

Task information


- In part 1 you read a text followed by eight questions with four options: **A, B, C** or **D**.
- Questions may test your ability to understand overall meaning, main ideas or details, as well as attitudes or opinions.
- You may need to *infer* meaning (use clues to understand things that aren't actually said).
- The first line can be a question or an unfinished statement.
- Questions follow the order of information in the text, but question 8 may test your overall understanding.

Reading for gist; dealing with distraction

1 Quickly read the exam instructions and the two paragraphs.

- 1 What kind of text is it?
- 2 Why did Liam go to the house?

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (**A, B, C** or **D**) which you think fits best according to the text.



It was late afternoon when Liam stepped off the train and made his way quickly out of Upton station. As ever in autumn it was damp, cold and windy, with low clouds racing across the darkening sky. He thought about taking a bus into town, but remembered how infrequent they were and decided to go on foot instead. There was hardly anyone around, though at a street corner he passed four teenagers he recognised. 'Hi,' he said, but there was no reply and he hurried on. Further along the road a young couple he was sure he knew passed by on the other side, but when he gave them a wave they just looked the other way. 'This used to be my home town,' Liam said to himself, 'but it doesn't feel like it any more.'

Arriving at number 46, he rang the bell and waited. At first nobody came, even though he was right on time and he knew that Carson was expecting him. He rang again, more impatiently. He didn't want to be there a moment longer than necessary. He wondered whether Carson might have changed his mind about helping. Had the plan perhaps become so ambitious that it had scared him off? Eventually, though, the door opened, and a tall, thin, worried-looking man stood there. 'Did you have a good journey? Is everything all right?' Carson asked. 'Yes,' said Liam calmly, 'and if you can give me the package, I'll be on my way.'

2 Look at exam question 1 below: the answer is C. The parts of the text that relate to options A–D are underlined. Write A, B, C or D next to the underlined text and explain why each option is right or wrong.

- 1 What surprised him about the town?
 - A There were many people on the streets.
 - B The public transport system was poor.
 - C** The people he saw were unfriendly.
 - D The weather was rather unpleasant.

3 Look at exam question 2 below: the answer is B. Underline the parts of the text that relate to options A–D and explain why each is right or wrong.

- 2 How did Liam feel when he was at the house?
 - A pleased he would be able to spend some time there
 - B** eager to collect the item and then leave quickly
 - C afraid because he was involved in something big
 - D worried that he might have got there too late

Tip! Look for clear evidence that the answer you have chosen is right, and that the other three are wrong.

Action plan

- 1 Read the instructions and the title, if there is one. What kind of text (e.g. *magazine article*) is it?
- 2 Quickly read the text without trying to answer any of the questions. What is it about?

Tip! You don't need to understand every word of the text to be able to answer the questions, so don't spend too much time on expressions you don't know.

- 3 Look at the stem of the first question, underlining the key words.
- 4 Find the relevant part of the text and draw a vertical line next to it, writing down the question number.

5 Read what the text says about the question and try to answer in your own words.

6 Look at options A, B, C and D. Which is closest to your understanding of what the text says?

Tip! Choose your answer according to **what the text says**, not what you think the right answer should be from your general knowledge, or your own opinions.

7 If you really aren't sure, cross out any options that are definitely wrong then make a guess.

8 Repeat steps 1-7 for each question.

Follow the exam instructions on page 12, using the advice on page 13 to help you.

Tip! Questions may ask you to work out the meaning of words or phrases using the context, or focus on reference words like *it* and *this*.

Tip! Questions could be about the use of examples or comparison, the writer's purpose, or the tone, e.g. *critical*, of the text.

You are going to read part of an article about an Arctic explorer. For questions 1–8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Alone to the North Pole

Photographer Christina Franco wants to become the first woman to reach the geographic North Pole solo and on foot. She tells Emma Smith about it.

Sixty days walking over ice and snow in temperatures as low as -45°C , with nothing to keep you company except the occasional polar bear. This is no small achievement. Only a few people have ever walked to the North Pole unassisted, and if Christina Franco succeeds, she will have earned a place in the history books and met one of the few remaining challenges of exploration left to women.

Her 480-mile journey will begin in northern Canada, dragging a sledge that weighs as much as she does. At the end of each day's walking or skiing, she will pitch her tent in sub-zero temperatures, get into a sleeping bag filled with ice, and attempt to sleep to the unsettling background sounds of howling wind and cracking ice, which may or may not signal the approach of one of those polar bears. 'I'll carry a pistol to scare any bears away,' says Franco, 42. 'The bears that far north won't have had contact with humans, fortunately, so they won't associate me with food, but they will be curious and that's dangerous. If it uses a paw to see what you are, it could damage your tent – or your arm. I imagine I'll have quite a few sleepless nights.'

