



HIPPO 2020

8th International English Language Olympiad

IESOL Assessment Reading

RQF Level: Level 2

(CEFR Level: C1)

Candidate Booklet – Reading

HIPPO 5-S1

Semi-final Round

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES:

- Do NOT turn over the page until instructed.
- This examination is made up of 3 TASKS.
- Answer all the questions
- Remember to transfer your answers onto the answer sheet.
- Use only black or blue PEN.
- Dictionaries are NOT allowed.

Time allowed: 45 minutes

Total marks available: 40



Reading Task 1

Read the article and choose the best option to complete the text – a, b, c, or d. An example has been done for you.

Where cats get their own staircases

Switzerland may be the best place in the world to be a housecat. They have freedom, autonomy, and their own cat-specific architecture. Be it on the side of a townhouse or apartment complex, custom-built ladders and ramps are **0)**_____ so cats can come and go as they please.

Cat ladders are found all over Europe, but they're particularly **1)**_____ in Switzerland, which is home to about 1.5 million domestic cats. Cats are the country's most **2)**_____ pet because some two-thirds of Swiss people live in rented homes, and Swiss landlords are more open to allowing cats than dogs.

Some ladders are made of metal, some of wood; they **3)**_____ be cobbled together from different materials or purchased online or in pet stores. Some carpenters even specialise in the design and building of cat ladders. Also, it's not uncommon for neighbours to **4)**_____ their cat ladders, which sometimes means a neighbour's cat will come in through your window.

Domestic cats, however, are some of the world's most effective **5)**_____, and freedom to roam can turn them into invasive species in their own backyards. Studies **6)** _____ in the United States and Australia have found cats to be prolific bird killers. Conservationists have also raised a **7)**_____ over outdoor cats' hunting of reptiles and small mammals.

Livio Rey, a biologist at the Swiss Ornithological Institute, says there isn't much of a conversation about cat predation of birds in Switzerland, though he notes there is a small but growing movement to keep cats inside to **8)**_____ some endangered species. "As far as I know, there is no discussion about cat ladders in Switzerland," says Livio. "We have a fact **9)**_____ that we regularly give to people to inform them how to prevent cats from preying on small animals. "

Many Swiss believe outdoor access for cats is important for their **10)**_____. "Keeping cats without allowing them to run freely is a great **11)**_____ for cat holders," reads the website of the Zurich Animal Protection Association, which recommends cat owners use cat flaps and cat ladders to **12)**_____ indoor-outdoor access and prevent boredom.



- Example:** a) designed b) appointed c) acknowledged d) evaluated
1. a) abundant b) feasible c) inadequate d) pointless
2. a) probable b) affordable c) common d) unwanted
3. a) should b) must c) have to d) can
4. a) build b) climb c) separate d) connect
5. a) predators b) prey c) opponents d) habitat
6. a) planned b) anticipated c) conducted d) cancelled
7. a) policy b) guidance c) movement d) concern
8. a) restrain b) protect c) review d) recreate
9. a) paper b) page c) piece d) sheet
10. a) welfare b) suitability c) allegation d) abuse
11. a) challenge b) amendment c) distraction d) motivation
12. a) allow b) agree c) abandon d) consider



Reading Task 2

Read the text and answer the questions below. Choose the correct option, a, b, c, or d. An example has been done for you.

Rats taught to drive tiny cars to lower their stress levels

Para. 1

Scientists have concluded that learning to drive a tiny vehicle makes rats feel less stressed. Researchers at the University of Richmond in the US taught a group of 17 rats how to drive small plastic cars. The rats then used the cars to locate specific points where the scientists had concealed food. Over time the rats improved their driving skills and the scientists raised the stakes by hiding the food in more obscure places. The rats proved equal to the challenge and were able to drive to food in more remote locations.

It has been known for a considerable time that rats can learn to identify specific objects, manipulate levers and weave their way around mazes. These tests are often used to study how problems in the brain affect the ability to carry out everyday tasks, such as turning left or right, driving or washing up. According to Dr Smith, lead scientist on the research, discovering what the effects of being in charge of a vehicle would have on the rats' brains was central to the research. Strangely, it appears the rats felt more relaxed when behind the wheel. Dr Smith suggests that this evidence could help with the development of treatments for mental illness in humans. This is because scientists believe that rats' brains are very similar to human brains. If human and rat brains are similar, what affects one species could also affect the other.

