IELTS Reading
Academic

Test 3

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READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1–14, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

The Charity Sector

The serious business of good intentions

A sense of purpose isn't the only requirement when it comes to working in the charity sector. While charities undoubtedly aim to help society, they make strategic decisions just like any other business. Therefore, charities cannot rely on the support of enthusiastic volunteers alone. In fact, that's a very small part of the sector. Charities employ professionals in areas including IT, marketing, and finance. And recent graduates no longer view working for a charity as a temporary option before starting a private-sector career. As recruitment expert Tim Callahan explains, "Charities are becoming more market-driven. They realise they have to compete with the corporate world to attract the best individuals. Salaries are rising to reflect this."

An essential activity for all charities is fundraising. While some charities generate revenue by selling their own products, they still depend mainly on donations. Without this financial support, charitable organisations simply wouldn't be able to operate. But, of course, charities have to stand out from other organisations doing similar activities. Like selling any other product or service, charity fundraising is about finding the right strategies to persuade people to part with their money. From friendly volunteers collecting donations on the street on behalf of a good cause to professional fundraisers pitching their organisation's work to potential corporate sponsors, knowledge of marketing techniques can make all the difference.

Effective communication is the key to selling anything. With charity fundraising, there are several messages that organisations have to convey. First, they have to demonstrate the need for their work, which means raising awareness of a particular problem in society. Then they need to demonstrate how the charity's work has a positive impact in this area. This "problem–solution" model is used to sell products in numerous sectors including health and beauty, household cleaning or kitchen appliances. However, because of the highly sensitive nature of the information that charities need to convey, these organisations have to communicate their message extremely carefully.

The concept of "emotional contagion" is a fundamental principle of charity advertising. Essentially, when people are presented with happy images, they feel positive, whereas sad images create negative emotions. Therefore, showing sad images such as sick children or mistreated animals can be a powerful way to raise awareness of a problem. According to psychology lecturer Dr Laura Highmore, such images can encourage people to donate to a charity: "When charities use images that focus on suffering, it communicates that the situation is urgent or very serious. It's natural for people to experience feelings of guilt or sadness when they see these images. Consequently, they're more likely to donate immediately because they want to stop these uncomfortable emotions. That's why the 'sad face' strategy often appears in charity advertising."

However, several studies have shown the limitations of the "sad face" strategy. While it can attract donations from people who don't usually give to charities, it can actually have the opposite effect on frequent donors. Miriam Freeman, a researcher of charitable giving, suggests that seeing such images makes people feel their donations are having little impact. Therefore, they may feel there's no point in continuing to support charities. For such audiences, charities need to communicate their "emotional contagion" message in a different way. Research has shown that when charities focus on the positive impacts of their work using happy images, the satisfaction levels of their donors increase. As a result, they feel even more engaged with the organisation. As Richard Banks, marketing coordinating at a healthcare foundation explains, "It's about reassuring our donors that their contributions directly support the essential work we do."

A recent survey in the UK revealed that, while retail accounted for almost 40% of all charitable donations amongst adults over 30, younger people preferred to donate via events such as concerts. Although these only accounted for 10% of total contributions, charities aiming to attract younger donors should bear this in mind.

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Overall, cash was the most popular payment method, accounting for just over half of all payments. This suggests that people make spontaneous donation decisions. By contrast, only 2% of all contributions are deducted directly from staff salaries. Charity analyst Joseph Butler predicts that this will grow in popularity because charities are focusing increasingly on this in their marketing. Similarly, direct debits which come out of a person's bank account on a regular basis are extremely valuable to charities as they guarantee a stable source of income. At present, these payments make up a quarter of all charity contributions, but this is another trend which is likely to become more important to charities.

Inevitably, some charitable causes will always be more popular than others. While this is entirely natural, it means that some charities struggle to gain attention or funding. Some people argue that, just like any other market, only the strongest charities should survive. Others claim that governments should use charitable donations as a way of determining which causes are most important to the public, and plan their policies accordingly. However, both of these viewpoints ignore the fact that all charities make positive contributions to society. Governments should support any organisation that strives to make the world better.

