

IELTS Academic Reading Sample 49 - Spoken Corpus Comes To Life

You should spend about **20** minutes on Questions **1-12** which are based on Reading Passage 49 below.

Spoken Corpus Comes To Life

A The compiling of dictionaries has been historically the provenance of studious professorial types - usually bespectacled - who love to pore over weighty tomes and make pronouncements on the finer nuances of meaning. They were probably good at crosswords and definitely knew a lot of words, but the image was always rather dry and dusty. The latest technology, and simple technology at that, is revolutionising the content of dictionaries and the way they are put together.

B For the first time, dictionary publishers are incorporating real, spoken English into their data. It gives lexicographers (people who write dictionaries) access to a more vibrant, up-to-date vernacular language which has never really been studied before. In one project, 150 volunteers each agreed to discreetly tie a Walkman recorder to their waist and leave it running for anything up to two weeks. Every conversation they had was recorded. When the data was collected, the length of tapes was 35 times the depth of the Atlantic Ocean. Teams of audio typists transcribed the tapes to produce a computerised database of ten million words.

C This has been the basis - along with an existing written corpus - for the Language Activator dictionary, described by lexicographer Professor Randolph Quirk as “the book the world has been waiting for”. It shows advanced foreign learners of English how the language is really used. In the dictionary, key words such as “eat” are followed by related phrases such as “wolf down” or “be a picky eater”, allowing the student to choose the appropriate phrase.

D “This kind of research would be impossible without computers,” said Delia Summers, a director of dictionaries. “It has transformed the way lexicographers work. If you look at the word “like”, you may intuitively think that the first and most frequent meaning is the verb, as in “I like swimming”. It is not. It is the preposition, as in: “she walked like a duck”. Just because a word or phrase is used doesn’t mean it ends up in a dictionary. The sifting out process is as vital as ever. But the database does allow lexicographers to search for a word and find out how frequently it is used - something that could only be guessed at intuitively before.

E Researchers have found that written English works in a very different way to spoken English. The phrase “say what you like” literally means “feel free to say anything you want”, but in reality it is used, evidence shows, by someone to prevent the other person voicing disagreement. The phrase “it”’s a question of crops up on the database over and over again. It has nothing to do with enquiry, but it’s one of the most frequent English phrases which has never been in a language learner’s dictionary before: it is now.

F The Spoken Corpus computer shows how inventive and humorous people are when they are using language by twisting familiar phrases for effect. It also reveals the power of the pauses and noises we use to play for time, convey emotion, doubt and irony.

G For the moment, those benefiting most from the Spoken Corpus are foreign learners. "Computers allow lexicographers to search quickly through more examples of real English," said Professor Geoffrey Leech of Lancaster University. "They allow dictionaries to be more accurate and give a feel for how language is being used." The Spoken Corpus is part of the larger British National Corpus, an initiative carried out by several groups involved in the production of language learning materials: publishers, universities and the British Library.

Questions 1-6

Reading Passage 1 has seven paragraphs (**A-G**).

Choose the most suitable heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.

Write the appropriate numbers (**i-xi**) in boxes **1-6** on your answer sheet. Paragraph **C** has been done for you as an example.

NB *There are more headings than paragraphs so you will not use all of them. You may use any heading more than once.*

List of Headings

- i Grammar is corrected
- ii New method of research
- iii Technology learns from dictionaries
- iv Non-verbal content
- v The first study of spoken language
- vi Traditional lexicographical methods
- vii Written English tells the truth
- viii New phrases enter dictionary
- ix A cooperative research project
- x Accurate word frequency counts
- xi Alternative expressions provided

1 Paragraph A

2 Paragraph B

Example

Paragraph C

Answer:

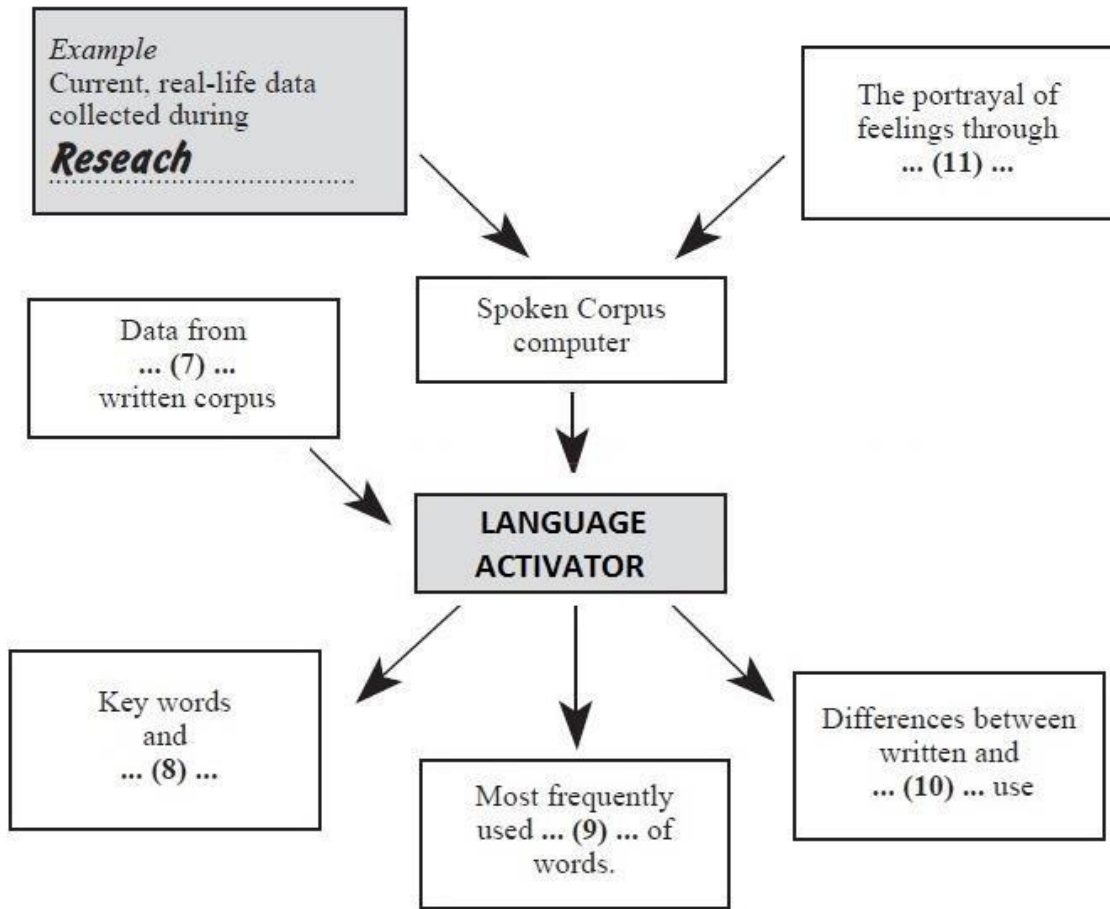
xi

- 3 Paragraph D
- 4 Paragraph E
- 5 Paragraph F
- 6 Paragraph G

Questions 7-11

The diagram below illustrates the information provided in paragraphs **B-F** of Reading Passage 127
 Complete the labels on the diagram with an appropriate word or words **Use NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each space.

Write your answers in boxes **7-11** on your answer sheet.



Question 12:

Choose the appropriate letter **A-D** and write it in box **12** on your answer sheet

12 Why was this article written?

- A To give an example of a current dictionary.

- B To announce a new approach to dictionary writing.
- C To show how dictionaries have progressed over the years.
- D To compare the content of different dictionaries