Para. 3

Dr Smith and her colleagues built a miniature car out of a clear plastic food container and attached some wheels. It had an aluminium floor and three metal bars as a steering wheel. When a rat stood on the aluminium floor and gripped the metal bars with their hands, they completed an electrical circuit that propelled the car forward. Touching the left, centre or right bar steered the car in different directions. After a few months of training, the rats learned how to make the cars go forward. Later, they learned how to change direction. They became extremely adept at driving the car towards the food hidden by the researchers. To make sure the rats were not just extremely lucky and stumbling across the food by accident, the scientists began to put the food in places that were trickier to discover. To get to the food involved manoeuvring around corners, so the rats had to take more complex routes to their food.

Some of the rats in the experiment had been raised from birth in a laboratory, while others had lived in the wild. The rats raised in the wild were significantly superior drivers when compared to lab rats. Why the undomesticated rats were better than their lab cousins remains clouded in mystery.

Para. 5

After each driving task was completed, all the subjects had decreased levels of stress, which the scientists believe could be linked to the satisfaction of having acquired a new skill. This certainly gives the appearance that the rats were happy to practice driving and then enjoyed motoring around.



Para. 6

Even though it seems like a barrel of fun to observe rats racing cars to supplement their diet, there is, allegedly, a very serious reason for this research and it isn't about which rat would GAP)_____ to be the next top Formula 1 driver. "At the moment there is no cure for depression. This illness impacts on a lot of people and we need to find a remedy," said Dr Smith. "We need to look at different animals and how they undertake multiple tasks. Then we will be able to see how behaviour affects our brains and cognitive functions. The more we know, the more we will be able to develop treatments and medicines to assist humans." Dr Smith also said, "the ability of rats to drive these cars demonstrates the elasticity of their brains. They have an ability to respond flexibly to new challenges. I do believe that rats are smarter than most people give them credit for. In fact, most animals are brainier than we imagine". Although the research is primarily intended to help humans, as a side issue it may also tell us more about rats and their intellectual capabilities.

Para. 7

Scientists have traditionally used mazes to test animals' brain functions. Animals were given tasks to find their way around a maze. The more complex the maze puzzle undertaken and successfully completed, the more intelligent the animal was alleged to be. This research could potentially replace tried and tested maze tests with more modern driving examinations, says Dr Smith. For example, driving tests could be employed to assess the effects of depression on motivation, she says. "If we use even more realistic and challenging models, it may provide more evidence that is of direct GAP)_____ to humans," she says.

The rats were not required to suffer the pressures of a pass/fail driving test at the end of the study. Nor did they receive documents to certify their new found abilities. And, more importantly, the scientists didn't tell us if there was any gender bias in terms of driving ability. That would have ended or added to the arguments about the driving ability of male and female humans.

Para. 9

The team is now planning more experiments using the tiny cars. These experiments will be to try to understand how rats learn to drive, why it seems to reduce stress and which brain areas are involved. Preliminary results should be available early next year.



Example: Scientists have tested the ability of rats to:

- a) design their own plastic cars.
- b) drive very small cars.
- c) build electrical circuits.
- d) act as companions to those with depression.

13. In paragraph 1, the underlined phrase 'to raise the stakes' means:

- a) to make something longer
- b) to make something higher
- c) to make something more difficult
- d) to make something more important

14. Researchers at the university of Richmond:

- a) discovered rats could locate food by smell alone.
- b) made some of the tasks too difficult for the rats.
- c) gradually increased the complexity of the task.
- d) found many of the rats could not drive.

15. In paragraph 3, the underlined verb 'stumble across' means the same as:

- a) find on purpose
- b) find by accident
- c) find after a long time
- d) find almost immediately

16. What was the main reason for the experiment?

- a) To see if rats could tell left from right when driving.
- b) To prove rats' brains are similar to human brains.
- c) To see the effects of driving on a rats brain.
- d) To demonstrate the positive impact of driving.

17. When the rats first began driving, they:

- a) found it easier to go left and right than forwards.
- b) could immediately drive the car forwards.
- c) stumbled on the food by accident.
- d) went forwards before learning to manoeuvre.



18. How do the abilities of wild rats compare to those raised in a lab?

- a) They are likely to be better at driving.
- b) They are usually worse at driving.
- c) They are at the same level.
- d) The comparison has not been made.

