

Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life Level 2 – Reading Sample paper



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.

There are blank pages for rough notes at the end of this exam paper.

Certificate in ESOL Skills for Life

Level 2 – Reading

Time allowed: 60 minutes

This exam paper has 30 questions. Answer all questions.

Task 1

Task 1 contains a **descriptive** text. There are eight questions (1-8). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

Charles Darwin

There can be little doubt that the English naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was one of the most eminent scientists of all time.

He was the second youngest of six children and came from a scientific background. His father, Dr. R.W. Darwin, was a medical doctor, and his grandfather, Erasmus Darwin, was a famous botanist. Darwin attended Edinburgh University before studying at Cambridge. Despite his father's disappointment that he chose not to follow in his footsteps and become a doctor, Darwin still had an interest in science and it became apparent that he would pursue his love of nature by becoming a naturalist.

1. He was invited to join a scientific expedition along the coast of South America on a ship named the *HMS Beagle*. He saw the expedition as a great opportunity to develop his career. Little did he know then that it would also change the way people thought about the natural world.

2. He was puzzled by the fact that islands close to each other were home to different species of birds and tortoises, and that each of these species was perfectly adapted to its local environment. He also noticed similarities among species, along with variations based on the specific environment they lived in, leading him to believe that different species had gradually evolved from common ancestors.

3. This process occurred when species successfully adapted to meet the changing requirements of their natural habitat, while those that didn't evolve and reproduce died off. Consequently only those species that were most adapted to their natural habitat and environment continued to reproduce and live in that environment.

When the *Beagle* returned to England in 1836, Darwin's earlier observations led him towards the development of a revolutionary theory about the origin of living beings that was contrary to the popular view of other naturalists at the time. The common belief then was that all species either came into being at the start of the world, or were created over the course of natural history. In either case, the species were believed to remain much the same throughout time.

4. On November 24, 1859, he published a detailed explanation of his theory in his best-known work, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*. Darwin was right about how the book would be received: it was indeed controversial and shocking for many people in the nineteenth century, but it now forms the basis of modern biology.

Section A: Questions 1-4

Four sentences are missing from the text. Look at the following sentences and decide which one best fits each gap. Write the letter of your answer **on your answer sheet**. There is one sentence you do not need.

- A Although Darwin's theories were already well developed by the end of the 1830s, he waited almost twenty years before publishing them because he knew they would be contentious.
- B Shortly after the end of his studies, aged only twenty-two, he had a life-changing opportunity.
- C During the five-year journey on the *Beagle*, Darwin's most important studies of plants, birds, fossils and animals took place in the Galapagos Islands.
- D A series of books on plants was also published in his lifetime.
- E His observations led him to believe that species survived through 'natural selection'.

Section B: Questions 5-8

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

- 5. What is the main purpose of this text?
 - A to give a summary of the life of Charles Darwin
 - B to describe what Darwin observed on his journey
 - C to explain how Darwin developed his theories

- 6. According to the text, when Darwin accepted the invitation to join the *Beagle*
 - A he wanted to become a doctor like his father
 - B he did not know much about the journey
 - C he could not predict what the results would be

- 7. Darwin's theories were new because until then everyone agreed that plants and animals
 - A did not change
 - B developed over time
 - C were all created at the same time

- 8. According to the text, Darwin knew that his book
 - A would be popular
 - B would be very influential
 - C would surprise people

Task 2

Task 2 contains **explanatory** texts in a vocational context. There are eight questions (9-16). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

Life at University

Text one

Options in Higher Education

You can get a degree in a number of different ways. Traditionally, school-leavers study full time, either in their home town or in another part of the country. But with the hike in university fees, many people are looking for alternative ways to study.

A. Distance Learning: Study materials are posted on websites and students can access them remotely. You work on these materials in your own time, reading books and articles, working on tasks, and writing assignments. You need to choose a provider with a good reputation and experience in delivering distance learning courses, with support from a tutor who is always available by phone or email. With the more established providers, you'll be able to interact with other students through online conferences and study groups. Distance learners often have more motivation and time management skills than students attending a university, so success rates are often higher.

B. Blended Learning: This is becoming increasingly popular. Students attend some lectures and seminars at university and study online as well. A good course provider will ensure that you have:

- module documents in electronic format
- regular assessment and feedback
- opportunities for collaborative learning with your classmates
- a study schedule and personal development plan
- stimulating and interactive face-to-face learning and teaching styles

Although this mixed-mode approach is often slightly cheaper, the success rates on these courses tend to be lower.

