

Exercise 2

Read the information. Then read the first three paragraphs of the article. Choose the correct summary of the main ideas of the paragraphs.

Some IELTS tasks require you to understand the main idea, or *gist*, of a paragraph or whole text. This is the main message that the writer is trying to communicate rather than details or supporting ideas.

Sometimes, this main idea is expressed at the start of the paragraph or summarised in one sentence called a *topic sentence*, but not always.

Sometimes, the main idea is implicit (not directly expressed), so it is important to read the whole paragraph to help you decide what the main message is.

In the IELTS test, distractors (wrong answers that mention ideas in the text but don't fully answer the question) are often supporting ideas or details that are mentioned, or statements that are only partly true.

Entrepreneurs

by Annabel Pepper

A Recent research indicates that around 50% of people are attracted to the idea of becoming an entrepreneur. Many of the people who have launched a business in a way that's never been tried before and have gone on to achieve great success, such as Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group of companies (including the airline Virgin Atlantic), have been household names for years. Others, such as 18-year-old Ben Towers, are new on the scene and may well become equally well known in due course.

B The businesses of many entrepreneurs seem to take off in no time at all – a case in point here is Ben Towers, whose marketing agency, Towers Design, employs 22 people, even though Towers himself is still in his teens. For others, it can be a slow ascent to the top, as was the case with James Dyson, the industrial designer and inventor of the bagless vacuum cleaner. It took Dyson 15 years and 5,127 different prototypes to get his original vacuum cleaner design to the market, finally making it in the 1990s. 'Everyone gets knocked back. No one rises to the top without hindrance,' Dyson has said. 'The ones who succeed are those who say, "Right, let's give it another go".' Innovation is a process and a constant challenge, and, of course, there will be disappointments along the way. What counts is how the entrepreneur deals with these challenges. One of Dyson's heroes, the American inventor of the

electric light bulb, Thomas Edison, famously said: 'I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that did not work.'

C While some people, such as serial entrepreneur Tom Blomfeld, seemed destined to become high-flyers, for others, the success they went on to accomplish seems very surprising when compared to what they achieved – or failed to achieve – at a young age. Richard Branson performed poorly at school and, according to his headmaster, would either end up in prison or become a multimillionaire. And sure enough, Branson today is one of the wealthiest businesspeople on the planet (although his wealth has recently been surpassed by that of Dyson).

Paragraph A

- Ben Towers might become more famous than Richard Branson one day.
- Richard Branson is one of the world's most famous entrepreneurs.
- There is a great deal of interest in entrepreneurs.

Paragraph B

- Entrepreneurs are people who quickly become successful in business.
- Entrepreneurs need to be motivated.
- Some entrepreneurs achieve success quickly, while others require more time and determination.

Paragraph C

- Even criminals can be entrepreneurs.
- It's not always easy to predict which entrepreneurs are going to be successful.
- Successful entrepreneurs don't do well academically.