Many of the early polar explorers suffered from disease and injuries, and while modern technology (lightweight materials, satellite phones, planes on stand-by to carry out rescue missions) has lessened the dangers, it can never make such an inhospitable landscape anything approaching safe. It can take just five minutes for any uncovered skin to become frostbitten and, once the sun has risen, Franco will only be able to remove her sunglasses inside her tent, otherwise the intensity of the sunlight reflecting off the snow would cause snow blindness. Just to heighten the danger, the cold will slow down her brain functions, so it will be more difficult to make split-second decisions in the event of a sudden crisis.

She will use about 8,000 calories a day, losing nearly half a kilogram every 24 hours. 'The problem is the human body can only take on about 5,500 calories a day,' she says. 'So you have to fatten up before you set off or you'll run out of

energy.' Franco is currently trying to put on 19 kilos. She may complain about not fitting into any of her dresses, but when Franco weighs herself in front of me and finds she's lost one kilo rather than gained two, as she'd expected, she's very upset. 'I hope my scales are wrong because, if not, I've lost weight,' she says, reaching for one of many bars of chocolate lying around her kitchen.

Born in Italy, Franco moved to New York and then to London. She has become well known locally, thanks to a training routine that involves dragging a tractor tyre around the streets, fastened by a rope around her waist. When I meet her she is about to head out along the canal near her home. 'I get a lot of comments,' she says, laughing. 'Cars stop and people take pictures. They think it's really funny. Occasionally people sit on it when I'm not looking, or pull on it, to make it more difficult.'

Franco, who hopes her walk will raise money to fund research into motor neurone disease, has long been fascinated by exploring. 'I remember, as a child, learning about the Italian Arctic explorer Umberto Nobile,' she explains. 'There are certain things that catch your imagination. The idea of people getting into frozen sleeping bags. It was remarkable to me, the idea of pushing the body like that and you didn't just die. These things get hold of you and, if one day the opportunity comes your way, you can't help yourself. Now, when I think how horrible it's going to be, I know I've only got myself to blame!'

And if she gets there, will she celebrate? 'Yes, my mum's going to come in the plane to pick me up. She's very worried and she hates the cold, but she's going to conquer her fears to come and celebrate with me if I make it.'



- 1 What does the writer say about the history of exploration?
 - A Walking to the North Pole used to be considered easier than other journeys.
 - B No woman has ever completed the journey to the geographic North Pole.
 - C Female explorers have already done most of the world's difficult journeys.
 - D Christina is already an important historical figure for her previous journeys.

- 2 'Unsettling' (line 12) means
 - A comforting.
 - B worrying.
 - C exciting
 - D surprising.

- 3 What does Christina say about the danger from polar bears?
 - A They could injure her without meaning to.
 - B If they are hungry, they might attack her.
 - C In that part of the Arctic they are harmless.
 - D She will have to shoot any that attack her.

- 4 Which of these is a real risk to Christina during her walk?
 - A She won't be able to think very quickly in emergencies.
 - B Sunlight reflected by the snow could quickly burn her skin.
 - C She will need to protect her eyes, even during the night.
 - D If she's ill or has an accident, there will be no medical care.

- 5 Why, when she is talking to the writer, does Christina want to eat chocolate?
 - A She feels that she has little energy at the moment.
 - B She's just found out her weight has gone down.
 - C She knows that her weight is actually going up.
 - D She always eats chocolate when she's upset.

- 6 Some people are amused when they
 - A realise that she trains next to a canal.
 - B hear the funny remarks she often makes.
 - C learn that she intends to walk to the North Pole.
 - D see her pulling a heavy object behind her.

- 7 She decided to walk to the North Pole when she
 - A managed to survive a night in freezing conditions.
 - B was at last able to do something she felt she had to do.
 - C realised she was ill and she needed to pay for treatment.
 - D first heard about a famous explorer from her country.

- 8 What impression do we get of Christina's attitude towards the walk?
 - A She now regrets deciding to go.
 - B She wants to do it, but not alone.
 - C She knows how tough it will be.
 - D She's sure she will reach the Pole.

Advice

1 The questions are in the same order as the information in the text, so which part of the text is likely to mention this?

2 How often do these sounds occur? Will she be pleased to hear them? Why?/Why not?

3 Read carefully to find out how bears might be a danger to humans.

4 Look for a word that means 'risks' and the examples of this.

5 What happened before she went to take the chocolate?

6 Decide what the pronoun 'it' means in the last two sentences of the paragraph.

7 What was her reaction when she had the chance to do the walk?

8 Look at her comments at various points in the text, but particularly near the end.

Task information

- In Part 2, there is a text with seven gaps (9–15). Each gap is for a missing sentence. These sentences are in a list (A–H), but in the wrong order. You have to put the sentences into the right gaps.
- There is also a sentence that doesn't fit anywhere. This can be any of A–H.
- You can use each sentence A–H once only.
- Part 2 tests your understanding of the overall structure of the text, and the development of ideas, opinions and events.
- The instructions tell you what kind of text it is and what it is about.
- The text has a title, and often some background information below it.

