



## UNIT /06: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

# READING

## EXAM SKILLS

**11** Using all the skills you have learnt in this lesson, read the text and answer the questions which follow.

### HOW EFFECTIVE ARE CONSERVATION EFFORTS?

While many organisations put a considerable amount of effort into conservation projects, it is just not enough. Many of these efforts are effective short-term, but in the long term they simply do not work, due to a number of factors.

Whilst there remains a demand for exotic animals in society, endangered species will always be at risk of being hunted and poached. Poachers often target larger animals – animals which take a long time to repopulate, such as rhinos and elephants. The poachers are clever and use methods which are sometimes completely undetectable. A recent case involved 300 elephants being killed in Zimbabwe's largest nature reserve. Poachers put poison in the water holes, killing hundreds of elephants and destroying an entire ecosystem\*.

Captive breeding is perhaps the most effective method of protecting animals from extinction, but this also has its problems. First, releasing animals from captive environments could introduce disease into wild populations. Secondly, after several generations in captivity, species could become less able to survive in the wild. Would they know how to hunt for food? Or how not to be killed by other animals?

Perhaps the biggest problem facing endangered species, however, is the increasing population of the human race. Although conservation measures have helped to prevent humans from completely destroying all natural habitats, human invasion will always be one of the greatest risks to threatened species.

\* ecosystem – all the living things in an area and the way they affect each other and the environment

#### Look at the statements and write

YES if the statement agrees with the views in the text  
NO if the statement contradicts the view of the writer  
NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

- 1 Captive breeding programmes ensure that animals can cope in their natural habitat.
- 2 Poachers are good at hiding the way in which they kill animals.
- 3 Releasing animals into the wild after captive breeding has led to infections spreading.
- 4 Conservation projects have not made any impact on saving natural habitats.

#### Complete the summary using the list of words, A-L.

#### The problems faced by conservationists

A great deal of effort is put into conservation work in order to protect endangered species from becoming 1 \_\_\_\_\_. Whilst some of these conservation efforts are successful to an extent, they are still not enough to safeguard certain species in the long term.

Culturally, these sought-after endangered 2 \_\_\_\_\_ are still valuable property and therefore they will always be at risk from 3 \_\_\_\_\_. 4 \_\_\_\_\_ is perhaps the best method to ensure their survival, but is also problematic. After generations of being held in a 5 \_\_\_\_\_ environment, these species may lose their ability to cope in their natural habitat.

One of the most significant factors is the increase in the population of the human race, leading to many natural habitats being taken over and 6 \_\_\_\_\_.

A lost	B poachers	C strange
D diseases	E extinct	F species
G protected	H human	I destroy
J captive breeding	K destroyed	L changed