Questions 1–8
Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1–8, write:

YES	*If the statement agrees with the claims of the writer*
NO	*If the statement contradicts the claims of the writer*
NOT GIVEN	*If it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this*

1 Charities rely mainly on volunteers to make up their workforce. ☐

2 People working for the private companies earn more than those working in the charity sector. ☐

3 Charities make more money from donations than from their own commercial activities. ☐

4 Charity advertising is different from advertising in retail. ☐

5 The "sad face" strategy is the tactic most frequently used in charity advertising. ☐

6 How often a person usually donates affects how they respond to emotional fundraising campaigns. ☐

7 Charity concerts are most popular with young people. ☐

8 Governments should prioritise helping smaller charities. ☐

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Questions 9–12
Look at the following statements (Questions 9–12) and the list of people in the box below.
Match each statement with the correct person A–D.

*Write the correct letter **A–D** in answer boxes 9–12.*

NB: You may use any letter more than once.

9 People who donate to charity on a regular basis may be discouraged by negative images. ☐

10 Positive images reinforce the value of donating to charity. ☐

11 Perceptions of work in the charity sector have changed. ☐

12 The way people donate to charity is likely to change. ☐

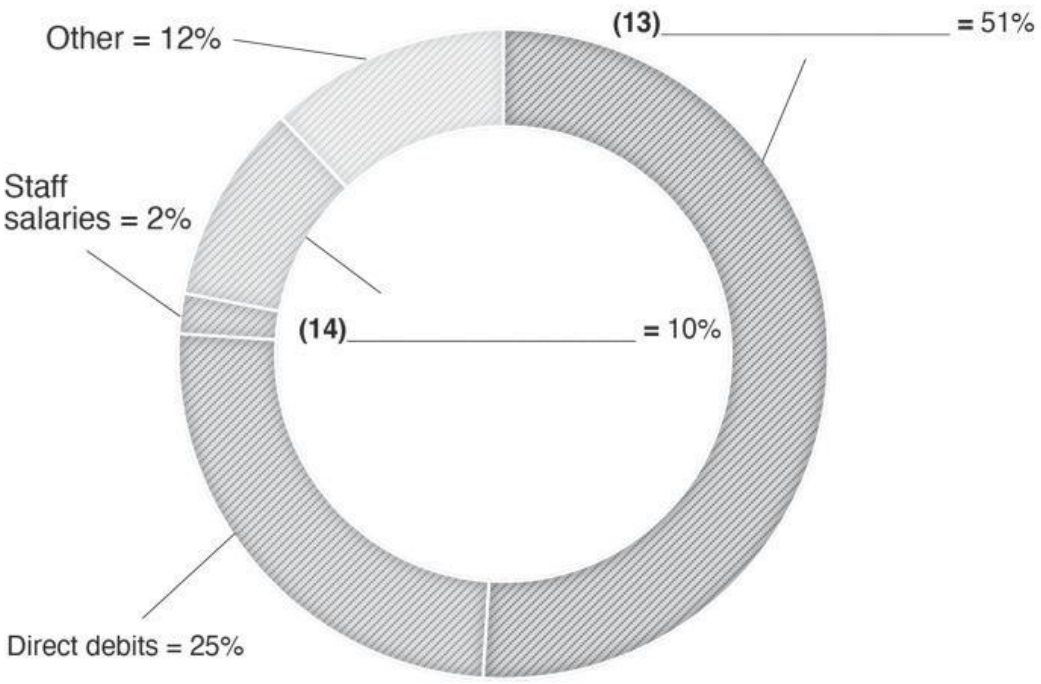
A	Tim Callahan	**B**	Miriam Freeman	**C**	Richard Banks	**D**	Joseph Butler

Questions 13 and 14
Complete the chart below.

*Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from Reading Passage 1 for each answer.*

Write your answers in gaps 13–14.

