



IELTS Mock Test 2020 December Reading Practice Test 1

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READING PASSAGE 1

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



Taking us back to the Paradise City

Formed in 1985 by Axl Rose and then lead guitarist, Tracii Guns, and taking its name from its two founding members, the hard rock band Guns and Roses reached heights of success that few could or would have ever predicted. Having sold more than 100 million albums worldwide, 46 million in the States alone, to date, the band that came to symbolise the hedonistic rebelliousness of the 1980s and 90s punk-rock period has, after much speculation, resurrected itself for one more assault on the music charts. GNR, as the band has come to be known, has just begun a new world tour. And as it embarks on another chapter of its journey, we take a look back at the colourful and often controversial history of the band.

1985 -1986

The band line-up underwent many changes in the early days. Founding member Tracii Guns' failure to attend rehearsals led to him being replaced as lead guitarist by Slash. And once Rob Gardner, the band's original drummer quit for personal reasons, Slash brought his close friend Steven Adler into the fold. With the band members now settled and the line-up complete, Axl Rose (vocals), Izzy Stradlin (rhythm guitar), Duff McKagan (bass), Slash (lead guitar) and Steven Adler (drums) embarked on their first tour, nicknamed 'Hell Tour'. It was here on the road that the band established its chemistry and though it only managed to release one four-track EP, Like a Suicide, during this period, the seeds of success were being sown as the band quickly earned a reputation for its impressive live performances.

1987 - 1989

On July the 21st, 1987, the band released its first album, Appetite for Destruction. But success wasn't by any means instant; the album lingered low in the charts for almost a year before the band's agent managed to convince MTV executives to play Welcome to the Jungle, the first single off the album, during their afternoon rotations. Rock and punk fans soon took notice and began requesting the video en masse. Sweet Child of Mine was the album's second US single and, thanks largely to growing grassroots support, the song

and its accompanying music video received regular airplay and shot to the top of the US charts. A world tour and invitations to appear at major international rock festivals followed. The band was now well on its way to achieving fame and fortune.

1990 - 1993

Band members lived life on the edge and, unfortunately, drummer Adler's lifestyle got the better of him. The extent of his dependence on drugs was so bad that he could no longer perform with the band and was fired in July, 1990, to be replaced by Matt Sorum. A sixth member of the group was also added as Dizzy Reed became the band's keyboardist. And, having gotten rid of its old management team as well, the band now launched its most ambitious project to date, releasing two albums, *Use Your Illusion 1* and *Use Your Illusion 2*, at the same time. The gamble paid off spectacularly with the albums shooting to numbers one and two in the charts respectively - GNR was the first band ever to achieve such a feat. But though they were riding the crest of a wave, controversy was never far from the band members, especially vocalist Rose who was, among other things, charged with assault and accused of inciting a riot that led to several fatalities. That said, the *Use Your Illusion* Tour ended on a high, registering record attendances and lasting an incredible 28 months.

1994 - 2008

But just when it seemed that the band could do no wrong, things slowly began to unravel. Rose and Slash had personal issues and the band went on a hiatus, not recording or touring together for the best part of two years, before Slash officially quit in 1996. Most of the other band members followed Slash out and, though Rose replaced them, it was a full nine years before a much-touted comeback gig was played in Las Vegas. The band's promised new album, *Chinese Democracy*, never materialised and tour schedules were interrupted and often cancelled altogether. It wasn't until 2008, with Rose now the only remaining member of the original band, that *Chinese Democracy* was finally released.

2009 - Present

A new world tour followed the release of *Chinese Democracy* and, although it received largely positive reviews, the band has continued to be plagued by controversy; Rose is notorious for arriving late for performances and his onstage behaviour has led to much criticism. But when all's said and done, there's no denying the enduring appeal of GNR. Loyal fans still line up in their thousands to get tickets for every new tour date, just as they did all those years ago at the height of the band's success. The only difference is that today they are more hoping for than expecting a great performance, but then that's rock and roll baby

Questions 1-3

Questions 1-3 relate to the first paragraph only.

Complete each sentence with the correct ending, A - G, from the box below.

A	takes its name from two former members.
B	was named after its founding members.
C	success in the States alone.
D	was never a predictable band musically.
E	considerable success in America.
F	a symbol of success in the 1980s.
G	representative of a certain attitude in music in the 80s and 90s.

