

# ESOL Skills for Life

## Level 2 – Reading

### Sample Paper 1

Time allowed: 60 minutes

- ▶ Write your name, candidate number, centre number and exam date on your answer sheet.
- ▶ You must not open this exam paper until instructed to do so.
- ▶ This exam paper has **three** tasks. Answer **all** questions.
- ▶ You may highlight parts of the texts or questions with a highlighter pen.
- ▶ Use only blue or black pen for your answers.
- ▶ Circle your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

1. What is this text about?

- A books
- B television
- C cinemas



| Question | Answer   |
|----------|--|
| 1.       | A <input type="radio"/> B <input checked="" type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> |
| 2.       | A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/>            |
| 3.       | A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/>            |

- ▶ You must not use pencil, erasable pen or correction fluid.
- ▶ You must not use a dictionary in this exam.
- ▶ You must not take this exam paper out of the exam room.

**Task 1**

Read the text about Tristan da Cunha and answer questions 1-10.

**Paragraph 1**

Tristan da Cunha lies deep in the South Atlantic Ocean, midway between South America and Africa. It is a part of the Saint Helena, Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha territory, a UK Overseas Territory. Yet it is 2,000 km away even from its nearest neighbour, Saint Helena, making it the world's remotest inhabited island.

**Paragraph 2**

First sighted by the Portuguese explorer Tristão da Cunha in 1506, who due to rough seas could not land, the island was first visited by a Dutch ship in 1643 and eventually settled by the British in 1810. While temperatures are mild all year round, the terrain is forbidding: the small circular island is dominated by highlands surrounding a giant volcanic cone at the centre, skirted by a few low-lying coastal plains.

**Paragraph 3**

Most islanders are the descendants of the people who arrived from Britain, Europe and America in the 19th century. They speak an idiosyncratic variety of English whose oddities have resulted from its speakers' isolation from the rest of the English-speaking world, most strikingly referring to bread as 'cake'. Locals participate in the fascinating system of community governance introduced by William Glass in 1817 that endures to the present day: land is shared and farmed equally, with all Tristanians involved, from the youngest child to the oldest pensioner. Additional sources of income include fishing, the selling of Tristanian stamps and coins, and a small but lucrative tourist trade, though with the island having no airstrip, visitors to the island must take a six-day boat trip from South Africa.

**Paragraph 4**

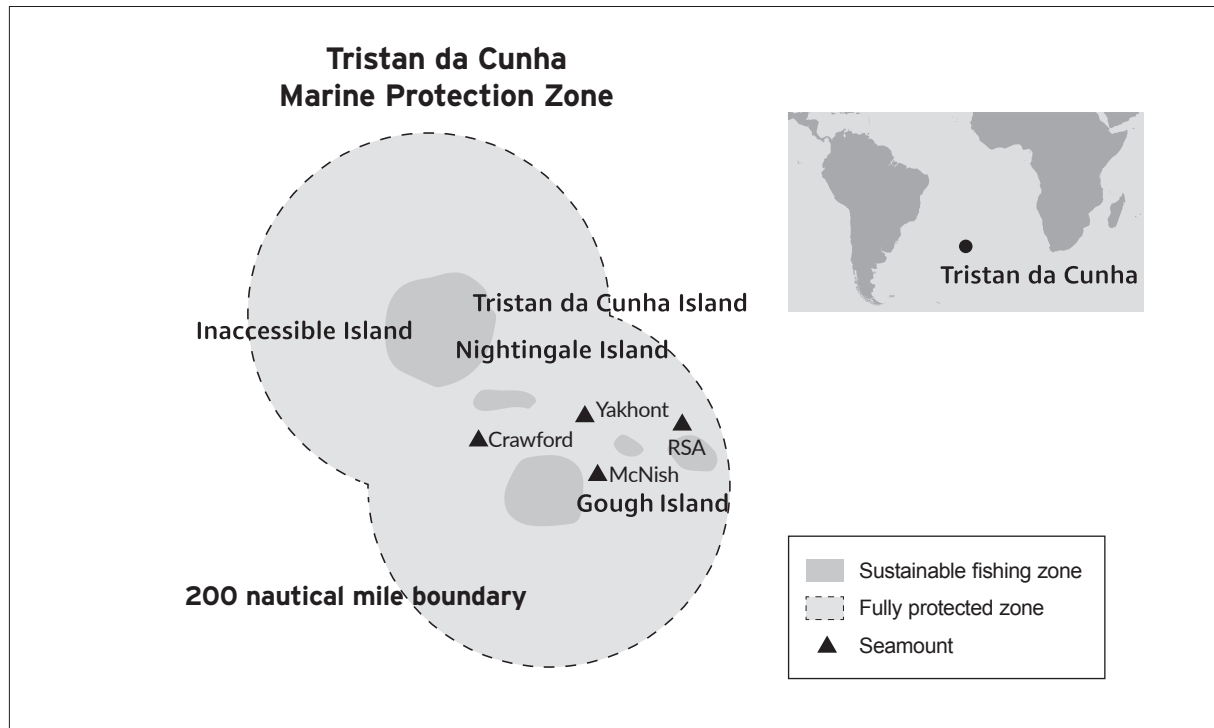
Tristan da Cunha and its neighbouring archipelago of largely inaccessible isles (one actually called Inaccessible Island) are home to a host of notable avian and marine species. The rockier islets, and especially Gough Island, provide breeding grounds for hundreds of thousands of seabirds, including formidably large albatrosses and rare species of petrels. Some birds are unique to the island chain, such as the Inaccessible Island rail, the smallest flightless bird in the world, and the melodious Tristan thrush. The shores and surrounding seas, meanwhile, are home to rockhopper penguins, fur seals, dolphins, sharks and whales; while the seamounts beneath the surface of the waters are home to innumerable crustaceans. The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) has called the area one of the most pristine marine environments on the planet; many of its depths remain unexplored and its denizens unrecorded.

