IELTS Recent Actual Test With Answers Volume 6
Reading Practice Test 1

HOW TO USE

You have 2 ways to access the test

1. Open this URL **http://link.intergreat.com/v36kp** on your computer

2. Use your mobile device to scan the QR code attached

READING PASSAGE 1

*You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.*

Reading Passage 1
The Concept of Childhood in Western Countries

The Concept of Childhood in Western Countries

The history of childhood has been a heated topic in social history since the highly influential book Centuries of Childhood', written by French historian Philippe Aries, emerged in 1960. He claimed that 'childhood' is a concept created by modern society.

Whether childhood is itself a recent invention has been one of the most intensely debated issues in the history of childhood. Historian Philippe Aries asserted that children were regarded as miniature adults, with all the intellect and personality that this implies, in Western Europe during the Middle Ages (up to about the end of the 15th century). After scrutinising medieval pictures and diaries, he concluded that there was no distinction between children and adults for they shared similar leisure activities and work; However, this does not mean children were neglected, forsaken or despised, he argued. The idea of childhood corresponds to awareness about the peculiar nature of childhood, which distinguishes the child from adult, even the young adult. Therefore, the concept of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children.

Traditionally, children played a functional role in contributing to the family income in the history. Under this circumstance, children were considered to be useful. Back in the Middle Ages, children of 5 or 6 years old did necessary chores for their parents. During the 16th century, children of 9 or 10 years old were often encouraged or even forced to leave their family to work as servants for wealthier families or apprentices for a trade.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, industrialisation created a new demand for child labour; thus many children were forced to work for a long time in mines, workshops and factories. The issue of whether long hours of labouring would interfere with

children's growing bodies began to perplex social reformers. Some of them started to realise the potential of systematic studies to monitor how far these early deprivations might be influencing children's development.

The concerns of reformers gradually had some impact upon the working condition of children. For example, in Britain, the Factory Act of 1833 signified the emergence of legal protection of children from exploitation and was also associated with the rise of schools for factory children. Due partly to factory reform, the worst forms of child exploitation were eliminated gradually. The influence of trade unions and economic changes also contributed to the evolution by leaving some forms of child labour redundant during the 19th century. Initiating children into work as 'useful' children was no longer a priority, and childhood was deemed to be a time for play and education for all children instead of a privileged minority. Childhood was increasingly understood as a more extended phase of dependency, development and learning with the delay of the age for starting full-time work- Even so, work continued to play a significant, if less essential, role in children's lives in the later 19th and 20th centuries. Finally, the 'useful child' has become a controversial concept during the first decade of the 21st century, especially in the context of global concern about large numbers of children engaged in child labour.

The half-time schools established upon the Factory Act of 1833 allowed children to work and attend school. However, a significant proportion of children never attended school in the 1840s, and even if they did, they dropped out by the age of 10 or 11. By the end of the 19th century in Britain, the situation changed dramatically, and schools became the core to the concept of a 'normal' childhood.

It is no longer a privilege for children to attend school and all children are expected to spend a significant part of their day in a classroom. Once in school, children's lives could be separated from domestic life and the adult world of work. In this way, school turns into an institution dedicated to shaping the minds, behaviour and morals of the young. Besides, education dominated the management of children's waking hours through the hours spent in the classroom, homework (the growth of 'after school' activities), and the importance attached to parental involvement.

Industrialisation, urbanisation and mass schooling pose new challenges for those who are responsible for protecting children's welfare, as well as promoting their learning. An increasing number of children are being treated as a group with unique needs, and are organised into groups in the light of their age. For instance, teachers need to know some information about what to expect of children in their classrooms, what kinds of instruction are appropriate for different age groups, and what is the best way to assess children's progress. Also, they want tools enabling them to sort and select children according to their abilities and potential.

Questions 1-7

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

*In **boxes 1-7** on your answer sheet, write*

TRUE	if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE	if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN	If there is no information on this

1 [____] Aries pointed out that children did different types of work to adults during the Middle Ages.

2 [____] Working children during the Middle Ages were generally unloved.

3 [____] Some scientists thought that overwork might damage the health of young children.

4 [____] The rise of trade unions majorly contributed to the protection of children from exploitation in the 19th century.

5 [____] Through the aid of half-time schools, most children went to school in the mid-19th century.

6 [____] In the 20th century, almost all children needed to go to school with a full-time schedule.

