

IELTS Reading Multiple Choice Questions



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IELTS Reading - Multiple Choice Questions

Multiple Choice Questions Practice Exercise 1 Travel is the best form of education Reading Passage

Answer questions 1-5 which are based on the reading passage below.

One learns a lot while serving in the United States Army. Foreign places, stressful conditions, and absence from home can foster an out-of-the-classroom education that crosses the boundary of the odd and unusual. Today, tales of strange sea creatures and haunted islands seem like a bad Sci-Fi marathon. But these were realities for one U.S. Army soldier stationed overseas at the turn of the 20th century.

The art of journal keeping, letter writing and daily diary entries are becoming extinct as methods of memory management are changing in today's technology driven world. What once was detailed on paper with memory fresh at hand is now posted on YouTube. Today, blogs replace diary entries. Hand-written letters to loved ones are far slower than a quick Facebook 'poke' or a cell phone text message.

Historians enjoy a deep appreciation for the written word. They savour the ability to see the world through the eyes of someone who never had satellite TV, the Internet or cell phone. Where explanation was not readily at hand in the strange lands of the Philippine Islands, the environment was ripe for adventure and the unknown. Placing one's self in such situations fosters an education that cannot be duplicated in any classroom, book or blockbuster movie. A survivor of deadly and savage situations, Colonel Horace P. Hobbs recorded these well-documented experiences that lend a degree of depth to the retelling and re-imagining of Army history.

The odd education of Colonel Horace P. Hobbs is revealed in his voluminous personal papers held at the U.S. Army Military History Institute. A letter of August 16, 1918, soothes his wife while he is stationed in France during World War I. "You see it is the women who suffer most during a war. Now I know you and mother are worrying about me and I am living in the most luxurious comfort and perfect safety just now." He goes to great lengths to explain his lush surroundings and the comfort he is experiencing, from bathing in a nearby brook to the size of his room and the servants who provide for him, as he attempts to console a worry-sick wife. It would seem, however, that Mrs Hobbs had been through worse as a military spouse.



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Her husband was stationed in the Philippines during the insurrection from 1899 to 1901. Colonel Hobbs wrote a book from his collected journals and memoirs entitled, "Kris and Krag: Adventures among the Moros of the Southern Philippine Islands". Among his many tales, the Colonel tells about a strange native custom on one of the small islands of taking their boats across a narrow strait to another island and returning before dark. They explained to him that the island was the home of the 'wok-wok', a powerful ghost who must be appeased with gifts of rice so they will not harm the people. Upon further inspection, the Army discovered the 'wok-wok' to be large apes.

Another bizarre chapter in the Colonel's education came when he was asked by some villagers to kill a sea creature which wreaked havoc among the people whenever they slaughtered an animal for food. The blood would run into the water, and out would come the creature. The Colonel waited for the apparition to appear after a slaughter, and he was not disappointed. Upon further inspection he described the animal as being some kind of mix between an alligator and a crocodile, but one he had never seen before. Experience in foreign places, blended with curiosity and a desire to learn, enabled Colon to obtain a far greater grasp of the world. These traits provided him with an education that the average person today cannot obtain from watching television or searching the web.

Questions 1-5

Choose the correct letter, a, b, c or d.

1) What offers a non-traditional form of education?

- a. Being away from home
- b. Being in foreign countries
- c. Situations that cause stress
- d. All of the above

2) Historians enjoy the chance to see

- a. Satellite TV.
- b. The world through other's eyes.
- c. The world.
- d. Popular documented experiences.



3) While in France, the Colonel

- a. Looked after his sick wife.
- b. Lived with his wife.
- c. Wrote letters to the U.S. Army Military History Institute,
- d. Comforted his wife with his letters.

4) A sea creature would appear

- a. Whenever the Colonel was in the village.
- b. And make the Colonel disappointed.
- c. When blood from a dead animal ran into the water.
- d. And slaughter an animal.

5) What traits helped a Colonel to get a good education?

- a. A desire to travel to foreign places
- b. Curiosity and a good grasp of the world
- c. Watching TV and using the Internet
- d. Curiosity and a desire to learn

Answers with explanation

1) d. All the above

Explanation: Paragraph 1 - One learns a lot while serving in the United States Army. Foreign places, stressful conditions, and absence from home can foster an out-of-the-classroom education (non-traditional education) that crosses the boundary of the odd and unusual.

