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Training Test 1 Reading Part 1

Task information

- In Part 1, there may be four short texts on a related theme or a single text divided into four sections.
- There are seven statements and you match each of these with the relevant short text or section. There is an example given.
- Part 1 mostly tests your ability to find specific information and detail in a text.
- You could also be tested on your understanding of topic, the target reader and the purpose for writing.
- The information you are looking for may not be in the same order as the statements.

READING FOR GIST

- 1 Quickly read the text *Launching a new product*. Ignore the underlined phrases. Decide whether the purpose of the text is to
- provide ideas about successfully introducing a product to the market.
 - outline typical mistakes and things to avoid when promoting a product.

IDENTIFYING KEY WORDS AND PHRASES IN THE STATEMENTS

- 2 Read statements 1 – 7 below without looking at the text on page 11. Underline two of the words or phrases in bold that show you where to look in the text. The locating words in the example have already been underlined.

Example:

- 0 A product may quickly be forgotten by people when **other products** receive their attention.

0	A	B	C	D
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- An **endorsement** from the wrong person could **lead** to **falling** product sales.
 - Take into account any **negative feedback** to **help** you **improve** your product.
 - Customers** must be **persuaded** that a product will **make a difference** to **their lives**.
 - In order to** create **interest**, begin to promote your product **well ahead** of the launch date.
 - Accept that the **traditional way** of launching a **product** is **not effective**.
 - Be clear** about the **group of people** who might be interested in **buying** your product.
 - Even when a **launch** has been successful, it is still **necessary** to **draw attention** to the product.
- 3 Read the text again, more carefully. Which section of the text (A, B, C or D) does each statement (1 – 7) in Exercise 2 refer to? Use the underlined phrases in the text to help you.

TIP

Don't try and match words in the statements with the same words in the text. Instead, think about how language in the options might be paraphrased.

Advice

- It is usually famous people that endorse products. Look for examples of people who might be considered famous.*
- Look for ways that a company could continue to promote its product after a launch.*

TIP

If you can't find the information for a particular statement, move on to the next one. At the end, once you have matched all the statements you can, you should have a better idea of where to look for the last piece of information.

Launching a new product

A Long-established companies may recall a time when launching a new product simply involved arranging interviews with reporters. Reviews would then be published around the launch date, guaranteeing publicity. However, unless companies are willing to recognise that this approach no longer holds consumer attention, the product is likely to fail. Today, even though a newspaper may post a stunning review online, it will quickly be replaced with other content. * There is always a 'newer' new product to read about, and consumers' memories can be short. Alternative strategies are therefore required.

B Before considering a possible launch date, ensure you know your target market, so you can avoid wasting time making announcements to the wrong audience. Once you have identified your core audience, offer them a free trial or demonstration. Don't be defensive if they find flaws; their comments will allow you to strengthen your product before it goes to market. Taking the time to evaluate similar products put out by competitors can also be beneficial.

Advice

* **0** Use the example to help you. Look in the text for the answer to clarify what you need to do. Here, the answer for the example is in section A of the text.

C When you are confident you have the best possible version of your product, start making announcements at least eight weeks before it goes on sale. A pre-launch video campaign, for example, will awaken customers' curiosity. Many companies also make products available to influencers first; that is, social media celebrities or popular bloggers. A good review from an influencer can mean thousands of fans taking notice and spreading the word about your product. Having said that, choose your influencer carefully. If they somehow damage their reputation, you will quickly see your profit margins decline.

D If sales take off after the official launch date, you can congratulate yourself on a job well done. However, you must now intensify your efforts to keep your product in the spotlight. Posting a customer satisfaction survey or a short article about customers' experiences are strategies many companies adopt. Another idea is to publish an infographic convincing people of the need for your product; explain what problem your product was created to solve or how it will help them do something better.

