Exam Practice Test 1 Reading and Use of English Part 8

ACTION PLAN

1 Read the instructions at the top of the page, the title and the sub-heading (if there is one). These will tell you what the subject of the text is.
2 Read the whole text quickly to gain a general understanding of what the text is about. Don't worry about words and phrases you don't understand on first reading.
3 Read each question, highlighting the key words.
4 Read section A carefully. Underline the parts of the text which contain answers to the questions. Note the number of each question next to the part of text it relates to and write the letter A in the box for that question.
5 Then do the same for the other texts – B, C and D.
6 Remember to check your answers. Check the questions against the text(s).

Follow the exam instructions, using the advice to help you.

You are going to read an article about a transport revolution led by a man called Jaime Lerner in the Brazilian city of Curitiba. For questions **47 – 56**, choose from the sections (**A – D**). The sections may be chosen more than once.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet.**

TIP

The questions usually don't contain exactly the same words as the texts where the answers can be found. Most questions use paraphrasing.

In which section is the following mentioned?

how Curitiba's bus system became a victim of its own success	47
initiatives taken that were unrelated to transport	48
the importance of Curitiba's bus system for the city's identity	49
Lerner's skills as a negotiator	50
why the Curitiba transport model works better in some places than others	51
the innovations which made Curitiba's bus system a world leader	52
an aspect of transport in Curitiba that is surprisingly underdeveloped	53
the expectations that certain people had of Lerner as mayor	54
how Curitiba inspired changes elsewhere	55
why Lerner decided to develop Curitiba's bus system rather than other forms of transport	56

Advice

47 *Think about the meaning of 'a victim of its own success'.*
48 *The 'initiatives' here refer to developments in the city. What could have been developed in a city like Curitiba that has nothing to do with transport?*
49 *A city's identity is to do with the way residents think about the city and the way people outside think of it.*
50 *Lerner was the mayor of Curitiba. Scan the texts quickly for references to his name.*
51 *Look for sections where the writer mentions the Curitiba transport model being used in different cities and countries.*
52 *Look for another way of expressing the idea of 'a world leader'.*
53 *Look for words in the texts which express the idea of something being surprising.*
54 *Scan the texts for references to Lerner. Look for words that express the idea of what people might expect from him.*
55 *Look for mentions of other places.*
56 *Look for references to other forms of transport.*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

A transport revolution in Curitiba, Brazil

A

For the first few hundred years of its existence, Curitiba, the capital of the state of Paraná in southern Brazil, was a sleepy, smallish town. But by the 1960s, its population had grown to about 360,000, and the city was facing overcrowding, serious traffic congestion and other problems that afflict many fast-growing cities around the world. In line with the orthodox thinking of the time, the authorities began to draw up plans to widen avenues, demolish historic buildings and adapt the city centre so that cars could become the primary mode of transport. In 1971, they appointed a young architect called Jaime Lerner as city mayor, confident that he would implement the planned changes. Lerner almost immediately shook things up, however. Instead of widening avenues, he created a pedestrian mall in the city centre. And rather than building more roads, he created parks and gardens, and protected the city's rivers from being turned into concrete drainage canals. His most memorable contribution, however, came in his ideas for the city's bus network.

B

Besides calling for wider streets for cars, planners advocated the building of subway train lines. The problem with this was that construction would be costly and lengthy. Lerner instead decided to integrate dedicated bus lanes along the city's main arteries, allowing buses to run at speeds comparable to those of light rail. A determined and clever deal-maker, Lerner persuaded private bus operators to provide the vehicles while he would pay for the new infrastructure. With this trade-off, the first rapid bus lanes cost 50 times less than rail lines. Improvements were then made over time and by the 1990s, the buses were carrying 1.5 million passengers a day. In fact, high ridership created problems, with long queues waiting to board buses and pay fares. Lerner, by now in his third term as mayor, came up with an elegant solution. He called for longer buses, faster boarding through multiple doors, fares paid for before entering the bus and a single fare covering the entire network. Lerner also gave the bus stops, or 'stations', a distinctive look by placing them in futuristic glass tubes. With these additions, the city gained the first bus rapid transit (BRT) network on the planet.

C

Curitiba's bus rapid transit now began to attract attention from other cities in Latin America. Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, a much bigger city with a population of 8 million people, had crippling traffic problems. Seeing how well the Curitiba BRT seemed to be working, the authorities in Bogotá borrowed and added to many of Lerner's concepts to build a viable larger BRT network of their own called the Transmilenio. The 'stations', which feature many of the key functional elements that Lerner first developed, contributed to its success. From there, BRT's influence continued to grow, spreading as far as the United States, South Africa and China. However, it's in Latin America where BRT systems have particularly taken off. 'There's no doubt that's where BRT systems carry the most people of any region in the world,' says one planning expert. 'It's probably down to the similar language and cultural context.'

D

But as the BRT concept spread internationally, it faced problems back in Curitiba. Although ridership remained high, it was declining, while car usage climbed. There were complaints of overcrowding on buses and the tubular bus stops failing to protect passengers from extreme temperatures and heavy rain. Curitiba now has 1.8 million people and mobility remains an issue. Plans have now been made for the creation of a subway system, a form of transport Lerner did his best to avoid as mayor. Another potential solution being considered is the bicycle. Contrary to what one might assume of a city known for sustainability, Curitiba has only recently begun to take cycling seriously. There are plans to develop cycle lanes and to integrate them with the bus system, though this is still in the early stages. Despite these issues, however, BRT has become a cultural touchstone, Curitiba's answer to the freewheeling carnival spirit of Rio and the fast-paced, business-dominated lifestyle in São Paulo. As if to remove any doubt about its symbolic status for the city, the airport gift shop is built in the shape of a life-size BRT station.

FOLLOW-UP

Which do you think it's best to read first, the questions or the texts?

LIVEWORKSHEETS