Exercise 6

Read the information. An international group of students who are preparing for the IELTS test recently sat an IELTS Academic Reading practice test under test conditions. Read what they said afterwards about their experiences. Match the problems the students faced with the students. There is one extra problem.

This task is not intended to replicate the tasks you will do in the IELTS Academic Reading test. Instead, its purpose is to help you prepare for the test by knowing how to avoid some common problems that candidates experience.

being overconfident about one of the passages

making a mistake when transferring answers onto the answer sheet

not allocating the right amount of time to the different passages in the test

not being familiar with an IELTS Reading task type

not following instructions, writing too many words for an answer

not following the instructions, not writing 'a word from the passage' in the answer

running out of time

1. **Xinjie, 24, from China**

   Overall, I think I did the test reasonably well. The main problem I had was that I spent about 30 minutes on the first passage, so because you get an hour for the whole test, I had to hurry through the other two. I got to the end of the test and answered all the questions. But I guess my marks for the second and third passages will probably be lower than for the first.

   Xinjie's problem:

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2. **Bunny, 30, from the Philippines**

When I saw that the second of the reading passages was about a wildlife conservation project, I thought, 'Oh great, that'll be really easy for me'. I've got a Master's in zoology, you see, so I figured that I'd already know some of the answers. But then when I started reading the passage, I realised that there weren't any questions about the kind of details that zoologists are expected to already know. They were all about the specific content of the passage. So, for me, already having knowledge about the subject didn't really help me at all. I was a bit disappointed, but I suppose that makes the test fairer for everyone, because it wouldn't have mattered if people knew about zoology or not.

Bunny's problem:

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3. **Juanita, 25, from Venezuela**

When I was doing a gap-fill task, I knew the answer was 'professor', so I wrote 'academic', because that's a synonym of 'professor' and we're supposed to use synonyms in the IELTS test. But after the test, my friend told me that in gap-fill tasks in the IELTS Reading test, we have to write exactly the same word as in the passage. So, I wish I'd just written 'professor'.

Juanita's problem:

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4. **Sanjay, 24, from India**

I normally do pretty well in IELTS Reading practice tests. The thing is, this time I went too slowly and didn't get around to answering Questions 35–40 on the third passage. I don't know why it happened. I've done lots of practice tests and always managed my time pretty well. I usually finish with about five minutes to spare, so I just quickly check through all my answers.

Sanjay's problem:

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5. **Anna, 37, from Russia**

I've been learning English for years and years. But in this practice test, there were questions where we had to say if information in the passage

we'd just read was true, false or not given. I've done true or false questions before this course loads of times and found them easy, so I just answered 'true' or 'false', because I wasn't sure what 'not given' is supposed to mean.

Anna's problem:

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6. **Arafa, 27, from Egypt**

Overall, I'm getting better marks now in practice tests than when I started doing them about a year ago. With the test I've just done, it went OK, I guess, but I think I made one silly mistake. There was a question about food science, and the answer was 'cabbage'. But it was also clear from the passage that the cabbage in question was cooked, and the writer considered it a healthy food, so I wrote 'healthy cooked cabbage', because I wanted to show that I had understood the passage fully. The instruction did say 'Write NO MORE THAN TWO words from the passage for each answer'. I wrote three, but I hope it isn't going to be marked wrong.

Arafa's problem:

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