4 For Part 1 in general, which of the following are more likely to be locator words?

- 1 a word contained in the title of the text
- 2 nouns / noun phrases that can be paraphrased in the text
- 3 a word which also occurs frequently in a text, e.g. *customer*
- 4 a linking phrase, e.g. *as a result of / lead to*
- 5 main verbs such as *persuade* or *improve*
- 6 words like *necessary* and *essential* that can be replaced by modals, e.g. *need to, must*

Exam Practice Test 1 Reading Part 1

ACTION PLAN

- 1 Read the instructions and title, and note any headings to find out what kind of text it is and the topic.
- 2 Read the statements and underline the key words and ideas.
- 3 Match the information in the text with the questions.
- 4 Read the questions again and check the evidence in the text.
- 5 Read the first section. Check which questions are answered in this section.
- 6 Repeat for the other sections.

Follow the exam instructions, using the advice to help you.

Questions 1 – 7

- Look at the statements below and the views given on the opposite page on innovation in business.
- Which statement (A, B, C or D) does each view 1 – 7 refer to?
- For each statement 1 – 7, mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.
- You will need to use some of these letters more than once.

TIP

Make sure you understand the complete meaning of each statement.

TIP

Look for the information in the questions which you need to match with a clause or sentence, or with a longer section of text.

Example:

- 0 Having new ideas is more important than the processes by which they are judged.

0	A	B	C	D
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- 1 Using our past experiences in innovation projects helps keep new ones on target.
- 2 Experiencing a well-known product in a new situation has enabled employees to be more innovative.
- 3 You should consider changing your marketing strategy if initial customer feedback is disappointing.
- 4 Take into account the fact that benefits of innovations take time to become apparent.
- 5 You need to accept that not all innovations will be successful and act quickly and decisively.
- 6 Conducting extensive research into an idea can have a negative impact on the original concept.
- 7 Innovation has had the most effect in areas of the business that might not seem the most obvious.

Advice

- 1 Find evidence of a company's past experience.
- 2 Look for the idea that employees personally experience an activity.
- 3 Find a reference to negative customer feedback.
- 4 Look for the point about how long it takes to be successful.
- 5 Find some advice about why it's important to make quick decisions.
- 6 Identify an explanation of a possible problem with trialling.
- 7 Find the idea of surprise in the texts.

Experts' views on business innovation

- A Tom Willington:** A common pitfall when launching a new product or service is not reacting flexibly to the unforeseen frustrations that it might cause your consumers in the first few weeks after launch. There might be greater advantages in repackaging the existing product or service, rather than always rushing to change or replace it. Another error that perhaps goes against logic is spending too long testing every single aspect of an idea to the point where you lose sight of your original concept. You could end up with a product that looks good 'on paper', but has actually lost its sparkle – the thing that attracted you to the idea in the first place.
- B Agnieszka Kowalski:** Innovation is resource-heavy, whether that's in terms of money, people or research and development – and for this reason, it's important to demonstrate its positive impact on the overall business strategy. We do this by setting benchmarks up front, both from a short- and long-term perspective – not forgetting that most innovation will require a period of time to pass before its impact can be felt or observed. We have a long history of innovation across all sectors of our business, which enables us to look at our back catalogue to set these benchmarks effectively.
- C Arjun Sharma:** We often think innovation is all about new technology, but that doesn't consider how companies can innovate the services they already offer. In fact, some of the most impactful innovations have occurred in unexpected areas of the value chain, like delivery services taking the place of physical supermarkets, or customers accessing positive or negative reviews on a holiday company's website to help them make decisions. By challenging our own ideas about what we think our business should be providing, thinking outside our comfort zone, we can affect consumer expectations.
- D Sara Halton:** Some of our most successful innovations have come from trying to stay clear of our own cultural expectations. As a company, we found ourselves returning to well-tried concepts, so for the release of our latest car, designers went abroad and stayed with families with similar vehicles to understand how they use a car today. Of course, every business is different. But you must be open to change, and be willing and brave enough to quickly kill an idea where necessary. The mechanisms for capturing ideas and measuring success are secondary.

Training Test 1 Reading Part 2

Task information

- In Part 2, there is a text with six gaps. Each gap represents a missing sentence. These sentences are in a list (A – G), but will be in a jumbled order. You have to put the sentences into the right gaps.
- The first gap is done for you as an example, using one of the sentences A – G.
- For the other five gaps, you should use each of the remaining sentences once only. There is one extra sentence you do not need.
- Part 2 tests your understanding of the overall structure of the text, and the development of an argument, ideas or opinions.