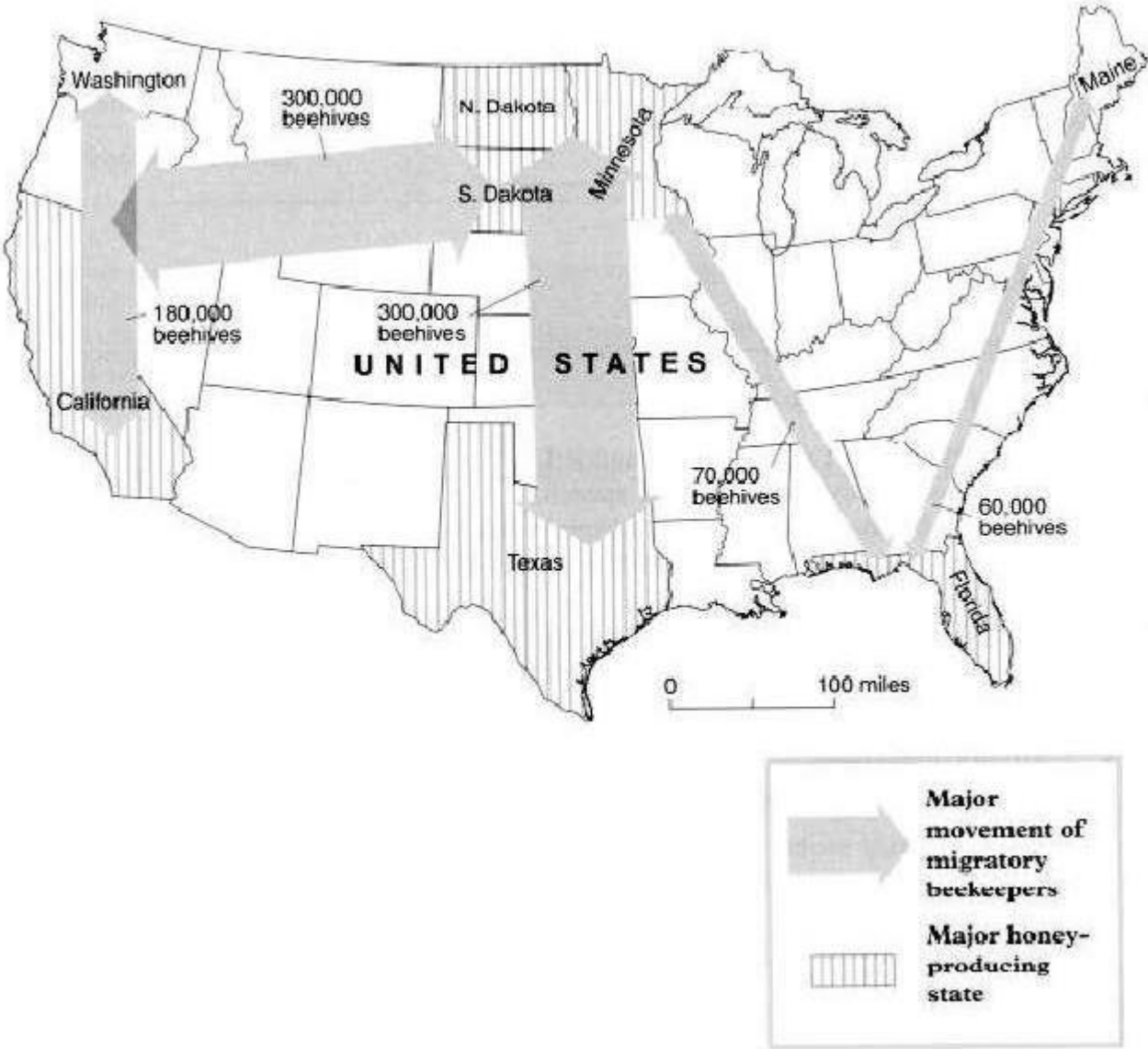
Answer:

- 1 vi
- 2 ii
- 3 x
- 4 viii
- 5 iv
- 6 ix
- 7 existing
- 8 (related) phrases
- 9 meanings / forms
- 10 spoken / real/ oral
- 11 noise / pauses / noises and pauses
- 12 B

IELTS Academic Reading Sample 50 - Migratory Beekeeping

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 13-27 which are based on Reading Passage 50 below.

MIGRATORY BEEKEEPING



Taking Wing

To eke out a full-time living from their honeybees, about half the nation's 2,000 commercial beekeepers pull up stakes each spring, migrating north to find more flowers for their bees. Besides turning floral nectar into honey, these hardworking insects also pollinate crops for farmers -for a fee. As autumn approaches, the beekeepers pack up their hives and go south, scrambling for pollination contracts in hot spots like California's fertile Central Valley.