C. Sandwich Courses: About 20% of degrees are sandwich courses. Students do a placement year or internship in industry, usually after the second year at university. This can extend your degree from three years to four, but the year will give you the opportunity to get practical experience and make contacts in the industry. Furthermore, you will be paid a salary, and these graduates are highly valued by employers. Some universities charge fees for this year, even though you are not attending lectures or meeting tutors, so take this into account when choosing your course.

Text two

Congratulations! You've got a place on the course you wanted, and you are about to start at the university you chose. Excited? Or nervous?

Leaving school and going to university can be a **daunting** prospect for many young people, if they choose to leave their family and friends and move to an unfamiliar area. However, this change is often one which turns out to be a positive, enlightening experience.

Living away from home makes you more independent; it helps you develop your social skills and broaden your horizons. Managing your money and making new friends may be skills you already have but they will be developed even further when you **embark** on your course at university.

Once you start university, you will find that staff and the older students will soon **allay** any initial fears you had. Fears will no longer be things that scare you but challenges, and these challenges you will relish. Life will become easier as you assimilate into the university lifestyle.

Section A: Questions 9-12

Choose the best type of course from text one to answer each of the following questions. Write **A** for 'distance learning' or **B** for 'blended learning' or **C** for 'sandwich courses' **on your answer sheet.**

9. This would increase your chances of getting a job.
10. You may not have to attend university at all.
11. These courses are longer than traditional degrees.
12. You combine learning from tutors with studying online.

Section B: Questions 13-16

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

13. What is the main purpose of text two?
 - A to persuade people to study at university
 - B to encourage people who are starting something new
 - C to warn people about the problems of studying full time
14. In text two, what does '**daunting**' mean?
 - A scary
 - B dangerous
 - C expensive
15. In text two, what does '**embark**' mean?
 - A start
 - B socialise
 - C study
16. In text two, what does '**allay**' mean?
 - A change
 - B increase
 - C calm

Task 3

Task 3 contains **persuasive** texts. There are eight questions (17-24). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

Text one**Mega supermarket to bring new life to sleepy town**

Yesterday SuperCo revealed plans to rejuvenate a quiet town by building a 'mega' food store on disused farm land around Calverford.

Chairman of SuperCo, James Ferguson, said, "This represents a unique opportunity for the local community. We will rejuvenate a run-down area and create a thriving retail enterprise, which includes drive-through fast-food outlets and a cinema, as well as the market leader, SuperCo. Overall, about 600 jobs should be created."

Mr Ferguson was keen to point out that the town has seen an 'exodus' of locals, fleeing to larger cities in the region to seek employment due to lack of opportunities in Calverford. "SuperCo's arrival will bring much-needed vibrancy to this quiet, sleepy town, not to mention economic benefits", he said.

The chairman himself has a considerable reputation for successful rural development, having completed a similar project in the North East, creating hundreds of jobs and changing the way people shop. He added that he believed large, low-cost supermarkets were the way forward for such communities in economically troubled times.

Text two

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the article in last night's Calverford News regarding the construction of a SuperCo supermarket on the Millcroft site.

The Millcroft site is a pleasant, green area enjoyed by everyone. It is scandalous that areas like this all over the country are being taken over by greedy, corporate organisations such as SuperCo, who claim to be doing a service to the community. If they had consulted local people who use this area of natural beauty they would have realised the depth of anger.

Frankly, Mr Ferguson's comments about Calverford being a 'sleepy' town are not making him any friends. There are, in fact, plenty of decent places for us to shop and we believe in supporting local businesses. He said that SuperCo's development would create job opportunities, but for whom? These new positions will be low-paid jobs that will subsequently require the company to bring in people from outside the town.

Mr Ferguson also seems oblivious to the disruption his supermarket will cause to the lives of this quiet town. We do not want hundreds of rough-looking people causing traffic chaos on their way to grab a few 30p tins of soup or other low-cost, low-quality products.

No, Mr Ferguson, Calverford does not want your supermarket, we will not be shopping there so I suggest you look for another idyllic nature spot to spoil and leave our 'sleepy' town to its slumber.

