

IELTS Academic Reading Sample 153 - Air Pollution

READING PASSAGE 23

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1—13 which are based on Reading Passage 153 below.

PART 1

A Air pollution is increasingly becoming the focus of government and citizen concern around the globe. From Mexico City and New York, to Singapore and Tokyo, new solutions to this old problem are being proposed, Mailed and implemented with ever increasing speed. It is feared that unless pollution reduction measures are able to keep pace with the continued pressures of urban growth, air quality in many of the world's major cities will deteriorate beyond reason.

B Action is being taken along several fronts: through new legislation, improved enforcement and innovative technology. In Los Angeles, state regulations are forcing manufacturers to try to sell ever cleaner cars: their first of the cleanest, titled "Zero Emission Vehicles", have to be available soon, since they are intended to make up 2 percent of sales in 1997. Local authorities in London are campaigning to be allowed to enforce anti-pollution laws themselves; at present only the police have the power to do so, but they tend to be busy elsewhere. In Singapore, renting out road space to users is the way of the future.

C When Britain's Royal Automobile Club monitored the exhausts of 60,000 vehicles, it found that 12 per cent of them produced more than half the total pollution. Older cars were the worst offenders; though a sizeable number of quite new cars were also identified as gross polluters, they were simply badly tuned. California has developed a scheme to get these gross polluters off the streets: they offer a flat \$700 for any old, run-down vehicle driven in by its owner. The aim is to remove the heaviest-polluting, most decrepit vehicles from the roads.

D As part of a European Union environmental programme, a London council is resting an infra-red spectrometer from the University of Denver in Colorado. It gauges the pollution from a passing vehicle - more useful than the annual stationary test that is the British standard today - by bouncing a beam through the exhaust and measuring what gets blocked. The council's next step may be to link the system to a computerised video camera able to read number plates automatically.

E The effort to clean up cars may do little to cut pollution if nothing is done about the tendency to drive them more. Los Angeles has some of the world's cleanest cars - far better than those of Europe - but the total number of miles those cars drive continues to grow. One solution is car-pooling, an arrangement in which a number of people who share the same destination share the use of one car. However, the average number of people in a car on the freeway in Los Angeles, which is 1.0, has been falling steadily. Increasing it would be an effective way of reducing emissions as well as easing congestion. The trouble is, Los Angelinos seem to like being alone in their cars.

F Singapore has for a while had a scheme that forces drivers to buy a badge if they wish to visit a certain part of the city. Electronic innovations make possible increasing sophistication: rates can vary according to road

conditions, time of day and so on. Singapore is advancing in this direction, with a city-wide network of transmitters to collect information and charge drivers as they pass certain points. Such road-pricing, however, can be controversial. When the local government in Cambridge, England, considered introducing Singaporean techniques, it faced vocal and ultimately successful opposition.

PART 2

The scope of the problem facing the world's cities is immense. In 1992, the United Nations Environmental Programme and the World Health Organisation (WHO) concluded that all of a sample of twenty megacities - places likely to have more than ten million inhabitants in the year 2000 - already exceeded the level the WHO deems healthy in at least one major pollutant. Two-thirds of them exceeded the guidelines for two, seven for three or more.

Of the six pollutants monitored by the WHO - carbon dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, sulphur dioxide, lead and particulate matter - it is this last category that is attracting the most attention from health researchers. PM10, a sub-category of particulate matter measuring ten-millionths of a meter across, has been implicated in thousands of deaths a year in Britain alone. Research being conducted in two counties of Southern California is reaching similarly disturbing conclusions concerning this little-understood pollutant.

A world-wide rise in allergies, particularly asthma, over the past four decades is now said to be linked with increased air pollution. The lungs and brains of children who grow up in polluted air offer further evidence of its destructive power the old and ill; however, are the most vulnerable to the acute effects of heavily polluted stagnant air. It can actually hasten death, so it did in December 1991 when a cloud of exhaust fumes lingered over the city of London for over a week.

The United Nations has estimated that in the year 2000 there will be twenty-four mega-cities and a further eighty-five cities of more than three million people. The pressure on public officials, corporations and urban citizens to reverse established trends in air pollution is likely to grow in proportion with the growth of cities themselves. Progress is being made. The question, though, remains the same: 'Will change happen quickly enough?'