7 [____] Nowadays, children's needs are much differentiated and categorised based on how old they are.

Questions 8-13

Answer the questions below.

*Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer:*

*Write your answers in **boxes 8-13** on your answer sheet.*

What had not become a hot topic until the French historian Philippe Aries' book caused great attention?

8 _____

According to Aries, what was the typical image of children in Western Europe during the Middle Ages?

9 _____

What historical event generated the need for a large number of children to work for a long time in the 18th and 19th centuries?

10 _____

What bill was enacted to protect children from exploitation in Britain in the 1800s?

11 _____

Which activities were becoming regarded as preferable for almost all children in the 19th century?

12 _____

In what place did children spend the majority of time during their day in school?

13 _____

READING PASSAGE 2

*You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 14-26**, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.*

Reading Passage 2
Bestcom—Considerate Computing

Bestcom—Considerate Computing

'Your battery is now fully charged,' announced the laptop to its owner Donald A. Norman in a synthetic voice, with great enthusiasm and maybe even a hint of pride. For the record, humans are not at all unfamiliar with distractions and multitasking. 'We are used to a complex life that gets constantly interrupted by computer's attention-seeking requests, as much as we are familiar with procreation,' laughs Ted Selker of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Media Lab,

Humanity has been connected to approximately three billion networked telephones, computers, traffic lights and even fridges and picture frames since these things can facilitate our daily lives. That is why we do not typically turn off the phones, shut down the e-mail system, or close the office door even when we have a meeting coming or a stretch of concentrated work. We merely endure the consequences. Countless research reports have confirmed that if people are unexpectedly interrupted, they may suffer a drop in work efficiency, and they are more likely to make mistakes. According to Robert G. Picard from the University of Missouri, it appears to build up the feeling of frustration cumulatively, and that stress response makes it difficult to focus again. It is. not solely about productivity and the pace of life. For some professionals like pilots, drivers, soldiers and doctors, loss of focus can be downright disastrous. 'If we could find a way to make our computers and phones realise the limits of human attention and memory, they may come off as more thoughtful and courteous,' says Eric Horvitz of Microsoft Research. Horvitz, Selker and Picard are just a few of a small but prospering group of researchers who are attempting to make computers, phones, cars and other devices to function

more like considerate colleagues instead of egocentric oafs.

To do this, the machines need new skills of three kinds: sensing, reasoning and communicating. First, a system must: sense or infer where its owner is and what he or she is doing. Next, it must weigh the value of the messages it wants to convey against the cost of the disruption. Then it has to. choose the best mode and time to interject: Each of these pushes the limits of computer science and raises issues of privacy, complexity or reliability. Nevertheless, 'Attentive' Computing Systems, have started to make an appearance in the latest Volvos, and IBM has designed and developed a communications software called WebSphere that comes with an underlying sense of busyness. Microsoft has been conducting extensive in-house tests of a way more sophisticated system since 2003. In a couple of years, companies might manage to provide each office employee with a software version of the personal receptionist which is only available to corner-suite executives today.

However, the truth is that most people are not as busy as they claim to be, which explains why we can often stand interruptions from our inconsiderate electronic paraphernalia. To find out the extent to which such disruption may claim people's daily time, an IBM Research team led by Jennifer Lai from Carnegie Mellon University studied ten managers, researchers and interns at the workplace. They had the subjects on videotape, and within every period of a specific time, they asked the subjects to evaluate their 'interruptibility'. The time a worker spent in leave-me-alone state varied from individual to individual and day to day, and the percentage ranged from 10 to 51. Generally, the employees wished to work without interruption for roughly 1/3 of the time. Similarly, by studying Microsoft workers, Horvitz also came to the discovery that they ordinarily spend over 65 per cent of their day in a low-attention mode.

Obviously, today's phones and computers are probably correct about two-thirds of time by assuming that their users are always available to answer a call, check an email, or click the 'OK' button on an alert box. But for the considerate systems to be functional and useful, their accuracy has to be above 65 in sending when their users are about to reach their cognitive limit.

Inspired by Horvitz's work, Microsoft prototype Bestcom-Enhanced Telephony (Bestcom-ET) digs a bit deeper into every user's computer to find out clues about what they are dealing with. As I said earlier, Microsoft launched an internal beta test of the system in mid-2003. Horvitz points out that by the end of last October, nearly 3,800 people had been relying on the system to field their incoming calls.