Yours faithfully,

J Yates

Questions 17-24

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

17. According to text one

- A Mr Ferguson is confident he has a solution to Calverford's problems
- B this is the first time Mr Ferguson has worked on a project of this size
- C Mr Ferguson is doubtful the community will accept the supermarket

18. Text one states that

- A a new supermarket will employ 600 people
- B a number of new businesses will open in Calverford
- C people would like to return to Calverford

19. What is the **main** purpose of text two?

- A to criticise the newspaper article
- B to argue that a new supermarket would be unpopular
- C to explain why people won't shop at the new supermarket

20. What is the **main** concern for the writer of text two?

- A people coming into the town
- B employment opportunities
- C the lack of public consultation

21. How is text two structured?

- A it first opposes Mr Ferguson's view, then complains about customers, and finally argues against benefits
- B it first argues against benefits, then discusses traffic problems, and finally expresses anger towards the plan
- C it first expresses community feeling, then argues against benefits, and finally makes a direct plea to Mr Ferguson

22. Text one uses the creation of jobs as an argument to support a new supermarket. Text two responds by arguing that

- A the town needs well-paid jobs
- B there are plenty of jobs in the town already
- C local people won't benefit from the new jobs

23. Which of the following statements is correct?

- A text two is more personal in nature than text one
- B text two includes more factual information than text one
- C both texts discuss the potential problems with the development

24. Both texts use the word 'quiet' to describe Calverford. This is seen as a positive quality by the writer of

- A text one
- B text two
- C both texts

Task 4

Task 4 contains a **persuasive** text. There are six questions (25-30). For each question, write the letter of the best answer **on your answer sheet**.

Questions 25-30 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.

Section A: Questions 25-28

This text has seven 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**.

There is an example. You do not need to use all of the paragraphs.

Example to introduce Nick Davidson A

25. to imply that Nick's cows are healthier than cattle on bigger farms _____

26. to tempt readers to place a large order for BARNFRESH cheese _____

27. to paint an idealistic picture of the location of Nick Davidson's farm _____

28. to justify the fact that BARNFRESH costs more than other brands _____

Section B: Questions 29-30

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

29. What is the main purpose of this text?

- A to persuade people that Nick is a good farmer
- B to get more people to buy BARNFRESH cheese
- C to advertise the benefits of keeping happy cows

30. This text primarily uses

- A factual information to prove Nick's way of farming makes the cheese better
- B historical evidence that Nick's farm produces high quality milk for the cheese
- C emotional language to convince readers to buy BARNFRESH cheese

Advertisement feature from BARNFRESH cheese

Meet Nick Davidson, one of our ethical farmers**Paragraph A**

It's 5am on a warm, sunny morning and farmer Nick Davidson whistles as he walks down the hill from his whitewashed farmhouse to visit his most precious possession: a herd of pure Jersey cows.

Paragraph B

With their big, soulful eyes and glorious honey-coloured coats, Nick's cows are a picture of peace and tranquillity on this fine May morning. Quietly munching on the lush green grass, the turquoise sea sparkling behind them, they could be from a different age, a time when life was simpler and people weren't always in a hurry.

Paragraph C

Nick's family have farmed Jersey cows for generations, and just like his father and grandfather before him, Nick will do anything to keep his cows happy. What's more – they seem to know it. As Nick opens the gate to his field, a few cows lift their heads and moo softly. They move towards him, ready for milking and soon all fifty of them are heading slowly down the lane towards the milking sheds.

Paragraph D

The milk from Nick's cows is beautiful: rich, creamy and full of natural goodness. No wonder, when Nick works so hard to give his animals the best of everything. Unlike cows that are farmed intensively, Nick's cattle enjoy a 100% outdoor life where they can breathe healthy sea air and graze on fields that are rich with nutritious clover.

Paragraph E

Nick reckons you can tell when milk comes from a happy cow. 'It's just got that special something,' he says. At BARNFRESH we are proud to say that Nick is just one of several carefully selected farmers who supply us with milk of the highest quality for our award-winning BARN FRESH cheese.

Paragraph F

Only available by mail order, BARNFRESH cheese has to be tasted to be believed. We'll admit it's a touch more expensive than your average Cheddar, but what's a few extra pence in return for exquisite flavour and the farming wisdom of generations?

Paragraph G

For more information, including details of how to order, visit www.barnfresh.com – you won't be disappointed. What's more, everyone who spends more than £20 in one order will receive a FREE copy of our recipe booklet. It's packed with mouth-watering suggestions of ways to use BARNFRESH cheese in your kitchen and give your cooking that special Jersey magic.

You can use these pages for rough notes. This booklet will **not** be marked.

