**ESOL International**

**English Reading Examination**

**Level C2 Proficient**

**Instructions to learners**

Check that you have the correct paper.

Please complete the information above.

Use black or blue ink. Do not use a pencil.

You may **NOT** use a dictionary.

There are 31 questions in this examination.

You must attempt all the questions.

Record your answers on the mark sheet.

Total marks available: **31**

You have **75 minutes** to finish the examination.

## Text 1

**Read the text. Answer the questions on your mark sheet.**

**The printing press and the print revolution**

The inception of the print revolution can be traced back to China, where the earliest known book was printed in 868, and metal type was employed in Korea by the early fifteenth century. However, it was in Germany around 1450 that Johannes Gutenbergs invention of the printing press utilising movable metal type was invented, transforming the dissemination of knowledge for evermore.

Capitalism was instrumental in transforming printing from a mere technological innovation into a thriving industry. The foremost printer of the sixteenth century, Plantin of Antwerp, exemplified this with his operation of twenty-four printing presses and a workforce exceeding one hundred employees. Despite literacy being confined to a small fraction of the populace, the production of books surged at an _____ rate, with an estimated 20 million volumes printed by 1500.

The immediate effect of printing was to increase the circulation of works that were already popular in a handwritten form, while less popular works went out of circulation. Publishers were interested only in books that would sell fairly quickly in sufficient numbers to cover the costs of production and make a profit. Thus, while printing enormously increased access to books by making cheap, high-volume production possible, somewhat paradoxically it also reduced choice.

The great cultural impact of printing was that it facilitate the growth of national languages. Most early books were printed in Latin, the common language of the educated elite, but the market for Latin was limited, and in its pursuit of larger markets the book trade soon produced translations into the more commonly spoken national languages emerging at this time. Printing indeed played a key role in standardising and stabillising these languages by fixing them in print, eventually leading to the production of dictionaries and grammar books. By the sixteenth century, Latin had become obsolete, as national literatures were by then more established.

1. **Which of the following is true about the status of Latin?**
   a. People were better able to learn Latin from reading printed books.
   b. Latin was the language used by the educated elite.
   c. Latin books initially made up the entirety of printed works.

2. **Capitalism influenced the print industry by:**
   a. Improving people's literacy.
   b. Transforming printing into a profitable industry.
   c. Limiting the circulation of popular works.

3. **The paradoxical effect of the advent of printing was:**
   a. Access to a variety of books.
   b. The dominance of manuscripts.
   c. Reduced diversity of available texts.

4. **The Gutenberg press:**
   a. Enabled the mass dissemination of knowledge.
   b. Was the first example of the printed word.
   c. Employed metal type for the first time.

5. **The impact on national languages was?**
   a. They emerged to become more commonly spoken languages.
   b They flourished and eventually made Latin obsolete.
   c. Books in national languages did not appeal to a mass market.

6. **There is a spelling error on:**
   a. Line 6.
   b. Line 16.
   c. Line 28.

7. **There is a grammar error on:**
   a. Line 9.
   b. Line 18.
   c. Line 23.

8. **There is a punctuation mistake on:**
   a. Line 5.
   b. Line 10.
   c. Line 14.

9. **The best word to complete the sentence on line 13 is:**
   a. Excellent.
   b. Unprecedented.
   c. Incalculable.

10. **The best word to replace the word 'exemplified' on line 11 is:**
    a. Illustrated.
    b. Recognised.
    c. Disproved.

