



Test 1

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1–15, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

Questions 1–5

Reading Passage 1 below has 5 paragraphs (A–E). Which paragraph focuses on the information below? Write the appropriate letters (A–E) in Boxes 1–5 on your answer sheet.

NB. Write only ONE letter for each answer.

1. The way parameters in the mind help people to be creative
2. The need to learn rules in order to break them
3. How habits restrict us and limit creativity
4. How to train the mind to be creative
5. How the mind is trapped by the desire for order

The creation myth

- A. It is a myth that creative people are born with their talents: gifts from God or nature. Creative genius is, in fact, latent within many of us, without our realising. But how far do we need to travel to find the path to creativity? For many people, a long way. In our everyday lives, we have to perform many acts out of habit to survive, like opening the door, shaving, getting dressed, walking to work, and so on. If this were not the case, we would, in all probability, become mentally unhinged. So strongly ingrained are our habits, though this varies from person to person, that, sometimes, when a conscious effort is made to be creative, automatic response takes over. We may try, for example, to walk to work following a different route, but end up on our usual path. By then it is too late to go back and change our minds. Another day, perhaps. The same applies to all other areas of our lives. When we are solving problems, for example, we may seek different answers, but, often as not, find ourselves walking along the same well-trodden paths.
- B. So, for many people, their actions and behaviour are set in immovable blocks, their minds clogged with the cholesterol of habitual actions, preventing them from operating freely, and thereby stifling creation. Unfortunately, mankind's very struggle for survival has become a tyranny – the obsessive desire to give order to the world is a case in point. Witness people's attitude to time, social customs and the panoply of rules and regulations by which the human mind is now circumscribed.
- C. The groundwork for keeping creative ability in check begins at school. School, later university and then work teach us to regulate our lives, imposing a continuous process of restrictions, which is increasing exponentially with the advancement of technology. Is it surprising then that creative ability appears to be so rare? It is trapped in the prison that we have erected. Yet, even here in this hostile environment, the foundations for creativity are being laid; because setting off on the creative path is also partly about using rules and regulations. Such limitations are needed so that once they are learnt, they can be broken.

IELTS Reading Tests

- D. The truly creative mind is often seen as totally free and unfettered. But a better image is of a mind, which can be free when it wants, and one that recognises that rules and regulations are parameters, or barriers, to be raised and dropped again at will. An example of how the human mind can be trained to be creative might help here. People's minds are just like tense muscles that need to be freed up and the potential unlocked. One strategy is to erect artificial barriers or hurdles in solving a problem. As a form of stimulation, the participants in the task can be forbidden to use particular solutions or to follow certain lines of thought to solve a problem. In this way they are obliged to explore unfamiliar territory, which may lead to some startling discoveries. Unfortunately, the difficulty in this exercise, and with creation itself, is convincing people that creation is possible, shrouded as it is in so much myth and legend. There is also an element of fear involved, however subliminal, as deviating from the safety of one's own thought patterns is very much akin to madness. But, open Pandora's box, and a whole new world unfolds before your very eyes.
- E. Lifting barriers into place also plays a major part in helping the mind to control ideas rather than letting them collide at random. Parameters act as containers for ideas, and thus help the mind to fix on them. When the mind is thinking laterally, and two ideas from different areas of the brain come or are brought together, they form a new idea, just like atoms floating around and then forming a molecule. Once the idea has been formed, it needs to be contained or it will fly away, so fleeting is its passage. The mind needs to hold it in place for a time so that it can recognise it or call on it again. And then the parameters can act as channels along which the ideas can flow, developing and expanding. When the mind has brought the idea to fruition by thinking it through to its final conclusion, the parameters can be brought down and the idea allowed to float off and come in contact with other ideas.

