

ESOL Skills for Life

Level 2 – Reading

Practice paper 2



Time allowed: 60 minutes

- ▶ Please answer **all** questions.
- ▶ Circle 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 that best matches the purposes below. Circle 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 give details about Webb's crossing
2. to give information about Webb's early career
3. to compare Webb and famous people now
4. to show how he got the idea to swim the Channel

Questions 5-6

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

5. Webb first decided to swim the Channel because he
 - A was tired of his job as a merchant sailor
 - B failed to rescue a drowning man
 - C was inspired by the story of another swimmer
6. According to the text, Webb
 - A needed a boat during his swim
 - B kept warm using traditional methods
 - C was stung by jellyfish 8 hours before landing

The first person to swim the English Channel

Paragraph A

It was a brave Englishman called Captain Matthew Webb who first successfully crossed the English Channel – the sea that separates England from France. He swam it unaided on the 24 August 1875. At 22 miles, most of us would think twice about trying this even with modern equipment.

Paragraph B

Before he attempted the swim, Webb had a reputation of being a hero. He was born in 1848, and began his working life in the merchant navy, transporting goods from one country to another. In August 1872, while on a sea voyage, Webb dived into the Atlantic to rescue a passenger who had fallen overboard. After 35 minutes, he reappeared in the waves. He later received medals for his bravery.

Paragraph C

It was due to this incident that Webb became a professional distance swimmer. He became interested in the idea of swimming the English Channel when he read about a failed attempt by another swimmer. Webb set his eyes on becoming the first to do it, but his first attempt was unsuccessful due to very rough weather.

Paragraph D

It only took two weeks for Webb to attempt the crossing again. He prepared for the journey by covering himself with animal fat to keep warm, an old technique of sailors. He was followed by three boats, but he never had to climb aboard. Eight hours into his journey he was stung by jellyfish, but this did not stop him, and after 22 hours Webb climbed out of the water in triumph at Calais in France.

Paragraph E

Webb's amazing achievement was celebrated all over the world, and he became the biggest celebrity of his time. He made his living through being invited to speak at functions and through guest appearances. If Webb were alive today, he would have been a regular on the television.

Paragraph F

Since Webb's incredible journey, hundreds have succeeded in the crossing. The fastest time is recorded at six hours and fifty-five minutes, smashing Webb's time. Most have succeeded in crossing in much less than half the time it took Webb. But Webb did it all without modern equipment, and he was the first. For these reasons he will always be remembered as a national hero.

Turn over page

Task 2**Questions 7-10**

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

- A The activity is extremely time consuming and, according to a leading psychologist, this is the most important factor.
- B But who is buying these books and what has caused this obsession?
- C The main reason reported for this vast increase in sales is that colouring can have therapeutic properties.
- D Although there has been a great deal of support, these books have also faced some criticism.
- E It is a strange new habit as the same effect could be achieved by doing exercise.
- F (Example) ~~So what do these new books look like?~~

Questions 11-13

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

- 11. The writer uses brackets in paragraph three to
 - A state their own opinion
 - B express a contradiction
 - C give important information
- 12. In paragraph five, 'They' refers to the
 - A British press
 - B colouring books
 - C night-shift workers
- 13. In paragraph six, the writer is implying that
 - A the books are likely to divide public opinion
 - B everyone is likely to buy a copy of the book
 - C the books are a completely new phenomenon

Questions 14-16

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

- 14. **tranquil** (paragraph two) means
 - A energetic
 - B peaceful
 - C beautiful
- 15. **concentrate** (paragraph three) means
 - A relax
 - B focus
 - C stress
- 16. **sceptical** (paragraph six) means
 - A convinced
 - B opinionated
 - C suspicious

Colouring books for adults

Paragraph one

The latest craze that is sweeping the nation is the sale of colouring books for adults. Already loved by children all over the world, these products are topping the sales charts for online retailers. Publishers are having to quickly reprint more copies to cope with increasing demand. This sudden popularity with the grown-up market has taken everyone by surprise.

Paragraph two

 F (Example) . Unlike a traditional children's book with simple shapes for children to fill in without going over the lines, the adult versions are much more complex, featuring designs of intricate patterns, which can take hours to complete. They often feature **tranquil** scenes of forests and animals, which are intended to calm and soothe.