2) b. The world through other's eyes

Explanation: Paragraph 3 - Historians enjoy a deep appreciation for the written word. They savour the ability to see the world through the eyes of someone who never had satellite TV, the Internet or a cell phone.

A and C are the wrong options as they only contain the words from the passage and do not convey the main idea. In fact, the passage states that historians study the time when there was no satellite TV. Also, C is less informative as compared to B. It does not mention how they like to see the world. D may confuse you because the passage mentions 'the written word' but not that these documents are popular.



3) d. Comforted his wife with his letters.

Explanation: Paragraph 4 - A letter of August 16, 1918, soothes his wife while he is stationed in France during World War I. ...bathing in a nearby brook, to the size of his room and the servants who provide for him, as he attempts to console a worry-sick wife. A and B are wrong answers as the Colonel was away from his wife. C is wrong as Colonel did not write letters to the U.S. Army Military History Institute, but his letters are preserved in this institute

4) c. When blood from a dead animal ran into the water.

Explanation: Paragraph 6- The blood would run into the water, and out would come the creature.

5) d. Curiosity and a desire to learn

Explanation: Paragraph 7 - Experience in foreign places, blended with curiosity and a desire to learn, enabled Colonel Hobbs to obtain a far greater grasp of the world. These traits provided him with an education that the average person today cannot obtain from watching television or searching the web.

A is wrong as the passage mentions his experience in foreign places and not the desire to travel to foreign places. B is wrong as the grasp of the world was the consequence and not the cause. C is wrong because the passage mentions that such education cannot be obtained by watching TV or through the internet.

Multiple Choice Questions Practice Exercise 2

Tropical Rainforests Reading Passage

Answer questions 1-5 which are based on the reading passage below.

Deforestation in the tropical areas of the world is following a course similar to the earlier clearing of the forests in Europe and North America, only advancing more rapidly. Today, more than 3 billion people live in the tropics alone; less than that lived in the entire world in 1950. To provide food, wood, fuel and resources for the world's rapidly growing population and to make room for the exploding tropical population, the world's tropical rainforests are literally disappearing.

Tropical hardwood prices continue to climb as world demand for tropical hardwoods continues to grow. A single teak log, for example, can now bring as much as \$20,000. Annual world consumption of tropical hardwoods is now more than 250 million cubic meters, over 100 billion board feet, per year. Southeast Asia until recently has been the largest source of tropical hardwoods, but that area will largely be depleted within the next five years.



All of the primary forests in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are gone, and Ivory Coast's forests are essentially non-existent. Nigeria's forests have been decimated as well. As Asia's and Africa's tropical forests are depleted, consuming countries are turning increasing attention to Latin America and the Amazon, whose own rapidly growing population is also a source of pressure on the rainforests.

Also, trillions of dollars worth of oil, gas, uranium, gold, iron, bauxite and other minerals, and millions of acres of potential farmland lie under the Amazon, the largest area of rainforest remaining on Earth. Amazon rainforests are being cleared on a vast scale for settlements, logging, gold mining, petroleum, cattle ranching, sugar cane, large hydroelectric dams, and charcoal for smelting ore. Peasant farmers also clear the rainforest to have land for planting, and then in the dry season, burning what they have cut.

During one month in 1995 for example, NASA satellite surveys of Brazil recorded 39,889 individual fires, up 370 percent from the same month of the prior year. In neighbouring Bolivia, the smoke is sometimes so thick that schools have to close and flights have to be delayed or cancelled. Scientists estimate that until as recently as 10,000 years ago, the world had 6 billion acres of tropical rainforests. By 1950, we had a little less than 2.8 billion acres of rainforest. It was then being cut down at the rate of about 10 to 15 million acres per year.

Today we have less than 1.5 billion acres left, and we are clearing this remaining rainforest at the rate of 30 to 50 million acres per year, two to three times as rapidly as just a few decades ago. If the present rate of tropical deforestation continues, in only three decades from now, scientists anticipate that tropical rainforests will no longer exist.