Questions 6–10

Choose the appropriate letters A–D and write them in Boxes 6–10 on your answer sheet.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6. According to the writer, creative people ... | 9. Advancing technology ... |
| A are usually born with their talents | A holds creativity in check |
| B are born with their talents | B improves creativity |
| C are not born with their talents | C enhances creativity |
| D are geniuses | D is a tyranny |
| 7. According to the writer, creativity is ... | 10. According to the author, creativity ... |
| A a gift from God or nature | A is common |
| B an automatic response | B is increasingly common |
| C difficult for many people to achieve | C is becoming rarer and rarer |
| D a well-trodden path | D is a rare commodity |
| 8. According to the writer, ... | |
| A the human race's fight to live is becoming a tyranny | |
| B the human brain is blocked with cholesterol | |
| C the human race is now circumscribed by talents | |
| D the human race's fight to survive stifles creative ability | |

Questions 11–15

Do the statements below agree with the information in **Reading Passage 1**?

In Boxes 11–15, write:

- Yes if the statement agrees with the information in the passage
No if the statement contradicts the information in the passage
Not Given if there is no information about the statement in the passage

Example: In some people, habits are more strongly ingrained than in others.

Answer: Yes.

11. Rules and regulations are examples of parameters.
12. The truly creative mind is associated with the need for free speech and a totally free society.
13. One problem with creativity is that people think it is impossible.
14. The act of creation is linked to madness.
15. Parameters help the mind by holding ideas and helping them to develop.

IELTS Reading Tests

Reading Passage 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 16–30, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.

LOCKED DOORS, OPEN ACCESS

The word, "security", has both positive and negative connotations. Most of us would say that we crave security for all its positive virtues, both physical and psychological—its evocation of the safety of home, of undying love, or of freedom from need. More negatively, the word nowadays conjures up images of that huge industry which has developed to protect individuals and property from invasion by "outsiders", ostensibly malicious and intent on theft or wilful damage.

Increasingly, because they are situated in urban areas of escalating crime, those buildings which used to allow free access to employees and other users (buildings such as offices, schools, colleges or hospitals) now do not. Entry areas which in another age were called "Reception" are now manned by security staff. Receptionists, whose task it was to receive visitors and to make them welcome before passing them on to the person they had come to see, have been replaced by those whose task it is to bar entry to the unauthorized, the unwanted or the plain unappealing.

Inside, these buildings are divided into "secure zones" which often have all the trappings of combination locks and burglar alarms. These devices bar entry to the uninitiated, hinder circulation, and create parameters of time and space for user access. Within the spaces created by these zones, individual rooms are themselves under lock and key, which is a particular problem when it means that working space becomes compartmentalized.

To combat the consequent difficulty of access to people at a physical level, we have now developed technological access. Computers sit on every desk and are linked to one another, and in many cases to an external universe of other computers, so that messages can be passed to and fro. Here too security plays a part, since we must not be allowed access to messages destined for others. And so the password was invented. Now correspondence between individuals goes from desk to desk and cannot be accessed by colleagues. Library catalogues can be searched from one's desk. Papers can be delivered to, and received from, other people at the press of a button.

And yet it seems that, just as work is isolating individuals more and more, organizations are recognizing the advantages of "team-work"; perhaps in order to encourage employees to talk to one

another again. Yet, how can groups work in teams if the possibilities for communication are reduced? How can they work together if e-mail provides a convenient electronic shield behind which the blurring of public and private can be exploited by the less scrupulous? If voice-mail walls up messages behind a password? If I can't leave a message on my colleague's desk because his office is locked?

Team-work conceals the fact that another kind of security, "job security", is almost always not on offer. Just as organizations now recognize three kinds of physical resources: those they buy, those they lease long-term and those they rent short-term—so it is with their human resources. Some employees have permanent contracts, some have short-term contracts, and some are regarded simply as casual labour.

Telecommunication systems offer us the direct line, which means that individuals can be contacted without the caller having to talk to anyone else. Voice-mail and the answer-phone mean that individuals can communicate without ever actually talking to one another. If we are unfortunate enough to contact an organization with a sophisticated touch-tone dialling system, we can buy things and pay for them without ever speaking to a human being.

