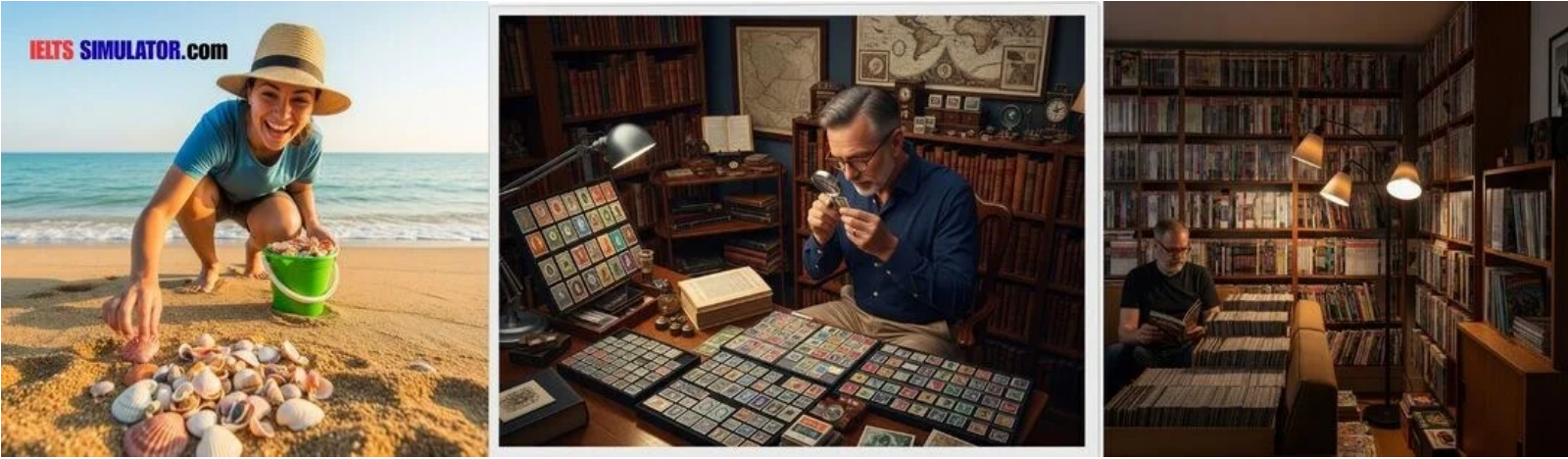


IELTS READING – COLLECTING AS A HOBBY
S22AT2



IELTS listening COLLECTING AS A HOBBY listening practice test has 10 questions..

Many forms of collecting have been dignified with a technical name: an archtophilist collects teddy bears, a philatelist collects postage stamps, and a deltiologist collects postcards. Amassing hundreds or even thousands of postcards, chocolate wrappers, or whatever, takes time, energy, and money that could surely to much more productive use. And yet there are millions of collectors around the world. Why do they do it?

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There are the people who collect because they want to make money – this could be called an instrumental reason for collecting; that is, collecting as a means to an end. They'll look for, say, **Q14 antiques** that they can buy cheaply and expect to be able to sell at a profit. But there may well be a psychological element, too – buying cheap and selling dear can give the collector a sense of **Q15 triumph**. And as selling online is so easy, more and more people are joining in.

Many collectors collect to develop their social life, attending meetings of a group of collectors and exchanging **Q16 information** on items. This is a variant on joining a bridge club or a gym and similarly brings them into **Q17 contact** with like-minded people. Another motive for collecting is the **Q18 desire** to find something special, or a particular example of the collected item, such as a rare early recording by a particular singer.

Some may spend their whole lives in a hunt for this. Psychologically, this can give a purpose to a life that otherwise feels **Q19 aimless**. There is a danger, though, that if the individual is ever lucky enough to find what they're looking for, rather than celebrating their success, they may feel empty, now that the goal that drove them on has gone.

If you think about collecting postage stamps another potential reason for it – Or, perhaps, a result of collecting is its **Q20 educational** value. Stamp collecting opens a window to other countries, and to the plants, animals, or famous people shown on their stamps.

Similarly, in the 19th century, many collectors amassed fossils, animals, and plants from around the globe, and their collections provided a vast amount of information about the natural world. Without those collections, our understanding would be greatly inferior to what it is.

In the past – and nowadays, too, though to a lesser extent – a popular form of collecting, particularly among boys and men, was **Q21 trainspotting**. This might involve trying to see every locomotive of a particular type, using published data that identifies each one, and ticking off each engine as it is seen. Trainspotters exchange information, these days often by mobile phone, so they can work out where to go to, to see a particular engine. As a by-product, many practitioners of the hobby become very knowledgeable about railway operations, or the technical specifications of different engine types.

Similarly, **Q22 people who collect dolls may go beyond simply enlarging their collection, and develop an interest in the way that dolls are made**, or the materials that are used. **Q23 These have changed over the centuries from the wood that was standard in 16th century Europe, through the wax and porcelain of later centuries, to the plastics of today's dolls**. Or collectors might be inspired to study how dolls reflect notions of what children like, or ought to like.

Not all collectors are interested in learning from their hobby, though, so what we might call a psychological reason for collecting is the need for a sense of control, perhaps as a way of dealing with insecurity. Stamp collectors, for instance, arrange their stamps in albums, usually very neatly, organising their collection according to certain commonplace principles-perhaps by country in alphabetical order, or grouping stamps by what they depict - people, birds, maps, and so on.

Q25 One reason, conscious or not, for what someone chooses to collect is to show the collector's individualism. Someone who decides to collect something as unexpected as dog collars, for instance, may be conveying their belief that they must be interesting themselves. And believe it or not, there is at least one dog collar museum in existence, and it grew out of a personal collection.

Of course, all hobbies give pleasure, but the common factor in collecting is usually passion: pleasure is putting it far too mildly. **Q26 More than most other hobbies, collecting can be totally engrossing and can give a strong sense of personal fulfillment**. To non-collectors, it may appear an eccentric, if harmless, way of spending time, but potentially, collecting has a lot going for it.

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