Of the 2,000 commercial beekeepers in the United States about half migrate. This pays off in two ways. Moving north in the summer and south in the winter lets bees work a longer blooming season, making more honey — money — for their keepers. Second, beekeepers can carry their hives to farmers who need bees to pollinate their crops. Every spring a migratory beekeeper in California may move up to 160 million bees to flowering fields in Minnesota and every winter his family may haul the hives back to California, where farmers will rent the bees to pollinate almond and cherry trees.

Migratory beekeeping is nothing new. The ancient Egyptians moved clay hives, probably on rafts, down the Nile to follow the bloom and nectar flow as it moved toward Cairo. In the 1880s North American beekeepers experimented with the same idea, moving bees on barges along the Mississippi and on waterways in Florida, but their lighter, wooden hives kept falling into the water. Other keepers tried the railroad and horsedrawn wagons, but that didn't prove practical. Not until the 1920s when cars and trucks became affordable and roads improved, did migratory beekeeping begin to catch on.

For the Californian beekeeper, the pollination season begins in February. At this time, the beehives are in particular demand by farmers who have almond groves; they need two hives an acre. For the three-week long bloom, beekeepers can hire out their hives for \$32 each. It's a bonanza for the bees too. Most people consider almond honey too bitter to eat so the bees get to keep it for themselves.

By early March it is time to move the bees. It can take up to seven nights to pack the 4,000 or so hives that a beekeeper may own. These are not moved in the middle of the day because too many of the bees would end up homeless. But at night, the hives are stacked onto wooden pallets, back-to-back in sets of four, and lifted onto a truck. It is not necessary to wear gloves or a beekeeper's veil because the hives are not being opened and the bees should remain relatively quiet. Just in case some are still lively, bees can be pacified with a few puffs of smoke blown into each hive's narrow entrance.

In their new location, the beekeeper will pay the farmer to allow his bees to feed in such places as orange groves. The honey produced here is fragrant and sweet and can be sold by the beekeepers. To encourage the bees to produce as much honey as possible during this period, the beekeepers open the hives and stack extra boxes called supers on top. These temporary hive extensions contain frames of empty comb for the bees to fill with honey. In the brood chamber below, the bees will stash honey to eat later. To prevent the queen from

crawling up to the top and laying eggs, a screen can be inserted between the brood chamber and the supers. Three weeks later the honey can be gathered.

Foul smelling chemicals are often used to irritate the bees and drive them down into the hive's bottom boxes, leaving the honeyfilled supers more or less bee free. These can then be pulled off the hive. They are heavy with honey and may weigh up to 90 pounds each. The supers are taken to a warehouse. In the extracting room, the frames are tilted out and lowered into an "uncapper" where rotating blades shave away the wax that covers each cell. The uncapped frames are put in a carousel that sits on the bottom of a large stainless steel drum. The carousel is filled to capacity with 72 frames. A switch is flipped and the frames begin to whirl at 300 revolutions per minute; centrifugal force throws the honey out of the combs. Finally the honey is poured into barrels for shipment.

After this, approximately a quarter of the hives weakened by disease, mites, or an ageing or dead queen, will have to be replaced. To create new colonies, a healthy double hive, teeming with bees, can be separated into two boxes. One half will hold the queen and a young, already mated queen can be put in the other half, to make two hives from one. By the time the flowers bloom, the new queens will be laying eggs, filling each hive with young worker bees. The beekeeper's family will then migrate with them to their summer location.

[Adapted from "America's Beekeepers: Hives for Hire" by Alan Mairson, National Geographic.]

Questions 13-19

The flow chart below outlines the movements of the migratory beekeeper as described in Reading Passage 126.

Complete the flow chart. Choose your answers from the box at the bottom of the page and write your answers in boxes 13-19 on your answer sheet.

BEEKEEPER MOVEMENTS

Example

Answer

In February, Californian farmers hire bees to help **pollinate** almond trees.

