

READING COMPREHENSION 2

Passage 1:

Imagine a city that's steeped in history. Now think of a city that is vibrant and modern. Maybe you think no city can be both, but you'd be wrong. Istanbul, the most well-known city in Turkey, manages to combine both ancient traditions with a lively, contemporary feel.

Being the only city in the world that is situated on two continents, Istanbul is clearly something special. On the legendary Silk Route that once linked Asia and Europe and the capital of many different civilisations in the past, Istanbul has a cultural diversity that few cities can offer. It remains to this day a welcoming place for thousands of people that come to visit **it** each year.

Before you start thinking the city is touristy, Istanbul has more than just historic monuments. Alongside its fabulous mosques and palaces, you can find cool art galleries and trendy cafes. In fact, there is so much variety that you can always find something that suits your mood. If shopping is more your scene, you can head to the Grand Bazaar with its thousands of stalls, or visit the many shopping centres and fashion stores. At night the streets are bustling with life and you're spoilt for choice for places to eat and drink.

Quite frankly, Istanbul should be on any list of the world's most liveable cities for its unique beauty and character. But don't just take my word for it. Come and see for yourself. You might just end up staying, like many have before!

Question 27: The word "**it**" in paragraph 2 refers to _____.

- A. capital B. Istanbul C. diversity D. Silk Route

Passage 2:

The change in the global surface temperature between 1850 and the end of the 21st Century is likely to exceed 1.5°C, most simulations suggest. The WMO says that if the current warming trend continues, temperatures could rise 3-5°C by the end of this century. Temperature rises of 2°C had long been regarded as the gateway to dangerous warming. More recently, scientists and policymakers have argued that limiting temperature rises to 1.5°C is safer.

An Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report in 2018 suggested that keeping to the 1.5°C target would require "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society". The UN is leading a political effort to stabilise greenhouse-gas emissions for as long as we continue to emit greenhouse gases, temperatures will continue to rise. China emits more CO₂ than any other country. **It** is followed by the US and the European Union member states, although emissions per person are much greater there. But even if we now cut greenhouse-gas emissions dramatically, scientists say the effects will continue. Large bodies of water and ice can take hundreds of years to respond to changes in temperature. And it takes CO₂ decades to be removed from the atmosphere.

As more CO₂ is released into the atmosphere, uptake of the gas by the oceans increases, causing the water to become more acidic. This could pose major problems for coral reefs. Global warming will cause further changes that are likely to create further heating. This includes the release of large quantities of methane as permafrost - frozen soil found mainly at high latitudes - melts.

Question 33: The word "**It**" in paragraph 2 refers to _____.

- A. the US B. CO₂ C. China D. any other country

Passage 3:

The pursuit of fame has never been more popular than it is today. Where fame was once reserved for the most gifted artists in the entertainment industry, these days it seems that anyone from a reality TV contestant to an online video blogger can become famous.

Most talent show contestants and video bloggers are young people with little or no idea about how to handle fame. **They** can struggle to cope with the sudden glare of the spotlight. Then, as their new-found fame ends and the public's attention turns elsewhere, these fading stars often struggle to readjust to normality.

However, hanging on to fame has its own pitfalls. Fame brings a loss of privacy as a star's life becomes the subject of media attention and, sometimes, cruel rumour. This can have a serious effect on their friendships. People who desire fame have to be prepared to live their life under a microscope. Fame may build confidence, but it can also destroy this confidence, bringing insecurity, depression and loneliness.

It is important to put human emotions and relationships before fame because, after all, fame does not bring happiness. The bright lights of fame have blinded many wannabes who, later, end up feeling lonely and confused. Fame is fleeting for most people, but the real world is lasting for everyone.

Question 32: The word **They** in paragraph 2 refers to _____.

- A. talent shows B. young people C. ideas D. spotlights

Passage 4:

The sculptural legacy that the new United States inherited from its colonial predecessors was far from a rich one, and in fact, in 1776 sculpture as an art form was still in the hand of artisans and craftspeople. Stone carvers engraved their motifs of skulls and crossbones and other religious icons of death into the gray slabs that we still see standing today in old burial grounds. Some skilled crafts people made intricately carved wooden ornamentations for furniture or architectural decorations, while others carved wooden shop signs and ships' figureheads. Although **they** often achieved expression and formal excellence in their generally primitive style, they remained artisans skilled in the craft of carving and constituted a group distinct from what we normally think of as "sculptors" in today's use of the word.

On the rare occasion when a fine piece of sculpture was desired, Americans turned to foreign sculptors, as in the 1770's when the cities of New York and Charleston, South Carolina, commissioned the Englishman Joseph Wilton to make marble statues of William Pitt. Wilton also made a lead equestrian image of King George III that was created in New York in 1770 and torn down by zealous patriots six years later. A few marble memorials with carved busts, urns, or other decorations were produced in England and brought to the colonies to be set in the walls of churches - as in King's Chapel in Boston. But sculpture as a high art, practiced by artists who knew both the artistic theory of their Renaissance Baroque.

Question 44: The word "**they**" in the passage refers to _____.

