

QCF ESOL Skills for Life

Level 2 – Reading

Sample



Time allowed: 60 minutes

Please answer **all** questions. Write your answers in pen, **not** pencil, **on the separate answer sheet**.
You may **not** use dictionaries. You may **not** use correction fluid.

Task 1

Questions 1-6 test your ability to read a text quickly for the general idea, and to scan it for key words and phrases. You are advised to read the questions **before** you read the text.

Questions 1-4

The text on page 3 has six paragraphs. Each paragraph has a purpose. Choose the letter of the paragraph which best matches the purposes below. Write the letter **on your answer sheet**. You do not need to use all of the paragraphs.

Example to introduce the theme of the text

 A

1. to bring readers up to date with scientific thinking about Mars
2. to give an example of an occasion when fears about Mars caused people to behave erratically
3. to give some background information that explains how people came to think Mars was inhabited
4. to demonstrate that people are still fascinated by the idea of Mars being the enemy of earth

Questions 5-6

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet**.

5. Giovanni Schiaparelli drew long straight lines on his map of Mars. We now know that he
 - A wanted to frighten people by pretending they were canals
 - B was the first person to suggest that there was life on Mars
 - C was getting an inaccurate picture through his telescope
6. Scientists today believe that
 - A there has never been any form of life on Mars
 - B it is impossible for anything to live on Mars now
 - C space missions may still discover life on Mars

The Spell of Mars

Paragraph A

For thousands of years the planet Mars has been a source of fascination for human beings. Clearly visible from earth, and easily recognisable from its blood red colour, it has been long considered an omen of bad luck. It is named after the Roman god of war and its two small moons are called Phobos and Deimos, which are the Greek words for 'fear' and 'panic'.

Paragraph B

The rapid developments in science from the 17th century onwards were not enough to ease people's fears and superstitions about the planet. In 1877 the Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli used telescope sightings to help him draw the first detailed map of Mars. His map shows long, straight lines across the surface, which he called canali, the Italian word for 'grooves'. The lines turned out to be an optical illusion but not in time to stop a rumour that they were actually canals that had been constructed by an alien race.

Paragraph C

The idea that there were intelligent beings living on Mars inspired a book called *The War of the Worlds*, written by H G Wells and published in 1897. A terrifying work of science fiction, it describes life on Earth after an invasion by Martians.

Paragraph D

Thirty years later, a radio version of the novel caused widespread panic in the USA. The broadcast began with a series of simulated news bulletins that suggested an actual invasion was taking place. It is said that many people ran out of their homes screaming, while others packed up their cars and fled.

Paragraph E

Since the 1960s, our understanding of Mars has increased dramatically, thanks to numerous space missions that have sent pictures of the planet back to Earth. It is now widely accepted that Mars cannot support life, although scientists continue to investigate the possibility that primitive life forms existed there many thousands of years ago.

Paragraph F

However, the planet continues to capture people's imaginations. The last fifty years have seen no shortage of novels, films, television programmes and even video games that are all based around the idea of a dystopian future in which Earth and Mars are engaged in a horrifying conflict.

Task 2**Questions 7-10**

Five sentences are missing from the text on page 5. Look at the following six sentences and decide which one best fits each gap. Write the letter of your answer **on your answer sheet**. There is an example (F). There is one sentence you do not need.

- A People who walk regularly don't just boost their physical health.
- B The health problems caused by a poor diet and lack of exercise are estimated to cost the NHS a staggering £5 billion a year.
- C If Britain continues on its current trajectory, it will soon be facing one of the most serious obesity problems in the world.
- D The great thing about walking is that it costs nothing and everyone can work it into their routine.
- E And it's much easier than you might think.
- F How can the government achieve its goal?

Questions 11-13

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet**.

- 11. What does the writer mean by writing 'NICE' in capital letters and in brackets in the first line of this text?
 - A the writer is impressed by the study and wants to show this
 - B the term is used ironically; the writer is not particularly impressed by the study or the Institute
 - C it is an abbreviation of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
- 12. According to paragraph three, the government
 - A wants supermarkets and restaurants to play a role in improving Britain's health
 - B is offering financial incentives to pubs that put healthier meals on their menus
 - C is planning to educate people in the food industry about diet and exercise plans
- 13. In paragraph four, the writer implies that
 - A British people are never going to improve their eating habits so there is no point in encouraging them
 - B people should change their diet as well as becoming more active, but the latter is more important
 - C it doesn't matter what we eat or drink because activity levels make the most difference to wellbeing

Questions 14-16

Choose the letter of the answer which best matches the meaning of each word as it is used in the text. Write the letter **on your answer sheet**.

