IELTS Practice Test Volume 1

Reading Practice Test 1

HOW TO USE

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1. Open this URL **https://link.intergreat.com/OQjuy** on your computer
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Reading Passage 1

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

Could You Pass Me My Glasses, Please?

The human eye was not designed for the years of intensive book learning that are now common in modern society. The result is eye strain and deterioration, often at an early age, but this same society has provided the obvious answer: corrective lensed eyeglasses. Ubiquitous and everpresent, coming in all styles, colours, and designs, the optical correction of faulty vision with these devices is a phase which probably everyone will have to face at some stage in their lives.

It is not surprising that the first eyeglasses were made by the Catholic monks dedicated to the writing, translation, and reproduction of finely written religious texts. In contrast to the general undereducation and illiteracy of the times, these monks were versed in many languages, and worked for years in badly-illuminated candle-lit 'scriptoriums' - an effort which took its toll on their eyesight. Thus, the earliest pictorial evidence for the use of eyeglasses is a 1352 portrait of the Catholic cardinal, Hugh de Provence. However, the usefulness of glasses had already long been realised by the population at large, and by 1300 the trade of lens-grinding was widespread enough to require formal guilds and regulations.

Although popular and effective, no one was quite sure of the mechanics of it all. The first detailed mathematical explanation would not come until Johannes Kepler published his work on optics in 1604. Basically, glasses modify the focal length of the eye's lens. There are two main focusing disorders: myopia and hyperopia. In the case of the first (near-sightedness, in which it is difficult to see objects at a distance), concave lenses are used, compensating for the eye's refractive error by pushing the focal point back, to the retina. Hyperopia (far-sightedness) uses

convex lenses to do the opposite, bringing the focal point forward, to the retina.

Yet, to accommodate the range of situations in which clear vision is needed, from reading books and computer monitors, to television watching and driving cars, some glasses are equipped with more than one lens type. The most common are bi-focal lenses, with two distinct horizontal viewing areas. A conscious effort is thus necessary to focus through the band of the lens necessary to solve the visual challenge faced. A variation which helps with this are lenses which allow progressive transitions, rather than distinct changes between viewing angles. The simplest system of all is to merely have several pairs of glasses, reserving them for specific tasks.

These days, lenses are most commonly a plastic polycarbonate material, offering lower weight and higher scratch resistance, as well as the ability to screen out harmful ultraviolet and infrared rays from the sun. Similarly, the frames are flexible and lightweight, offering less friction and irritation for the skin. Nevertheless, glasses cannot be said to be convenient devices. Grease, dirt, sweat, and vapour can streak them when eating or cooking, or from natural condensation due to temperature changes (such as when exiting a heated building into the colder outdoors). Glasses are also awkward during fast-motion sports or labouring jobs, are rather easily broken, and not cheap to repair.

Obviously then, contact lenses have considerable advantages. These are inserted directly over the pupil, and have the additional benefit of a perceived aesthetic appeal. Traditional glasses are sometimes seen as unfashionable, carrying associations of age or infirmity. The almost invisible contacts avoid this, which is perhaps one reason why most wearers are female. Having said that, by completely covering the pupil, contacts also offer better peripheral vision, and are more appropriate for certain less common vision impairments. Their disadvantage is the difficulty and discomfort involved in putting them on and taking them off. They can also result in dryness and irritation.

Interestingly though, the modern era has seen eyeglasses become somewhat of a fashion accessory. The musicians Buddy Holly and John Lennon were so characterised by their glasses that their names have been given to the style they wore. Glasses can now even be bought ‘off the shelf’, without an eye examination, cashing in on the need for quick solutions that people want in a busy society. Although they are a source of much revenue, opticians advise people to first have proper eye examinations, not only to ensure the best results, but also for early detection of potential eye diseases, such as glaucoma, which might actually be the root cause of focusing problems.

The lace of the future may well be ‘laser eye surgery’. In this process, laser beams are used, usually to alter the curvature of the cornea and thus provide long-term corrective benefits. Although straightforward enough and increasingly safe and affordable, given the delicacy of the eye, there remains a small risk of failure and resultant vision problems, such as ghosting or

halos. It is an interesting fact, that, despite the growth of such surgery, and the use of contacts, traditional lenses remain as popular as ever. Nothing, it seems, can match the simple convenience of putting on a pair of glasses.

Questions 1-3

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

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 [ ] Most people study hard today.

2 [ ] When glasses were invented, most people could read.

3 [ ] Most monks suffered eye problems.