In March, beekeepers **(13)** for migration at night when the hives are **(14)** and the bees are generally tranquil. A little **(15)** can ensure that this is the case.

They transport their hives to orange groves where farmers **(16)** beekeepers for placing them on their land. Here the bees make honey.

After three weeks, the supers can be taken to a warehouse where (17)..... are used to remove the wax and extract the honey from the (18)

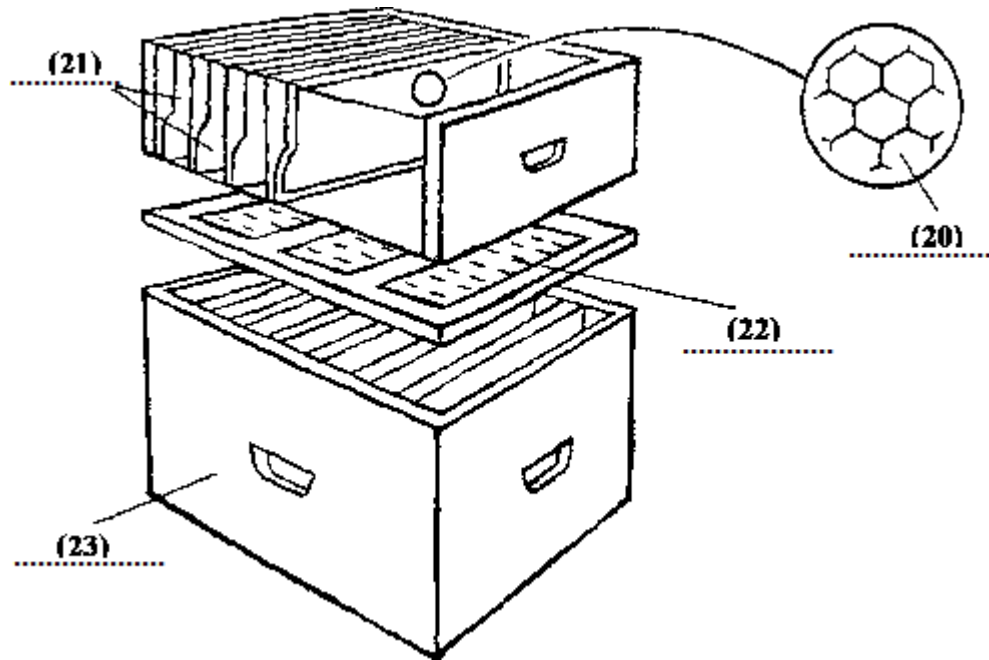
After the honey collection, the old hives are rejected. Good double hives are (19)..... and re-queened and the beekeeper transports them to their summer base.

List of Words/Phrases

- | | | |
|-----------|------------|---------|
| smoke | chemicals | pay |
| barrels | protection | charge |
| set off | light | split |
| pollinate | machines | supers |
| combs | screen | prepare |
| full | empty | queens |

Questions 20-23

Label the diagram below Choose **ONE OR TWO WORDS** from the Reading Passage for each answer Write your answers in boxes **20-23** on your answer sheet.



Questions 24-27

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 126? In boxes 24-27 write.

YES if the statement agrees with the information given

NO if the statement contradicts the information given

NOT GIVEN if there is no information about this

24 The Egyptians keep bees on the banks of the Nile.

25 First attempts at migratory beekeeping in America were unsuccessful.

26 Bees keep honey for themselves in the bottom of the hive.

27 The honey is spun to make it liquid.

Answer:

13 prepare

14 full

15 smoke

16 charge

17 machines

18 combs

19 split

20 (hexagonal) cells// comb

21 frames (of combs)

22 screen

23 brood chamber

24 NOT GIVEN

25 YES

26 YES

27 NO

IELTS Academic Reading Sample 46 - 100 Years of the Western Workplace

100 Years of the Western Workplace

A Conditions in the working environment of Western countries changed significantly over the 20th century.

Though not without some associated problems, these changes may be viewed generally as positive: child labour all but ceased, wages rose, the number of working hours in a week decreased, pension policies became standard, fringe benefits multiplied and concerns over health and safety issues were enforced.