Questions 1-5

Look at the following solutions (Questions 1-5) and locations. Match each solution with one location. Write the appropriate locations in boxes 1-5 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any location more than once.

SOLUTIONS

- 1** Manufacturers must sell cleaner cars.
- 2** Authorities want to have power to enforce anti-pollution laws.
- 3** Drivers will be charged according to the roads they use.

4 Moving vehicles will be monitored for their exhaust emissions.

5 Commuters are encouraged to share their vehicles with others.

Locations

Singapore

Tokyo

London

New York

Mexico City

Cambridge

Los Angeles

Questions 6-10

Do the following statements reflect the claims of the writer in Reading Passage 23?

In boxes **6-10** on your answer sheet write

YES if the statement reflects the claims of the writer

NO if the statement contradicts the claims of the writer

NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

6 According to British research, a mere twelve per cent of vehicles tested produced over fifty per cent of total pollution produced by the sample group.

7 It is currently possible to measure the pollution coming from individual vehicles whilst they are moving.

8 Residents of Los Angeles are now tending to reduce the yearly distances they travel by car.

9 Car-pooling has steadily become more popular in Los Angeles in recent years.

10 Charging drivers for entering certain parts of the city has been successfully done in Cambridge, England.

Questions 11-13

Choose the appropriate letters **A—D** and write them in boxes **11-13** on your answer sheet.

11 How many pollutants currently exceed **WHO** guidelines in all megacities studied?

- A one
- B two
- C three
- D seven

12 Which pollutant is currently the subject of urgent research?

- A nitrogen dioxide
- B ozone
- C lead
- D particulate matter

13 Which of the following groups of people are the most severely affected by intense air pollution?

- A allergy sufferers
- B children
- C the old and ill
- D asthma sufferers

Answer:

- 1 Los Angeles
- 2 London
- 3 Singapore
- 4 London
- 5 Los Angeles
- 6 YES
- 7 YES
- 8 NO
- 9 NO
- 10 NO
- 11 A
- 12 D
- 13 C

IELTS Academic Reading Sample 154 - First Impressions Count

FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

A Traditionally uniforms were — and for some industries still are — manufactured to protect the worker. When they were first designed, it is also likely that all uniforms made symbolic sense - those for the military, for example, were originally intended to impress and even terrify the enemy; other uniforms denoted a hierarchy - chefs wore white because they worked with flour, but the main chef wore a black hat to show he supervised.

B The last 30 years, however, have seen an increasing emphasis on their role in projecting the image of an organisation and in uniting the workforce into a homogeneous unit — particularly in ‘customer facing’ industries, and especially in financial services and retailing. From uniforms and workwear has emerged ‘corporate clothing’. “The people you employ are your ambassadors,” says Peter Griffin, managing director of a major retailer in the UK. “What they say, how they look, and how they behave is terribly important.” The result is a new way of looking at corporate workwear. From being a simple means of identifying who is a member of staff, the uniform is emerging as a new channel of marketing communication.

C Truly effective marketing through visual cues such as uniforms is a subtle art, however. Wittingly or unwittingly, how we look sends all sorts of powerful subliminal messages to other people. Dark colours give an aura of authority while lighter pastel shades suggest approachability. Certain dress style creates a sense of conservatism, others a sense of openness to new ideas. Neatness can suggest efficiency but, if it is overdone, it can spill over and indicate an obsession with power. “If the company is selling quality, then it must have quality uniforms. If it is selling style, its uniforms must be stylish. If it wants to appear innovative, everybody can’t look exactly the same. Subliminally we see all these things,” says Lynn Elvy, a director of image consultants House of Colour.

D But translating corporate philosophies into the right mix of colour, style, degree of branding and uniformity can be a fraught process. And it is not always successful. According to Company Clothing magazine, there are 1000 companies supplying the workwear and corporate clothing market. Of these, 22 account for 85% of total sales - £380 million in 1994.

E A successful uniform needs to balance two key sets of needs. On the one hand, no uniform will work if staff feel uncomfortable or ugly. Giving the wearers a choice has become a key element in the way corporate clothing is introduced and managed. On the other, it is pointless if the look doesn’t express the business’s marketing strategy. The greatest challenge in this respect is time. When it comes to human perceptions, first impressions count. Customers will size up the way staff look in just a few seconds, and that few seconds will colour their attitudes from then on. Those few seconds can be so important that big companies are prepared to invest years, and millions of pounds, getting them right.