Paragraph three

 7. . According to scientists, it can help to relieve stress and help to relax an overworked brain in order to have a restful night's sleep. It is believed that the physical act of colouring allows the individual's brain to **concentrate** on the task at hand, without any stressful planning to do. What is more, it also allows people to express their own creativity and can improve coordination (which is something I could definitely do with!).

Paragraph four

 8. . It is the time spent doing the activity, as opposed to the colouring itself, which gives individuals time to reflect on how they are feeling. It is, in a sense, a modern day method of meditation, a practice based around using the awareness of your thoughts and feelings to create a state of calm.

Paragraph five

 9. . One theory is that in the modern world, individuals lead such busy lives, always rushing from one thing to the next, that people have actually forgotten how to relax and are taking to childlike pursuits in order to achieve a state of relaxation. According to the British press, the books are not aimed at people who are particularly interested in art. **They** are popular with overworked men and women alike. Some night-shift workers also use the books to simply stay alert.

Paragraph six

 10. . There are those who are **sceptical** and believe success is simply a result of a clever marketing campaign, as books like these have been around for decades. Some therapists also believe it would be more beneficial if people created their own art, rather than colouring someone else's. However, whether you love them or loathe them, it looks like the books are here to stay. So, will you be buying a copy?

Turn over page

Task 3

Texts A-E on pages 8-10 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 circle the letter of the text **on your answer sheet**. One of the texts does not have a purpose listed below.

Example: to reassure **and** give a further explanation

.....C.....

17. to make objections **and** request action

.....

18. to confirm an arrangement **and** give further details

.....

19. to give a formal announcement **and** highlight the main points

.....

Questions 20-22

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

20. Text C suggests that

- A people can study at a further education college in the town centre
- B if the shopping centre is built, extra traffic would cause problems
- C the town centre will improve after the shopping centre is built

21. Text D is a

- A formal description of the shopping centre
- B positive report of a visit to the development
- C list of job opportunities at the shopping centre

22. It is clear from all the texts that

- A traffic control is an important issue for both developers and residents
- B there are not enough employment opportunities in Bailmore
- C increasing housing is a main part of the development

Questions 23-27

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

Example: *Introduction* A

23. An opportunity to give your opinion

24. The plan for the centre's design

25. What the research shows

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

26. At the shopping centre, Samina Singh was told that people

- A were ready for the formal opening
- B would be able to order a new dish
- C were worried about slow business

27. To get tickets for the opening ceremony, Mira applied online and now she

- A needs to collect them at the new shopping centre
- B has to print off the tickets before going to the event
- C must wait for a confirmation email from the organisers

Questions 28-30

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

28. substantially (text A)

- A greatly
- B slowly
- C officially

29. regenerate (text C)

- A reuse
- B renew
- C reverse

30. exquisite (text D)

- A ordinary
- B beautiful
- C colourful

Turn over page

Text A

Bailmore Shopping Centre Public Notice

A (Example)

We, the Bailmore Property Group, propose the development of a shopping centre on the site of the disused Grant Mill factory. We believe this to be the best possible use of the land. The proposal for the Bailmore Shopping Centre is summarised below.

B

Bailmore does not have a shopping centre and our surveys show that people are travelling long distances to other shopping centres – taking money away from local businesses. Furthermore, they demonstrate that having our own shopping centre will encourage people to spend money locally, create much-needed job opportunities and strengthen community ties.

C

The key part of our proposal is that the shopping centre will be under a large, circular glass roof, and contain shops and restaurants, mainly owned or rented by local business people. It will be surrounded by a large, free car park and attractive green areas. We also propose to construct 100 flats, which will only be available to Bailmore residents.

D

We recognise that in the short term there will be some disruption to the town centre as businesses relocate from there to the shopping centre. However, those businesses will benefit from having new premises at affordable rents, and more customers. The building of the shopping centre is only the first phase in our vision for the development of Bailmore. In the second phase, we plan to eventually focus on improving the roads and transport links, and to redesign the town centre, making it a vibrant, cultural destination.

