IELTS READING FINAL TEST

READING PASSAGE 1

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

Third culture kids

In a world where international careers are becoming commonplace, the phenomenon of third culture kids (TCKs) children who spend a significant portion of their developmental years in a culture outside their parents' passport culture(s) is increasing exponentially. Not only is their number increasing, but the cultural complexity and relevance of their experience and the adult TCKs (ATCKs) they become, is also growing.

When Ruth Hill Useem, a sociologist, first coined this term in the 1950s, she spent a year researching expatriates in India. She discovered that folks who came from their home (or first) culture and moved to a host (or second) culture, had, in reality, formed a culture, or lifestyle, different from either the first or second cultures. She called this the third culture and the children who grew up in this lifestyle 'third culture kids'. At that time, most expatriate families had parents from the same culture and they often remained in one host culture while overseas.

This is no longer the case. Take, for example, Brice Royer, the founder of TCKid.com. His father is a half-French/half-Vietnamese UN peacekeeper, while his mom is Ethiopian. Brice lived in seven countries before he was eighteen including France, Mayotte, La Reunion, Ethiopia, Egypt, Canada and England. He writes, 'When people ask me "Where are you from?" I just joke around and say, "My mom says I'm from heaven." ' What other answer can he give?

ATCK Elizabeth Dunbar's father, Roy, moved from Jamaica to Britain as a young boy. Her mother, Hortense, was born in Britain as the child of Jamaican immigrants who always planned to repatriate 'one day'. While Elizabeth began life in Britain, her dad's international career took the family to the United States, then to Venezuela and back to living in three different cities in the U.S. She soon realised that while racial diversity may be recognised, the hidden cultural diversity of her life remained invisible.

Despite such complexities, however, most ATCKs say their experience of growing up among different cultural worlds has given them many priceless gifts. They have seen the world and often learnt several languages. More importantly, through friendships that cross the usual racial, national or social barriers, they have also learned the very different ways people see life. This offers a great opportunity to become social and cultural bridges between worlds that traditionally would never connect. ATCK Mikel Jentzsch, author of a best-selling book in Germany, *Bloodbrothers – Our Friendship in Liberia*, has a German passport but grew up in Niger and then Liberia. Before the Liberian civil war forced his family to leave, Mikel played daily with those who were later forced to become soldiers for that war. Through his eyes, the stories of those we would otherwise overlook come to life for the rest of us.

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Understanding the TCK experience is also important for other reasons. Many ATCKs are now in positions of influence and power. Their capacity to often think 'outside the box' can offer new and creative thinking for doing business and living in our globalizing world. But that same thinking can create fear for those who see the world from a more traditional world view. Neither the non-ATCKs nor the ATCKs may recognise that there may be a cultural clash going on because, by traditional measures of diversity such as race or gender, they are alike.

In addition, many people hear the benefits and challenges of the TCK profile described and wonder why they relate to it when they never lived overseas because of a parent's career. Usually, however, they have grown up cross-culturally in another way, perhaps as children of immigrants, refugees, bi-racial or bi-cultural unions, international adoptees, even children of minorities. If we see the TCK experience as a Petri dish of sorts - a place where the effects of growing up among many cultural worlds accompanied by a high degree of mobility have been studied - then we can look for what lessons may also be relevant to helping us understand issues other cross-cultural kids (CCKs) may also face. It is possible we may discover that we need to rethink our traditional ways of defining diversity and identity. For some, as for TCKs, 'culture' may be something defined by shared experience rather than shared nationality or ethnicity. In telling their stories and developing new models for our changing world, many will be able to recognize and use well the great gifts of a cross-cultural childhood and deal successfully with the challenges for their persona, communal and corporate good.

Questions 1-6

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the reading passage?

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

1. There is a close connection between careers and the number of TCKs.
2. An increasing number of people describe themselves as TCKs.
3. Ruth Hill Useem studied children in several countries.
4. Ruth Hill Useem defined the third culture as a mixture of two parents' original cultures.
5. Brice Royer feels that he has benefited greatly from living in many different countries.
6. Elizabeth Dunbar felt that she had a culture that was different from most people's.

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Questions 7-13

Complete the table below.

*Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.*

THIRD CULTURE KIDS – ADVANTAGES AND RESULTS

Area	*Advantage for ATCKs*	*Possible result*
Friendships	know how different people 7_____	can act as bridges between worlds that are usually separate
Business	creative thinking	may cause 8_____ among certain people can lead to 9_____ despite similarities
Whole experience	knowledge of many cultural worlds and a great deal of 10_____	can teach us about problems faced by 11_____ of all kinds current ideas of what both 12_____ mean may be considered wrong belief that culture depends on 13_____

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READING PASSAGE 2

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

ESTABLISHING YOUR BIRTHRIGHTS

Position in the family can play a huge role in shaping character, finds Clover Stroud

A Last week I was given a potent reminder of how powerful birth order might be in determining a child's character. My son, Jimmy Joe, nine, and my daughter, Dolly, six, were re-enacting a TV talent show. Jimmy Joe elected himself judge and Dolly was a contestant. Authoritative and unyielding, he wielded a clipboard, delivering harsh criticisms that would make a real talent show judge flinch. Initially Dolly loved the attention, but she soon grew tired of his dominance, instigating a pillow fight, then a fist fight. It ended, inevitably, in tears. A visiting friend, with an older, more successful sister, declared it 'classic first child behaviour of dominance and supposed authority'. Dolly's objection to her brother's self-appointed role as leader was justified, he announced, while Jimmy Joe's superiority was characteristic of the forceful personality of firstborns. Birth order, he said, wasn't something they could just shrug off.