READING FOR MAIN IDEAS

It is important to be able to identify the main ideas in each paragraph, and do this quickly. This will help you follow the writer's argument, and rule out some of the unlikely options.

- 1 Quickly read the text *How colour affects consumer behaviour*. (Ignore the gaps and the underlined words.) Choose a summary sentence from a – e below to match with each paragraph 1 – 5.

- a Companies often make generalisations about the colours customers prefer.
- b Colours should be appropriate for the situation they are used in.
- c Colour is important to companies in many areas of design.1.....
- d People giving advice about colour psychology do not always understand it.
- e Companies must make it easy for customers to notice a colour.

TIP

Underline key vocabulary in sentences A – G, in particular main verbs and nouns. Then look for synonyms or paraphrasing in the text before and after a gap.

RECOGNISING THE FUNCTION OF LINKING PHRASES

For Part 2, it is a good idea to highlight linking phrases in sentences A – G. These phrases may help you work out whether a sentence fits into a gap or not.

- 2 Look at the words and phrases 1 – 7 taken from the missing sentences A – G on page 15. Match the phrases with explanations a – g.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 In this way 2 For example 3 however 4 In contrast with 5 It's more the case 6 Similarly 7 Indeed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a for adding a comment which is surprising or which differs from what has just been said. b when mentioning a fact or situation that is related to the one we just mentioned. c to provide evidence that something we already said is true d when comparing two things which are very different e to introduce a further comment or statement which strengthens the point we have already made f to refer to the likely consequence of an action/situation we just mentioned g to show disagreement with a previous view or statement, and introduce a view or statement we support |
|--|---|

TIP

Cross out the example from the list, and then each time you choose one of the other sentences, cross that out too. In this way, you won't have to keep reading through the whole list.

- 3 Read the text again and choose the best sentence A – G to fill each of the gaps (1 – 5).

How colour affects consumer behaviour

- We do not need psychologists to tell us that specific colours may evoke a particular emotion or create a particular mood. We may be less conscious, however, of the extent to which companies rely on colour psychology to build brand awareness and encourage us to spend. **(0)** G..... . This is a widespread practice, especially amongst larger corporations.
- In fact, colour psychology *can* be useful to companies, but they must question claims made in the numerous online articles on this subject. **(1)** These suggestions do not reflect the complex way that colour psychology works, however. In truth, while writers of business websites may have expertise in many aspects of running a successful venture, they are unlikely to have spent time studying the human mind. It becomes necessary, therefore, for them to simply repeat information from other poorly researched articles about colour psychology. **(2)** Predictably, many of them are related to gender preference.
- Companies often rely on marketing databases to reveal whether customers are mostly male or female, and select colours for products accordingly. But just because some manufacturers continue to create pink products for women, this doesn't mean it's the colour all women prefer or that there is genuine demand for it. **(3)** Likewise for men, not all are instinctively drawn to dark colours. Therefore, to expand their customer base, design and marketing departments must take into account people's personal preferences.
- Instead of choosing colours on the basis of an emotion they might represent, companies should, instead, predict what colours might be a good fit for a product. It is traditional, for instance, to produce kitchen appliances in 'hygienic' white. **(4)** Sales suggest this has been a positive move. But would customers accept these products in, say, brown? While brown may be perfectly acceptable for chocolate and coffee adverts, implying warmth and luxury, it may suggest dirt in a kitchen context. Orange might not be the colour many consumers want for motorbikes, but could make an energy drink look tempting.
- Companies that really understand colour psychology will also know that a colour must demand attention. For instance, some banks opt for red to represent their brand, unlike the majority that use blue. By choosing red, they can easily distinguish themselves. **(5)** Customers are far more likely to remember a brand or take action when directed if a colour stands out.

- In this way**, the same, oversimplified messages about the way customers respond to colour continue to spread.
- For example**, it is often stated that health products or services are best promoted in green, while fast food outlets should stick to red.
- There has recently been a shift in thinking, **however**, and now they are also available in blue and yellow.
- In contrast with** the Western view, it can also represent sickness, courage, and envy, depending on the cultural background of the customer.
- It's more the case** that this group of consumers may be forced to buy an item in this colour, since there is no alternative.
- Similarly**, buttons such as 'Buy Now' or 'Get Started' will contrast sharply with the other text or images on a webpage.
- Indeed**, everything from the colour of the logo to the colour of the store lighting is chosen in the belief that it will affect consumer behaviour.