**Paragraph 5**

To preserve this remarkable natural heritage, the waters around Tristan da Cunha have been designated a marine protection zone. The Tristan da Cunha Marine Protection Zone is one of the biggest such areas on the planet, spanning a vast territory of some 687,000 square kilometres around the island. Aside from a 10% area set aside for the islanders' own fishing needs, the protected area is a no-take zone, meaning that fishermen, foreign or domestic, cannot operate there. Recent data obtained from deep sea dives and satellite observation has revealed that the project is bearing fruit: foremost in their report was the fact that migratory blue sharks, elsewhere zealously fished, have found a safe haven in the region, **with** more of these apex predators found here than any other zone monitored.

**Paragraph 6**

While the island remains as geographically isolated as ever, the internet has enabled islanders to communicate more with the outside world. This has allowed them to coordinate more with organisations interested in the natural world and win funding for conservation projects. In 2024, the island was awarded the coveted Blue Park Award in recognition of its efforts to safeguard and foster biodiversity.

**Questions 1-10**

Choose the correct answer.

1. What is the overall purpose of this text?
  - A to compare islands in the Atlantic Ocean
  - B to explain an environmental project
  - C to criticise the management of an island
  
2. According to paragraph 2, when did people first come to live on Tristan da Cunha?
  - A 1506
  - B 1643
  - C 1810
  
3. According to paragraph 3, what did William Glass do for the island?
  - A recorded its unique dialect
  - B devised its political system
  - C developed its transport links

**Turn over page**

4. According to paragraph 4, which island is especially known for a bird that cannot fly?
  - A Tristan da Cunha
  - B Gough Island
  - C Inaccessible Island
5. In paragraph 5, what is the primary measure of the marine protection zone?
  - A fewer tourist visits
  - B restricted fishing hauls
  - C control of invasive species
6. In paragraph 6, what notable change has the internet brought to the island?
  - A new links to environmental organisations
  - B an increase in tourism to the island
  - C a change to the way the islanders speak
7. Which paragraph is most useful for understanding the size of the protection zone?
  - A paragraph 3
  - B paragraph 4
  - C paragraph 5
8. In paragraph 4, what can we infer about the creatures around the seamounts?
  - A Scientists do not know about all of them.
  - B Their numbers have decreased recently.
  - C They have adapted to nearby humans.
9. In paragraph 5, what is the purpose of the word '**with**'?
  - A to introduce a contrast
  - B to introduce another example
  - C to introduce an explanation
10. According to the visual image, what is McNish?
  - A an island
  - B a seamount
  - C a no-take zone

**Task 2**

Read the text about The Royal Mint and answer questions 11-20.