You may use each **letter once only**.

- 1 Guns and Roses
- 2 The band has enjoyed
- 3 The band became

Questions 4-7

Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD** for each answer.

Between 1985 and 1986 one of the original members wasn't capable of going to 4 _____ which forced the band to replace him.

During their first tour they managed to have good 5 _____ and play well together.

The album Sweet Child of Mine got regular 6 _____ and reached the top of the charts.

Nobody can argue that they have not enjoyed long-lasting 7 _____

Questions 8-13

Look at the following statements (Questions 8-13) and the lists of periods of time below.

Match each statement to the correct period A - D.

Write the correct letter, A - D, in the spaces 8-13 below.

NB You may use **any letter more than once**.

A	from 1985 to 1986
B	from 1987 to 1989
C	from 1990 to 1993
D	from 1994 to 2008

- 8 The band took a long break, during which many members decided to leave.
- 9 There was an extremely long delay before the release of the band's next album.
- 10 The relationship between band members developed in a positive way while on tour.
- 11 A damaging addiction prevented one band member from performing well and led to him being sacked.
- 12 A new member joined the band playing an instrument that hadn't been played by previous band members.
- 13 The band registered its first number-one hit single.

READING PASSAGE 2

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



Surfs Up

There are two major subdivisions of surfing: longboarding and shortboarding. Their respective names represent differences in the type of surfboard used. Longboards are, as the name suggests, much longer and require a different riding style to short-boards.

Surfboards were originally made of solid wood, and were large and cumbersome, often weighing in excess of 100 pounds. Nowadays, they are more commonly constructed out of polyurethane foam making them much lighter, which means better manoeuvrability for the boarder. This is especially beneficial for longboarders, whose boards can measure up to 3 metres in length. Successful longboarders must learn to carry out difficult walking manoeuvres up and down the board so as to set themselves in the optimal position for catching and riding the wave. The lighter the board, the easier it becomes to execute such manoeuvres. Shortboarders, whose boards are usually between 1.8 and 2 metres long, also benefit from greater manoeuvrability though, and are able to turn and adjust more quickly thanks to the lighter boards.

It is claimed that surfing was first observed being enjoyed by native Tahitians in 1767 by European explorers. Later travellers also reported seeing naked locals, both men and women, amusing themselves in the surf off the coast of Hawaii. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the sport is synonymous with the South Pacific and Hawaii in particular. Today, however, the popularity of surfing is such that surf clubs have popped up almost everywhere, from the windy West Coast of Ireland, to the ultrachic Californian beaches. Indeed, it is in Northern California where perhaps the most famous and glamorous surfing takes place.

The prospective surfer would be well-advised to consider the dangers associated with the sport before he takes to the waves. Like all water sports, surfing carries with it the

inherent danger of drowning. Although the board itself offers buoyancy, it can also be a hindrance, and a deadly one at that if its leash becomes entangled in a reef, holding the surfer underwater. Ideal water conditions for surfing can be extremely demanding on the body, too, and require the surfer to be an extremely competent swimmer.

Collisions with sandbanks, reefs, surfboards and other surfers can also be extremely hazardous and can lead to concussion - a death sentence if the surfer is not rescued from the water quickly. Although rarer, attacks by marine animals are not uncommon, with sharks, rays, seals and jellyfish posing the greatest threats. You certainly need to be a courageous soul to brave the waves in this sport.

But for those who insist on giving it a go, the rewards can be very gratifying, and it isn't too expensive to get up and running either. Surf schools in popular destinations offer multi-day beginner and intermediate courses that focus on the basic fundamentals. Five-day courses start from as little as £100 and there are all-inclusive camps, too, which cover accommodation, meals, lessons and equipment. Longboards, given their superior paddling speed and stability, are usually preferred by coaches for use with beginners. Typically, the courses break

down the technique into separate skills: the first one being how to get into position to catch a wave, the second one being how to ride the wave and not fall off. Balance, of course, plays a crucial role, so a lot of time is dedicated to balance training exercises as well.

Difficult though it may be to master the art of surfing, it can also be extremely rewarding, and there are few feelings to compare with the exhilaration of riding out your first wave. So, for those of you daredevil adrenalin junkies who fancy having a go, details of a surf club near you can be found on the British Surfing Association's website, britsurf.co.uk.