One important way to help is to plant tropical hardwood trees for harvests to produce hardwoods so that they are not taken from the natural rainforest. It is also vitally important to get the message out to others about the importance, and the wisdom, of planting tropical Hardwood trees for profit, not just because of the profit but also because of the benefit to the world.

Some countries are beginning to listen. Thailand, for example, banned logging in 1988, and Costa Rica has now protected nearly 26% of its country in national parks or reserves. The trend is unmistakable, and the facts are compelling. The world's rainforests will be either protected or destroyed.



Questions 1-5

Choose the correct letter a, b, c or d.

- 1) One reason people are cutting down the tropical rainforests is
 - a. To be like Europe and North America.
 - b. To progress rapidly.
 - c. To live alone in tropical areas.
 - d. To accommodate the growing population.

- 2) The Amazon rainforests are being decimated to
 - a. Improve tourism.
 - b. Raise cattle, dig mines and build dams.
 - c. Clear the settlements.
 - d. Build millions of farms.

- 3) Scientists claim that within 10,000 years, the rainforests have
 - a. Reduced to 6 billion acres.
 - b. Diminished by 2.8 billion acres.
 - c. Diminished to a quarter.
 - d. Been cut at a yearly rate of 30 to 40 million acres.

- 4) Some positive changes can be made by
 - a. Admitting the mistakes we have made.
 - b. Growing trees for commercial purposes.
 - c. Making more profit.
 - d. Each country decides what to do.

- 5) What is the purpose of the passage?
 - a. To suggest different places for holiday destinations.
 - b. To explain why people are so greedy.
 - c. To offer possible solutions to an environmental problem.
 - d. To detail the destruction of the rainforests.



Answers with explanation

1) d. To accommodate the growing population.

Explanation: Paragraph 1 - To provide food, wood, fuel and resources for the growing population, and to make room for the exploding tropical population, the world's rainforests are literally disappearing.

A is incorrect as paragraph 1 states that the trend of deforestation in tropical areas is similar to that of Europe and North America and not that people want to be like them. B is incorrect as according to the paragraph the rapid progress is in the context of deforestation and not for people. C is also not the answer because there is no such information in the passage.

2) b. Raise cattle, dig mines and build dams.

Explanation: Paragraph 4 - Amazon rainforests are being cleared on a vast scale for settlements, logging, gold mining, petroleum, cattle ranching, sugar cane, large hydroelectric dams, and charcoal for smelting ore.

A is incorrect as it is not mentioned in the passage. C states that the settlements are cleared whereas the information in the passage says that Amazon rainforests are cleared to establish settlements. So wrong. D is also wrong as the passage does not mention it as one of the reasons for clearing forests. It says there is a potential for farmlands in the Amazon.

3) c. Diminished to a quarter.

Explanation: Paragraph 5 - Scientists estimate that until as recently as 10,000 years the world had 6 billion acres of tropical rainforests.

Paragraph 6 - Today we have less than 1.5 billion acres left, ...

6 billion acres of rainforest has reduced to 1.5 billion acres during 10,000 years. So it is a reduction to one-fourth of the total area.

A, B and D are wrong interpretations of numbers quoted in the passage

4) b. Growing trees for commercial purposes.

Explanation: Paragraph 7 - One important way to help is to plant tropical hardwood tree for harvests to produce hardwoods so that they are not taken from the natural rainforest... the importance, and the wisdom, of planting tropical hardwood trees for profit, not just because of the profit but also because of the benefit to the world.

It can be inferred from Paragraph 7 that if tropical hardwood trees are grown specifically for harvesting, that is, for commercial purposes, there will be no need to cut the forests.

A and D are not mentioned C, i.e. making a profit is mentioned as a consequence of growing hardwood trees and not referred to as a way of bringing about positive changes.



5) d. To detail the destruction of the rainforests.

Explanation: The answer can be obtained from the gist of the whole passage.

A is not mentioned in the passage. B - Paragraph 4 refers to the various resources for which rainforests are being cut, but there is no mention of the reason for this greed. C - Paragraph 7 suggests one way to protect tropical rainforests, but that cannot be inferred as the gist of the passage or the writer's purpose. So A, B and C are not the answers.