Predicting text content; finding clues

- 1 Read the title and the sentence below it in *italics*. What do you think the text will be about?
- 2 Study the extract. Gap 9 has the correct answer (F) and the expressions which link sentence F to the text are underlined. Match each link in sentence F and an underlined part of the text, e.g. *biologists/the scientists*.

The flight of the bee

New research explains the mystery of why bees never seem to get lost.

Those who have studied bees have long wondered how they always manage to find their way home. No matter how strong the cross-winds, they never seem to get blown off course. Now, however, biologists believe they have discovered their secret – by using radar to observe their flight patterns.

9 **F** *To do so, they fitted bees with tiny electronic instruments, which enabled the scientists to track all their movements over several kilometres. What this showed them was that bees seem to know exactly how far the wind is blowing them off course, and they react to this by adjusting their flight direction accordingly.*

Aircraft pilots do something similar, using computers to calculate wind speed and direction.

10 **B** *Bees, on the other hand, do the same thing by checking the position of the sun and watching how the ground appears to be moving below them. If the wind is affecting the way they are going, they change direction.*

During this experiment, the researchers also discovered that the wind speed affects the height at which bees fly. On windy days, it appears, bees flying against the wind tend to fly lower than usual. **11** **H** *This, they found, is because it normally blows more strongly higher up. Bees flying in the same direction as the wind, however, can use this to save energy by flying at greater heights.*



Advice

9 Look for words like *one, do and so* used to link ideas, e.g. There were six cakes. I ate one; They love surfing. I do, too; He says it's a good idea. I don't think so.

10 Underline vocabulary links, e.g. use of the same word in both main text and sentence, or words with similar or opposite meanings.

11 When you see a word like *that* or *it*, decide what it refers to. Remember that it may refer backwards or forwards in the text.

- 3 Gaps 10 and 11 have also been completed with the correct sentence. Underline the expressions that link text and sentence.

Test 1 Exam practice Reading Part 2

Action plan

- 1 Read the instructions, the title and any background information. What kind of text is it? What's the topic?
 - 2 Quickly read through the main text. What is each paragraph about?
 - 3 Look quickly at sentences A–H. Do any of them obviously fit particular gaps?
 - 4 For each gap 9–15, study the ideas and words that come before and after it.
 - 5 Look for similar or contrasting ideas in the list of sentences.
 - 6 In both the main text and sentences A–H, underline vocabulary links, reference words such as *this* or *her*, and linking expressions like *also*, *even though*, *one*, *do* and *so*.
- Tip!** Before you choose a sentence, check that the verb forms, singular/plural, etc. in the main text all agree.
- 7 When you have chosen your answers, read the complete text. Does it make sense?
- Tip!** Each time you choose one of A–H, cross it out so that you don't have to keep reading through the whole list. This will save you time.

1 Look quickly at the exam task on page 16.

- 1 What kind of text is it and what is it about?
- 2 What is each of the main paragraphs about?

2 Follow the exam instructions, using the advice to help you.

- | | |
|--|---|
| A Once you manage to find a more worthwhile website, however, there are real advantages. | E Others require a large joining fee in order to progress to more advanced activities. |
| B Of course, it's not easy to include exercise in your daily routine if you are lazy and spend all day sitting around at home. | F Because of the amount of time they spend on the Internet, many of these people are actually doing less exercise than before. |
| C Best of all, you can do so with the support of an online community who have the same aims as you. | G Good eating habits are essential for achieving this, particularly if you want your weight to decrease, or increase. |
| D Otherwise it's just too easy to give up, because you've paid nothing and nobody cares if you log onto (or off) the website, or whether you actually do any exercise at all. | H True, but it can be hard to know exactly what that is when there is such an enormous range of online choice. |

Test 1 Exam practice Reading Part 3

Action plan

- 1 Read the instructions and the title to find out what kind of text it is and the topic.
- 2 Quickly read the questions underlining the key words.
- 3 Go quickly through the first section to see which questions it answers.
- 4 When you find information that seems to answer a question, read the question again and study the evidence in the text carefully.

Tip! Different texts or parts of the text may contain similar ideas, but you have to read carefully to decide which say **exactly the same thing** as the questions.

Follow the exam instructions, using the advice to help you.