- 14. **whopping** (paragraph one)
 - A surprising
 - B huge
 - C terrible
- 15. **cumulative** (paragraph four)
 - A impact
 - B minor
 - C increasing
- 16. **feasible** (paragraph six)
 - A realistic
 - B appropriate
 - C imaginable

A Healthier Britain

Paragraph one

A recent study by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has confirmed what we all suspected: Britain could be healthier. The report observed that a **whopping** 75% of women, 60% of men and 40% of school children are a long way from being as active as they ought to be. The findings also noted that the nation's diet could be improved. Just over half of all Brits were found to be making poor food choices, such as snacking on biscuits and cakes and opting for sugary drinks instead of water.

Paragraph two

7. In an age of austerity and cutbacks, it's not surprising that persuading people to adopt healthier lifestyles is high on the Government's agenda.

Paragraph three

F (Example) It wants to step up educational campaigns and it's working hard to get the food industry on board. Perhaps surprisingly, the first signs of success are being seen in pubs, with some major chains already implementing the official recommendations and making healthy meals more readily available to their customers.

Paragraph four

However, while many people in Britain could obviously eat and drink more healthily, the study recommends that increasing levels of activity should be the top priority. Active people are less likely to suffer from a whole raft of illnesses, according to the report. The research advises that while adults should aim to build up to 30 minutes of exercise five times a week, any boost in activity levels can have a **cumulative** effect on wellbeing.

Paragraph five

8. NICE is not talking about expensive gym memberships or getting up at 5am to fit in a morning jog. The report's main recommendation is simply that people should cycle or walk instead of using the car or public transport.

Paragraph six

9. If it isn't **feasible** to ditch the car or get off the bus a stop earlier, there's the option of a walk at lunchtime or taking the kids to the park after school. For people who struggle to motivate themselves to head off on a solitary ramble, there are thousands of walking groups across the country. They offer something for everyone, with walks ranging in length from just one or two miles to serious hikes.

Paragraph seven

10. Walking has also been shown to have great psychological benefits, and what's more, thanks to the reduced car usage, walkers can congratulate themselves on being greener too.

Task 3

Texts A-E on pages 8-11 are all related to each other. You need to use all five texts to answer the following questions.

Questions 17-19

There are five texts, A-E. Decide which text matches each of the purposes below and write the letter of the text **on your answer sheet**. One of the texts does not have a purpose listed below.

Example to close an account **and** express frustration C

- 17.** to reprimand staff for their careless approach to emails **and** provide guidance on improving this
18. to get customer feedback **and** to complain about a poor service
19. to politely request information **and** encourage someone to do their job more quickly

Questions 20-22

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet**.

- 20.** You work for the Human Resources Department at Massey & Sons. What can you learn from texts C, D and E?
 A Emma Pierce is not very good at her job
 B Ms Reese is very efficient at her job
 C Emma Pierce manages a difficult team
- 21.** David McMillan always
 A chooses his words carefully to create a good impression
 B asks a lot of questions to get his point across
 C writes informally to persuade people he is right
- 22.** It is clear from all of the texts that
 A Massey & Sons are under-staffed
 B the staff at Massey & Sons need training
 C Massey & Sons have very demanding customers

Questions 23-27

Text A has six paragraphs with missing headings. Choose the best paragraph for each of the following headings and write the letter **on your answer sheet**. You do not need to use all the paragraphs.

There is an example.

Example Be accurate **C**

23. Be organised

24. Be brief

25. Be serious

Choose the letter of the best answer and write it **on your answer sheet**.

26. In text C, how does David McMillan construct his letter of complaint?

- A** he states what action he wants to take, outlines his efforts to get a better service and describes the problems with the emails he has received
- B** he complains about Emma Pierce, gets angry about the lack of courtesy he has experienced and demands a new contract from the company
- C** he describes what Emma Pierce has done wrong, outlines his efforts to get a better service and explains why he cannot afford to waste time

27. Text B tells us that Andrea Roberts

- A** is sure that the new policy will resolve the email problems
- B** has negative opinions about customers who criticise emails
- C** has evidence that there is a problem with company emails

Questions 28-30

Choose the letter of the answer that **best** matches the meaning of each word as it is used in the text. Write the letter **on your answer sheet**.

28. imperative (texts A and B)

- A** commanding
- B** very important
- C** reasonable

29. courtesy (text C)

- A** grammar
- B** friendliness
- C** politeness

30. clarification (text D)

- A** explanation
- B** information
- C** correction

Text A

Company Email Policy

A

Good practice when communicating with other companies and customers by email is essential. Staff should always be polite and professional. Please remember that once a message is sent, it cannot be taken back, so do not press the send button in haste. Make sure your email says what you intended it to say.