Horvitz is, in fact, a tester himself, and as we have our conversation in his office, Bestcom silently takes care of all the calls. Firstly, it checks if the caller is in his address book, the company directory, or the 'recent call' list. After triangulating all

these resources at the same time, it attempts to figure out what their relationship is. The calls that get through are from family, supervisors and people he called earlier that day. Other callers will get a message on their screens that say he cannot answer now because he is in a meeting, and will not be available until 3pm. The system will scan both Horvitz's and the caller's calendar to check if it can reschedule a callback at a time which works for both of them. Some callers will take that option, while others simply leave a voicemail. The same happens with e-mails. When Horvitz is not in his office, Bestcom automatically offers to transfer selected callers to his cellphone, unless his calendar implies that he is in a meeting.

Questions 14-19

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2?

*Inboxes **14-19** on your answer sheet, write*

TRUE	if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE	if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN	If there is no information on this

14 [dropdown] According to Ted Selker, human reproduction has been disturbed throughout history.

15 [dropdown] If people are interrupted by calls or e-mails, they usually put up with it.

16 [dropdown] Microsoft is now investigating a software which is compatible with ordinary offices.

17 [dropdown] People usually have a misperception about whether they are busy or not.

18 [dropdown] Experts in Carnegie Mellon University conducted a research observing all occupations of IBM.

19 [dropdown] Current phone and computer systems have shortcut keys for people receiving information immediately.

Questions 20-26

Complete the flow-chart below.

Choose **ONLY ONE WORD** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in **boxes 20-26** on your answer sheet.

Bestcom Working Process

Bestcom system carries out further analysis in order to find 20 _____ about what users are doing.		
↓		↓
in the office		out of the office
↓	↓	↓
Check the 21 _____ between the caller and the user, whether the caller has contact information of the user, such as their family, friends or collegues.	If callers are not in directory, a(n) 22 _____ will show up on their screen, saying the user is not available at moment. The system will 23 _____ a suitable time for both, or callers can choose to leave a(n) 24 _____ to users.	Bestcom will provide a solution by transferring your call to the user's 25 _____ if there is no 26 _____ in his or her schedule.

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 27-40***, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.*

Can Hurricanes be Moderated or Diverted?

A Each year, massive swirling storms bringing along winds greater than 74 miles per hour wipe across tropical oceans and land on shorelines—usually devastating vast swaths of territory. When these roiling tempests strike densely inhabited territories, they have the power to kill thousands and cause property damage worth of billions of dollars. Besides, absolutely nothing stands in their way. But can we ever find a way to control these formidable forces of nature?

B To see why hurricanes and other severe tropical storms may be susceptible to human intervention, a researcher must first learn about their nature and origins. Hurricanes grow in the form of thunderstorm clusters above the tropical seas. Oceans in low-latitude areas never stop giving out heat and moisture to the atmosphere, which brings about warm, wet air above the sea surface. When this kind of air rises, the water vapour in it condenses to form clouds and precipitation. Condensation gives out heat in the process the solar heat is used to evaporate the water at the ocean surface. This so-called invisible heat of condensation makes the air more buoyant, leading to it ascending higher while reinforcing itself in the feedback process. At last, the tropical depression starts to form and grow stronger, creating the familiar eye -- the calm centre hub that a hurricane spins around. When reaching the land, the hurricane no longer has a continuous supply of warm water, which causes it to swiftly weaken.

C Our current studies are inspired by my past intuition when I was learning about chaos theory 30 years ago. The reason why long-range forecasting is complicated is

that the atmosphere is highly sensitive to small influences and tiny mistakes can compound fast in the weather-forecasting models. However, this sensitivity also made me realise a possibility: if we intentionally applied some slight inputs to a hurricane, we might create a strong influence that could affect the storms, either by steering them away from densely populated areas or by slowing them down. Back then, I was not able to test my ideas, but thanks to the advancement of computer simulation and remote-sensing technologies over the last 10 years, I can now renew my enthusiasm in large-scale weather control.

D To find out whether the sensitivity of the atmospheric system could be exploited to adjust such robust atmospheric phenomena as hurricanes, our research team ran simulation experiments on computers for a hurricane named Iniki that occurred in 1992. The current forecasting technologies were far from perfect, so it took us by surprise that our first simulation turned out to be an immediate success. With the goal of altering the path of Iniki in mind, we first picked the spot where we wanted the storm to stop after six hours. Then we used this target to generate artificial observations and put these into the computer model.