Multiple Choice Questions Practice Exercise 3

A Complex Relationship Reading Passage

Answer questions 1-5 which are based on the reading passage below.

Ants and aphids are known to have a complex relationship. Aphids provide ants with a food source the - sugar-rich honeydew they excrete when eating plants - and, in return, the ants protect the aphids from ladybirds and other insects that prey on them.

To ensure a constant supply of honeydew, some ant species cultivate large numbers of aphids and prevent them from straying too far from the colony by biting and damaging, or even completely removing, their wings. The ants also secrete a chemical from their mandibles which inhibits wing development in juvenile aphids.

Ants communicate with each other using a large repertoire of chemical signals, which are actively secreted onto surfaces from exocrine glands on the legs. These signals can recruit nest mates to food sources and are also used to mark a colony's territory. Ants secrete chemicals passively too. As an ant moves, hydrocarbons are shed from the cuticle (the waterproof outer lining of the exoskeleton), leaving a chemical trail.

Ants use behavioural signals called semiochemicals to manipulate aphids' nervous systems. Ant's own behaviour can be manipulated too, by parasitic fungi. Earlier work has shown that the presence of ants can somehow tranquilize aphids and limit their motor functions, but whether or not this required direct contact between the ants and aphids is unclear.

Using digital video cameras to measure the walking speeds of aphids, Tom Oliver of Imperial College London and colleagues from Royal Holloway and the University of Reading have shown that aphids move much more slowly on paper that has previously been walked on by ants. They believe that the chemicals laid down in the ants' footprints are used to maintain an aphid farm near the ant colony.



Maintaining a populous aphid farm in a small area is obviously beneficial to the ants, as it would provide them with large quantities of honeydew. However, the relationship between the two species is complex, and it seems that the ants' manipulation of the aphids behaviour is exploitative.

Normally, aphids wander off to new locations when conditions become crowded, to establish new populations nearby. And although ant-attended aphid populations are bigger and live longer than those not attended by ants, the ants prevent the aphid dispersal that is necessary to maintain a stable meta-population and makes the aphids more vulnerable to parasites.

Questions 1-5

- 1) Honeydew is naturally produced by
 - a) Ants.
 - b) Plants.
 - c) Aphids.
 - d) Ladybirds.

- 2) How do ants ensure they have regular supplies of honeydew?
 - a) They provide food to aphids.
 - b) They maintain a large population of aphids.
 - c) They force aphids to secrete a chemical.
 - d) They find more juvenile aphids.

- 3) Studies have shown that the nervous system of aphids is affected by
 - a) The behaviour of ants.
 - b) Using parasitic fungi.
 - c) Direct contact with ants.
 - d) Chemicals secreted by ants.

- 4) According to the writer, the relationship between ant and aphids
 - a) Beneficial for both.
 - b) Easy to explain.
 - c) Natural.
 - d) Not beneficial to aphids.

- 5) What do aphids do if the area becomes overpopulated?
 - a) Start a new colony
 - b) Start a stable meta-population
 - c) They grow bigger
 - d) They live longer than ants



Answers with explanation

1) c. Aphids

Explanation: Paragraph 1 - Aphids provide ants with a food source the sugar-rich honeydew they excrete when eating plants...

2) b. They maintain a large population of aphids.

Explanation: Paragraph 2 - To ensure a constant supply of honeydew, some ant species cultivate large numbers of aphids and prevent them from straying too far from the colony..

3) d. Chemicals secreted by ants.

Explanation: Paragraph 4 - Ants use behavioural signals called semiochemicals to manipulate aphids' nervous systems..Earlier work has shown that the presence of ants can somehow tranquilize aphids and limit their motor functions,...

Paragraph 5 - Using digital video cameras to measure the walking speeds of aphids, Tom Oliver ... have shown that aphids move much more slowly on paper that has previously been walked on by ants.

4) d. Not beneficial to aphids.

Explanation: Paragraph 6 - Maintaining a populous aphid farm in a small area is obviously beneficial to the ants, .. the relationship between the two species is complex, and it seems that the ants' manipulation of the aphids' behaviour is exploitative.

5) a. Start a new colony

Explanation: Paragraph 7 - Normally, aphids wander off to new locations when conditions become crowded, to establish new populations nearby.