B

As most business people are short of time, email messages should be concise; people are less likely to read lengthy emails. Try and restrict emails to no more than one page, and less if possible.

C (Example)

Although you are used to writing informal emails to people you know, when writing on behalf of the company you will need to pay close attention to the details of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Therefore, you must check your emails carefully before filling in the address line and sending the email. Going through your writing may seem tedious, but you will need to overcome your boredom, as good use of formal language will create a good impression.

D

Separate folders should be set up in your email account for different subjects or companies you deal with. When sending an email, make sure you fill in the subject line accurately, giving an idea of the contents of the email. This will avoid confusion both for the reader of the email, and for yourself when you look back at correspondence.

E

When sending emails in the name of the company, never try to be funny. It is **imperative** that jokes or amusing pictures are not sent, even if you personally find them funny. It is important to be professional in all communication from the company. Another point to remember is that what might seem funny in speech may not be funny when it is written down, and this could lead to misunderstanding.

F

Although emails will be suitable for most types of communication, there are times when a phone call or speaking face-to-face might be better. Never give bad news in an email and if a situation is complicated, it might be more effective to arrange a meeting rather than try and communicate in a long series of emails.

Text B

To: All Staff

From: Manager, Human Resources Department



Company's new email policy

Following complaints from business contacts about the standard of emails sent by our company, please find attached the company's new email policy. Please be sure to follow all the points of the policy in future. It is **imperative** that the new policy is followed, because poor email communication is currently having a negative effect on our business.

Andrea Roberts

Text C

David McMillan
McMillan Toys
12 West Street
Leeds
LD01 3YY
14th May 2013

Jon Simpson
Director of Human Resources
Massey & Sons
Moorfields
London
SW03 4TR

Dear Jon,

I would like to cancel my account with Massey & Sons, as I am seriously disappointed by your declining customer service levels. Having been a customer with Massey for fourteen years, this is not a decision I have taken lightly. However, I have raised the issue of inappropriate emails from some of your team members several times with their manager, Emma Pierce, and have seen no improvement in the situation.

The lack of professionalism and basic **courtesy** in the correspondence from your present team is unacceptable. Furthermore, I rarely receive an adequate answer to my queries and frequently have to send several messages for each enquiry. As you are aware, I am operating a small company with limited resources and my time is precious. It is with great regret, therefore, that I feel I must take my custom elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,

D McMillan

David McMillan

Text D

Customer satisfaction survey

We would like to know more about your experience of our company. Please take a moment to complete the evaluation questionnaire below.

1. How would you rate our service overall?

1 (poor) 2 ③ 4 5 (excellent)

Please add comments below

*The service was fine but the experience was unpleasant due to the poor email correspondence. I felt that Ms Reese's manner was rather rude and unhelpful. Her emails were clearly written in a hurry and I was often not sure what they meant, so I found myself frequently emailing her back to ask for **clarification**.*

2. Did we respond to your queries within a reasonable timescale?

① (yes) 2 3 4 5 (no)

Please add comments below

Ms Reese always replied very quickly, and I do appreciate that. However, it would have saved both of us time in the long run if she had perhaps taken a little more time to read my emails properly so that I didn't have to keep emailing the same question repeatedly.

3. Did you find our service efficient?

1 (yes) ② 3 4 5 (no)

Please add comments below

Mainly yes, but only because I called and spoke to the team manager. However, I was not always clear what Ms Reese meant by her poorly written emails. I believe I may on occasion have gone to lengths which were not really necessary as I wanted to ensure that there were no problems.