Advice

- The sentence after the gap begins with **these suggestions**. Look for examples of suggestions or recommendations in sentences A – G.
- The sentence before the gap talks about the need to **repeat information**. Look for an example of paraphrasing in A – G.
- The topic before the gap is discussing company beliefs about women's colour preferences. Look for language in A – G that might refer to the main subject, e.g. women.

USEFUL LANGUAGE: LINKING PHRASES

- The text contains some underlined phrases which are similar in meaning to the phrases in Exercise 2. Match each underlined phrase with a phrase from Exercise 2, e.g. *Indeed* = *In fact* (paragraph 2).

Exam Practice Test 1 Reading Part 2

ACTION PLAN

- 1 Read the instructions, title and subtitle (if there is one), so you can see what kind of text it is and what the topic is.
- 2 Quickly read through the main text to get an overall idea of what the text is about.
- 3 Then read the seven sentences, A – G, to see if you think any obviously fit into any of the gaps.
- 4 For each gap, look closely at the ideas and words that come before and after it.
- 5 Look for related ideas in the sentences and the texts.
- 6 In both the main text and the sentences A – G, underline any vocabulary links, reference words such as *this*, *these* and linking expressions like *also*, *so* and *additionally*.

Follow the exam instructions, using the advice to help you.

Questions 8 – 12

- Read the article on page 17 about negotiating a pay rise.
- Choose the best sentence below to fill each of the gaps.
- For each gap 8 – 12, mark one letter (A – G) on your Answer Sheet.
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning (0).

TIP

Don't spend too much time on words you don't know.

TIP

Look carefully at pronouns to make sure they match the nouns before/after the gap.

Example:

0	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>A Being able to supply records of specific achievements and events is essential.</p> <p>B Your line manager will certainly be involved, even if they don't have the power to make the final decision.</p> <p>C Perhaps there are elements of your current role that could be expanded, or exchanged for new challenges and more responsibility.</p> <p>D Doing so helps you stay in control and avoid the possibility of making a decision you might regret.</p> | <p>E Recruitment companies are also useful sources of information.</p> <p>F Additionally, you must be aware of the organisation's process for making pay awards.</p> <p>G This is usually done as part of the performance management process.</p> |
|---|--|

How to negotiate a pay rise

The art of salary negotiation is a key career skill that will help you throughout your working life. Asking for a rise can, however, be unwelcome to employers, so it's essential you get your timing right. If not, you might get a reputation for being difficult at the very time you want senior decision-makers to be thinking about your value. It may well be possible to submit your request in line with a general company pay review. **(0)** **G**..... . If your company, however, does not have a regular time for this – or you've just missed it – raising the subject of salary during a performance development review is a good option.

Negotiating a pay rise is about understanding your value. One way of getting a realistic figure is by speaking to people in similar roles within your company or sector, particularly people you know well. **(8)** Then, when you start negotiating, you can have the goal you've set yourself at the front of your mind. Be clear about why this is so important to you and your rationale behind it. Why does negotiating a pay rise have to be done now? Where does your salary fit in your overall career objectives? **(9)** Find out how it works, and who has influence regarding any offer.

You will be expected to present a watertight business case, and evidence of your skills. **(10)** You should include details of your work and any completed

projects, and how you work with different teams and key people. Most importantly, you'll need to demonstrate the ability to work on tasks that are above and beyond what might be expected of someone in your current position.

Expect frank discussions about your pay. As with any negotiation process, you must have a clear understanding of what is acceptable to you, and you need to consider how much scope for flexibility you are willing to allow. You always have the opportunity to go back with a compromise and other suggestions, so think about a solution that could fit in with your overall pay package strategy. **(11)** You'll clearly know what these options are if you have identified them in advance. Naturally, when you're under contract, your employer is likely to try and hold you at the lowest possible rate. That doesn't mean you can't create a package that works well for you, so just be clear about why you deserve what you want.