To combat this closing in on ourselves we have the Internet, which opens out communication channels more widely than anyone could possibly want or need. An individual's electronic presence on the internet is known as the "Home Page"—suggesting the safety and security of an electronic hearth. An elaborate system of 3-dimensional graphics distinguishes this very 2-dimensional medium of "web sites". The nomenclature itself creates the illusion of a geographical entity, that the person sitting before the computer is travelling, when in fact the "site" is coming to him. "Addresses" of one kind or another move to the individual, rather than the individual moving between them, now that location is no longer geographical.

An example of this is the mobile phone. I am now not available either at home or at work, but wherever I take my mobile phone. Yet, even now, we cannot escape the security of wanting to "locate" the person at the other end. It is no coincidence that almost everyone we see answering or initiating a mobile phone-call in public begins by saying where he or she is.

Questions 16–19

Choose the appropriate letters A–D and write them in Boxes 16–19 on your answer sheet.

16 According to the author, one thing we long for is ...

- A the safety of the home
- B security
- C open access
- D positive virtues

17 Access to many buildings ...

- A is unauthorised
- B is becoming more difficult
- C is a cause of crime in many urban areas
- D used to be called 'Reception'

18 Buildings used to permit access to any users, ...

- A but now they do not
- B and still do now
- C especially offices and schools
- D especially in urban areas

19 Secure zones ...

- A don't allow access to the user
- B compartmentalise the user
- C are often like traps
- D are not accessible to everybody

Questions 20–27

Complete the text below, which is a summary of paragraphs 4–6. Choose your answers from the **Word List** below and write them in Boxes 20–27 on your answer sheet.

There are more words and phrases than spaces, so you will not be able to use them all. You may use any word or phrase more than once.

Example:

The problem of _____ access to buildings

IELTS Reading Tests

Answer: physical

The problem of physical access to buildings has now been _____ 20 _____ by technology. Messages are sent between _____ 21 _____, with passwords not allowing _____ 22 _____ to read someone else's messages. But, while individuals are becoming increasingly _____ 23 _____ socially by the way they do their job, at the same time more value is being put on _____ 24 _____. However, e-mail and voice-mail have led to a _____ 25 _____ opportunities for person-to-person communication. And the fact that job-security is generally not available nowadays is hidden by the very concept of _____ 26 _____. Human resources are now regarded in _____ 27 _____ physical ones.

Word List

just the same way as 17	computer	cut-off 23
reducing of	computers 21	overcame
decrease in 15	combat	isolating
team-work 24 26	developed	physical
similar	other people 22	
no different from	solved 20	

Questions 28–30

Complete the sentences below. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in Boxes 28 – 30 on your answer sheet.

28. The writer does not like _____.

29. An individual's Home Page indicates their _____ on the Internet.

30. Devices like mobile phones mean that location is _____.

Reading Passage 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 31–40, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

National Cuisine and Tourism

To an extent, agriculture dictates that every country should have a set of specific foods which are native to that country. They may even be unique. However, even allowing for the power of agricultural science, advances in food distribution and changes in food economics to alter the ethnocentric properties of food, it is still possible for a country 'to be famous for' a particular food even if it is widely available elsewhere.

The degree to which cuisine is embedded in national culture

Within the sociology of food literature two themes suggest that food is linked to social culture. The first relates food and eating to social relationships, (Finkelstein, Vissor, Wood), and the second establishes food as a reflection of the distribution of power within social structures, (Mennell). However, establishing a role for food in personal relationships and social structures is not a sufficient argument to place food at the centre of national culture. To do that it is necessary to prove a degree of embeddedness. It would be appropriate at this point to consider the nature of culture.