B The collection of data relating to work conditions also became a far more exact science. In particular, there were important developments in methodology and data gathering. Additionally, there was a major expansion of the data collection effort – more people became involved in learning about the workplace; and, for the first time, results started to be published. This being the case, at the end of the century, not only were most workers better off than their early 20th century predecessors had been, but they were also in a position to understand how and why this was the case. By carefully analyzing the statistical data made available, specific changes in the workplace - not least regarding the concept of what "work" should involve - became clearly discernible.

C The most obvious changes to the workplace involved the size and composition of the countries' workforces. Registering only 24 million in 1900 (and including labourers of age ten and up) and 139 million (aged 16 and older), the size of America's workforce, for instance, increased by almost six fold – in line with its overall population growth. At the same time, the composition of the workforce shifted from industries dominated by primary production occupations, such as farmers and foresters, to those dominated by professional, technical and, in particular, service workers. At the beginning of the 20th century, 38% of all American workers were employed on farms, by the end of the same century, that figure had fallen to less than 3 %.

D In Europe, much the same process occurred. In the 1930's, in every European country, bar Britain and Belgium, more than 20 per cent of the population worked in agriculture. By the 1980's, however, the farming populations of all developed countries, excluding Eastern Europe, had dropped to ten per cent and often even lower. At the same time, capital intensive farming using highly mechanized techniques dramatically reduced the numbers needed to farm there.

E And therein lay the problem. While the workplace became a safer and more productive environment, a world away from the harsh working conditions of our forefathers, the switch from an agricultural to a modern working environment also created massive unemployment in many countries. Fundamental to this problem was the widespread move from the countryside to the city. Having lost their livelihoods, the world's peasant populations

amassed in ever larger numbers in already crowded communities, where rates of job growth failed to keep up with internal migration. As a result, thousands were left squatting in shanty towns on the periphery of cities, waiting for jobs that might never arrive. While this was (and is) particularly true of Third World countries, the same phenomenon could also be witnessed in several American, French, English and German cities in the late 20th century.

F From a different and more positive perspective, in the 20th century, women became visible and active members of all sectors of the Western workplace. In 1900, only 19% of European women of working age participated in the labour force; by 1999, this figure had risen to 60%. In 1900, only 1% of the country's lawyers and 6% of its physicians were female; by contrast, the figures were 29% and 24% in 1999. A recent survey of French teenagers, both male and female, revealed that over 50% of those polled thought that, in any job (bar those involving military service), women make better employees, as they are less likely to become riled under stress and less overtly competitive than men.

G The last and perhaps most significant change to the 20th century workplace involved the introduction of technology. The list of technological improvements in the workplace is endless: communication and measuring devices, computers of all shapes and sizes, x ray, lasers, neon lights, stainless steel, and so on and on. Such improvements led to a more productive, safer work environment. Moreover, the fact that medicine improved so dramatically led to an increase in the average lifespan among Western populations. In turn, workers of very different ages were able to work shoulder to shoulder, and continue in their jobs far longer.

H By the end of 20th century, the Western workplace had undergone remarkable changes. In general, both men and women worked fewer hours per day for more years under better conditions. Yet, the power of agriculture had waned as farmers and foresters moved to cities to earn greater salaries as annalists and accountants. For those who could not make this transition, however, life at the dawn of the new century seemed less appealing.

Questions 1-5

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the reading paragraph for each answer.

Write the answer on your answer sheet from 1-5.

Several changes took place in the working environment in the 20th century: **1**stopped almost completely in most countries, salaries increased while the number of working hours in a week decreased.

Because of the improvement in both the methodology and the carrying out of data collection, **2**.....at the end of the century were in a better position to understand how and why their lives had been made easier.

The most significant changes to the work environment in the West concerned its **3**

In 1999, **4**.....of European women of working age participated in the work force.

A particularly significant change to the 20th century workplace came via **5**which brought about a long list of innovations and improvements.

Questions 6-10

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the passage?