UK DONATIONS BY TYPE



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READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 15–27, which are based on Reading Passage 2 on the next page.

Questions 15–19
Reading Passage 1 has 6 sections, A–F.
*Choose the correct headings for Sections **A** and **C–F** from the list of headings below.*
Write the correct number i–viii in answer boxes 15–19.

List of headings	
i	A world of choice
ii	Appointment TV
iii	Targeting mainstream audiences
iv	The focus on interactive TV
v	Instant gratification
vi	Too much of a good thing?
vii	Meeting viewers' needs

Example:

	Answer
Section **B**	*ii*

15 Section **A** ☐

16 Section **C** ☐

17 Section **D** ☐

18 Section **E** ☐

19 Section **F** ☐

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Screen Time

This week, it's the turn of writer Paul Meyers to share his views about TV

Section A

My friends and I are poles apart when it comes to our TV-viewing preferences. Not so much in terms of the programmes we enjoy, more in the way we watch them. Typically, my friends stream shows using on-demand services on their devices so that they can watch whatever they want whenever they like. Nothing wrong with that of course, but they insist on "binge-watching" episode after episode so that they finish an entire series in one afternoon! Personally, I can't see the appeal of viewing shows in this way. Why is there such a drive to get everything immediately nowadays? Why can't people wait? After all, who wants to eat a whole box of chocolates all at once?

Section B

My friends tease me for what they regard as my old-fashioned attitude to TV. For me, nothing beats watching shows as they're actually broadcasted on TV, especially when it's a drama with an intriguing plot. Making the effort to tune in each week for the latest instalment is part of the fun. Waiting to discover how the story will unfold builds the anticipation. Best of all, it also gives viewers the chance to swap theories about what might happen next. I like the idea of the entire audience following along at the same time, with all the viewers experiencing the plot twists at the same moment. Just like watching a match at the stadium, it's a shared experience for people to discuss afterwards. I miss the days when conversations would begin with: "What did you think about last night's episode?" You don't get that when all the episodes are available at the click of a button!

Section C

Even so, I understand that TV needs to move with the times. In fact, I welcome the way broadcasters have evolved to respond to viewers' desire for flexibility. Channels realise there are many different forms of entertainment at our disposal, all competing for our attention. And it's not just teenagers that feel this way. With all this choice, people are less likely to commit to watching something at a fixed time each week. For this reason, the idea of "must-see" TV that everyone tunes in to watch at the same time is fast becoming a thing of the past. Instead, many channels now offer online "catch-up" services so that viewers can log in and watch their favourite shows on any device at a time that's more convenient. This is invaluable given how busy most people are nowadays.

Section D

And of course, TV channels now face increasing competition from commercial subscription services, such as those my friends use for their TV-viewing marathons. For a monthly fee, customers gain access to a wide variety of programmes of every genre to suit all tastes. With these services, subscribers can watch programmes from all around the world, rather than just those shown in their home country. From Japanese anime to Brazilian soap operas, commercial streaming platforms enable people to watch programmes that they wouldn't have been able to access previously. This is obviously an attractive proposition for programme makers as it opens up new markets for their output. As these streaming platforms grow in popularity, it'd be nice to think that audiences will become more open-minded and adventurous in their viewing habits. I'd certainly applaud anything that encourages people to explore different cultures.

Section E

But are viewers actually getting as much choice as they assume? In theory, these on-demand services offer almost unlimited opportunities for audiences to broaden their viewing horizons. In reality, whenever a viewer finishes watching something, the platform subtly directs them toward watching more of the same by recommending a similar show. From a commercial perspective, this makes sense. After all, these sites have a business model which is all about retaining customers. They're more likely to do this by constantly updating their range of popular shows that appeal to the broadest range of viewers rather than by trying to meet everyone's individual specialist tastes. For this reason, these services offer a wide rather than deep selection of programmes. As far as I can tell, while it's possible to find shows of every genre, the variety within each category is limited unless the genre has mass appeal.