The distinction made by Pierce between a behavioural contingency and a cultural contingency is crucial to our understanding of culture. Whilst a piece of behaviour may take place very often, involve a network of people and be reproducible by other networks who do not know each other, the meaning of the behaviour does not go beyond the activity itself. A cultural practice, however, contains and represents 'meta-contingencies' that is, behavioural practices that have a social meaning greater than the activity itself and which, by their nature reinforce the culture which houses them. Celebrating birthdays is a cultural practice not because everybody does it but because it has a religious meaning. Contrast this with the practice in Britain of celebrating 'Guy Fawkes Night'. It is essentially an excuse for a good time but if fireworks were banned, the occasion would gradually die away altogether or end up as cult to California. A smaller scale example might be more useful. In the British context, compare drinking in pubs with eating 'fish and chips'. Both are common practices, yet the former reflects something of the social fabric of the country, particularly family, gender, class and age relationships whilst the latter is just a national habit. In other words, a constant, well populated pattern of behaviour is not necessarily cultural. However, it is also clear that a cultural practice needs behavioural reinforcement. Social culture is not immortal.

Finkelstein argues that 'dining out' is simply 'action which supports a surface life'. For him it is the word 'out' that disconnects food from culture. This view of culture and food places the 'home' as the cultural centre. Continental European eating habits may contradict this notion by their general acceptance of eating out as part of family life. Following the principle that culture needs behavioural reinforcement, if everyone 'eats' out on a regular basis, irrespective of social and economic differentiation, then this might constitute behavioural support for cuisine being part of social culture. That aside, the significance of a behavioural practice being embedded in culture is that it naturally maintains an approved and accepted way of life and therefore has a tendency to resist change.

The thrust of the argument is that countries differ in the degree to which their food and eating habits have a social and cultural meaning beyond the behaviour itself. This argument, however, could be interpreted to imply that the country with the greatest proportion of meals taken outside the home would be the one in which the national cuisine is more embedded in social culture. This is a difficult position to maintain because it would bring America, with its fast-food culture to the fore. The fast-food culture of America raises the issue of whether there are qualitative criteria for the concept of cuisine. The key issue is not the extent of the common behaviour but whether or not it has a function in maintaining social cohesion and is appreciated

IELTS Reading Tests

and valued through social norms. French cuisine and 'going down the pub' are strange bedfellows but bedfellows nevertheless.

How homogenous is national cuisine?

Like language, cuisine is not a static entity and whilst its fundamental character is unlikely to change in the short run it may evolve in different directions. Just as in a language there are dialects so in a cuisine there are variations. The two principal sources of diversity are the physical geography of the country and its social diversity.

The geographical dimensions work through agriculture to particularise and to limit locally produced ingredients. Ethnic diversity in the population works through the role of cuisine in social identity to create ethnically distinct cuisines which may not converge into a national cuisine. This raises the question of how far a national cuisine is related to national borders. To an ethnic group their cuisine is national. The greater the division of a society into classes, castes and status groups with their attendant ethnocentric properties, of which cuisine is a part, then the greater will be the diversity of the cuisines.

However, there is a case for convergence. Both these principal sources of diversity are, to an extent, influenced by the strength of their boundaries and the willingness of society to erode them. It is a question of isolation and integration. Efficient transport and the application of chemistry can alter agricultural boundaries to make a wider range of foods available to a cuisine. Similarly, political and social integration can erode ethnic boundaries. However, all these arguments mean nothing if the cuisine is not embedded in social culture. Riley argues that when a cuisine is not embedded in social culture it is susceptible to novelty and invasion by other cuisines.

Questions 31–36

Choose one phrase (A–K) from the **List of phrases** to complete each **Key point** below. Write the appropriate letters (A–K) in Boxes 31–36 on your answer sheet.

The information in the completed sentences should be an accurate summary of the points made by the writer.

NB. There are more phrases (A–K) than sentences, so you will not need to use them all. You may use each phrase once only.

