READING MOCK TEST 11

READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-13** which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

Bringing cinnamon to Europe

Cinnamon is a sweet, fragrant spice produced from the inner bark of trees of the genus Cinnamomum, which is native to the Indian sub-continent. It was known in biblical times, and is mentioned in several books of the Bible, both as an ingredient that was mixed with oils for anointing people's bodies, and also as a token indicating friendship among lovers and friends. In ancient Rome, mourners attending funerals burnt cinnamon to create a pleasant scent. Most often, however, the spice found its primary use as an additive to food and drink. In the Middle Ages, Europeans who could afford the spice used it to flavor food, particularly meat, and to impress those around them with their ability to purchase an expensive condiment from the 'exotic' East. At a banquet, a host would offer guests a plate with various spices piled upon it as a sign of the wealth at his or her disposal. Cinnamon was also reported to have health benefits, and was thought to cure various ailments, such as indigestion.

Toward the end of the Middle Ages, the European middle classes began to desire the lifestyle of the elite, including their consumption of spices. This led to a growth in demand for cinnamon and other spices. At that time, cinnamon was transported by Arab merchants, who closely guarded the secret of the source of the spice from potential rivals. They took it from India, where it was grown, on camels via an overland route to the Mediterranean. Their journey ended when they reached Alexandria. European traders sailed there to purchase their supply of cinnamon, then brought it back to Venice. The spice then travelled from that great trading city to markets all around Europe. Because the overland trade route allowed for only small quantities of the spice to reach Europe, and because Venice had a virtual monopoly of the trade, the Venetians could set the price of cinnamon exorbitantly high. These prices, coupled with the increasing demand, spurred the search for new routes to Asia by Europeans eager to take part in the spice trade.

Seeking the high profits promised by the cinnamon market, Portuguese traders arrived on the island of Ceylon in the Indian Ocean toward the end of the 15th century. Before Europeans arrived on the island, the state had organized the cultivation of cinnamon. People belonging to the ethnic group called the Salagama would peel the bark off young shoots of the cinnamon plant in the rainy season, when the wet bark was more pliable. During the peeling process, they curled the bark into the 'stick' shape still associated with the spice today. The Salagama then gave the finished product to the king as a form of tribute. When the Portuguese arrived, they needed to increase production significantly, and so enslaved many other members of the Ceylonese native

population, forcing them to work in cinnamon harvesting. In 1518, the Portuguese built a fort on Ceylon, which enabled them to protect the island, so helping them to develop a monopoly in the cinnamon trade and generate very high profits. In the late 16th century, for example, they enjoyed a tenfold profit when shipping cinnamon over a journey of eight days from Ceylon to India.

When the Dutch arrived off the coast of southern Asia at the very beginning of the 17th century, the set their sights on displacing the Portuguese as kings of cinnamon. The Dutch allied themselves with Kandy, an inland kingdom on Ceylon. In return for payments of elephants and cinnamon, they protected the native king from the Portuguese. By 1649, the Dutch broke the 150-year Portuguese monopoly when they overran and occupied their factories. By 1658, they had permanently expelled the Portuguese from the island, thereby gaining control of the lucrative cinnamon trade.

In order to protect their hold on the market, the Dutch, like the Portuguese before them, treated the native inhabitants harshly. Because of the need to boost production and satisfy Europe's ever-increasing appetite for cinnamon, the Dutch began to alter the harvesting practices of the Ceylonese. Over time, the supply of cinnamon trees on the island became nearly exhausted, due to systematic stripping of the bark. Eventually, the Dutch began cultivating their own cinnamon trees to supplement the diminishing number of wild trees available for use.

Then, in 1996, the English arrived on Ceylon, thereby displacing the Dutch from their control of the cinnamon monopoly. By the middle of the 19th century, production of cinnamon reached 1,000 tons a year, after a lower grade quality of the spice became acceptable to European tastes. By that time, cinnamon was being grown in other parts of the Indian Ocean region and in the West Indies, Brazil, and Guyana. Not only was a monopoly of cinnamon becoming impossible, but the spice trade overall was diminishing in economic potential, and was eventually superseded by the rise of trade in coffee, tea, chocolate, and sugar.

Questions 1-9

Complete the notes below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

*Write your answers in boxes **1-9** on your answer sheet.*

The Early History of Cinnamon

Biblical times:	added to (1)…….. used to show (2)……. Between people

Ancient Rome:	used for its sweet smell at (3)……..
Middle Ages:	added to food, especially meat was an indication of a person's (4)…….. known as a treatment for (5)…….. and other health problems grown in (6)……. merchants used (7)…… to bring it to the Mediterranean arrived in the Mediterranean at (8)…… traders took it to (9)…… and sold it to destinations around Europe.

Questions 10-13

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

*In boxes **10-13** on your answer sheet, write*

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

10. The Portuguese had control over the cinnamon trade in Ceylon throughout the 16th century.
11. The Dutch took over the cinnamon trade from the Portuguese as soon as they arrived in Ceylon.
12. The trees planted by the Dutch produced larger quantities of cinnamon than the wild trees.
13. The spice trade maintained its economic importance during the 19th century.

READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 14-26** which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.