F In addition, some uniform companies also offer rental services. "There will be an increasing specialisation in the marketplace," predicts Mr Blyth, Customer Services Manager of a large UK bank. The past two or three years have seen consolidation. Increasingly, the big suppliers are becoming 'managing agents', which means they offer a total service to put together the whole complex operation of a company's corporate clothing package - which includes reliable sourcing, managing the inventory, budget control and distribution to either central locations or to each staff member individually. Huge investments have been made in new systems, information technology and amassing quality assurance accreditations.

G Corporate clothing does have potential for further growth. Some banks have yet to introduce a full corporate look; police forces are researching a complete new look for the 21st century. And many employees now welcome a company wardrobe. A recent survey of staff found that 90 per cent welcomed having clothing which reflected the corporate identity.

Questions 28-33

The passage *First Impressions Count* has seven paragraphs A–G. Which paragraphs discuss the following points? Write the appropriate letters **A–G** in boxes **28–33** on your answer sheet.

Example

Answer

the number of companies supplying the corporate clothing market

D

28 different types of purchasing agreement

29 the original purposes of uniforms

30 the popularity rating of staff uniforms

31 involving employees in the selection of a uniform

32 the changing significance of company uniforms

33 perceptions of different types of dress

Questions 34-40

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer of the passage? In boxes 34-40 on your answer sheet write

YES if the statement agrees with the writer's views

NO if the statement contradicts the writer's views

NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

- 34 Uniforms were more carefully made in the past than they are today.
- 35 Uniforms make employees feel part of a team.
- 36 Using uniforms as a marketing tool requires great care.
- 37 Being too smart could have a negative impact on customers.
- 38 Most businesses that supply company clothing are successful.
- 39 Uniforms are best selected by marketing consultants.
- 40 Clothing companies are planning to offer financial services in the future.

Answer:

- 28 F
- 29 A
- 30 G
- 31 E
- 32 B
- 33 C
- 34 NOT GIVEN
- 35 YES
- 36 YES
- 37 YES
- 38 NO
- 39 NOT GIVEN
- 40 NO

IELTS Academic Reading Sample 155 - Looking for a Market among Adolescents

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-27 which are based on Reading Passage 155 on the following pages.

Questions 14-19

Reading Passage 21 has eight paragraphs (**A-H**). Choose the most suitable heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.

Write the appropriate numbers (**i-xi**) in boxes **14-19** on your answer sheet.

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 Gathering the information
- ii Cigarettes produced to match an image
- iii Financial outlay on marketing
- iv The first advertising methods
- v Pressure causes a drop in sales
- vi Changing attitudes allow new marketing tactics
- vii Background to the research
- viii A public uproar is avoided
- ix The innovative move to written adverts
- x A century of uninhibited smoking
- xi Conclusions of the research

14 Paragraph A

15 Paragraph B

16 Paragraph C

Example

Paragraph D

Answer

iv

17 Paragraph E

18 Paragraph F

19 Paragraph G

Example

Answer

Paragraph H

xi

Looking for a Market among Adolescents

A In 1992, the most recent year for which data are available, the US tobacco industry spent \$5 billion on domestic marketing. That figure represents a huge increase from the approximate £250-million budget in 1971, when tobacco advertising was banned from television and radio. The current expenditure translates to about \$75 for every adult smoker, or to \$4,500 for every adolescent who became a smoker that year. This apparently high cost to attract a new smoker is very likely recouped over the average 25 years that this teen will smoke.

B In the first half of this century, leaders of the tobacco companies boasted that innovative mass-marketing strategies built the industry. Recently, however, the tobacco business has maintained that its advertising is geared to draw established smokers to particular brands. But public health advocates insist that such advertising plays a role in generating new demand, with adolescents being the primary target. To explore the issue, we examined several marketing campaigns undertaken over the years and correlated them with the ages smokers say they began their habit. We find that, historically, there is considerable evidence that such campaigns led to an increase in cigarette smoking among adolescents of the targeted group.