And try to remember as your feet are dangling over the side of the board, Jaws was just a film; it ALMOST certainly won't happen to you!

Questions 14-19

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

14 Longboards and shortboards

- A often weigh more than 100 pounds today
- B are usually made out of solid wood.
- C require surfers to perform difficult walking manoeuvres.
- D are lighter and more manoeuvrable today.

15 The sport of surfing

- A was invented by a group of European explorers.
- B was first observed by native Tahitians.
- C is commonly performed naked by both men and women.
- D was first practised in the South Pacific.

16 Surfing has become very popular

- A in windy coastal areas.
- B on the fashionable west coast of Ireland.
- C in Tahiti in recent years.
- D all around the world.

17 Before a novice surfer takes to the water, he should

- A check the latest weather report.
- B avoid big waves.
- C have good buoyancy.
- D be aware of the risks involved.

18 Although a surfboard can help you stay buoyant, it can also

- A get in the way of your safety in some cases.
- B help you escape from dangerous sea life.
- C be a very dangerous weapon.
- D prevent concussion or death.

19 Unless you are pulled from the water quickly, a bad collision can prove

- A hard to escape.
- B life-saving.
- C fatal.
- D rare.

Questions 20-21

Choose **TWO** letters, A - E.

Which **TWO** of the following are hazards that surfers face?

- A being held underwater by reefs.
- B the potential for shark attacks.
- C frequent encounters with jellyfish.
- D demanding water conditions.
- E hazardous rescue attempts.

Questions 22-23

Choose **TWO** letters, A - E.

Which **TWO** of the following are true about surfing?

- A It can become a rewarding career
- B It can be very rewarding as you see yourself improve
- C It can be an adrenalin rush
- D It can be expensive to start
- E It can be dangerous for swimmers around you

Questions 24-26

Complete the table below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Subdivisions of surfing:	Longboarding	Shortboarding			
Surfing originated in:	The South Pacific				
Common dangers include:	24 _____	if the board's leash becomes entangled in a reef, can be deadly	difficult water conditions	collision & concussion	attacks, by local sealife

Starting cost of five-day courses:	£ 25 <input type="text"/>				
26 <input type="text"/> include:	accommodation	meals	lessons	equipment	

READING PASSAGE 3

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



Making a sound Investment Decision

As investors tire of stock market instability, the idea of owning a piece of real estate is gaining in popularity. Now, not everyone has what it takes to become a landlord, but if you can make a go of it, it certainly has the potential to become a good money-earner. Here are some tips from successful real estate mogul, Janet Anderson, on how to start building up your property portfolio.

According to Janet, one of the best ways to identify a bargain is to hunt for foreclosures. Foreclosures are properties banks have repossessed because their owners were unable to meet the mortgage repayments. Banks want a quick sell on these places, Janet says. They want to cut their losses and get their money back as quickly as possible. Developing a network - making connections with city clerks and bank employees who know which properties are about to be sold - can be an excellent way to identify such bargains. And bargains they certainly can prove to be; in a recent firesale auction ('firesale auction' is the phrase that has been coined to describe auction-room events dedicated entirely to the disposal of repossessed assets) a house with a market value nearing \$1,000,000, but with a low reserve price designed to encourage bidders and secure a quick sale, went for \$450,000; that's a whopping 55% discount.

It's also important to be realistic though and not stretch yourself too far financially. Janet says the biggest mistake you can make is to borrow too much or over-borrow. For first-time investors, lenders usually demand bigger down payments because you haven't got a proven track record. That's more of your money on the table and, therefore, should anything go wrong, you're in for a big financial hit.

Her business partner, James Nylles, is in complete agreement on this point. He also highlights the fact that the mortgage payments and deposits are only part of the long-

term cost of buying a rental property. There is also the cost of repairs, administration and maintenance, rental manager's fees, insurance and so on, all of which require you to hold a significant amount of money in reserve. Failure to factor this in when calculating how much you can afford to part with in mortgage repayments can lead to disaster.