Key points

31. The native foods of a country, ...
32. The ethnocentric properties of food ...
33. Celebrating birthdays ...
34. Cultural practice ...
35. Drinking in pubs in Britain ...
36. The link between language and cuisine ...

List of phrases

- A. is a behavioural practice, not a cultural practice
- B. are unique
- C. varies
- D. is that both are diverse
- E. is a reflection of the social fabric
- F. is a cultural practice
- G. can be changed by economic and distribution factors
- H. is fundamental
- I. are not as common as behaviour
- J. needs to be reinforced by behaviour
- K. are, to a certain extent, dictated by agriculture

Questions 37–40

Use the information in the text to match the **Authors (A–D)** with the **Findings (37–40)** below. Write the appropriate letters (A–D) in Boxes 37 – 40 on your answer sheet.

Authors

- A Finkelstein
- B Pierce
- C Mennell
- D Riley

Findings

- 37. There is a difference between behaviour and cultural practice.
- 38. The connection between social culture and food must be strong if national cuisine is to survive intact.
- 39. Distribution of power in society is reflected in food.
- 40. The link between culture and eating outside the home is not strong.



Key

Key to Test 1

Questions 1 – 5

This type of question is a variation of paragraph headings. There are no distracters in this section, which makes it much easier.

1. Answer: E. The paragraph is about the fact that parameters help our minds to be creative.
2. Answer: C. The answer lies in the key phrases: ... *keeping creative ability in check* (in the first sentence) and *These limitations are needed so that once they are learnt, they can be broken* (the last sentence of the paragraph). The focus sentence is a combination of these two ideas. Note how the word *yet* divides the paragraph. It indicates the focus of the paragraph against the background in the first part. It also marks the division of information in the whole passage.
3. Answer: A. The writer wrote the paragraph to show that habits limit our creativity and the habits we need to survive play a role in this limitation.
4. Answer: D. The theme of the paragraph is how creativity works.
5. Answer: B. The paragraph deals with how parameters help the mind to be creative.

For further information re practice with information in paragraphs and with paragraph headings, see Exercises 1–12 and the Reading Tests in *A book for IELTS* by McCarter, Easton & Ash.

Questions 6 – 10

6. Answer: C. The answer is in the first line of the passage: *It is a myth that creative people are born with their talents.* Here, *it is a myth* = are not.
7. Answer: C. The answer is in paragraph A. The actual words are not in the paragraph, but the meaning is clear. A is not correct, because this is a myth; B is not correct, because the passage states that *when we try to be creative, our automatic response takes over*. D is not correct, because the *well-trodden paths* prevent creativity. Compare number 13 below.
8. Answer: D. The answer is in paragraph B: *Unfortunately, mankind's very struggle for survival has become a tyranny.* The answer paraphrases this statement. A is not correct, because the passage says the *struggle has become* i.e. *is a tyranny*, not that it is becoming so; B is not correct, because cholesterol is not mentioned in relationship to the brain, but the mind. C is incorrect, because it is the mind which is circumscribed.
9. Answer: A. The answer is in paragraph C: *a continuous process of restrictions, which is increasing exponentially with the advancement of technology.* The statement is a paraphrase of this section. Note B and C are basically the same: it is, therefore, not possible to have either of these two alternatives as your answer. Watch out for this feature in multiple choice questions.
10. Answer: D. The answer is in paragraph C: *Is it surprising then that creative ability appears to be so rare?* This is a question and has the same meaning as the statement given, i.e. it is not surprising. Note C is not possible, because the passage doesn't indicate whether the rarity is increasing or decreasing.

Questions 11 – 15

11. Answer: Yes. The answer is at the beginning of paragraph D: *... and one that recognises that rules and regulations are parameters*
12. Answer: Not Given. There is no reference to this statement in the passage.
13. Answer: Yes. The answer is in paragraph D: *The difficulty in this exercise and with creation itself is convincing people that creation is possible.* The answer is a paraphrase of this part of the text. Compare number 7 above.