Section F

Still, these subscription services do enough to keep viewers generally entertained even if they can't offer an extensive library of niche or unusual programmes. What concerns me is the general move towards viewer

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participation in TV shows. People no longer passively watch a programme. Instead, they're encouraged to get involved in some way. For instance, there are far too many TV competitions or reality shows where viewers vote to eliminate a contestant each week. These shows are relatively cheap to produce. I suspect that's far more of a consideration than TV companies' claims that interactive programming makes the audience more emotionally invested. Surely, true audience engagement comes from making high-quality shows with interesting characters and unpredictable plots? If that's no longer the focus, maybe it's time I switched off altogether!

Questions 20–23
Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.
*Write the correct letter **A–D** in answer boxes 20–23.*

20 What does the writer suggest about his friends?

A They have poor taste in TV shows.
B They are difficult to please.
C They lack self-control.
D They dislike new trends.

21 According to the second paragraph, the writer most enjoys

A predicting the plot of TV dramas.
B watching TV when he's with other people.
C live sport broadcasts.
D TV shows that require little effort.

22 What point does the writer make about TV channels?

A They are focusing too much on young audiences.
B They are adapting to suit modern lifestyles.
C They are becoming less popular.
D They are improving their range of programmes.

23 What is the writer's attitude towards commercial TV subscription services?

A Impressed with the convenience they offer
B Hopeful that they will improve the quality of TV programmes
C Concerned that they encourage people to watch too much TV
D Doubtful that they offer as much variety as people believe

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Questions 24–27
Complete the summary using the list of words or phrases, A–I, below.
*Write the correct word, **A–I**, in gaps 24–27.*

TV Trends

It is clear that the way people want to **(24)**_____ TV programmes is changing, with viewers expecting to have instant access to programmes on a range of devices. And while traditional TV stations have started to offer **(25)**_____ options, they face competition from newer services which customers pay to access. In theory, the main selling point of these newer commercial platforms is the **(26)**_____ of their programming. For instance, they are exposing audiences to **(27)**_____ content they might not have been able to watch before.

A	subscription	**B**	consume	**C**	cheapness
D	variety	**E**	series	**F**	broadcast
G	catch-up	**H**	traditional	**I**	international

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 28–40, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

Introduction

The link between technology and learning has been the focus of considerable academic study in recent decades. For instance, there has been a wealth of research comparing the impact of traditional face-to-face education with that of online learning. Similarly, as laptop computers become increasingly widespread, there have been numerous studies analysing their impact on learning. While computers certainly bring students a range of benefits, research has revealed certain limitations of these devices. For example, some researchers have found evidence suggesting that the use of laptops can negatively affect students' ability to concentrate. Students are more likely to be distracted when using these devices to complete tasks in class.

Electronic notetaking

While the pros and cons of using laptops in school classrooms continue to be debated, electronic notetaking has become standard practice in many higher-education contexts. University students are often required to take comprehensive notes during lectures, and there is a common perception that typing information on a keyboard is simply more convenient than writing by hand. Typing takes

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less time and mistakes can be instantly corrected on the screen. Most documents can be automatically checked for spelling or grammatical errors, which is undoubtedly another positive when it comes to editing one's work. Paragraphs can be re-ordered with just a click or swipe, without having to re-write anything. In addition, electronic information can easily be stored and transferred to other devices.

It is clear then that electronic notetaking offers several practical advantages over writing by hand. However, previous research has cast doubt on whether this type of notetaking can actually support learning. For instance, one notable study at an American university found that students who took notes by hand could remember more about what they had learned compared to students who had taken notes on their laptops. The researchers also reported higher test scores amongst students who used handwritten notes to prepare for their assessment compared to students who had prepared for the test using electronic notes.

Another finding from the American study concerned the different notetaking strategies employed by students when writing or typing information. Based on their analysis of students' notes, the researchers concluded that, when taking notes on a laptop, students tend to type down far more of the lecture word by word. By contrast, taking notes by hand encourages students to be more selective about what they write, and summarise the key points in their own words. This appears to suggest that, while electronic notetaking is an effective way of recording information accurately, it may impair learners' ability to focus on the meaning of the information.