19. In paragraph 5, the word 'appearance' means the same as:

- a) presence
- b) impression
- c) looks
- d) visit

20. In paragraph 6, the best verb to fit the gap is:

- a) turn out
- b) turn up
- c) turn over
- d) turn in

21. Dr Smith believes:

- a) rats are highly intelligent creatures.
- b) she has found a way to cure depression.
- c) research is better when there is an element of fun.
- d) rats are not the best animal to use in research.

22. The research suggests that completing maze based tasks:

- a) is too easy to run good tests with reliable results.
- b) doesn't tell us anything about animal brain functions.
- c) is less effective than driving based research.
- d) can even be useful for humans.

23. In paragraph 7, the best word to fit the gap is:

- a) discovery
- b) equivalence
- c) relevance
- d) liability



24. In paragraph 9, the underlined word 'preliminary' means the same as:

- a) exhaustive
- b) feasible
- c) forthcoming
- d) initial

25. Following the end of the experiments:

- a) scientists are planning to reward the rats.
- b) another experiment is planned to examine gender bias.
- c) the idea of using cars again has been abandoned.
- d) the same methods will be used but with a different focus.

26. This text is:

- a) a report on a science topic written for a general reader.
- b) an article in a specialist magazine for pet owners.
- c) primarily a biographical piece of reporting.
- d) a scientist's account of his own experiment.



Reading Task 3

A) Read the four texts and answer the questions below by indicating which text each question relates to: A, B, C or D.

An example has been done for you.

Text A

Lapis lazuli is a deep-blue rock that is loved for its intense colour. As early as 6000 BCE, lapis lazuli was mined in Afghanistan. Mines in northeast Afghanistan continue to be the major source of lapis lazuli. Small quantities are found elsewhere but Afghanistan is still the dominant supplier.

Lapis was highly valued by the Indus Valley Civilisation (3300–1900 BCE) of modern Pakistan and later used in the funeral mask of the Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamun (1341–1323 BCE), in reference to the commonly-held GAP)_____ that the body of the sun god Re was made of lapis and gold.

By the end of the Middle Ages, lapis lazuli began to be exported to Europe, where it was ground into powder and made into ultramarine, the finest and most expensive of all blue pigments. It was used by some of the most important artists.

Some people suggest lapis lazuli stones can help you. It is said it encourages self-awareness and reveals inner truth, providing qualities of honesty, compassion and morality to the person. It is also supposed to stimulate objectivity and clarity.

You can buy lapis fairly cheaply on the internet. However, some of it is counterfeit. To test if your lapis has been dyed, simply wipe the stone with alcohol. If it loses its colour it's either imitation lapis, or a poor quality lapis dyed to imitate better quality lapis.

Text B

Emerald is a valuable stone, coloured green by small amounts of chromium. Emeralds in ancient times were mined in Egypt from about 1500 BCE. The Egyptian mines were exploited on an industrial scale by the Roman and Byzantine Empires, and later by Islamic conquerors. Mining ceased in Egypt with the discovery of the Colombian deposits in the 1500s; only ruins remain.

Colombia is by far the world's largest producer of emeralds with about 50–95% of the world's production. The exact number depends on the year. Many people consider diamonds to be more valuable than emeralds, due to the demand for diamonds having been carefully cultivated and the tight controls on their supply. But in fact, several coloured gemstones (including emeralds) can be just as valuable as diamonds. The quality and rarity of these gemstones are factors which determine their value.

Like other precious stones, emeralds are considered important by those who believe in astrology (the idea that the stars and planets influence our life). Apparently, emerald gemstones should be worn by Aquarians (those born December to January) when the presence of the planet Mercury is strongest. This should bring you good luck.



Text C

Opal was rare and exceptionally valuable in Roman times. The evidence suggests that opal was first mined in Croatia in the Roman Empire, around AD 100-400. In the Middle Ages, opal was considered a stone that could provide great luck because it was believed to have lots of power.

Today, Australia is usually said to account for 95–97% of the world's supply of opals. However, recent data suggests that the world supply of opal is changing. Major discoveries of opals took place in Ethiopia in 2008 and 2013 and large scale production is now underway.

Depending on the conditions in which it formed, opal may be white, black or nearly any colour. Black opal is considered to be the rarest of these gemstones, whereas white, grey and green are the most common. Black and red are the most valuable opals and, (GAP)_____ diamonds, are rarer but not as valuable. A popular stone, lab testing to confirm an opal's authenticity and origin may be the only option if the stone's documentation is missing.