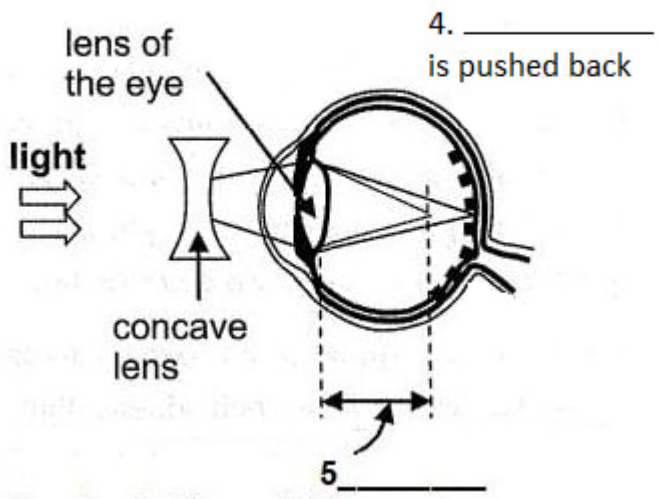
Questions 4-6

Complete the diagram.

Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.

Two Focusing Problems

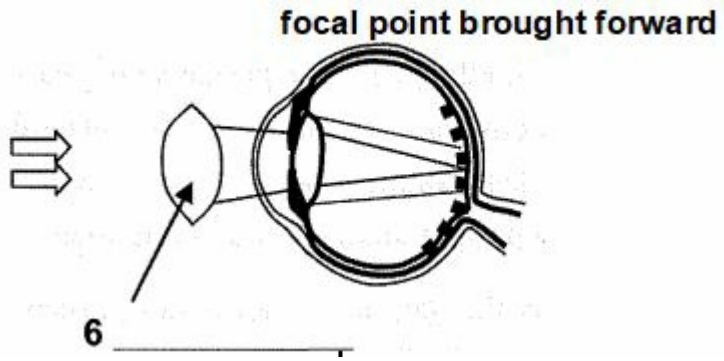
Myopia



4 _____

5 _____

Hyperopia



6 _____

Questions 7-10

Answer the questions.

Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.

Who first explained how glasses function?

7 _____

What is needed when viewing through bi-focal glasses?

8 _____

What can cause condensation on glasses?

9 _____

What aspect of sight do contact lenses improve better than glasses?

10 _____

Questions 11-13

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

11 Modern lenses are

- A safer.
- B heavier.
- C softer.
- D more flexible.

12 ‘Off-the-shelf' glasses

A are not popular.

B can cause glaucoma.

C earn shops good money.

D are recommended.

13 Laser eye surgery is

A of limited benefit.

B more convenient than glasses.

C becoming more popular.

D complex.

Reading Passage 2

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

Subtitling: Some Strategies

When movies made in one language are shown to speakers of another, the two methods of resolving the language barrier are subtitling and dubbing. Subtitling is the written translation of the words, usually appearing discreetly at the bottom of the screen, while dubbing is the recording of voices in the target language.

Dubbing, although seemingly more accessible to movie watches, comes with many disadvantages. For a start, it is expensive, hence it needs a large audience to justify the cost, yet even big films carry no guarantee of such commercial success. In addition, the dubbed voices may seem detached or inappropriate to the characters, or otherwise, the absurdity of having an undereducated American ranffian saying. 'Je voudrais déclarer un vol' becomes too much, affecting appreciation of the film. Finally, films and TV programs now have an increasingly rapid turnover rate, and subtitling is faster and more practical in such situations.

However, one should not assume subtitling is easier than dubbing. Subtitling requires careful strategies, and here I will outline some of them. In order to do this, a sample movie is needed, and the one examined here is an Italian movie subtitled into English. Comprehension of subtitles will always be affected by lack of familiarity with the values, beliefs, and interactive differences between the host and viewing cultures. The subtitlers need to be aware of this in order to translate true meaning. Thus, before beginning any work, a brief 'cultural audit' is absolutely necessary, involving a comparison of the two cultures in relation to the storyline of the movie.

The movie is set in the late 1960s, at a time when the wealth and materialism of American society was very high, contrasting the relative poverty of Italian village life. The plot tells the story of a poor couple who dream of winning large sums of money by gambling in a card game against a wealthy elderly American woman, who occasionally visits Italy just for that purpose. The final thematic assertion that there are more important factors than money reflects the warmth and solidarity of the Italian village in the face of adversity. Although these themes are universal, one could speculate that a Western audience might not like or identify with them as much, give the increasing urbanisation and materialism of their own society.

