

Reading Practice Test

TIME 1 Hour

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Start at the beginning of the test and work through it.

You should answer **all** questions.

If you cannot do a particular question, leave it and go on to the next.

You can return to it later.

All answers must be written on the answer sheet.

Do not remove this booklet from the examination room.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

There are **40** questions on this question paper.

The test is divided as follows:

Reading Passage 1 Questions 1 - 13

Reading Passage 2 Questions 14 - 26

Reading Passage 3 Questions 27 - 40

READING PASSAGE 1

Cleaning Wilson Bay

There's nothing remarkable about the fish of Wilson Bay in Jacksonville, North Carolina. They have fins, two eyes, and scales in all the right places. But the mere presence of healthy, edible marine life in the bay constitutes a man-made miracle, because until recent years any life forms inhabiting the dirty bay water grew stunted and misshapen. No one dared fish, swim or waterski there. Researchers even donned special gloves to handle the water.

Not only had the bay served as a repository for the coastal city's human waste for half a century, but the water also received run-off from a nearby housing project. A U.S. military base had a further impact. The wooden pilings supporting the structure were coated in the timber preservative, creosote, which had gradually polluted the water.

When Jacksonville officials shut down the bay's sewage treatment plant in 1998 and started a new inland waste system, they felt a moral obligation to clean up the mess left behind. But the biggest problem was that no one had a clue where to start processing such seriously contaminated water.

That's where Jay Levine stepped in. Levine, a professor of veterinary science at North Carolina State University, had recently returned from France, where he had seen an aquaculture project involving oysters. From what he had observed he proposed using bivalve molluscs such as oysters and clams as part of a multi-pronged approach to cleaning the water. City officials liked the concept, but many in the public and press were not only sceptical, but downright derisive of the idea that a humble oyster could clean such severely fouled water.

Levine's plan, which was tweaked and redrawn many times as the project progressed, was to implement a kind of bioremediation - using nature to heal itself. In this case, however, nature had a kick start from science.

Levine placed plastic mesh bags of oysters high enough in the water to allow them to be bathed in sunlight. The idea was that the oysters would thrive in the warm, shallow waters and eat the material floating in the bay. The removal of unwanted waste would allow the return of the smaller links in the bay's food chain, which would then serve as a lure to increasingly larger creatures, such as fish, turtles and seabirds.

Bubbling aeration units were used to restore oxygen to the water to help the returning species breathe. 'The original goal was to pull water into the bay, but the most important benefit was delivering oxygen to the bottom,' says Pat Donovan-Potts, who became involved as a field scientist with the project. 'It had an amazing effect - it supercharged the oysters [and helped to stabilise] the bottom of the bay.'

The clean-up project didn't stop there. The team built channels and rain gardens in adjacent neighbourhoods in order to filter the contaminated run-off from the housing projects. In addition, the pilings from the military base were removed to prevent further leaching of creosote into the water. In a related project, scientists supervised the restoration of wetlands, which was carried out by local teachers and students.

Despite predictions that the oysters would die and the project fail, the oysters not only lived, but grew fat on their dubious diet. Along with this, the water habitat showed signs of revival. Faecal coliform counts (the measure of human sewage contamination) began a steady downward spiral, while marine life and birds began to return to the bay. Normal fish reappeared and key species, such as ospreys and golden eagles, were spotted nesting in the area.

Under the auspices of the Sturgeon City Institute, established to educate residents and others on environmental issues, the project has expanded from the bay into other nearby bodies of water. Staffed mostly by teenage volunteers, the institute helps test and measure how the water and wetlands respond to change. And now, the Wilson Bay Initiative, as the overall project is known, is preparing to cash in on America's passion for sushi.

A world-class aquaculturist at Wilmington's University of North Carolina, Wade Watanube, is working with Jacksonville officials to launch his first marine aquaculture project outside the university walls. The project will rear black sea bass, harvest their eggs and grow more. A recent study found there is a high demand for black sea bass for use in sushi, one of the country's most popular restaurant dishes. Initial tests will gauge whether a freestanding, profitable venture can operate successfully. Jacksonville's projects director, Glenn Hargett, is optimistic: 'If it does, then this project will have found another unintended benefit for our community.'

