



IELTS READING – “JUST DO IT!” Or – the subtle art of procrastination S52AT2



IELTS Reading “JUST DO IT!” Or – the subtle art of procrastination reading practice test has 10 questions..

Questions 14–18

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2?In boxes 14–18 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE - if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE - if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN- if there is no information on this

14. Procrastination has always been recognised as a serious problem.

15. The reason for the rise in procrastination is unknown.

16. Students are the most likely group to procrastinate.

17. A range of health problems have been linked to procrastination.

18. Most techniques to stop procrastination are based on scientific study.

Procrastination, a kind of chronic time-wasting, has long been dismissed as an innocuous human foible. **Q14 Researchers are now beginning a more sober examination of this practice, however, and there may be good reason for doing so: twenty percent of Americans now admit to suffering from procrastination, a fifteen percent jump from 1970.** Researchers are bemused as to **Q15 what explains this sharp rise in the figures, but there is no doubt that procrastination is wreaking** havoc on people’s lives. One side effect is perhaps the most predictable: procrastination hampers academic and work commitments as sufferers fail to meet deadlines or achieve their goals. But there are other costs too. In shifting burdens of responsibility onto others and reneging on their promises, procrastinators undermine relationships both in the workplace and in their private lives, all of which takes a toll on their well-being. **Q17 In one study, over the course of a semester, procrastinating university students were noted to be suffering from notably weaker immune systems, more gastrointestinal problems, and higher occurrences of insomnia than their nonprocrastinating peers.**

Attempt Free Reading Test..

Questions 19–25

Look at the following statements (Questions 19–25) and the list of people below.

Match each statement with the correct person, A, B or C.

Write the correct letter, A, B or C, in boxes 19–25 on your answer sheet.

List of People

A Amy Sykes

B Raymond Chandler

C John Perry

19. Doing housework is a common way of avoiding important work.

20. Get support from other people.

21. Make a list of boring tasks before important ones.

22. Look for ways to make the work more interesting.

23. Lists are powerful tools for reducing procrastination.

24. Use boredom as motivation.

25. Use rewards when a task is completed.

Is there hope for procrastinators? Everyone admits it’s a difficult demon to beat, but a few selfstyled procrastination coaches have developed strategies to that end. Although evidence for their efficacy is largely anecdotal at this stage, some of these strategies at least offer promising avenues for future research. Career counsellor **Q20&25 Amy Sykes focuses on the basics. Firstly, she says, embrace peer pressure. Many weight loss and self-help groups encourage individuals to hold themselves accountable to a wider circle of their peers,** and Sykes believes this social safety net can be harnessed just as successfully by procrastinators. A change in perspective is also considered vital. ‘When we want people to do something for us, we really sell it to them,’ Sykes observes. ‘But when we need to do it ourselves, we focus on all the reasons we don’t want to.’ Instead, she argues, we should pique our own interest and **Q22 find ways to make our important projects more attractive** – by turning them into little competitions or fact-finding missions, for example. If all else fails, Sykes believes we must recompense ourselves for our troubles, ideally with little treats upon finishing a task. ‘It doesn’t need to be big,’ she says. ‘Pancakes, a hot bath, or an episode of your favourite television show could all do the trick.’

Though these tips may be a little too garden-variety 1 for some, others have thought up more cunning twists on the human psyche. One such approach was developed by the crime writer **Q19&24 Raymond Chandler, who built his strategy on a basic yet critical observation: procrastinators rarely sit about completely inactively, but rather tend to engage themselves in useful but less pressing tasks: vacuuming behind the bed, cleaning out the fridge, washing the windows and so on. The result is that they ‘cheat’ themselves into experiencing feelings of productivity and satisfaction that offer further distraction from the original project.** Chandler’s method, which he successfully used to help himself write detective stories, involves setting aside a period of time in which the procrastinator may do one of two things: absolutely nothing or work on the project that he or she wishes to complete. Sitting still, without the satisfaction of busying himself with less urgent tasks, Chandler slowly felt the itch of tedious monotony sink in. Within five or ten minutes, this itch had become intolerable, and he felt compelled to begin writing his stories.

Question 26

Choose the correct letter A, B, C or D.

Write the correct letter in box 26 on your answer sheet.

What is the writer’s conclusion?

A Some procrastination-reducing strategies have had proven success.

B Procrastination will never be completely eliminated.

C Procrastinators should employ a life coach to help them.

D Most procrastinators want to learn how to be more efficient.

Another procrastinator, professor of philosophy John Perry, developed his strategy against procrastination based on essentially the same insight as Chandler’s – that procrastinators are actually quite good at doing ‘marginally useful’ tasks, just not the tasks they really ought to be doing. He thus surmised that the enemy of successful task completion is not, in fact, that great engine of productive activity – procrastination itself – but rather how we order our projects in the hierarchy of urgency. If a procrastinator needs to finish an assignment before 8 o’clock the following morning, for instance, he is likely to find himself sharpening pencils instead. ‘But if all the procrastinator had left to do was to sharpen some pencils,’ Perry observes, ‘no force on earth could get him to do it.’ **Q21 The key to this approach is to rank one’s priorities, then bump the most urgent tasks a little further down and place at the top some potentially** daunting and important-sounding-projects which are ultimately not all that essential. If the student with the essay deadline can convince himself he absolutely must reorganise his email box, or finish reading that old, dusty novel he only got halfway through, then suddenly the essay deadline is going to seem a far superior option.

If the Ancient Greeks struggled with it, and all the life coaches, counsellors, and motivational speakers in the modern world are unable to erase it from our existence either, it seems unlikely that procrastination will ever truly be put to rest. As these procrastination gurus have shown, however, the right strategies have the potential to minimise its impact – if you ever get around to using them.

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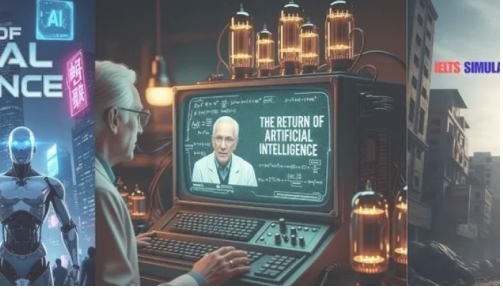
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