Write:

TRUE if the statement agrees with the writer

FALSE if the statement contradicts the writer

NOT GIVEN if there is no specific information about this in the passage

6. No significant drawbacks accompanied changes in the work environment during the 20th century.

7. America and Europe shared the same overall trends in terms of the development of the workplace over the last century.

8. The appearance of shanty towns after farmers move into city areas occurred primarily in the Third World.

9. In 1900, 19% of North American women of working age participated in the workforce.

10. Improvements in medicine led to workers earning more over a longer period.

Questions 11-15

Below is a summary of the passage. Using information from the passage, complete the summary.

Choose **NO MORE THAN FOUR WORDS** from the passage to complete each space

The Western workplace changed dramatically in the course of the 20th century. Most of these changes should be viewed as positive; and, thanks to important developments in **11** more people than ever were able to appreciate the improvements made. The most obvious changes concerned the **12**of the workforce.

Another major trend was the gradual urbanization of countries, as farmers and other primary producers left their homes and went to the cities in search of work. Sadly, **13**grew up as many waited on the outskirts of cities throughout both developing and developed countries, waiting for work.

Another significant difference between the beginning and close of the 20th century was the number of **14**that chose to take jobs. Impressively, moreover, many of the professions they chose had previously been considered the preserve of men alone.

The last great change was the introduction of technology. Technological improvements in the field of **15**.....led to an increase in the average life span and, not surprisingly, also resulted in an older working population.

Answer:

1. child labour: *(paragraph A)*
2. workers: *(paragraph B)*
3. size and composition: *(paragraph C)*
4. 60%: *(paragraph F)*
5. technology: *(paragraph G)*
6. No
7. NOT GIVEN
8. YES
9. NO
10. NOT GIVEN
11. methodology and data gathering
12. size and composition
13. shanty towns
14. women/ females
15. medicine

IELTS Academic Reading Sample 45 - Votes for Women

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-27 which are based on Reading Passage 45 below.

VOTES FOR WOMEN

*The suffragette movement, which campaigned for votes for women in the early twentieth century, is most commonly associated with the Pankhurst family and militant acts of varying degrees of violence. The Museum of London has drawn on its archive collection to convey a fresh picture with its exhibition. **The Purple, White and Green: Suffragettes in London 1906 – 14***

The name is a reference to the colour scheme that the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) created to give the movement a uniform, nationwide image. By doing so, it became one of the first groups to project a corporate identity, and it is this advanced marketing strategy, along with the other organisational and commercial achievements of the WSPU, to which the exhibition is devoted.



Formed in 1903 by the political campaigner Mrs Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters Christabel and Sylvia, the WSPU began an educated campaign to put women's suffrage on the political agenda. New Zealand, Australia and parts of the United States had already enfranchised women, and growing numbers of their British counterparts wanted the same opportunity.

With their slogan 'Deeds not words', and the introduction of the colour scheme, the WSPU soon brought the movement the cohesion and focus it had previously lacked. Membership grew rapidly as women deserted the many other, less directed, groups and joined it. By 1906 the WSPU headquarters, called the Women's Press Shop, had been established in Charing Cross Road and in spite of limited communications (no radio or television, and minimal use of the telephone) the message had spread around the country, with members and branch officers stretching to as far away as Scotland.

The newspapers produced by the WSPU, first Votes for Women and later The Suffragette, played a vital role in this communication. Both were sold throughout the country and proved an invaluable way of informing members of meetings, marches, fund-raising events and the latest news and views on the movement.

Equally importantly for a rising political group, the newspaper returned a profit. This was partly because advertising space was bought in the paper by large department stores such as Selfridges, and jewellers such as Mappin & Webb. These two, together with other like-minded commercial enterprises sympathetic to the cause, had quickly identified a direct way to reach a huge market of women, many with money to spend.

The creation of the colour scheme provided another money-making opportunity which the WSPU was quick to exploit. The group began to sell playing cards, board games, Christmas and greeting cards, and countless other goods, all in the purple, white and green colours. In 1906 such merchandising of a corporate identity was a new marketing concept.