Finally, don't be tempted into accepting an early offer. An appropriate initial response might be, 'Thanks for that, I'm going to get back to you on it.' Each situation is different and you may need more or less time to consider any offer. Even if you think that the offer is perfect, give yourself at least a night to think it through. **(12)** The people you are negotiating with should respect your need to consider an offer carefully before committing to it.

Advice

- 8** The topic here is places to get advice, and the phrase **One way** suggests that another is to follow, so look for a linking word that does this.
- 9** Look for a sentence with a word that connects to the idea of an **offer** after the gap, and that has a correct pronoun reference.
- 10** Look for a sentence that has examples of the topic of the sentence before the gap, and fits with the idea of including information in the following sentence.
- 11** The word **these** in the following sentence gives you a clue that you are looking for more than one idea here.
- 12** Look for the linker in the sentences that connects to the ideas before the gap.

Training Test 1 Reading Part 3

Task information

- In Part 3, you read a text followed by six questions with four options: **A, B, C** or **D**.
- Questions often test your ability to understand opinion and attitude. You may also need to understand main ideas such as cause and effect, problems and solutions, or why a particular example has been used.
- You may need to infer meaning. This means using clues in the text to understand things that aren't directly stated.
- There may sometimes be a question that tests your understanding of a word or phrase. You should be able to use the context to work out its meaning.
- Questions always follow the order of information in the text.

PREDICTING TEXT CONTENT

- 1 Read the title and the subheading in italics. What do you think the text will be about?
- 2 Quickly read the two paragraphs. How accurate was your prediction?

RECOGNISING AND RULING OUT DISTRACTION

Only one of the four options **A – D** is the correct answer. However, there might be something in each paragraph to make you think one of the other options is the correct answer. This is called *distraction*.

- 3 Read the paragraphs more carefully. Then look at multiple-choice questions 1 and 2 and decide which is the correct answer, **A, B, C** or **D**.
- 4 Now think about the three options that are incorrect for questions 1 and 2. There is something in the paragraphs that might make you *think* these are the correct answers. For each of the incorrect options, underline this distraction.

TIP

Sometimes the stem (the question or statement that comes before the options) will tell you which paragraph to look at. Use only information in this paragraph to choose the correct option.

TIP

Sometimes the stem will contain words that are the same or similar to words in the text, e.g. people's names or dates, or business-related nouns like *modern technology, new strategy, training courses, workplace survey*. Use these words to locate the relevant part of the text.

Make meetings count

It's the quality of meetings, not the quantity, that helps companies fulfil goals

It goes without saying that collaboration is vital to the success of any business. Yet the responses to recent workplace surveys may surprise some CEOs. It seems that no matter the industry, there is growing frustration amongst staff regarding the meetings they feel obliged to attend. Respondents report having to spend up to 25% of their working day sitting around tables with colleagues, often listening in to discussions about projects that do not directly concern them. Every minute spent at a meeting is time they could otherwise have spent on getting through tasks actually assigned to them. But, despite this widespread sense of resentment, they admit that every time a meeting invitation pops up on their calendars, they accept without question.

However, by modifying their own behaviour, an employee may be able to encourage others in the office to change theirs. When replying to a colleague's invitation, a respectful 'The project sounds interesting,' should appear in the opening line. Following that, the employee can enquire what their colleague specifically hopes to achieve by having the meeting and how they can help their colleague achieve it. If no clear objective is provided, and the employee's expected contribution remains vague, the employee can politely decline the invitation, but offer to send data electronically in advance of the meeting. In some cases, the sender may decide a sit-down meeting is unnecessary after all.

- 1 According to the writer, workplace surveys reveal that employees
 - A are unwilling to express their real opinions during meetings.
 - B set up meetings so they can avoid criticism from senior management.
 - C worry that meetings impact on their own productivity.
 - D fail to realise how meetings offer opportunities for teamwork.

- 2 In the second paragraph, the writer recommends that an employee
 - A seek information about the purpose of individual meetings.
 - B suggest fewer meetings being scheduled with their department.
 - C offer assistance to co-workers with organising meetings.
 - D be tactful with people in the office who may be over-sensitive.