**Paragraph 1**

As a **numismatist**, I find the rich history interwoven into the development of currency in the United Kingdom truly fascinating. The Royal Mint is the United Kingdom's official producer of British coins and bank notes, and is under an exclusive contract to supply the nation's coinage. It has been in existence for over a thousand years, evolving from humble origins to the well-renowned institution it is today.

**Paragraph 2**

The history of coins in Great Britain can be traced back to the second century BC when they were introduced by Celtic tribes from across the English Channel. After the Roman invasion in 43 AD, the Romans set up multiple mints across the land. However, once the Roman rule in Britain came to an end, no coins appear to have been minted in Britain until the emergence of English kingdoms in the sixth and seventh centuries. By 650 AD, as many as 30 mints are recorded across Britain. In 1279, the country's numerous mints were unified under a single system whereby control was centralised to the mint within the Tower of London, the seat of ancient government.

**Paragraph 3**

..... **11.** ..... A master worker was charged with hiring engravers, who **meticulously** carved out the intricate designs on the coins, as well as managing the moneyers whose role it was to produce the coins. This location worked well but, as production increased, the outdated mint machinery struggled to cope with growing demands. In 1707, the Acts of Union uniting England and Scotland into one country further exacerbated the issue. London took over production of Scotland's currency, replacing Scotland's pound Scots with the English pound sterling. This finally led to plans for the mint to move to a location that could fully accommodate its increased production.

**Paragraph 4**

..... **12.** ..... The new mint was completed in 1809 with the keys of the new mint ceremoniously delivered to the Constable of the Tower. The site was protected by a boundary wall patrolled by The Royal Mint's military guard. In the mid-1960s, Britain decimalised its currency, a project that involved re-minting millions of new coins. The site at Tower Hill was deemed inadequate to meet the anticipated high demand such a recoinage would entail. Therefore, plans were soon afoot to find a much more spacious location.

**Paragraph 5**

In 1968, The Royal Mint moved to its current location in Llantrisant, a small town in Wales. Nowadays, the Mint produces not only cash for British pockets but for many foreign countries. Last year, it produced more than two billion coins for more than 60 nations. During the same period, it only produced two million for British use. The Mint also produces a limited range of special coins to commemorate special occasions and people.

**Turn over page**

**Paragraph 6**

**13.** For example, a visitor centre was built in Llantrisant to generate additional income. At the centre, members of the public can enjoy a guided tour of the factory. Then, there is an interactive exhibition where visitors can learn about the history of the organisation, its production methods and the hobby of collecting coins.

**Paragraph 7**

In 2012, The Royal Mint made a successful bid to produce the 4,700 medals needed for the Olympics and Paralympics held in London. Since 2018, The Royal Mint has expanded into precious metals investment, recently announcing plans to build a new plant in South Wales to recover precious metals from electronic waste. It is hoped that this and similar initiatives will reverse the dwindling fortunes of this much-loved institution. However, the ongoing transition from physical currency to digital transactions has put the mint's main function into doubt, and its survival is by no means guaranteed.

**Questions 11-13**

Choose the best first sentence (A-D) for each paragraph. There is one first sentence you don't need.

- 11.** Paragraph 3 .....
- 12.** Paragraph 4 .....
- 13.** Paragraph 6 .....

- A** Over the last 20 years, The Royal Mint has been evolving its business to help offset declining cash use.
- B** For or more than 500 years, the operation continued to be based in the Tower of London: a secure, safe place to produce and store money.
- C** The Royal Mint is an important part of British culture for a number of reasons.
- D** In 1805, construction started on a new purpose-built mint on Tower Hill, opposite the Tower of London.

**Questions 14-18**

Choose the correct answer.