IELTS Reading Tests

14. **Answer: Yes.** The answer is at the end of paragraph D: *leaving the safety of one's own thought patterns is very much akin to madness*; akin to = like.
15. **Answer: Yes.** The answer is in the latter half of paragraph E.

Reading Passage 2

Questions 16–19

16. **Answer: B.** The answer is in the second sentence of paragraph 1: *we crave security*.
17. **Answer: B.** The answer is in paragraph 2. The key word is *increasingly* = becoming. **A**, **C** and **D** are all mentioned in the paragraph, but not in the correct context.
18. **Answer: A.** The answer is in the first sentence of paragraph 2: *now do not*. **B** is the opposite and **C** and **D** are just phrases lifted from the text.
19. **Answer: D.** The answer is in paragraph 3, the key phrase is *bar entry to the uninitiated*, which the answer paraphrases. **A** is incorrect, because only some access is not allowed. **B** is not true, because it is the working space that is compartmentalised, not the user, and **C** is not correct, because 'traps' are not the same as 'trappings'.

Questions 20–27

Before you start looking in the text for the words to complete the blank spaces, you should read the summary through quickly to get an idea of the overall meaning. As you read, you should work out what kind of word you need to find in each case. For example, does the blank require a verb in the imperative form, a noun, an adjective or an adverb? You should also think of words that could fill the blanks so that when you look at the original passage the answers will come to you more easily.

20. **Answer: solved.** Although the word *combat* appears in the original, it does not fit here grammatically. The past participle is needed. Note *overcame* is the Simple Past, not the Past Participle.
21. **Answer: computers.** The plural is needed here.
22. **Answer: other people.**
23. **Answer: cut-off.** The word *isolating* does not fit grammatically. You need an adjective made from the past participle of the verb. Compare 20 above.
24. **Answer: team-work.**
25. **Answer: decrease in.**
26. **Answer: team-work.** As it says in the instructions, you may use a word or phrase more than once.
27. **Answer: just the same way as.** The answer is obviously not *similar* or *no different from*.

Questions 28–30

28. **Answer: touch-tone dialling systems.** The answer is in paragraph 7: *if we are unfortunate enough to contact an organization with a sophisticated touch-tone dialling system*. The key word here is *unfortunate*, which shows that the writer is negative about the topic. The writer does not comment on the other means of communication in the same way.
29. **Answer: electronic presence.** The answer is in paragraph 8.
30. **Answer: no longer geographical.** The answer is in paragraphs 8 and 9: *... now that location is no longer geographical An example of this is the mobile phone*. The important thing here is to recognise the link between the paragraphs.

Reading Passage 3

Questions 31–36

31. **Answer: K.** The answer is in the first sentence of the passage. Note that the active needs to be changed into the passive.
32. **Answer: G.** The answer is in the first paragraph. B is not correct, because the passage says foods *may be* unique, not that they are and is not talking about ethnocentric properties.
33. **Answer: F.** The answer is in paragraph 3.
34. **Answer: J.** The answer is in paragraph 4. The key phrase is towards the end of the paragraph: *a cultural practice needs behavioural reinforcement*.
35. **Answer: E.** The answer is in the third paragraph.
36. **Answer: D.** The answer is in paragraph 6. C is incorrect, because it is the language and the cuisine that vary, not the link. And H is not correct. It is the character of language and cuisine that is said to be fundamental, and not language and cuisine themselves. Beware of the right word or phrase in the wrong context.

Questions 37–40

37. **Answer: B.** The answer is in paragraph 3. After scanning for the name, the important word is *distinction* which means difference in this case.
38. **Answer: D.** The answer is in the last paragraph.
39. **Answer: C.** The answer is in paragraph 2. The important thing here is to link correctly the names to the themes.
40. **Answer: A.** The answer is in paragraph 4.

Note how the answers in this section are jumbled; otherwise, it would be too easy!