The study

Our study replicated the aims of the American research, but this time focused on the context of an undergraduate literature class. Literature undergraduates are expected to move beyond pure memorisation. The content of lectures is typically less fact-based, focusing instead on the discussion of broad themes and concepts. As such, we wanted to see whether electronic notetaking may have an impact on the types of notes students take in a degree subject which requires considerable analytical and critical thinking.

In our study, eighty participants took notes during a series of literature lectures. The lecture content was designed to ensure that it was unfamiliar to all the students. This was so that no participant would have an advantage due to previous exposure to the topic. Students were randomly assigned to either Group A or Group B. Students in Group A made and stored all their lecture notes using laptops, while students in Group B took their notes by hand.

After the lectures, the students' notes were analysed. The aim was to ascertain whether the two groups differed in their notetaking strategies. The notes were examined in terms of how much of the lecture the students had noted down, how closely their notes resembled what was said during the lecture, and whether the students had added their own comments or analysis of the lecture content.

Findings

Analysis of the students' notes confirmed the findings of the American study. Participants using laptops noted down far more of the lecture compared to the Group B students. The electronic notes included even minor details, often reproducing the exact words used by the speaker. By contrast, students taking notes by hand focused on the key themes of the lecture. Their notes included more paraphrases, and contained more of the students' own comments. This suggests that the Group B students were analysing the content while they were writing.

Discussion

Based on this and earlier studies, it would appear that students adopt different strategies depending on whether they are taking notes electronically or by hand. Taking notes by hand seems to encourage students to focus more on understanding the ideas rather than recording every detail. Further research is needed to determine the extent to which this may impact upon students' academic success, although it seems likely that handwritten notes may be more useful when studying conceptual information rather than facts. It is also worth investigating whether students are aware of how to take effective notes.

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Questions 28–31
*Choose **FOUR** letters A–G. Write the correct letter A–G in answer boxes 28–31.*

The list below gives some advantages of using electronic devices in educational contexts.
*Which **FOUR** of these advantages are mentioned in the passage?*

A It helps students to stay focused.

B It enables students to correct their mistakes easily.

C It makes education more interesting for students.

D It means students can organise their writing easily. ☐ **28**

E It is a convenient way for information to be stored. ☐ **29**

F It teaches students valuable online research skills. ☐ **30**

G It helps students to note down information easily. ☐ **31**

Questions 32–36
Complete the table below.
*Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from Reading Passage 3 for each answer.*
Write your answers in gaps 32–36.

Previous research	Present study
Focus on the impact on learning	Based on a previous study conducted at an **(32)**_____
Previous studies have compared traditional classroom-based lessons and **(33)**_____	Investigated notetaking strategies of students studying **(34)**_____
Studies suggest that computers may make students more **(35)**_____ in class	The researchers made sure that the topics of the lectures were **(36)**_____ to all the participants

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Questions 37–39
Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer in Reading Passage 3?

In boxes 37–39, write:

TRUE	*If the statement agrees with the information in the passage*
FALSE	*If the statement contradicts the information in the passage*
NOT GIVEN	*If there is no information on this in the passage*

37 The American study showed that electronic notetaking improved students' ability to recall information from lectures. [ ]

38 Group A students performed better in their university exams than Group B students. [ ]

39 Notes taken by hand have been found to contain more examples of students' own reflections. [ ]

Question 40
Choose the correct letter, A, B, C, D, or E.
Which of the following is the most suitable title for Reading Passage 3?

*Write the correct letter **A–E** in the answer box below.*

A A study comparing electronic and handwritten notetaking amongst university students

B A review of the different uses of laptop computers in university education

C The importance of teaching university students different notetaking strategies

D A case study of the academic impacts of electronic notetaking

E Comparing different types of electronic devices for notetaking in university lectures

[ ]

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