Multiple Choice Questions Practice Exercise 4 Recovering a Damaged Reputation

Answer questions 1-4 which are based on the reading passage below.

In 2009, it was revealed that some of the information published by the University of East Anglia's Climatic Research Unit (CRU) in the UK, concerning climate change, had been inaccurate. Furthermore, it was alleged that some of the relevant statistics had been withheld from publication. The ensuing controversy affected the reputation not only of that institution, but also of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), with which the CRU is closely involved, and of climate scientists in general. Even if the claims of misconduct and incompetence were eventually proven to be largely untrue, or confined to a few individuals, the damage was done. The perceived wrongdoings of a few people had raised doubts about the many.



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2) The response of most climate scientists was to cross their fingers and hope for the best, and they kept a low profile. Many no doubt hoped that subsequent independent inquiries into the IPCC and CRU would draw a line under their problems. However, although these were likely to help, they were unlikely to undo the harm caused by months of hostile news reports and attacks by critics.

3) The damage that has been done should not be underestimated. As Ralph Cicerone, the President of the US National Academy of Sciences, wrote in an editorial in the journal Science: 'Public opinion has moved toward the view that scientists often try to suppress alternative hypotheses and ideas and that scientists will withhold data and try to manipulate some aspects of peer review to prevent dissent.' He concluded that 'the perceived misbehaviour of even a few scientists can diminish the credibility of science as a whole.'

4) An opinion poll taken at the beginning of 2010 found that the proportion of people in the US who trust scientists as a source of information about global warming had dropped from 83 percent, in 2008, to 74 percent. Another survey carried out by the British Broadcasting Corporation in February 2010 found that just 26 percent of British people now believe that climate change is confirmed as being largely human-made, down from 41 percent in November 2009.

5) Regaining the confidence and trust of the public is never easy. Hunkering down and hoping for the best - climate science's current strategy - makes it almost impossible. It is much better to learn from the successes and failures of organisations that have dealt with similar blows to their public standing.

6) In fact, climate science needs professional help to rebuild its reputation. It could do worse than follow the advice given by Leslie Gaines-Ross, a 'reputation strategist' at Public Relations (PR) company Webef Shandwick, in her recent book *Corporate Reputation: 12 Steps to Safeguarding and Recovering Reputation*. Gaines-Ross's strategy is based on her analysis of how various organisations responded to crises, such as desktop-printer firm Xerox, whose business plummeted during the 1990s, and the USA's National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) after the Columbia shuttle disaster in 2003.

7) The first step she suggests is to 'take the heat - leader first'. In many cases, chief executives who publicly accept responsibility for corporate failings can begin to reverse the freefall of their company's reputations, but not always. If the leader is held at least partly responsible for the fall from grace, it can be almost impossible to convince critics that a new direction can be charted with that same person at the helm.



8) This is the dilemma facing the heads of the IPCC and CRU. Both have been blamed for their organisations' problems, not least for the way in which they have dealt with critics, and both have been subjected to public calls for their removal. Yet both organisations appear to believe they can repair their reputations without a change of leadership.

9) The second step outlined by Gaines-Ross is to 'communicate tirelessly'. Yet many climate researchers have avoided the media and the public, at least until the official enquiries have concluded their reports. This reaction may be understandable, but it has backfired. Journalists following the story have often been unable to find spokespeople willing to defend climate science. In this case, 'no comment' is commonly interpreted as an admission of silent, collective guilt.

10) Remaining visible is only a start, though; climate scientists also need to be careful what they say. They must realise that they face doubts not just about their published results, but also about their conduct and honesty. It simply won't work for scientists to continue to appeal to the weight of the evidence, while refusing to discuss the integrity of their profession. The harm has been increased by a perceived reluctance to admit even the possibility of mistakes or wrongdoing.

11) The third step put forward by Gaines-Ross is 'don't underestimate your critics and competitors'. This means not only recognising the skill with which the opponents of climate research have executed their campaigns through Internet blogs and other media, but also acknowledging the validity of some of their criticisms. It is clear, for instance, that climate scientists need better standards of transparency, to allow for scrutiny not just by their peers, but also by critics from outside the world of research.