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Questions 1-6

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1-6 on your answer sheet write

- TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE if the statement disagrees with the information
NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

1. It is surprising that Wilson Bay now supports healthy marine life.
2. The public supported Levine's proposal for reviving the bay.
3. The plan required a number of modifications during its implementation.
4. Levine's team was the first to realise that the pilings added to the pollution.
5. Teenagers are paid to work on the project.
6. Further research is needed into the profitability of fish farming in the area.

Questions 7-11

Complete the flow chart below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from Reading Passage 1 for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 7-11 on your answer sheet

Cleaning up Wilson Bay

7. _____ were put into the bay inside special bags

8. _____ was mechanically added to the water and had a significant impact on the habitat

Drains and 9. _____ were used to remove contaminants from domestic waste water

The creosote problem was solved by taking away wooden
10. _____

School groups improved
11. _____ in the area

Questions 12 and 13

Choose **TWO** letters **A-E**

Write your answers in boxes 12 and 13 on your answer sheet

According to the writer, which **TWO** of the following happened as a result of the clean-up of Wilson Bay?

- A** Recreational use of the bay increased
- B** Healthy fish reappeared
- C** Important bird species were seen in the area
- D** Oysters were farmed
- E** A new housing project was built

READING PASSAGE 2

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

Swarming the Shelves

A

A trip to the supermarket may not seem like an exercise in psychological warfare – but it is. Shopkeepers know that filling a store with the aroma of freshly baked bread makes people feel hungry and persuades them to put more food in their trolley than they had intended. Stocking the most expensive products at eye level makes them sell faster than cheaper but less visible competitors. Now researchers are investigating how “swarm intelligence” (that is, how ants, bees or any other social animal, including humans, behave in a crowd) can be used to influence what people buy.

B

At a recent conference on the simulation of adaptive behaviour in Rome, Zeeshan-ul-hassan Usmani, a computer scientist from Princeton University, described a new way to increase impulse buying using this phenomenon. Supermarkets already encourage shoppers to buy things they do not realise they wanted: for instance, by placing everyday items such as milk and eggs at the back of the store, forcing shoppers to walk past other tempting goods to reach them. Dr Usmani and Ronaldo Menezes of the Florida Institute of Technology set out to enhance this tendency to buy more by playing on the herd instinct. The idea is that, if a certain product is seen to be popular, shoppers are likely to choose it too. The challenge is to keep customers informed about what others are buying.

C

Enter smart-cart technology. In Dr Usmani’s supermarket every product has a radio frequency identification tag, a sort of barcode that uses radio waves to transmit information, and every trolley has a scanner that reads this information and relays it to a central computer. As a customer walks past a shelf of goods, a screen on the shelf tells him how many people currently in the shop have chosen that particular product. If the number is high, he is more likely to select it too.

D

Dr Usmani’s “swarm-moves” model appeals to supermarkets because it increases sales without the need to give people discounts. And it gives shoppers the satisfaction of knowing that they bought the “right” product – that is, the one everyone else bought. The model has not yet been tested widely in the real world, mainly because radio frequency identification technology is new and has only been installed on a trial basis in some supermarkets. But Dr Usmani says that supermarkets in America and Britain are interested in his work, and testing will continue.

E

Another recent study on the power of social influence indicates that sales could, indeed, be boosted in this way. Matthew Salganik of Columbia University in New York and his colleagues have described creating an artificial music market in which some 14,000 people downloaded previously unknown songs. The researchers found that when people could see the songs ranked by how many times they had been downloaded, they followed the crowd. When the songs were not ordered by rank, but the number of times they had been downloaded was displayed, the effect of social influence was still there but was less pronounced. People thus follow the herd when it is easy for them to do so.