E

In the long term, there will be several benefits to Bailmore. Residents will be able to enjoy the convenience of shopping under one roof, almost on their doorstep. Job prospects will increase **substantially** and it is the intention to hold community events there, such as those for charity fundraising.

F

We invite all interested parties to attend a public meeting later this month to discuss the plans. Information is available on our website www.bailmoredevelopment.co.uk. Please visit the Town Hall where detailed plans are available to the public in the Emerald Room.

Paul Craston
Bailmore Property Group

Text B


www.bailmoresayno.co.uk

Say No to Bailmore Shopping Centre!

We must stop the centre being built! Shopping centres are a threat to town centre businesses. The town centre should be developed and more jobs created there instead of spending money on a shopping centre. What's going to happen when everyone starts going out to the old Grant Mill? Even more people will lose their jobs. And just think of the traffic! The roads going in that direction are very narrow. There'll be huge jams!

Join us in protesting against the shopping centre.

Email Paul Craston at the Bailmore Property Group, paul.bailmoreshoppingcentre@email.com

Come to a public meeting this Friday, 7pm, at the Bailmore Community Centre on Fen Road.

Contact us at: mira.bailmoresayno@email.com

Text C

From: paul.bailmoreshoppingcentre@email.com

To: mira.bailmoresayno@email.com

Subject: Shopping Centre

Dear Mira

Thank you for your email.

I understand that you have some concerns about the proposed Bailmore Shopping Centre. Your main worries seem to be about the effect the shopping centre will have on the town centre, and the increased traffic on the roads to the old Grant Mill site.

I would like to address your points. Firstly, it's not accurate that the town centre is thriving. Many businesses have been failing for years as shoppers are going to out-of-town shopping centres, and people have been struggling to find work in Bailmore.

If you looked at our detailed plans you would see that in the second phase of our development we intend to **regenerate** the town centre and to create better transport links by improving the roads and building a tram network. As well as not having a shopping centre, Bailmore also lacks a cinema, theatre or concert hall. Bailmore would also benefit from having its own purpose-built further education college. All these developments would bring much-needed jobs to our town.

Please go and look at the plans and do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions.

Kindest regards

Paul Craston
Bailmore Property Group

Turn over page

Text D

BAILMORE SHOPPING CENTRE – OPENING CEREMONY!

by Samina Singh

At last the construction of the long-awaited shopping centre is almost complete and with the formal opening ceremony only a week away, people are hard at work getting the shops and restaurants ready for business.

I went to speak to some of the lucky people who'll be working there!

Samira Ali, 23, has a trainee manager's job in Vista Fashions. I met her as she was putting some **exquisite** shirts on the shelves. The stitching detail was incredible. 'I haven't been able to find a job since I left university,' she told me, 'and that was two years ago. I'm so happy!'

Next, I went to the Food Hall and found Boris Lopez, 48, helping his boss Luigi, business owner. While he polished the tables he cheerfully explained, 'Luigi could only employ me part-time when the restaurant was in town, business was so slow! But now we're bound to be busier he's given me a full-time job! And we've created a Bailmore Pizza Special to celebrate our fresh start!' Coming to the ceremony? Make sure you arrive early to get your £10 vouchers! They'll be given to the first 500 people!

Remember to allow extra time for your journey!

Do you have a shopping centre story to tell?
Contact: saminasingh@bailmorenews.co.uk

Text E

To: dominica@email.com
From: mira@email.com
Subject: Friday

Hi Dominica

I'm so happy you're coming to the opening ceremony for the shopping centre! I've booked our tickets on the centre's website and printed off the confirmation — we just need to get there early to pick them up. It's going to be brilliant! There will be fireworks, the Bailmore Boys are singing, there's free food and they're giving away £10 shopping vouchers! I know I was against it, but I really think it's the start of something great for Bailmore! And about time too! My friend, Nikki, was so fed up when she lost her job last year and now she's got a fantastic new one at the shopping centre. Maybe we'll see her there!

I'll come for you at 5pm on Friday. It starts at 7pm but it's going to be very busy and the traffic is bound to be horrendous!

Lots of love

Mira

xxxxxxxxxx

End of exam

Skills for Life Level 2 Reading – Practice paper 2

Answers

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