E The most significant alteration turned out to be the initial temperatures and winds. Usually, the temperature changes across the grid were only tenths of a degree, but the most noteworthy change, which was an increase of almost two degrees Celsius, took place in the lowest model layer to the west of the storm centre. The calculations produced wind-speed changes of two or three miles per hour. However, in several spots, the rates shifted by as much as 20 mph due to minor redirections of the winds close to the storm's centre. In terms of structure, the initial and altered versions of Hurricane Iniki seemed almost the same, but the changes in critical variables were so substantial that the latter one went off the track to the west during the first six hours of the simulation and then travelled due north, leaving Kauai untouched.

F Future earth-orbiting solar power stations, equipped with large mirrors to focus the sun's rays and panels of photovoltaic cells to gather and send energy to the Earth, might be adapted to beam microwaves which turn to be absorbed by water vapour molecules inside or around the storm. The microwaves would cause the water molecules to vibrate and heat up the surrounding air, which then leads to the hurricane slowing down or moving in a preferred direction.

G Simulations of hurricanes conducted on a computer have implied that by changing the precipitation, evaporation and air temperature, we could make a difference to a storm's route or abate its winds. Intervention could be in many different forms: exquisitely targeted clouds bearing silver iodide or other rainfall-inducing elements might deprive a hurricane of the water it needs to grow and multiply from its formidable eyewall, which is the essential characteristic of a

severe tropical storm.

Questions 27-33

*Reading Passage 3 has seven paragraphs, **A-G**.*

Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.

*Write the correct number, **i-viii**, in **boxes 27-33** on your answer sheet.*

	List of Headings
i	Hurricanes in history
ii	How hurricanes form
iii	How a laboratory exercise re-routed a hurricane
iv	Exciting ways to utilise future technologies
v	Are hurricanes unbeatable?
vi	Re-visiting earlier ideas
vii	How lives might have been saved
viii	A range of low-tech methods

27 [▼]   Paragraph A

28 [▼]   Paragraph B

29 [▼]   Paragraph C

30 [▼]   Paragraph D

31 [▼]   Paragraph E

32 [▼]   Paragraph F

33 [▼]   Paragraph G

Questions 34-38

Complete the summary below.

*Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.*

*Write your answers in **boxes 34-38** on your answer sheet.*

Hurricanes originate as groups of ^{34} _____ over the tropical oceans. Low-latitude seas continuously provide heat and moisture to the atmosphere, producing warm, humid air above the sea surface. When this air rises, the water vapour in it condenses to form clouds and precipitation. ^{35} _____ releases heat—the solar heat it took to evaporate the water at the ocean surface. This so-called latent ^{36} _____ of condensation makes the air more buoyant, causing it to ascend still higher in a self-reinforcing feedback process. Eventually, the tropical depression begins to organise and strengthen, forming the familiar ^{37} _____ —the calm central hub around which a hurricane spins. On passing over ^{38} _____ , the hurricane's sustaining source of warm water is cut off, which leads to the storm's rapid weakening.

Questions 39-40

*Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C** or **D**.*

*Write the correct letter in boxes **39-40** on your answer sheet.*

39 What encouraged the writer to restart researching hurricane control?

A ○ the huge damage hurricane trigger

B ○ the developments in computer technologies

C ○ the requirement of some local people

D ○ the chaos theory learnt as a student

40 What was the writer's reaction after their first experiment?

A ○ surprised that their intervention had not achieved a lot

B ○ ecstatic with the achievement the first experiment had

C ○ surprised that their intervention had the intended effect

D ○ regretful about the impending success

Solution:

1 FALSE

2 FALSE

3 TRUE

4 NOT GIVEN

5 FALSE

6 NOT GIVEN

7 TRUE

8 history of childhood

9 miniature adults

10 industrialisation/industrialization

11 the Factory Act

12 play and education

13 (a) classroom

14 NOT GIVEN

15 TRUE

16 TRUE

17 TRUE

18 FALSE

19 NOT GIVEN

20 clues

21 relationship

22 message

23 reschedule

24 voicemail

25 cellphone

26 meeting

27 v

28 ii

29 vi

30 iii

31 vii

32 iv

33 viii

34 thunderstorms

35 Condensation

36 heat

37 eye

38 land

39 B

40 C