F

In Japan, one retailer has been ordering its products according to sales data from department stores and research companies. The shops sell only the most popular items in each product category, and the rankings are updated weekly. Icosystem, a company in Cambridge, Massachusetts, also aims to exploit knowledge of social networking to improve sales.

G

And the psychology that works in physical stores is just as potent on the internet. Internet retailers such as Amazon are adept at telling shoppers which products are popular with like-minded consumers. Even in the privacy of your home, you can still be part of the swarm.

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Questions 14 and 15

Choose **TWO** letters **A-E**

Write your answers in boxes 14 and 15 on your answer sheet

In paragraphs **A & B**, which **TWO** of the following supermarket sales strategies are **NOT** mentioned?

- A** pumping delicious smells into the air
- B** putting expensive products where they can be easily seen
- C** making shopping trolleys larger
- D** putting commonly bought items at the back of the shop
- E** giving away free food samples to customers

Questions 16-21

Reading Passage 2 has seven paragraphs, **A-G**

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter **A-G** in boxes 16-21 on your answer sheet

NB You may use any letter more than once

- 16. A place where you can only buy the most commonly bought brands.
- 17. A description of how a computerised shopping trolley works.
- 18. Research findings not related to supermarkets.
- 19. Why supermarkets are interested in Dr Usmani's research.
- 20. Applying "swarm intelligence" to online shopping.
- 21. An organised event for sharing academic research.

Questions 22-25

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2?

Write your answers in boxes 22-25 on your answer sheet

- YES** *if the statement agrees with the information*
NO *if the statement disagrees with the information*
NOT GIVEN *if there is no information on this*

- 22.** Measures should be taken to restrict the use of psychological warfare in supermarkets.
- 23.** Shoppers are less likely to choose a product if they know that it is extremely popular.
- 24.** "Smart" shopping technology is still in the experimental stage.
- 25.** The Columbia University study was based on Dr Usmani's research.

Question 26

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

Write your answer in box 26 on your answer sheet

The main idea of this passage is that

- A** The cheaper the product, the more likely it is to be sold.
- B** The supermarket industry is very competitive.
- C** It is important for supermarkets to keep technology up-to date.
- D** People's herd mentality can be exploited to increase sales.

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

Questions 27-30

From the list below, choose the most suitable headings for section **A-D**.

Write the correct number **i-vii** in boxes 27-30 on your answer sheet

List of Headings

- i** The drawbacks of personal carbon trading.
- ii** Comparison with other similar schemes.
- iii** The chances of carbon trading being implemented.
- iv** Results of a carbon trading case study
- v** Public reaction to carbon trading.
- vi** How does the system work?
- vii** An old idea revisited.

27. Section A

28. Section B

29. Section C

30. Section D

READING PASSAGE 3

A

The UK is considering a personal carbon trading scheme. In the scheme, all citizens will receive a free equal allowance of carbon units, which can be exchanged for carbon use, for example, the consumption of petrol or electricity. Additionally, these units can be traded in a market which has the aim of reducing the overall use of carbon.

The idea of tradable personal carbon allowances, or domestic tradable quotas as they are also called, is not new. The concept was first proposed in the mid-1990s, when it was largely ignored as utopian and unworkable. But it is now being taken seriously by the British Government among others. In a recent speech, the UK's environment secretary David Smith said such a scheme would tackle the "vast majority of individual [carbon] emissions ... which in turn make up 44% of the [UK] economy's total emissions".

B

A tradable personal carbon allowance scheme could function like this: the government calculates a target for the total emissions it will allow from personal electricity, gas and transport use – the factors which are responsible for most domestic carbon production. This total is converted into carbon points and distributed. Every citizen receives an equal share.

The points are like a currency, to be used alongside the regular currency, although they only apply to carbon. When someone buys fuel, or an airline ticket, or pays an electricity bill, they use their points as well as their money. In fact, the two currencies could be integrated so that both worked with the same debit or credit card.