But the paper and merchandising activities alone did not provide sufficient funds for the WSPU to meet organisational costs, so numerous other fund-raising activities combined to fill the coffers of the 'war chest'. The most notable of these was the Woman's Exhibition, which took place in 1909 in a Knightsbridge ice-skating rink, and in 10 days raised the equivalent of £250,000 today.

The Museum of London's exhibition is largely visual, with a huge number of items on show. Against a quiet background hum of street sounds, copies of The Suffragette, campaign banners and photographs are all on display, together with one of Mrs Pankhurst's shoes and a number of purple, white and green trinkets.

Photographs depict vivid scenes of a suffragette's life: WSPU members on a self-proclaimed 'monster' march, wearing their official uniforms of a white frock decorated with purple, white and green accessories; women selling The Suffragette at street corners, or chalking up pavements with details of a forthcoming meeting.

Windows display postcards and greeting cards designed by women artists for the movement, and the quality of the artwork indicates the wealth of resources the WSPU could call on from its talented members.

Visitors can watch a short film made up of old newsreels and cinema material which clearly reveals the political mood of the day towards the suffragettes. The programme begins with a short film devised by the 'antis' - those opposed to women having the vote - depicting a suffragette as a fierce harridan bullying her poor, abused husband. Original newsreel footage shows the suffragette Emily Wilding Davison throwing herself under King George V's horse at a famous race.

Although the exhibition officially charts the years 1906 to 1914, graphic display boards outlining the bills of enfranchisement of 1918 and 1928, which gave the adult female populace of Britain the vote, show what was achieved. It demonstrates how advanced the suffragettes were in their thinking, in the marketing of their campaign, and in their work as shrewd and skilful image-builders. It also conveys a sense of the energy and ability the suffragettes brought to their fight for freedom and equality. And it illustrates the intelligence employed by women who were at that time deemed by several politicians to have 'brains too small to know how to vote'.

Questions 14 and 15

Choose the appropriate letters **A-D** and write them in boxes **14** and **15** on your answer sheet.

14 What is the main aspect of the suffragette movement's work to which the exhibition at the Museum of London is devoted?

- A the role of the Pankhurst family in the suffrage movement
- B the violence of the movement's political campaign
- C the success of the movement's corporate image
- D the movement's co-operation with suffrage groups overseas

15 Why was the WSPU more successful than other suffrage groups?

- A Its leaders were much better educated.
- B It received funding from movements abroad.
- C It had access to new technology.
- D It had a clear purpose and direction.

Question 16

Choose **TWO** letters **A-E** and write them in boxes **16** on your answer sheet.

In which **TWO** of the following years were laws passed allowing British women to vote?

- A 1906
- B 1909
- C 1914

D 1918

E 1928

Questions 17-19

Complete the notes below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from Reading Passage for each answer.

write the answers in boxes **17-19** on your answer sheet.

Three ways in which the WSPU raised money:

- the newspapers: mainly through selling**17**.....
- merchandising activities: selling a large variety of goods produced in their**18**.....
- additional fund-raising activities: for example,**19**.....

Questions 20-26

Do the following statements reflect the situation as described by the writer in Reading Passage?

Write:

YES if the statement reflects the situation as described by the writer

NO if the statement contradicts the writer

NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to know what the situation is from the passage

20 In 1903 women in Australia were still not allowed to vote.

21 The main organs of communication for the WSPU were its two newspapers.

22 The work of the WSPU was mainly confined to London and the south.

23 The WSPU's newspapers were mainly devoted to society news and gossip.

24 The Woman's Exhibition in 1909 met with great opposition from Parliament.

25 The Museum of London exhibition includes some of the goods sold by the movement.

26 The opponents of the suffragettes made films opposing the movement.

Question 27

Choose the appropriate letter **A-D** write it in boxes **27** on your answer sheet.

The writer of the article finds the exhibition to be

A misleading.

B exceptional.

C disappointing.

D informative.

Answer:

14 C

15 D

16 D and E

17 (selling) advertising (space)

18 colour scheme // (three) colours // purple, white (and) green

19 (the) Woman's Exhibition

20 NO

21 YES

22 NO

23 NO

24 NOT GIVEN

25 YES

26 YES

27 D