12) It is also important to engage with those critics. That doesn't mean conceding to unfounded arguments which are based on prejudice rather than evidence, but there is an obligation to help the public understand the causes of climate change, as well as the options for avoiding and dealing with the consequences.

13) To begin the process of rebuilding trust in their profession, climate scientists need to follow these three steps. But that is just the start. Gaines-Ross estimates that it typically takes four years for a company to rescue and restore a broken reputation.

14) Winning back public confidence is a marathon, not a sprint, but you can't win at all if you don't step up to the starting line.



This causes them problems when faced with the smallest alterations in food availability and abundance. So, as well as reductions in the diversity of farmland habitat, the decline in the range of food plants is injurious to hares.

F. The rapid turnaround in the breeding cycle suggests that hares should, in principle, be able to increase their populations quickly to exploit new habitats. They certainly used to: studies show that hares evolved on the open plains and spread rapidly westward from the Black Sea after the last ice age (though they were probably introduced to Britain as a species to be hunted for the pot by the Romans). But today's hares are thwarted by the lack of rich farmland habitat. When the delicate herbs and other plants they rely on are ploughed up or poisoned by herbicides, these wonderful, agile runners disappear too, taking with them some of the wildness from our lives.

Questions 1-4

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

1. In accordance with Gaines-Ross's views, the heads of the CRU and IPCC should have _____.

- a. Resigned from their posts.
- b. Accepted responsibility and continued in their posts.
- c. Shifted attention onto more junior staff.
- d. Ignored the criticisms directed at them.

2. Which mistake have staff at the CRU and IPCC made?

- a. They have blamed each other for problems.
- b. They have publicly acknowledged failings.
- c. They have avoided interviews with the press.
- d. They have made conflicting public statements.

3. People who challenge the evidence of climate change have generally.

- a. Presented their case poorly.
- b. Missed opportunities for publicity.
- c. Made some criticisms which are justified.
- d. Been dishonest in their statements.



4. What does the reference to 'a marathon' indicate in the final paragraph?

- a. The rate at which the climate is changing.
- b. The competition between rival theories of climate change.
- c. The ongoing need for new climate data.
- d. The time it might take for scientists to win back confidence.

Answers with explanation

1) Answer: A

Explanation: In Paragraph 7, line 1, it is said that the first step she suggests is to 'take the heat—leader first'. This signifies Gaines-Ross' opinions from the section are in line with what she stated, where she claimed that since CRU and IPCC leaders should have carried the majority of the criticism. The right response from the list of options above is that this implies they resign from their position.

2) Answer: C

Explanation: In Paragraph 9, it is clearly stated in the second line that many climate researchers have avoided the media and the public, at least until the official inquiries have concluded their reports. Hence, the second mistake staff at the CRU and IPCC made was avoiding interviews with the press.

3) Answer: C

Explanation: C is the appropriate option, and it is justified in Paragraph 12 about the criticisms conceding to unfounded arguments that are based on prejudice rather than evidence, but there is an obligation to help the public understand the causes of climate change as well as the options for avoiding and dealing with the consequences.

4) Answer: D

Explanation: In the last paragraph, it is said that winning back public confidence is a marathon, not a sprint, but you can't win at all if you don't step up to the starting line. It is apparent from the sentence that the time it might take for scientists to win back confidence is a reference to a 'marathon'.



Multiple Choice Questions Practice Exercise 5

The risk agriculture faces in developing countries Reading Answers

Answer questions **1-5** which are based on the reading passage below.

A. Two things distinguish food production from all other productive activities: first, every single person needs food each day and has a right to it; and second, it is hugely dependent on nature. These two unique aspects, one political, the other natural, make food production highly vulnerable and different from any other business. At the same time, cultural values are highly entrenched in food and agricultural systems worldwide.

B. Farmers everywhere face major risks; including extreme weather, long-term climate change, and price volatility in input and product markets. However, smallholder farmers in developing countries must in addition deal with adverse environments, both natural, in terms of soil quality, rainfall, etc. and human, in terms of infrastructure, financial systems, markets, knowledge and technology. Counter-intuitively, hunger is prevalent among many smallholder farmers in the developing world.