## Text 2

**Read the text. Answer the questions on your mark sheet.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Should we encourage participation in dangerous sports? | 1 |
| | 2 |
| The rapidly increasing popularity of extreme sports has sparked a contentious | 3 |
| debate regarding their societal value and whether their growth should be actively | 4 |
| promoted. Advocates argue that these high-risk pursuits offer unparalleled | 5 |
| opportunities for personal growth, pushing individuals to transcend their perceived | 6 |
| limitations and cultivate resilience in the face of adversity. They argue that the | 7 |
| adrenaline-fuelled experiences afforded by activities such as free soloing, wingsuit | 8 |
| flying, and big wave surfing foster a profound sense of self-awareness and present a | 9 |
| unique avenue for self-actualisation. | 10 |
| | 11 |
| Moreover, advocates propose that the abundance of dangerous sports generates a | 12 |
| spirit of inovation, driving advancements in safety equipment and techniques that | 13 |
| ultimately benefit society at large. The argument follows that this perpetual quest | 14 |
| for enhanced security measures drives technological progress, with potential | 15 |
| applications extending far beyond the realm of extreme athletics. | 16 |
| | 17 |
| Conversely, critics vehemently opposes the encouragement of such dangerous | 18 |
| endeavours, citing the inherent risks and potential societal costs. They argue that | 19 |
| promoting activities with a high likelihood of severe injury or fatality is | 20 |
| fundamentally irresponsible and places an undue burden on emergency services and | 21 |
| healthcare systems. Furthermore, critics _____ that the glorification of extreme | 22 |
| risk-taking may have detrimental effects on impressionable youth, potentially | 23 |
| fostering a cavalier attitude towards personal safety. | 24 |
| | 25 |
| The ethical implications of encouraging dangerous sports are equally complex. While | 26 |
| one might argue for the protection of individual autonomy in pursuing high-risk | 27 |
| activities questions arise regarding the moral responsibility of society to protect its | 28 |
| members from unnecessary harm. This philosophical dilemma is further intensified | 29 |
| by considerations of the potential psychological impact on friends and family | 30 |
| members of those who lose their life in pursuit of their passion. | 31 |
| | 32 |
| Ultimately, the question of whether to encourage participation in dangerous sports | 33 |
| defies a simple resolution. It necessitates a nuanced examination of the delicate | 34 |
| balance between personal freedom and societal responsibility, the value of pushing | 35 |
| human limits versus the preservation of life, and the complex interplay between risk, | 36 |
| reward, and human potential. | 37 |

11. **What does the text conclude?**
    a. People should be encouraged to push their own limits at all costs.
    b. Personal choice should be balanced alongside other considerations.
    c. That ethical implications override individual autonomy.

12. **Supporters of dangerous sports argue the following:**
    a. They lead to improved technology.
    b. Fatalities arise out of the irresponsibility of participants.
    c. Risk-taking improves the well-being of young people.

13. **Dangerous sports have a potential impact on:**
    a. Other competing athletes.
    b. Sports manufacturing companies.
    c. Society, relatives, and friends.

14. **Which of the following do advocates suggest?**
    a. Only sports can give humans an adrenaline-fuelled experience.
    b. Participating in dangerous sports can help humans to fully develop their capabilities.
    c. The popularity of extreme sports adds value to healthcare systems.

15. **Those who criticise extreme sport do so because they worry about:**
    a. The expense to the healthcare systems.
    b. Whether safety equipment works.
    c. Whether promoters of extreme sport are paid adequately.

16. **There is a spelling error on:**
    a. Line 6.
    b. Line 13.
    c. Line 27.

17. **There is a grammar error on:**
    a. Line 15.
    b. Line 18.
    c. Line 23.

18. **There is a punctuation mistake on:**
    a. Line 5.
    b. Line 9.
    c. Line 28.

19. **The best word to fill the gap on line 22 is:**
    a. Concede.
    b. Argue.
    c. Comply.

20. **The best word to replace the word 'transcend' on line 6 is:**
    a. Exceed.
    b. Lower.
    c. Clear.

## Text 3

**Read the text. Answer the questions on your mark sheet.**

**Intelligence: Nature or Nurture?**

The nature versus nurture debate is a longstanding discussion in psychology and education, particularly when it comes to intelligence. The IQ test, introduced in the early 20th century, is often lauded as an objective measure of intelligence, supposedly independent of environmental factors. This perspective assumes that intelligence is largely genetically determined. However, several anomalies challenge this view. One significant contradiction is the Flynn effect, which shows that average IQ scores have in fact been rising over the past several decades. This presents a serious challenge; the point of the IQ test was that the average should always be 100. This suggests that factors other than genetics must be influencing intelligence. If intelligence were purely genetic, such a rapid rise in scores across generations would be unlikely.

Another point of contention is the comparatively high IQ scores observed among students in East Asia. Some studies have attributed this phenomenon not to genetic factors but to environmental influences such as the length of schooling, the extent of parental support, and a cultural emphasis on disciplined work in those countries. These factors indicate that the environment plays a crucial role in shaping intelligence.

