

## ISE III

### Sample Independent listening task – Invasive Species

#### Examiner rubric

You're going to hear part of a talk about the natural world. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

*The task will play once.*

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

*Give the candidate some blank notepaper.*

Now listen to the task again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to summarise the different ways in which various species have arrived in new locations, and the speaker's attitude towards the spread of these invasive species. Are you ready?

*The task will play once.*

Now tell me what different ways various species have arrived in new locations, and the speaker's attitude towards the spread of these invasive species. I'll stop you after one minute.

#### Audio script

Hello everyone and welcome to the programme. Today we're going to discuss the interesting topic of invasive species, that is animals or plants that have moved into new parts of the world where they're not native.

The concept of invasive species is certainly not new. But how have these species managed to arrive in different locations?

First of all, it's an undeniable fact that humans have sometimes deliberately moved species from one place to another. Let's take a well-known example. In the nineteenth century, rabbits were taken from Europe to Australia as a food source. What was unexpected was that the animals multiplied rapidly and unfortunately destroyed huge areas of farmland.

And then, there are the effects of increased trade and use of transportation, which have resulted in the accidental spread of invasive species. Take brown rats, for example, which found their way onto ships. They disembarked at ports, notably, on Pacific islands, where they were quick to establish themselves very successfully. And there are other similar examples.

There's yet another reason for the spread of non-native species. This is that climate change is opening new areas to species that wouldn't previously have survived. A case in point is insects, such as various species of butterfly, which have routinely been spotted in areas that used to be too cold for them.

Now, let me move on to explain my ideas about the spread of invasive species.

Although people are very fond of highlighting some of the more extreme problems associated with invasive species, I'm certain that the damage they cause is not nearly as serious as it seems. In fact, we just need to examine the scientific data to find out that only about one per cent of all invasive species cause harm to their new environment. This figure might surprise you.

And we also mustn't forget that some of today's favourite wildlife species were seen as invasive in the past. A good illustration of this is the honeybee, which was introduced to North America in the sixteenth century and is now commonplace. This is only one of many examples.

Now, despite some of the horror stories, here's my final point, which is a clear argument in favour of invasive species. In some cases, they can actually provide habitats that enable native species to thrive. A good illustration of this is the Japanese seaweed which now grows in the US. It has provided shelter for the native sea creatures and regenerated the marine environment. As I said, there are some upsides.

Now, let's learn some more from a team of experts who've been investigating the effects of invasive species.

## Answers

**Main point/gist:** The speaker is talking about how different species have arrived in new locations, and the speaker's attitudes towards the spread of invasive species.

### Possible responses to task

#### Ways in which species have arrived in new locations

- ▶ Humans deliberately moved species to another place – eg rabbits taken to Australia from Europe (as a food source) (destroyed farmland)
- ▶ Increased trade/transportation has led to a spread of invasive species by accident – eg brown rats went on ships to Pacific islands
- ▶ Climate change is creating new environments for species (which wouldn't normally have survived) – eg butterflies in new places

#### Speaker's attitude towards invasive species

- ▶ The situation is not as serious as some say – only 1% of invasive species harm new environment
- ▶ Some of today's favourite wildlife species were invasive species – eg honeybee in North America
- ▶ Invasive species can provide habitats for native species – eg (Japanese) seaweed provides shelter for native sea creatures (in the US)