B Debate about the significance of birth order goes right to the heart of the nature versus nurture argument and is, consequently, surrounded by huge controversy. This controversy has raged since the 19th century, when Austrian psychiatrist Alfred Adler argued that birth order can define the way someone deals with life. He identified firstborns as driven and often suffering from a sense of having been 'dethroned' by a second child. Younger children, he stated, were hampered by having been more pampered than older siblings. It's a view reiterated by Professor Frank Sulloway's influential work, *Born to Rebel*. Sulloway, a leading proponent of the birth order idea, argued it has a definitive effect on the 'Big Five' personality traits of openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness and neuroticism.

C According to the birth-order theory, first children are usually well-organised high achievers. However, they can have an overdeveloped sense of entitlement and be unyielding. Second children are sometimes very competitive through rivalry with the older sibling. They're also good mediators and negotiators, keen to keep everyone happy. Middle children, tagged the 'easy' ones, have good diplomacy skills. They suffer from a tendency to feel insignificant beside other siblings and often complain of feeling invisible to their parents. Youngest children are often the most likely to rebel, feeling the need to 'prove' themselves. They're often extroverts and are sometimes accused of being selfish. Twins inevitably find it harder to see themselves as individuals, unless their parents have worked hard to identify them as such. It's not unusual for one twin to have a slightly dominant role over the other and take the lead role.

D But slapping generalised labels on a child is dangerous; they change all the time, often taking turns at being the 'naughty one' or the 'diligent one'. However, as one of five children, I know how hard it is to transcend the tags you earn according to when you were born. It is unsurprising then that my eldest sister is the successful

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entrepreneur, and that, despite covering all the big bases of adult life like marriage, kids and property, my siblings will probably always regard me as their spoilt younger sister.

E 'As the oldest of three, I've found it hard not to think of my own three children as having the same personality types that the three of us had when I was growing up,' says Lisa Cannan, a teacher. 'I identify with my eldest son, who constantly takes the lead in terms of organisation and responsibility. My daughter, the middle child, is more cerebral than her brothers. She's been easier than them. She avoids confrontation, so has an easy relationship with both boys. My youngest is gorgeous but naughty. I know I'm partly to blame for this, as I forgive him things the elder two wouldn't get away with.'

F As a parent, it's easy to feel guilty about saddling a child with labels according to birth order, but as child psychologist Stephen Bayliss points out, these characteristics might be better attributed to parenting styles, rather than a child's character. He says that if a parent is worried about having encouraged, for example, an overdeveloped sense of dominance in an older sibling or spoiled a younger child, then it's more useful to look at ways this can be addressed than over-analysing why it happened. Bayliss is optimistic that as adults we can overcome any negative connotations around birth order. 'Look at the way you react to certain situations with your siblings. If you're unhappy about being treated as a certain type of personality, try to work out if it's a role that you've willingly accepted. If you're unhappy with the role, being dynamic about focusing on your own reactions, rather than blaming theirs, will help you overcome it. Change isn't easy but nobody need be the victim of their biography.'

Questions 14-19

The reading passage has six paragraphs, **A-F**.

Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number, **i–ix**, in boxes 14-19 on your answer sheet.

List of Headings

i. Children's views on birth order

ii. Solutions are more important than causes

iii. Characteristics common to all children regardless of birth order

iv. Doubts about birth-order theory but personal experience supporting it

v. A theory that is still supported

vi. Birth-order characteristics continuing as children get older

vii. A typical example of birth-order behaviour in practice

viii. Exceptions to the rule of birth order

ix. A detailed description of each child in families in general

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14. Paragraph A
15. Paragraph B
16. Paragraph C
17. Paragraph D
18. Paragraph E
19. Paragraph F

Questions 20-23

Look at the following statements and the list of people below.

Match each statement with the correct person, **A–D**.

Write the correct letter, **A–D**, in boxes 20-23 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

List of People

A. Alfred Adler

B. Professor Frank Sulloway

C. Lisa Cannan

D. Stephen Bayliss

20. Experience as a child can affect behaviour as a parent.
21. Birth order may not be the main reason why children have the personalities they have.
22. There is a link between birth order and a group of important characteristics.
23. It is possible for people to stop feeling bad about how family members behave with them.

Questions 24-26

Complete the sentences below.

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

Write your answers in boxes 24-26 on your answer sheet.

24. First-born children have expectations that are too high with regard to _____.
25. Middle children are often considered _____ by their parents.
26. Youngest children may be described as _____ by other people.

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