muir's talent as a writer and his efforts in the 1870s to support the conservation of Yosemite, took Muir camping to areas of Yosemite that Muir had not seen for years, areas that had been spoiled through uncontrolled development. Because of the experience of this trip, Muir agreed to write two articles in support of the institution of a National Parks system in the United States with Yosemite as the first park to be so designated. These two articles in *The Century* initiated the Yosemite National Park campaign.

5 The campaign was indeed successful. The law creating Yosemite National Park was enacted in 1890, and three additional national parks were created soon after. A year later, a bill known as the Enabling Act was passed; this was a bill that gave U.S. presidents the right to reserve lands for preservation by the U.S. government. Pleased by this success but keenly aware of the need to continue the effort to preserve wilderness areas from undisciplined development, Muir established an organization in 1892, the Sierra Club, with the expressed goal of protecting the wilderness, particularly the area of the Sierra Nevada mountain range where Yosemite is located.

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

LIVEWORKSHEETS

6 From then until his death in 1914, Muir worked assiduously on his writing in an effort to build recognition of the need for environmental protection. His writings from this period include *The Mountains of California* (1894), *Our National Parks* (1901), *My First Summer in the Sierra* (1911), and *My Boyhood and Youth* (1913).

7 A century later, the results of what John Muir was instrumental in initiating are remarkable. The National Park Service is now responsible for more than 350 parks, rivers, seashores, and preserves; more than 250 million people visit these parks each year, and the Sierra Club has more than 650,000 members.

1. According to paragraph 1, Muir was born

a. in the first half of the 18th century.
c. in the first half of the 19th century.
b. in the second half of the 18th century.
d. in the second half of the 19th century.

2. It is stated in paragraph 1 That Muir is known for

a. his contributions to immigration reform.
c. his efforts to maintain natural areas.
b. his explorations of the wilderness.
d. his extensive studies of national parks.

3. It is indicated in paragraph 2 that Muir's early education

a. was conducted at home.
c. violated his father's wishes.
b. took place in a religious school.
d. was in a public school.

4. It is NOT mentioned in paragraph 2 that Muir

a. whittled with wood.
c. whittled mechanical devices.
b. was taught how to whittle by his father.
d. was admitted to the university because of his whittling.

5. According to paragraph 2, after Muir left the university, it is NOT true that he

a. took a job in a factory.
c. decided to quit his job.
b. suffered an unhealable injury.
d. embarked on a long walking tour.

6. All of the following are mentioned in paragraph 3 that Muir held EXCEPT

a. a laborer **b.** an animal tender **c.** a wilderness guide **d.** a travel writer

7. It is stated in paragraph 3 that in the years after 1880, Muir

a. took some odd jobs.
c. gave his wife's parents a ranch.
b. devoted a lot of time to his family.
d. spent most of his time preserving the environment.

8. It is NOT mentioned in paragraph 4 that Muir

a. had been involved with environmentalists for some time.
b. was connected by an editor for *The Century*.
c. worked as an editor for *The Century*.
d. wrote two articles for *The Century*.

Level B2

Taken from Phillips, D. (2006) Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test: iBT. Pearson Education. US
Adapted by Andrés Barón-Ávila
MA Education and Technology – UCL – IOE

CLICK LEARN & PRACTICE
LIVEWORKSHEETS

9. The campaign trip that is discussed in paragraph 4

a. occurred in the 1870s.

b. led Muir to areas that had never seen before.

c. took place in areas that were in their natural state.

d. helped to convince Muir to write the articles.

10. It is stated in paragraph 5 that the Enabling Act

a. allowed the president to set aside lands to conserve them.

b. became law in 1890.

c. called for the establishment of the first three national parks.

d. preserved the lands for government use.

11. According paragraph 5, it is NOT true that the Sierra Club was founded

a. after the passage of the Enabling Act.

b. by John Muir.

c. before the turn of the century.

d. to move Yosemite to the Sierra Nevada.

12. It is mentioned in paragraph 6 that, for the last decades of his life, Muir

a. spent a considerable amount of time in Yosemite.

b. wrote a number of new laws.

c. changed his mind on the need for environmental protection.

d. devoted himself to increasing public awareness of the environment.

13. It is NOT indicated in paragraph 7 that early in the twenty-first century

a. hundreds of locations are part of the National Park Service.

b. numerous parks, rivers, seashores, and preserves are being developed.

c. a quarter of a billion people visit these parks each year.

d. more than a half a million people belong to the Sierra Club.