Further complicating the debate is the observation that children originally from low socioeconomic backgrounds who were later adopted into more affluent families often show significant improvements in IQ scores. This supports the argument that nurturing environments can enhance intellectual development, challenging the notion that intelligence is fixed at birth. While genetics undoubtedly play a role in determining intelligence, the evidence suggests that environmental factors are highly important. The nature versus nurture debate continues to evolve as new research sheds light on the complex interplay between inherited traits and external influences.

21. **The text is:**
    a. More in favour of the 'nature' view.
    b. More in favour of the 'nurture' view.
    c. Equal towards nature and nurture.

22. **According to the text:**
    a. Affluent surroundings affect scores.
    b. Adopted children always have higher scores.
    c. Socioeconomic backgrounds do not affect scores.

23. **One apparent benefit of the IQ test is:**
    a. It is a laudable measure of intelligence.
    b. It is dependent on environmental factors.
    c. It is an objective measure of intelligence.

24. **Which of the following is true about the higher IQ scores observed in East Asia?**
    a. They are due to genetic factors.
    b. Other countries lack emphasis on disciplined work.
    c. The length of schooling may play a role.

25. **What is the Flynn effect?**
    a. The observation that intelligence is purely genetic.
    b. The rise in average IQ scores over the past several decades.
    c. The belief that IQ scores should average at 100.

## Text 4

**Read the text. Answer the questions on your mark sheet**

Piano tuning is a meticulous process that requires a deep understanding of both musical theory and the instrument's mechanical structure. The fundamental goal is to adjust the tension of the strings to ensure that each note produces the correct pitch. A standard piano has 88 keys, corresponding to over 200 individual strings, each of which must be tuned with precision to achieve harmonic coherence. The process begins with setting the temperament, typically using an electronic tuning device or a tuning fork to establish a reference pitch—usually A440 (440 Hz). This pitch serves as the anchor for the tuning process. The piano technician then adjusts the intervals between notes, often using equal temperament, a system in which the octave is divided into 12 equal semitones. This ensures that the piano sounds in tune across all keys, though compromises are made to balance consonance and dissonance in different registers.

The technician employs several specialised tools during tuning. A tuning hammer, which resembles a small wrench, is used to rotate the tuning pins, thereby adjusting string tension. This must be done carefully, as excessive tightening can cause the string to snap, while insufficient tension will result in an inaccurate pitch. Muting wedges or felt strips are used to silence adjacent strings, allowing the tuner to focus on one string at a time in pianos with multiple strings per note.

After tuning, the technician must fine-tune and stabilise the piano's tuning by repeatedly checking each note, ensuring it holds its pitch even under varying playing conditions. Tuning a piano is both an art and a science, requiring not only technical precision but also a well-trained ear to balance the instrument's tonal qualities.

26. **What is the significance of A440?**
    a. It helps divide the octave into 12 equal semitones.
    b. All tuning forks are typically set at this pitch.
    c. It is the standard tone around which all notes are tuned.

27. **Why is piano tuning considered to be both a science and an art?**
    a. The two invariably go hand in hand.
    b. Technical skills and understanding of musical pitch are required.
    c. Because using specialised tools for the process is an art in itself.

28. **Why is equal temperament often used during piano tuning?**
    a. It allows the piano to produce pure harmonic intervals in every key.
    b. It helps the tuner to increase the volume of each note when played.
    c. It divides the octave into 12 equal semitones

29. **The text suggests piano tuning:**
    a. Is a job best done by someone with technical skills and musical sensitivity.
    b. Should be undertaken by someone with a trained ear.
    c. Is an easy process any trained technician can carry out with the right tools.

30. **How does a piano tuner ensure that an instrument is harmonically aligned?**
    a. They replace the strings and tuning pins for better sound quality.
    b. They adjust the tension of the strings so that each note produces the correct pitch.
    c. They change the number of keys on the piano for a wider range.

31. **What do technicians use to ensure their focus is just on one string while tuning?**
    a. A tuning hammer.
    b. Muting wedges or felt strips.
    c. An electronic tuning device.

**End of Examination**

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