The most immediate translation issue relates to the movie's title, 'Lo Scopone Scientifico', translates as 'Scientific Scopone', whereas the English title is, 'The Scientific Card Player'. 'Scopone' is the name of a traditional Italian card game of great antiquity. Obviously, the translators could not use this name, obscure to the Westren viewers, but they insert a blander and inappropriate term. An even clearer subtitling lapse is that the betting is always done using, apparently, ludicrously high figures. Subtitles such as, 'Let's start with a million' regularly jump out. This is a literal translation of the figures (in Italian lira), yet it is the dollar with which the English-speaking audience would associate. The result is an apparent lack of plausibility, changing the comedic nature of the film.

With respect to the specific subtitling used, there are five. Let us begin with the subtitle, 'The old bag's here.' This is idiomatic in English, being an insulting term for an elderly woman. However, it is a simple expression comprising only two words, one of which is literally intended ('old'). I would speculate that the same idiom occurs in Italian (that is, the direct translation of 'old' and 'bag' in Italian carries the same idiomatic meaning). This is the strategy of Transfer, where the full expression without time or space consideration is given. Otherwise, there could well be a closely aligned idiom, in which case the strategy would be *Imitation*, where there are similar lexical elements between both languages.

Continuing with idioms, we read, 'Catches win matches'. This derives from certain ball games, such as cricket, where catching the ball after it is struck by the batsman contributes towards winning the game. There are no such sporting cultures in Italy followed. Thus, one can be certain that other words were used in the original Italian, but that these have a similar pragmatic effect (in meaning and idiomatic nature). The strategy used is thus *Paraphrasing*, where different expressions specific to the source language (Italian) and target language (English) are required.

Later on, we read, 'A sign of destiny'. When this subtitle appears, there are actually two to three people speaking with equal force at the same time. Space and time constraints render it impossible to have them all translated, so only the quoted subtitle appears, using the strategy known as *Condensation*. Finally, we read *scopa* – an Italian word referring to a variation of the central card game. Being unique to Italy, there is no equivalent word in English, so the strategy used here is *Regination*, where the subtitler leaves the word in the original language. The

meaning remains obvious from the context, and only in such minimal and unlikely situations does this strategy become acceptable.

Questions 14-17

14 Dubbing can

- A appeal to larger audiences.
- B seem silly.
- C increase appreciation of the film.
- D be faster

15 Cultural audits

- A look at one culture.
- B are long and involved.
- C help comprehension.
- D are not normally required.

16 The movie which was examined

- A has common human themes.
- B has a surprising ending.
- C is set in an Italian city.
- D involves two main actors.

17 Scopone

- A is a relatively new game.
- B is known to the Western audience.
- C is a bland term.
- D has a variation called scopa.

Questions 18-22

Write TRUE, FALSE, or NOT GIVEN.

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

18 [ ] The English title is a subtitling lapse.

19 [ ] Transfer and imitation are interesting strategies.

20 [ ] Paraphrasing is often used.

21 [ ] Resignation can be used in many situations.

22 [ ] Almost all Italians love scopa.

Questions 23-26

Match the translation example with its associated fact.

*Write the correct letter, **A-D**, next to the questions.*

A	a practical decision
B	clarified by the situation
C	using other words, but with the same meaning
D	probably exists in the source language