4. Would you recommend us to others?

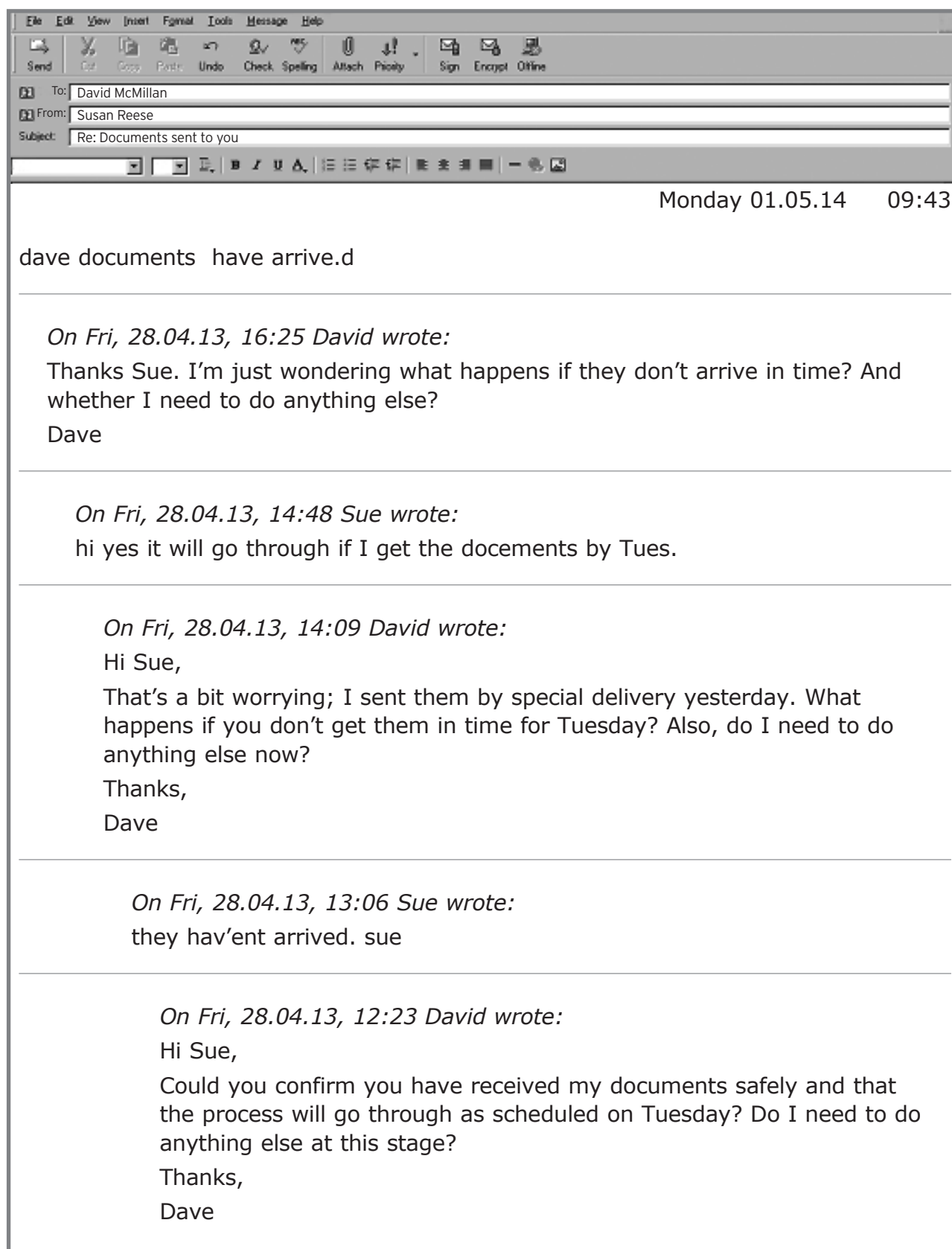
1 (yes) 2 3 4 ⑤ (no)

Please add comments below

I certainly wouldn't, for the reasons outlined above. This has been a very unpleasant experience for me.

Customer name (optional): *customer did not wish to specify*

Text E



The screenshot shows an email client window with a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Tools, Message, Help) and a toolbar with icons for Send, Cut, Copy, Paste, Undo, Check Spelling, Attach, Priority, Sign, Encrypt, and Offline. The email header shows: To: David McMillan, From: Susan Reese, Subject: Re: Documents sent to you. The timestamp is Monday 01.05.14 09:43.

dave documents have arrive.d

On Fri, 28.04.13, 16:25 David wrote:
 Thanks Sue. I'm just wondering what happens if they don't arrive in time? And whether I need to do anything else?
 Dave

On Fri, 28.04.13, 14:48 Sue wrote:
 hi yes it will go through if I get the docements by Tues.

On Fri, 28.04.13, 14:09 David wrote:
 Hi Sue,
 That's a bit worrying; I sent them by special delivery yesterday. What happens if you don't get them in time for Tuesday? Also, do I need to do anything else now?
 Thanks,
 Dave

On Fri, 28.04.13, 13:06 Sue wrote:
 they hav'ent arrived. sue

On Fri, 28.04.13, 12:23 David wrote:
 Hi Sue,
 Could you confirm you have received my documents safely and that the process will go through as scheduled on Tuesday? Do I need to do anything else at this stage?
 Thanks,
 Dave