One of the biggest traps for first-time investors, according to Nylles, is the temptation to pay over the odds to get the property you desire. Buyers often get carried away, especially in the auction-room setting, which can get quite competitive and even descend into a racket of one-upmanship. They end up paying top-dollar and landing themselves in a financial situation they can ill afford to be in. Remember, you are in the property game to make money, so the more money you have to pay upfront for a property, the less likely you are to recoup your investment in the long run. The good news, however, is that the housing market is not very hot at the moment, which means the danger of overpaying is not so great. Always set emotions to one side and think from a purely business perspective. The question of your liking or disliking the property is irrelevant. As Nylles points out: "you will not be living there." Business decisions are made in the cold hard light of day; your objective is to minimise your outlay and maximise your return. Whether you secure a huge home in pristine condition or a tiny flat with barely room to stretch in is irrelevant - if the tiny flat gets you a better return on your investment then the choice is a no-brainer.

And last of all, do your homework. You've got to get to know the location in which you are going to invest. Look out for areas which are earmarked for government investment. Urban renewal areas are often very attractive since house and rental prices in such places are low right now but can be expected to rise in the not too distant future. The range of local amenities, safety and the state of the local economy are all important factors to consider, too. As the old saying goes, 'location, location, location'. Invest in a good location and you will maximise your rental income.

Questions 27-33

Answer the questions below using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

What are investors getting fed up with?

27 _____

Janet Anderson is involved in the sale of property. What is another phrase used in paragraph 1 to describe this type of business?

28 _____

What is one of the best ways to identify a bargain in the property market?

29 _____

Failure to meet your what, can cause your home to be repossessed?

30 _____

What do banks want to get back quickly on foreclosed properties?

31 _____

Developing networks is an excellent way to find what?

32 _____

What is the biggest error of judgement first-time investors can make, according to Anderson?

33 _____

Questions 34-40

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 3?

In spaces 34- 40 below, write

YES	if the statement agrees with the views of the writer
NO	if the statement contradicts the views of the writer
NOT GIVEN	if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

34  Banks demand larger deposits from first-time property investors.

35  By making a larger deposit, investors can limit their personal financial risk.

36  There are a lot of long-term costs to take into consideration before purchasing a rental property.

37  Banks require you to hold a lot of money in reserve to meet your long-term property maintenance costs.

38  Many investors are tempted to pay more than they should for their investment properties.

39 At the moment, house prices are extremely high in general.

40 There are a lot of urban renewal projects that have been earmarked by the government.



Solution:

- 8 D
- 9 D
- 10 A
- 11 C
- 12 C
- 13 B
- 14 D
- 15 D
- 16 D
- 17 D
- 18 A
- 19 C
- $\frac{20}{21}$ B,D
- $\frac{22}{23}$ B,C
- 24 drowning
- 25 100
- 26 All-inclusive camps
- 27 stock market instability
- 28 real estate

- 29 hunt for foreclosures
- 30 mortgage repayment
- 31 their money
- 32 bargain(s) properties
- 33 borrow too much/over-borrow
- 34 YES
- 35 NO
- 36 YES
- 37 NO
- 38 YES
- 39 NO
- 40 NOT GIVEN
- 1 B
- 2 E
- 3 G
- 4 rehearsals
- 5 chemistry
- 6 airplay
- 7 appeal

Review and Explanations

- 8 Answer: **D**
- 9 Answer: **D**
- 10 Answer: **A**
- 11 Answer: **C**
- 12 Answer: **C**
- 13 Answer: **B**
- 14 Answer: **D**
- 15 Answer: **D**
- 16 Answer: **D**
- 17 Answer: **D**
- 18 Answer: **A**
- 19 Answer: **C**
- 20-21 Answer: **B,D**
- 22-23 Answer: **B,C**
- 24 Answer: **drowning**
- 25 Answer: **100**
- 26 Answer: **All-inclusive camps**
- 27 Answer: **stock market instability**
- 28 Answer: **real estate**
- 29 Answer: **hunt for foreclosures**
- 30 Answer: **mortgage repayment**
- 31 Answer: **their money**
- 32 Answer: **bargain(s) properties**
- 33 Answer: **borrow too much/over-borrow**
- 34 Answer: **YES**
- 35 Answer: **NO**
- 36 Answer: **YES**
- 37 Answer: **NO**
- 38 Answer: **YES**
- 39 Answer: **NO**
- 40 Answer: **NOT GIVEN**
- 1 Answer: **B**
- 2 Answer: **E**
- 3 Answer: **G**
- 4 Answer: **rehearsals**
- 5 Answer: **chemistry**
- 6 Answer: **airplay**
- 7 Answer: **appeal**