23 [ ] *The old bag'*

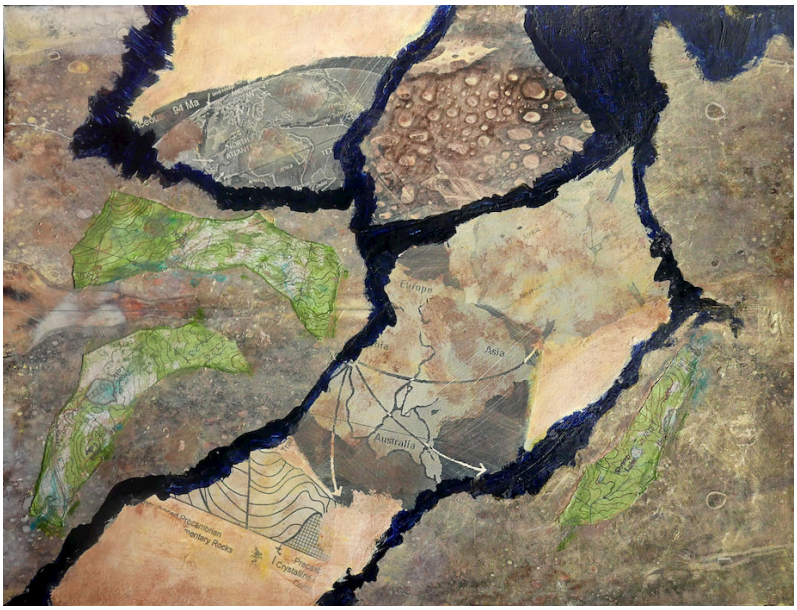
24 [ ] *'Catches win matches'*

25 [ ] *'A sign of destiny'*

26 [ ] *'Scopa'*

Reading Passage 3

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



Continents Collide!

The idea that the continents are moving was first proposed by a German meteorologist,.Alfred Wegener, in a book published in 1915. He had gathered a great deal of careful and tantalising evidence, the most obvious being the simple observation that the great landmasses of the world seem to fit together, jigsaw-like, a striking example being the coastlines of either side of the Atlantic ocean. Wegener was even able to theorise, correctly, that all the continents were once assembled into a supercontinent (now called Pangaea). Pangaea broke up into Laurasia (which became North America and Eurasia) and Gondwana (which became the remaining continents).

Unfortunately, Wegener could propose no propulsive force for this movement, apart from the vague and erroneous suggestion that it might be centrifugal forces. He also severely overestimated the speed of this motion. These problems, and the fact that he was a meteorologist (rather than a geologist), meant that, upon publishing his ideas, the scientific community was resolutely and implacably hostile. It is an interesting example of that not uncommon instance in which a scientist who was fundamentally correct was denied any recognition in his lifetime. Semmelweis, who advocated the washing of hands before surgery as a way to reduce hospital fatalities, is another example. Wegener was to unexpectedly die on an expedition in Greenland, probably of a heart attack - in his death, as in his life, left out in the cold.

The first hints of the existence of Gondwana came from the similarity of fossil plants and animals distributed in the same geological period over South America, Africa, Antarctica, India,

and Australia. Similarly, the composition and nature of the rocks along relevant coastlines spoke the same story, yet to become scientifically credible, the theory needed evidence of a propulsive force to move such huge continents (in the same way that Semmelweis's ideas needed the germ theory of disease). It was only in the 1960s, decades after Wegener's death, that hard evidence for his theory began amassing to eventually become overwhelming.

The theory is now called 'plate tectonics', since it was proven that the Earth's surface is fractured into 'plates'. These bump and grind as they steadily move at infinitesimally slow rates in given directions, driven by 'convention forces'. These are formed by the vast circular rising of superheated rock from the planet's molten interior. This material cools as it nears the surface, eventually sinking once again towards the centre. Add to this the rotation of the Earth itself, and there is a complicated and barely understood set of cyclic swirls of molten rock, producing drags and pulls on each tectonic plate, the sum of which results in a steady migration.

Of course, this motion is slow, typically at the speed at which fingernails grow, and at its fastest, the rate at which hair does. But by being consistent and essentially unstoppable, the results can be spectacular, particularly when plates meet. Here, the release of heat, as well as the buckling and melting which results, gives rise to geological events such as earthquakes, and geological features such as mountains, volcanoes, and oceanic ridges and trenches. Plate boundaries see most of the world's active volcanoes, with the Pacific Plate's 'Ring of Fire' being a good example. Volcanism may sometimes occur in the middle of plates, but this has been theorised to be a result of 'hotspots': anomalously hot areas of interior rock which melt through the plate, forcing an escape to the surface.

Plate boundaries come in three types. First, Transform boundaries, where the plates grind past each other. It was once thought that the well-known Aegir Ridge was an example, until studies showed that it had never been active, whereas the periodic earthquakes along California's San Andreas Fault show the very opposite case. The second type is Divergent boundaries, where the two plates slide apart from each other. Mid-oceanic ridges, such as in the Atlantic, and active rift zones, such as in East Africa, are examples. Finally, there are Convergent boundaries, where the two plates slide towards each other. This can form either a subduction zone (if one plate moves underneath the other) or a continental collision. Deep marine trenches are formed in the former case, and with the descending plate releasing its trapped water on being heated in the Earth's interior, huge amounts of heat and pressure rise to the surface, causing mountains and volcanoes to form, such as in the Andes mountain range.