Oxytocin

The positive and negative effects of the chemical known as the 'love hormone'

A. Oxytocin is a chemical, a hormone produced in the pituitary gland in the brain. It was through various studies focusing on animals that scientists first became aware of the influence of oxytocin. They discovered that it helps reinforce the bonds between prairie voles, which mate for life, and triggers the motherly behaviour that sheep show towards their newborn lambs. It is also released by women in childbirth, strengthening the attachment between mother and baby. Few chemicals have as positive a reputation as oxytocin, which is sometimes referred to as the 'love hormone'. One sniff of it can, it is claimed, make a person more trusting, empathetic, generous and cooperative. It is time, however, to revise this wholly optimistic view. A new wave of studies has shown that its effects vary greatly depending on the person and the circumstances, and it can impact on our social interactions for worse as well as for better.

B. Oxytocin's role in human behaviour first emerged in 2005. In a groundbreaking experiments, Markus Heinrichs and his colleagues at the University of Freiburg, Germany, asked volunteers to do an activity in which they could invest money with an anonymous person who was not guaranteed to be honest. The team found the participants who had sniffed oxytocin via a nasal spray beforehand invested more money than those who received a placebo instead. The study was the start of research into the effects of oxytocin on human interactions. 'For eight years, it was quite a lonesome field,' Heinrichs recalls. 'Now, everyone is interested.' These follow-up studies have shown that after a sniff of the hormone, people become more charitable, better at reading emotions on others' faces and at communicating constructively in arguments. Together, the results fuelled the view that oxytocin universally enhanced the positive aspects of our social nature.

C. Then, after a few years, contrasting findings began to emerge. Simone Shamay-Tsoory at the at the University of Haifa, Israel, found that when volunteers played a competitive game, those who inhaled the hormone showed more pleasure when they beat other players, and felt more envy when others won. What's more, administering oxytocin also has sharply contrasting outcomes depending on a person's disposition. Jennifer Bartz from Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, found that it improves people's ability to read emotions, but only if they are not very socially adept to begin with. Her research also shows that oxytocin in fact reduces cooperation in subjects who are particularly anxious or sensitive to rejection.

D. Another discovery is that oxytocin's effects vary depending on who we are interacting with. Studies conducted by Carolyn DeClerck of the University of Antwerp, Belgium, revealed that people who had received

a dose of oxytocin actually became less cooperative when dealing with complete strangers. Meanwhile, Carsten De Dreu at the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands discovered that volunteers given oxytocin showed favouritism: Dutch men became quicker to associate positive words with Dutch names than with foreign ones, for example. According to De Dreu, oxytocin drives people to care for those in their social circles and defend them from outside dangers. So, it appears that oxytocin strengthens biases, rather than promoting general goodwill, as was previously thought.

E. There were signs of these subtleties from the start. Bartz has recently shown that in almost half of the existing research results, oxytocin influenced only certain individuals or in certain circumstances. Where once researchers took no notice of such findings, now a more nuanced understanding of oxytocin's effects is propelling investigations down new lines. To Bartz, the key to understanding what the hormone does lies in pinpointing its core function rather than in cataloguing its seemingly endless effects. There are several hypotheses which are not mutually exclusive. Oxytocin could help to reduce anxiety and fear. Or it could simply motivate people to seek out social connections. She believes that oxytocin acts as a chemical spotlight that shines on social clues – a shift in posture, a flicker of the eyes, a dip in the voice – making people more attuned to their social environment. This would explain why it makes us more likely to look others in the eye and improves our ability to identify emotions. But it could also make things worse for people who are overly sensitive or prone to interpreting social cues in the worst light.

F. Perhaps we should not be surprised that the oxytocin story has become more perplexing. The hormone is found in everything from octopuses to sheep, and its evolutionary roots stretch back half a billion years. 'It's a very simple and ancient molecule that has been co-opted for many different functions,' says Sue Carter at the University of Illinois, Chicago, USA. 'It affects primitive parts of the brain like the amygdala, so it's going to have many effects on just about everything.' Bartz agrees. 'Oxytocin probably does some very basic things, but once you add our higher-order thinking and social situations, these basic processes could manifest in different ways depending on individual differences and context.'

Questions 14-17

Reading Passage 2 has six section, **A-F**.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

*Write the correct letter, **A-F**, in boxes **14-17** on your answer sheet.*

NB *You may use any letter more than once.*

14. reference to research showing the beneficial effects of oxytocin on people

15. reasons why the effects of oxytocin are complex
16. mention of a period in which oxytocin attracted little scientific attention
17. reference to people ignoring certain aspects of their research data

Questions 18-20

Look at the following research findings (Questions **18-20**) and the list of researchers below.

Match each research finding with the correct researcher, **A-F**.

*Write the correct letter, **A-F**, in boxes **18-20** on your answer sheet.*

18. People are more trusting when affected by oxytocin.
19. Oxytocin increases people's feelings of jealousy.
20. The effect of oxytocin varies from one type of person to another.

List of Researchers

A. Markus Heinrichs

B. Simone Shamay-Tsoory

C. Jennifer Bartz

D. Carolyn DeClerck

E. Carsten De Dreu

F. Sue Carter

Questions 21-26

Complete the summary below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **21-26** on your answer sheet.

Oxytocin research

The earliest findings about oxytocin and bonding came from research involving (21)…….. It was also discovered that humans produce oxytocin during (22)…… An experiment in 2005, in which participants were given either oxytocin or a (23)……, reinforced the belief that the hormone had a positive effect.

However, later research suggests that this is not always the case. A study at the University of Haifa where participants took part in a (24)…….. revealed the negative emotions which oxytocin can trigger. A study at the University of Antwerp showed people's lack of willingness to help (25)…… while under the influence of oxytocin. Meanwhile, research at the University of

Amsterdam revealed that people who have been given oxytocin consider (26)…….. that are familiar to them in their own country to have more positive associations than those from other cultures.