

# Academic Reading Practice Test 20

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# Instructions for Taking the Test

Read the rules and regulations carefully before the test:

1. Switch off your mobile phone and electronic devices.
2. Manage your time strictly to **20 minutes** per passage, reading questions first to guide your skimming and scanning for answers, always paying close attention to word limits and matching synonyms.
3. Read the instructions thoroughly before answering the questions.
4. Read the questions carefully to avoid silly mistakes.

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## Early Childhood Education

**A.** Dr. Lockwood Smith's recent visit to the US and Britain came with a list of findings. Being New Zealand's National Party Education's spokesman reports the key findings of his visit and reveals the prospects in New Zealand's education policy.

**B.** *'Education To Be More'* is a report pertaining to the New Zealand Government Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group. It was published last August, discussing the enhancement of access and funding for childcare and early childhood education institutions. Though education is a necessity, parents don't send children to pre-schools until they attain three years of age. Are they missing out on the most crucial years of all? Let's see further.

**C.** A 13-year research study of early childhood development at Harvard University reveals that most children after the age of three have the ability to understand nearly 1000 words – most of the vocabularies they will practise in normal conversation for the rest of their lives. In addition to that, research shows that as every kid born will be curious, however, it can be controlled significantly in their second and third years of life. Researchers say that human behaviour gets into shape during the first two years. Similarly, during the first three years children acquire the fundamental skills which will be used later at home and at school. Once children cross three years, they try to spread their existing knowledge of the world.

**D.** A general fact is that children from poorer socio-economic backgrounds are likely to perform not well in studies. It's acknowledged not only in New Zealand but also in Britain, America and Australia. To tackle the educational issue, a nationwide program known as *'Headstart'* was initiated in 1965 in the United States, with a pool of money. It made a path for children to join in pre-school institutions after turning into three, and facilitated the children from poorer families perform better in school. Besides so much investment, the result was not as expected. It is because of two things. First, the program started too late. Most of the children who enrolled in it were already behind their peers in language and reasonable intelligence. Second, there is no participation from the parents. After school hours, children go back to the same home where parents don't know how to improve their skills.



**E.** Now it has become evident from the pilot program '*Headstart*' launched in Missouri in the US that the first three years of a kid's life are important. This growing need shows that working with the parents rather than ignoring them from the process of child's education is the most effective way of improving children's learning abilities. The four-year pilot study involved around 380 families who have one child, and are from a cross-section of socio-economic background, etc. The other factors include age and family configurations. For this pilot study, they included single-parent and two-parent families. Moreover, it included families where both parents are working and families where one parent is at home.

**F.** The program is associated with parent-educators who visit the parent's home engaging with tired parents or parents and the child. Know the child's development, necessary advice on things to care for, and what to expect as the child grows, etc. all such information is given. It also added the guidance in keeping the child's intelligence, language proficiency, social and motor-skill development. Regular diagnoses of the child's academics and sensory development (hearing and vision) were kept available to measure possible hurdles that help with development and growth. In case of medical issues, they met the medical practitioners. Parent-educators visited homes and conducted group meetings every month with new parents. They shared experiences and discussed topics of varied subjects. Apart from that, parent resource centres offered study materials for families and facilitators for the child care. It is located in each school building.

**G.** The children at three years of age, who had been indulged in the pilot program '*Missouri*' were analysed alongside a similar section of children chosen from the same range of cross-section, socio-economic aspects and family conditions, and also the same age of children as samples. Astonishingly, the results were excellent. The children with the same age group were more advanced in language proficiency than their counterparts. They showed greater potential in problem-solving techniques and other intellectual skills, besides social development. Here, the average performance of a child in this program was at the level of top 15 to 20 percent compared to their peers in things like verbal ability, language skills, and auditory comprehension.





H. Above all, the classical method of measures of 'risk' like the parents' age and education, or whether they were a single parent, no interest or having no relationship to the assessments of success and language development. On the other hand, children performed equally well in the program despite their socio-economic backgrounds. In this program, no child was virtually abused. The one component that tended to affect the child's development was stress from the family side that led to poor quality of parent-child relationship and interaction. That interaction was not always bad in poorer families.

I. Most of these findings are interesting. There is alarming evidence in New Zealand that children belonging to poorer socio-economic backgrounds are performing less at school and that our school system tends to maintain that disadvantage unknowingly. The initiative subsequently mentioned the fact that above could break that cycle of disadvantage. The idea of engaging with parents in their homes or at their workplace, could improve the situation quite markedly with respect to the Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group's report. Their main objective is to enrol children and mothers to childcare and institutionalised childhood education at an early stage. Education from the age of three to five is unquestionably important to any child, but not focusing on parent education and the vital importance of the first three years, might lead to evidence that reflects the inequality in education.

### Questions 1 – 5

The reading passage has nine paragraphs, A–I.

**Choose the correct heading** for each paragraph from the list of headings below.

Write the correct Roman numeral (i–vi) as your answer to each question.

#### List of Headings

- i) Education to be more
- ii) Breakthrough in the pilot study
- iii) Pilot program 'Headstart'
- iv) Traditional method of risk assessment
- v) Parent-Educators and their role
- vi) Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group's report

- 1. Paragraph B
- 2. Paragraph E
- 3. Paragraph F
- 4. Paragraph G
- 5. Paragraph H



13. What sculpture made Moore receive commission?

- a. Warrior with shield and falling warrior
- b. Mayan sculpture
- c. Abstract sculptures
- d. Family sculpture

14. Which series of Moore gained recognition?

- a. Primitive forms of art
- b. Reclining women
- c. Standing figures in bronze
- d. Abstract sculpture

### Questions 6 – 10

**Complete the notes below.**

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

- There is alarming evidence in **6.** \_\_\_\_\_ that children belonging to poorer socio-economic backgrounds are performing less.
- Though education is a **7.** \_\_\_\_\_, parents don't send children to pre-schools until they attain three years of age.
- Parent resource centres offered study materials for families and facilitators for the **8.** \_\_\_\_\_.
- The one component that tended to affect the child's development was stress from the family side that led to poor quality of parent-child **9.** \_\_\_\_\_ and interaction.
- Moreover, it included families where both parents are **10.** \_\_\_\_\_ and families where one parent is at home.

### Questions 11 – 13

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

Write

**YES** – if the statement agrees with the claims of the writer

**NO** – if the statement contradicts the claims of the writer

**NOT GIVEN** – if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

**11.** The children with the same age group were more skilled in language proficiency than their counterparts.

**12.** The children for the pilot study were selected based on their socio-economic background only.

**13.** The children's performance in education is associated with the food they intake.



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## Answers for IELTS Academic Reading Practice Test 20

1. Paragraph B = i	2. Paragraph C = iii	3. Paragraph D = v	4. Paragraph E = ii
5. Paragraph F = iv	6. New Zealand	7. Necessity	8. Child care
9. Relationship	10. Working	11. Yes	12. No
13. Not Given			

### How many questions did you get right?

Correct Answers (Out of 13)	Your Next Step
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