C. Participants in the online debate argued that our biggest challenge is to address the underlying causes of the agricultural system's inability to ensure sufficient food for all, and they identified as drivers of this problem our dependency on fossil fuels and unsupportive government policies.

D. On the question of mitigating the risks farmers face, most essayists called for greater state intervention.

In his essay, Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, argued that governments can significantly reduce risks for farmers by providing basic services like roads to get produce more efficiently to markets, or water and food storage facilities to reduce losses. Sophia Murphy, senior advisor to the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, suggested that the procurement and holding of stocks by governments can also help mitigate wild swings in food prices by alleviating uncertainties about market supply.

E. Shenggen Fan, Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute, held up social safety nets and public welfare programmes in Ethiopia, Brazil and Mexico as valuable ways to address poverty among farming families and reduce their vulnerability to agriculture shocks. However, some commentators responded that cash transfers to poor families do not necessarily translate into increased food security, as these programmes do not always strengthen food production or raise incomes.



Regarding state subsidies for agriculture, Rokeya Kabir, Executive Director of Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha, commented in her essay that these 'have not compensated for the stranglehold exercised by private traders. In fact, studies show that sixty percent of beneficiaries of subsidies are not poor, but rich landowners and non-farmer traders.

F. Nwanze, Murphy and Fan argued that private risk management tools, like private insurance, commodity futures markets, and rural finance can help small-scale producers mitigate risk and allow for investment in improvements. Kabir warned that financial support schemes often encourage the adoption of high-input agricultural practices, which in the medium term may raise production costs beyond the value of their harvests.

Murphy noted that when futures markets become excessively financialised they can contribute to short-term price volatility, which increases farmers' food insecurity. Many participants and commentators emphasised that greater transparency in markets is needed to mitigate the impact of volatility, and make evident whether adequate stocks and supplies are available. Others contended that agribusiness companies should be held responsible for paying for negative side effects.

G. Many essayists mentioned climate change and its consequences for small-scale agriculture. Fan explained that in addition to reducing crop yields, climate change increases the magnitude and the frequency of extreme weather events, which increase smallholder vulnerability. The growing unpredictability of weather patterns increases farmers' difficulty in managing weather-related risks.

According to this author, one solution would be to develop crop varieties that are more resilient to new climate trends and extreme weather patterns. Accordingly, Pat Mooney, co-founder and executive director of the ETC Group, suggested that 'if we are to survive climate change, we must adopt policies that let peasants diversify the plant and animal species and varieties/breeds that make up our menus.

H. Some participating authors and commentators argued in favour of community-based and autonomous risk management strategies through collective action groups, co-operatives or producers' groups. Such groups enhance market opportunities for small-scale producers, reduce marketing costs and synchronise buying and selling with seasonal price conditions.

According to Murphy, 'collective action offers an important way for farmers to strengthen their political and economic bargaining power, and to reduce their business risks. One commentator, Giel Ton, warned that collective action does not come as a free good. It takes time, effort and money to organise, build trust and to experiment. Others, like Marcel Vernooij and Marcel Beukeboom, suggested that in order to 'apply what we already know', all stakeholders, including business, government, scientists and civil society, must work together, starting at the beginning of the value chain.



I. Some participants explained that market price volatility is often worsened by the presence of intermediary purchasers who, taking advantage of farmers' vulnerability, dictate prices. One commentator suggested farmers can gain greater control over prices and minimise price volatility by selling directly to consumers.

Similarly, Sonali Bisht, founder and advisor to the Institute of Himalayan Environmental Research and Education (INHERE), India, wrote that copportunity-supported agriculture, where consumers invest in local farmers by subscription and guarantee producers a fair price, is a risk-sharing model worth more attention. Direct food distribution systems not only encourage small-scale agriculture but also give consumers more control over the food they consume, she wrote.

Questions 1-4

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

Write the correct letters in boxes **10-11** on your answer sheet.

Which TWO problems are mentioned which affect farmers with small farms in developing countries?

- A** lack of demand for locally produced food
- B** lack of irrigation programmes
- C** being unable to get insurance
- D** the effects of changing weather patterns
- E** having to sell their goods to intermediary buyers

Which TWO actions are recommended for improving conditions for farmers?