Now someone who was frugal in their energy use – for example, who had installed solar heating and a wind turbine for electricity generation and who cycled to work – could end up with surplus points. Meanwhile, someone else might drive a large car, have a houseful of electronic gadgets and fly to distant holiday destinations, thereby exceeding their allocation. Under the personal tradable carbon allowance scheme, these two individuals could trade points, the carbon guzzler could buy from the carbon cutter. The deal would take place on an open market, and the price of the points would be set by that market.

C

Such a scheme has a number of potential advantages over other mechanisms that have the same aim of reducing carbon consumption, says Smith. First, it would be more equitable than putting a carbon tax on electricity, fuel, etc., because tax increases hit all consumers of products, whereas the carbon allowance scheme only creates financial penalties for those who go above their entitlement.

The scheme could be more empowering than many forms of regulation, because instead of banning particular products, services or activities, or taxing them heavily, a personal carbon allowance would enable individuals to make their own decisions. These can be based on their individual account which shows the quantity of carbon used. The points system also provides a guide for those who want to do their bit for

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the environment, but at the moment have no way of measuring the effectiveness of their actions.

And the scheme could be more effective than taxes or attempts to ban products because personal carbon allowances limit the total amount of carbon that can be used, not how the carbon target is achieved. “Carbon trading fixes the outcome to be achieved,” said Smith, “and leaves the price of carbon to adjust to the necessary level to change behaviour.” Citizens wanting to conserve their points will choose low carbon products, thereby encouraging the market for such products – green electricity, hybrid cars, etc. Consumers changing their preferences will have a domino effect throughout the supply chain. This approach will also simplify the implementation of such a scheme.

“By focusing on just the energy a citizen buys – their electricity, gas, petrol and air travel – not the energy used already to make food, cars or domestic appliances – the complexity is reduced,” said Smith. Meanwhile, the vast majority of individual emissions are captured, which in turn make up almost half of the UK economy’s total emissions.

D

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, a leading UK research organisation based in Manchester, England, last year published a feasibility study on personal carbon allowances and concluded that it would be technically possible to introduce such a scheme based around existing credit and debit cards, and that it could prove relatively inexpensive. Furthermore, such a scheme would have “distributive justice” since every citizen would be given a free and equal share of the carbon entitlement.

But no one is pretending that such a scheme is likely to be introduced soon, or that it will completely solve climate change. It is bound to be controversial, and will require big up-front investment. It is also likely to work best in conjunction with other methods, such as offsetting, which need further development too. But it offers some answers to questions that will have to be faced at some point in the future – such as just what is our individual carbon/environmental entitlement, how do we reward environmental responsibility, and how can we use market mechanisms to engage individuals in the battle against climate change?

Questions 31-34

Complete the flow chart below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from Reading Passage 3 for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 31-34 on your answer sheet

Operation of personal carbon allowance scheme

A total personal emissions
31. _____ is set by the government.

Carbon points are calculated and evenly
32. _____ .

The carbon allowance is used as a form of
33. _____ .

People who use too much carbon will be able to
34. _____ points.

Questions 35-38

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

Write the correct letter **A-G** in boxes 35-38 on your answer sheet.

- A** because the carbon target is set and will not change.
- B** because tax levels will stay the same.
- C** because of purchasing behaviour which aims to save points.
- D** because only people who use too much carbon will be negatively affected.
- E** because the price of carbon will be fixed
- F** because the points system will give information about how much is consumed.
- G** because the government will allocate carbon points according to income

- 35. The carbon trading scheme will be fairer to consumers than carbon tax
- 36. People will have more control over their carbon use
- 37. The carbon trading scheme will work better than bans or taxes
- 38. The availability of low carbon products will increase

Questions 39 and 40

Choose the appropriate letters **A-E** and write them in boxes 39 and 40 on your answer sheet

Which **TWO** of the following are conclusions from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research concerning personal carbon allowances?

- A** The scheme would be effective at reducing carbon emissions.
- B** The scheme would be fair to everyone.
- C** The scheme should be implemented within the next five years.
- D** The current credit card system could be used to introduce the scheme.
- E** The scheme is unlikely to affect the consumption habits of the wealthy.