For those who believe in the power of stones to affect humans, the opal is said to bring psychic and mystical visions. It also stimulates originality and creativity. Although there is no science to support these ideas, many people believe them.

Text D

Amber is actually fossilized tree resin, which has been appreciated for its natural beauty since Neolithic times, about 12,000 years ago. The Roman writer Pliny likened the gemstone to the tears of the sun, forming as sunlight hit the ocean. However, he also reasoned that it was the 'juice of a tree' because it burned. When burnt it smelt like a pine tree, so he suggested it was from a pine tree.

Amber, or 'Baltic gold', is plentiful in Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania, where it differs from its South American counterpart (GAP)_____ having a rich honey colour. It's in these Baltic states that you can see some of the most amazing uses of amber, including the Amber Chamber in the palace in Charlottenburg. While modern legal mining is popular, a great deal of illegal amber mining occurs, causing untold environmental damage and leaving stretches of land as barren as moonscape.

Amber is often used in jewellery and also traditionally used as a healing product in folk medicine. It is said it absorbs pain and negative energy, helping to alleviate stress.

Amber is most unusual and interesting when an insect is trapped inside it. This means you can view a 10,000 year old insect inside a yellow jewel. A genuine piece of amber with a preserved insect inside is easy to buy: just £20 on the internet.



Which text...	Text
Example: describes an ingredient in paint that derives from a precious stone?	A
27. describes a gemstone which is supposed to make you feel better?	-----
28. criticises some modern day extraction practices?	-----
29. explains how the price of some precious stones is governed by trading practices?	-----
30. includes information about how to confirm a stone's authenticity at home?	-----
31. recommends a gemstone for a specific group of people?	-----
32. describes how the traditional production of a gemstone has been challenged by a new producer?	-----
33. describes a stone which is said to increase a person's imaginative abilities?	-----
34. refers to a comparison between the appearance of a gemstone and a natural event?	-----

B) Now answer the following questions by choosing the correct option.

35. In Text A, the best word to complete the gap is:

- a) memory
- b) reference
- c) convention
- d) belief

36. In text B, the best word to complete the gap is:

- a) extent
- b) scale
- c) breadth
- d) scope

37. In Text B, the underlined verb 'ceased' can best be replaced with:

- a) was cut out
- b) came to an end
- c) gave up
- d) was brought down



38. in Text C, the best phrase to complete the gap is:

- a) in addition to
- b) in the same way as
- c) in comparison to
- d) as a result of

39. In Text D, the underlined phrase 'as barren as moonscape' means the same as:

- a) unlike anywhere else
- b) without plant life
- c) without daylight
- d) not easily found

40. In text D, the best phrase to complete the gap is:

- a) due to
- b) despite
- c) otherwise
- d) beyond

Candidate Number

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Date of Birth

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3. Complete the sentence by changing the form of the word given.

11. He retired a few years ago, but he decided to make a _____. **COME**
12. The society has a number of _____ ideas on how to deal with problems. **PROGRESS**
13. It's a pure _____. There's no evidence. **HEAR**
14. She is not a very _____ person. **TALK**
15. The old lady said she was able to _____ the future. **SEE**
16. What is your _____ of the situation? **ASSESS**
17. My _____ is to get a job, find a partner and take up a hobby. **INTEND**
18. It is very _____ that United will win the league - they are not that good. **PROBABLE**
19. At the _____ of the season, up to 100.00 tourist come very day. **HIGH**
20. I need to make a _____ from my account. **DRAW**

4. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word. You must use between 3 and 8 words, including the word given.

21. It's five years since Nani started to learn English at school. **LEARNING**
Nani _____ five years at school.
22. I always hated physics at school, but now I really like it. **USED**
I _____ but now I really like it.
23. Toni's parents were criticising him because he had not done his homework. **WAS**
Toni _____ because he had not done his homework.
24. They will reveal the names of the winners very soon. **JUST**
The names of the _____.
25. They painted the house very well. **MADE**
They _____ the house.

5. Correct the incorrect sentences and tick the correct ones.

26. If everything goes well I will be able to take up a new assistant.

27. He put on his coat, kicked the cat and stormed out of the house.

28. The waste is taken to the civic amenity site.

29. By the time I am forty years old I hope I will be married and have a steady job.

30. When John arrived at the training centre he realised he left his gloves at home.