- 14.** According to paragraph 2, who set up the first mints in Great Britain?
- A the Celts
- B the Romans
- C the English
- 15.** According to paragraph 3, why did The Royal Mint move to a new location?
- A to improve the working environment
- B to accommodate new mint technology
- C to produce currency for England and Scotland

- 16.** According to paragraph 5, what type of coin does The Royal Mint produce the highest amount of?
- A British
  - B foreign
  - C commemorative
- 17.** At the end of paragraph 7, how does the writer feel about the future of The Royal Mint?
- A positive
  - B concerned
  - C nostalgic
- 18.** In paragraph 7, what is inferred by The Royal Mint producing medals for the Olympics and Paralympics?
- A The Royal Mint is a patriotic institution.
  - B The Royal Mint is supportive of international sports.
  - C The Royal Mint is diversifying production.

**Questions 19-20**

Choose the word or phrase with the same meaning as the word or phrase in **bold**.

- 19. numismatist** (paragraph 1)

- A British historian
- B coin specialist
- C Royal Mint official

- 20. meticulously** (paragraph 2)

- A roughly
- B fussily
- C carefully

**Turn over page**

**Task 3**

Read the five texts and answer questions 21-30.

**Text 1**

| English Folk Music   |      |            |            |       |
|--|------|------------|------------|-------|
| Who's Who  | News | Techniques | Contact Us | Forum |
| <p>Accomplished English violinist Nick Manders has just released a critically acclaimed <b>eponymous</b> album of stirring, self-penned compositions, skilfully infusing folky jigs, reels and ballads with elements of rock, jazz and other influences.</p> <p>Manders initially came to prominence in the mid-1980s, playing a pivotal role in the folk-rock band 'Standing Stones', notable for their experimentation with different sounds and genres.</p> <p>A virtuoso fiddler, Manders is a musical genius whose ability to improvise seemingly effortlessly makes each musical performance unique, unpredictable and breathtaking. A performance by Manders is not to be missed, and 'Nick' will no doubt become a must-have classic for folk enthusiasts for decades to come.</p> |      |            |            |       |

**Text 2**

| 'Nick' |   |
|--------|---|
| Irena  | Hi fellow folkies. Just downloaded 'Nick' and I can't get enough of it. Nick Manders at his best. What do you reckon?   |
| Cathy  | Couldn't agree more. In fact, I've been inspired to get my fiddle out and have a go at a few reels and gigs myself. Let's just say I'm getting there. I sound less like a bunch of cats anyway.   |
| Simon  | Sorry to be a downer but I just don't get it. It's just the same rehashed stuff he's been doing for donkey's years. I cannot fault his technique, but it's all a bit lacklustre to me.  |
| Cathy  | Seriously? Well, we'll have to agree to disagree. I personally feel it's his best release yet. I love how he jigs around the stage with a cheeky twinkle in his eye. Would love to see him play live.   |
| Irena  | Yeah, he's a mesmerising performer, isn't he? I run a small folk festival down in Cornwall. I've approached his agent to see if we can sign him up and I'm hoping he'll say 'yes'. Check us out - folkways.com - we'll be posting our confirmed line-up soon. |
| Cathy  | Sounds fab, Irena. I'm in Devon so could easily pop down to Cornwall. Fingers crossed you sign him up.  |

**Text 3**

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| To      | jamesmajor@folktalent.com                                  |
| From    | irena.polissya@techmail.com                                |
| Subject | Booking Confirmation for Nick Manders at Folkways Festival |

Dear James

I trust this email finds you in excellent health. As a representative of the Folkways Festival Organising Committee, I am writing to formally request confirmation regarding Nick Manders' availability to perform at this year's festival at Harewood Hall Farm from 1 to 3 August.

Nick Manders, with his virtuosity and distinctive fusion of folk-inspired melodies, stands as an ideal candidate for our festival. His performance promises to elevate the overall experience for our discerning audience and contribute significantly to the festival's success. Please be assured that we offer generous performance fees.

Folkways has firmly imprinted itself into the fabric of the folk festival calendar. We anticipate welcoming approximately 20,000 festivalgoers this year. We see potential for a **symbiotic** relationship between the festival and Nick - enabling a harmonious blend of artistry that enriches both the festival and your esteemed client.

We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and look forward to your positive confirmation.

Kind regards  
Irena Polissya

**Text 4****Nick Manders**

Picture a moonlit stage, the air palpable as folk legend Nick Manders steps into the spotlight, his fiddle poised.