You are going to read a magazine article about people who stayed in tree houses. For questions 16–30, choose from the people (A–D). The people may be chosen more than once.

Which person

says they probably would not stay in a tree house again?

16	
----	--

was sometimes keen to get back to the tree house?

17	
----	--

was glad there was protection from insects?

18	
----	--

enjoyed the view from the tree house?

19	
----	--

did not have to walk up to the house?

20	
----	--

took part in water sports?

21	
----	--

liked the fact that local people benefit from the tree houses?

22	
----	--

immediately accepted an unexpected offer?

23	
----	--

spent a lot of time walking?

24	
----	--

had stayed in a tree house before?

25	
----	--

was pleasantly surprised by the local food?

26	
----	--

wishes they had gone there as a child?

27	
----	--

felt hot despite the cooling system?

28	
----	--

was in a house with clean water from the ground?

29	
----	--

regretted not taking something with them?

30	
----	--

Advice

16 There's no need to read the whole text first. It's quicker to read the questions, then go through each section in turn. Look for another way of saying 'probably would not ... again'.

17 Think of a phrasal verb that means 'feel happy thinking about'.

18 Look for a type of insect. Be careful: one person had no 'protection' from them.

19 Make sure you choose the person who liked the view 'from the house, not 'of' it.

20 What can you take to go up to an apartment? Look for this word, then read the next sentence.

21 All four people talk about water, but only one mentions actual 'water sports'.

22 Look for ways in which 'local people' are employed.

Tip! Don't expect to find answers in the text to use the same words as the questions. Look for words, phrases or sentences that express the same ideas.

Tip! You will need to use the same option for more than one question, e.g. four answers may all be A.

Holidays in a tree house



A

Primary-school teacher **Anisha Kapoor** went to the Green Magic Nature Resort in Kerala, south-west India. 'It wasn't my first experience of tree house living,' she says, 'but it was certainly the best. I was pleased to see that in a region where there aren't many jobs, the houses are entirely built and maintained by workers from the area, using traditional techniques and local materials. For instance, the lifts up to the front doors are made of cane grown in nearby fields. They work fine, by the way, and I was glad there were no stairs to climb – the houses are 25 metres up! That's good, though, because at that height there's often a cool breeze blowing through the branches. For power there's solar energy, and the taps in the kitchen and bathroom are supplied by pollution-free natural springs in the nearby hills. There's even a pretty good shower.'

C

Australian technician **Richie O'Hara** was a guest at the Hinchinbrook Island Wilderness Lodge, on an island off the north coast of tropical Queensland. 'The wooden tree house was quite comfortable,' he says, 'and they had all the advertised facilities such as running water and a fridge. Actually, I hadn't fully read the brochure, so when I arrived, I was surprised to find an internet connection in the house and I wished I'd brought my computer with me. Still, I found plenty of healthy things to do, like canoeing and diving, and in the evening I could sit in the living room looking out above the rainforest to the Pacific beyond. That was great. After a week or so, though, I was a little tired of the climb to and from the house, so I doubt whether I'd repeat the tree-top experience. But I'm sure kids would love it – it's just a pity I didn't go there when I was about ten!'

B

Ever since TV researcher **Whitney Martin** worked on a programme about tree houses, she'd dreamt about staying in one. So when her neighbours happened to mention they had just such a place in Alaska, and asked whether she'd like to spend a fortnight there in July, she said 'yes' without a moment's hesitation. 'I couldn't believe it when I saw it,' she says, 'it had everything: even hot running water and cable TV. Though I rarely watched that because I was out most of the time. Just a few steps from the house there were trails that seemed to go on forever through the forest to some really fantastic rivers and lakes. And of course that far north the days are really long in summer, so I could keep going until very late. I hardly ever felt cold, though, and on those occasions when I did, I had a nice warm place of my own to look forward to. The only disadvantage of being there at that time of the year was the huge number of mosquitoes. I must have been bitten a hundred times.'

D

Medical student **Kirsty Hammond** spent a week in Tanzania's Lake Manyara National Park, at the Lake Manyara Tree Lodge. 'As we approached it,' she says, 'we glimpsed the buildings up among the branches, with the Great Rift Valley in the background. It was a wonderful sight. The houses were comfortable, too, with running water, a well-equipped bathroom and, fortunately, large mosquito nets above the beds – I'm very aware of the dangers if they bite you. I also liked the fact that almost everything was above ground, even the restaurant. To be honest, I'd had my doubts about some of the traditional meals I'd seen people eating, but once I tasted them I realised how good they were. The only problem there was the high night-time temperature: although my bedroom had an overhead fan, I didn't sleep very well. But generally I had a great time. There's some fantastic wildlife around, including tree-climbing lions – though perhaps luckily I didn't actually see any of those.'