C National surveys collected the ages at which people started smoking. The 1955 Current Population Survey (CPS) was the first to query respondents for this information, although only summary data survive. Beginning in 1970, however, the National Health Interview Surveys (NHIS) included this question in some polls. Answers from all the surveys were combined to produce a sample of more than 165,000 individuals. Using a respondent's age at the time of the survey and the reported age of initiation, [age they started smoking], the year the person began smoking could be determined. Dividing the number of adolescents (defined as those 12 to 17 years old) who started smoking during a particular interval by the number who were "eligible" to begin at the start of the interval set the initiation rate for that group.

D Mass-marketing campaigns began as early as the 1880s, which boosted tobacco consumption six fold by 1900. Much of the rise was attributed to a greater number of people smoking cigarettes, as opposed to using cigars, pipes, snuff or chewing tobacco. Marketing strategies included painted billboards and an extensive distribution of coupons, which a recipient could redeem for free cigarettes..... Some brands included soft-porn pictures of women in the packages. Such tactics inspired outcry from educational leaders concerned about their corrupting influence on teenage boys. Thirteen percent of the males surveyed in 1955 who reached adolescence between 1890 and 1910 commenced smoking by 18 years of age, compared with almost no females.

E The power of targeted advertising is more apparent if one considers the men born between 1890 and 1899. In 1912, when many of these men were teenagers, the R.J. Reynolds company launched the Camel brand of cigarettes with a revolutionary approach..... Every city in the country was bombarded with print advertising. According to the 1955 CPS, initiation by age 18 for males in this group jumped to 21.6 percent, a two thirds increase over those born before 1890. The NHIS initiation rate also reflected this change. For adolescent males it went up from 2.9 percent between 1910 and 1912 to 4.9 percent between 1918 and 1921.

F It was not until the mid-1920s that social mores permitted cigarette advertising to focus on women..... In 1926 a poster depicted women imploring smokers of Chesterfield cigarettes to "Blow Some My Way". The most successful crusade, however, was for Lucky Strikes, which urged women to "Reach for a Lucky instead of a Sweet." The 1955 CPS data showed that 7 percent of the women who were adolescents during the mid-1920s had started smoking by age 18, compared with only 2 percent in the preceding generation of female adolescents. Initiation rates from the NHIS data for adolescent girls were observed to increase threefold, from 0.6 percent between 1922 and 1925 to 1.8 percent between 1930 and 1933. In contrast, rates for males rose only slightly.

G The next major boost in smoking initiation in adolescent females occurred in the late 1960s. In 1967 the tobacco industry launched "niche" brands aimed exclusively at women. The most popular was Virginia Slims. The visuals of this campaign emphasized a woman who was strong, independent and very thin..... Initiation in female adolescents nearly doubled, from 3.7 percent between 1964 and 1967 to 6.2 percent between 1972 and 1975 (NHIS data). During the same period, rates for adolescent males remained stable.

H Thus, in four distinct instances over the past 100 years, innovative and directed tobacco marketing campaigns were associated with marked surges in primary demand from adolescents only in the target group. The first two were directed at males and the second two at females. Of course, other factors helped to entrench smoking in society. Yet it is clear from the data that advertising has been an overwhelming force in attracting new users.

Questions 20-24

Do the following statements agree with the information in Reading Passage 21? In boxes 20-24 write:

YES if the statement is true according to the passage

NO if the statement contradicts the passage
NOT GIVEN if there is no information about this in the passage

- 20 Cigarette marketing has declined in the US since tobacco advertising banned on TV.
- 21 Tobacco companies claim that their advertising targets existing smokers.
- 22 The difference in initiation rates between male and female smokers at of the 19 Lh century was due to selective marketing.
- 23 Women who took up smoking in the past lost weight.
- 24 The two surveys show different trends in cigarette initiation.

Questions 25-27

Complete the sentences below with words taken from the Reading Passage. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 25-27 on your answer sheet.

Tobacco companies are currently being accused of aiming their advertisements mainly at **(25)** statistics on smoking habits for men born between 1890 and 1899 were gathered in the year **(26)**..... The **(27)** brand of cigarettes was designed for a particular sex.

Answer:

- 14 iii
- 15 vii
- 16 i
- 17 ix
- 18 vi
- 19 ii
- 20 NO
- 21 YES

22 YES

23 NOT GIVEN

24 NO

25 adolescents

26 1955

27 Virginia Slims