- A. skilled craftspeople B. architectural decorations
C. wooden shop signs D. wooden ornamentations

Passage 5:

Sometimes work, study or a sense of adventure take us out of our familiar surroundings to go and live in a different culture. The experience can be difficult, even shocking. Almost everyone who studies, lives or works abroad has problems adjusting to a new culture. This response is commonly referred to as 'culture shock'. Culture shock can be defined as 'the physical and emotional discomfort a person experiences when entering a culture different from their own'.

For people moving to Australia, Price (2001) has identified certain values which may give rise to culture shock. Firstly, he argues that Australians place a high value on independence and personal choice. This means that a teacher or course tutor will not tell students what to do, but will give **them** a number of options and suggest they work out which one is the best in their circumstances. It also means that they are expected to take action if something goes wrong and seek out resources and support for themselves.

Australians are also prepared to accept a range of opinions rather than believing there is one truth. This means that in an educational setting, students will be expected to form their own opinions and defend the reasons for that point of view and the evidence for it.

Australians are uncomfortable with differences in **status** and hence idealise the idea of treating everyone equally. An illustration of this is that most adult Australians call each other by their first names. This concern with equality means that Australians are uncomfortable taking anything too seriously and are even ready to joke about themselves.

Question 20. The word "**them**" in paragraph 2 refers to _____.

- A.** options **B.** students **C.** Australians **D.** circumstances

Passage 6:

Sylvia Earle is an underwater explorer and marine biologist who was born in the USA in 1935. She became interested in the world's oceans from an early age. As a child, she liked to stand on the beach for hours and look at the sea, wondering what it must be like under the surface.

When she was 16, she finally got a chance to make her first dive, which motivated her to become an underwater explorer. Since then, she has spent more than 6,500 hours under water, and has led more than seventy expeditions worldwide. She has also made the deepest dive ever, reaching a record-breaking depth of 381 meters.

In 1970, she became famous around the world when she became the captain of the first all-female team to live under water. The team spent two weeks in an underwater 'house'. The research they carried out showed the damage **that** pollution was causing to marine life, and especially to coral reefs. Her team also studied the problem of over-fishing. Fishing methods meant that people were catching too many fish. Earle warned, and many species were in danger of becoming extinct.

Since then she has written several books and magazine articles about ways of reducing the damage that is being done to the world's oceans. One way, she believes, is to rely on fish farms for seafood, and reduce the amount of fishing that is done out at sea. Although she no longer eats seafood herself, she realises the importance it plays in our diets. However, people need to reduce the impact they are having on the ocean's supplies.

Question 39. The word "**that**" in paragraph 3 refers to _____.

- A.** the research **B.** the house **C.** the team **D.** the damage

Passage 7:

When naming a child, some parents seem to choose a name based simply on their personal preference. In other families, grandparents or professional name-makers come up with a child's name. And in some cases, the time of a child's birth influences how the child's name is determined. In many European cultures, names are typically chosen by parents. Parents' choice for their child's name may be based on names of relatives or ancestors within their particular family. Traditionally in some Asian countries, a child's grandfather or a fortune-teller chooses the child's name. In contrast to the tradition of naming children after relatives, the child's name is chosen to influence the child's character. For example, names may be based on a connection to certain elements such as fire, water, earth, wood, or metal. Or the name might include a written character meaning beauty, strength, or kindness.

In certain African cultures, when a child is born plays a large part in determining the child's name. In Ghana's Akan culture, the day a child is born determines the child's name. But each day has different names for boys and girls. For instance, a boy born on Friday is named Kofi, whereas a girl born on the same day is named Afua. Both Kofi and Afua are names meaning "wanderer" or "explorer." Children with these names are seen as travelers.

No matter where the name comes from, a child's name is the first gift in life. Whether **it** is chosen according to preference or dictated by tradition, the name reflects something about a child's culture. For that reason, all names should be treasured and respected.

Question 3: The word "**it**" in paragraph 5 refers to _____.

- A.** culture **B.** preference **C.** name **D.** tradition

Passage 8:

Newspapers and television news programs always seem to report about the bad things happening in society. However, there is a place where readers can find some good news. That place is the website called *Happy News*.

The man behind *Happy News* is Byron Reese. Reese set up *Happy News* because he thought other news sources were giving people an unbalanced view of the world. Reese said about *Happy News*, "The news media gives you a distorted view of the world by exaggerating bad news, misery, and despair. We're trying to balance out the scale."

Not everyone agrees with Reese's view, though. Many people think that news sources have a responsibility to provide news that is helpful to people. People need to know about issues or problems in today's society. Then **they** are better able to make informed decisions about things that affect their daily lives. Reese said that *Happy News* is not trying to stop people from learning about issues or problems. *Happy News* is just trying to provide a balanced picture of today's world.

By the end of its first month online, *Happy News* had more than 70,000 unique readers. About 60 percent of those readers were women. Something else unique makes *Happy News* different from any of the other news or information websites that are on the Internet. Unlike many other websites, *HappyNews* gets fan mail from its readers on a daily basis.

Question 34: The pronoun "**they**" in paragraph 2 refers to _____.

- A.** issues **B.** sources **C.** people **D.** problems