The best example of a continental collision is the Indian plate, which is steadily and implacably migrating straight into central Asia. The Himalayas of Nepal and Northern India, the Karakoram Ranges of Northern Pakistan, and the highlands of Afghanistan, are all part of the complex fold system that resulted, producing some of the highest peaks in the world. There are also some deep valleys receiving the run-off melt-water from the far side of these mountains, creating some mighty rivers, such as the Indus, the Irrawaddy, and the Mekong. Interestingly, the

Himalayas are still growing, meaning that the summit of Mount Everest is perhaps a couple of metres higher now than when people first stood there in 1953, presumably making it just that little bit harder to reach.

Questions 27-28

Complete the sentences.

Choose ONE WORD from the passage for each answer.

The combination of North America and Eurasia had the name 27 _____

The combination of Laurasia and Gondwana had the name 28 _____

Questions 29-32

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

29 Scientists disliked Wegener's idea because he

- A was German.
- B made simple observations.
- C was a meteorologist.
- D made too many suggestions.

30 Both Wegener and Semmelweis

- A died prematurely.
- B lacked crucial evidence.
- C were never given recognition.
- D were German.

31 The motion of tectonic plates

- A is faster than hair growth.
- B does not change.
- C is well understood.
- D can start cyclic swirls.

32 Volcanos are formed away from plate boundaries due to

A ○ buckling and melting.

B ○ oceanic effects.

C ○ geological events.

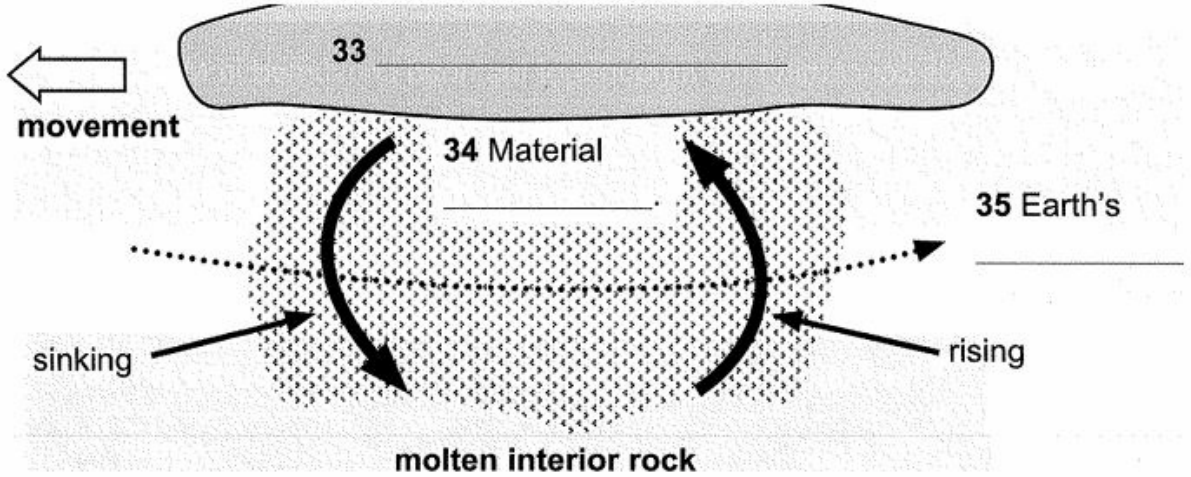
D ○ heated regions.

Questions 33-35

Complete the diagram.

Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.

Tectonic Forces at Work



33 _____

34 _____

35 _____

Questions 36-40

Type of Boundary	Related Example
Transform	36 _____
37 _____	East African Rift
Convergent I: 38 _____	Central Asian ranges (resulting in tall mountains, deep valleys, and several 39 _____)

Convergent II: 40 _____	Andes Mountains

Solution:

Part 1: Question 1 - 13

1. TRUE
2. FALSE
3. NOT GIVEN
4. focal point
5. focal length
6. convex lenses
7. (Johannes) Kepler
8. conscious effort
9. temperature change(s)
10. peripheral (vision)
11. A
12. C
13. A

Part 2: Question 14 - 26

14. B
15. C
16. A
17. D
18. TRUE
19. NOT GIVEN
20. NOT GIVEN
21. FALSE
22. TRUE
23. D

24 C

25 A

26 B

Part 3: Question 27 - 40

27 Laurasia

28 Pangaea

29 C

30 B

31 B

32 D

33 tectonic plate

34 cools

35 rotation

36 Aegir Ridge

37 Divergent (boundary)

38 continental collision

39 mighty rivers

40 subduction (zone)