Nick's latest masterpiece awaits its live debut, each note a brushstroke on the canvas of emotion. New works then make way for timeless classics etched into the collective memory of folk aficionados.

Join us under the star-studded sky and let Nick Manders ignite your soul, weaving memories that linger long after the last note fades.

**Turn over page**

## Text 5

## Music Performance Contract

This Music Performance Contract ("Contract") is entered into by and between:

Artist (Nick Manders): Hereinafter referred to as the "Artist"

Organiser (Irena Polissya): Hereinafter referred to as the "Organiser"

### Performance Details

- Performance Date and Time: The Artist shall perform on Saturday, August 2, from 9:00pm to 11:00pm.
- Venue: Folkways Festival, Harewood Hall Farm, Pendragon Road, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 4FZ.

### Compensation

- Fee: The Organiser agrees to compensate the Artist with £1,000 for the performance.
- Payment Terms:  
The Artist shall receive an upfront deposit of 20% upon signing this Contract.  
The remaining 80% balance shall be paid upon completion of the performance

### Cancellation and Termination

- Cancellation by Artist: In the event of cancellation by the Artist, the Organiser shall be notified at least 30 days in advance.
- Cancellation by Organiser: If the festival is cancelled by the Organiser, the Artist shall be compensated for any expenses incurred.

### Signatures

By signing below, the parties acknowledge their agreement to the terms outlined in this Contract.

|                                   | Signature | Date |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------|
| <b>Artist (Nick Manders)</b>      |           |      |
| <b>Organiser (Irena Polissya)</b> |           |      |

**Questions 21-23**

Match each text to its text purpose (A-D). There is one text purpose you don't need.

21. Text 1 .....
22. Text 2 .....
23. Text 3 .....

- A to propose an attractive business deal
- B to detail business terms and conditions
- C to advertise a new musical release
- D to encourage people to attend an event

**Questions 24-28**

Choose the correct answer.

24. Why is Text 5 written in a formal register?
- A to express dissatisfaction with a service
  - B to ensure the text is clear and precise
  - C to be polite and respectful to the recipient
25. In Text 2, what is Simon's main criticism of Nick Manders?
- A His violin playing lacks precision.
  - B His performance lacks professionalism.
  - C His new tunes lack originality.
26. According to Text 4, what can festivalgoers expect Nick Manders to play?
- A tracks requested by the audience
  - B tunes from his latest album
  - C previously unreleased material
27. What type of language is used in Text 4, paragraph 2?
- A metaphoric
  - B idiomatic
  - C colloquial
28. In Text 2, what is inferred about Cathy's violin playing?
- A She enjoys performing for her pets.
  - B She's improving with practice.
  - C She's an exceptionally good player.

**Turn over page**

### Questions 29-30

Choose the word or phrase with the same meaning as the word or phrase in **bold**.

**29. eponymous** (Text 1)

- A underrated
- B covers
- C self-named

**30. symbiotic** (Text 3)

- A mutually beneficial
- B exploitative of others
- C one-sided arrangement

**Important**  
Remember to circle your answers on the answer sheet.

| 1. What is this text about?<br>A books<br><u>B television</u><br>C cinemas | →            | <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Question</th><th>Answer</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1.</td><td>A <b>B</b> C</td></tr><tr><td>2.</td><td>A B C</td></tr><tr><td>3.</td><td>A B C</td></tr></tbody></table> | Question | Answer | 1. | A <b>B</b> C | 2. | A B C | 3. | A B C |
|--|--------------|--|----------|--------|----|--------------|----|-------|----|-------|
| Question   | Answer       |  |          |        |    |              |    |       |    |       |
| 1.   | A <b>B</b> C |  |          |        |    |              |    |       |    |       |
| 2.   | A B C        |  |          |        |    |              |    |       |    |       |
| 3.   | A B C        |  |          |        |    |              |    |       |    |       |

**End of exam**

## Skills for Life Level 2 Reading — Sample paper 1

### Answers

1. B
2. C
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. A
7. C
8. A
9. C
10. B
11. B
12. D
13. A
14. B
15. C
16. B
17. B
18. C
19. B
20. C
21. C
22. D
23. A
24. B
25. C
26. B
27. A
28. B
29. C
30. A