- A** reducing the size of food stocks
- B** attempting to ensure that prices rise at certain times of the year
- C** organising co-operation between a wide range of interested parties
- D** encouraging consumers to take a financial stake in farming
- E** making customers aware of the reasons for changing food prices



Answers with explanation

1) Answer: D,E

Explanation: Located in the first line of paragraph G, “climate change and its consequences for small-scale agriculture”.

2) Answer: D,E

Explanation: Located in the first two lines of paragraph I, “the presence of intermediary purchasers who, taking advantage of farmers’ vulnerability, dictate prices”.

3) Answer: C,D

Explanation: Located in the first two lines of paragraph H, “Some participating authors and commentators argued in favour of community- based and autonomous risk management strategies through collective action groups, co-operatives or producers’ groups”.

4) Answer: C,D

Explanation: Located in the last two lines of paragraph H, “all stakeholders, including business, government, scientists and civil society, must work together, starting at the beginning of the value chain”



General Reading Multiple Choice Questions Practice Exercise 1

Business advice to newbie entrepreneurs Reading Passage

Answer questions 1- 5 which are based on the reading passage below.

Set a marketing approach. Undifferentiated marketing succeeds when the same component of the product appeals to a large number of people. When advertising to different markets, on the other hand, a differentiated approach highlights various characteristics of the product. When only one part of the market is being targeted, rather than a number of various segments, a concentrated plan should be adopted.

Experiment with various methods to advertise your goods. For example, within the same market base, test a range of advertising initiatives. Make sure that each campaign emphasises your product's special selling point and appeals to the feelings of the people to whom you're marketing it. Consider running a similar campaign in many markets, you might find that one of them likes your product for a cause you hadn't thought of. Alternatively, consider putting your goods in a variety of stores that cater to various demographics. Then consider each campaign's success and take action based on client feedback from salespeople or follow-up surveys.

Seeding the market entails presenting potential buyers' product samples and demonstrating why they require (or desire) them. Try to get your product into the hands of industry leaders or businesses that may need many items. Request that professionals test your product and provide feedback. Make your testimonials visible by including them on your website and in your brochures, especially those from experts and industry leaders. This will improve your reliability. Distribute press releases to the media to inform the arrival of your product, as well as any unexpected and good findings of the experts who examined it.

Begin your chosen promotion technique, focusing on the markets you think would react best to your goods. To boost local interest and attention, hold a product launch or grand opening event. Advertise in magazines that your target market reads, as well as on local radio and television stations and newspapers. Evaluate the success of your product on a regular basis. Take note of any longer-term changes in the market base or client expectations, and then reposition the product as relevant. Procter & Gamble, for example, repositioned its diapers by highlighting the type of sizes available. They started encouraging them as Pampers Phases, which were aimed at various age groups of infants and toddlers.



Question 1 - 5

Choose the correct letter, A - D.

1. Undifferentiated marketing succeeds when the same component of the product appeals
 - A. to a large number of people.
 - B. to some people
 - C. to a minimum number of people
 - D. to a large number of products

2. Experiment with various strategies
 - A. to reach the people
 - B. to succeed in marketing a product
 - C. to promote your goods
 - D. to get attached to people

3. Putting your goods in a variety of shops that cater
 - A. to announce the arrival of your product
 - B. to diverse demographics
 - C. to increase local interest
 - D. to make people aware of

4. Request that professionals test your product and
 - A. give approval
 - B. provide feedback
 - C. check whether it has any issue
 - D. verify the same

5. Evaluate the success of your product
 - A. on a regular basis
 - B. weekly
 - C. monthly
 - D. after it reaches the people



Answers with Explanation

1. A. to a large number of people

Explanation: Paragraph 1 - Undifferentiated marketing succeeds when the same component of the product appeals to a large number of people.

2. C. to advertise your goods

Explanation: Paragraph 2 - Experiment with various methods to advertise your goods.

3. B. to diverse demographics

Explanation: Paragraph 2 - Alternatively, consider putting your goods in a variety of stores that cater to various demographics.

4. A. provide feedback

Explanation: Paragraph 3- Request that professionals test your product and provide feedback.

5. A. on a regular basis


Explanation: Paragraph 4 - Evaluate the success of your product on a regular basis.




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