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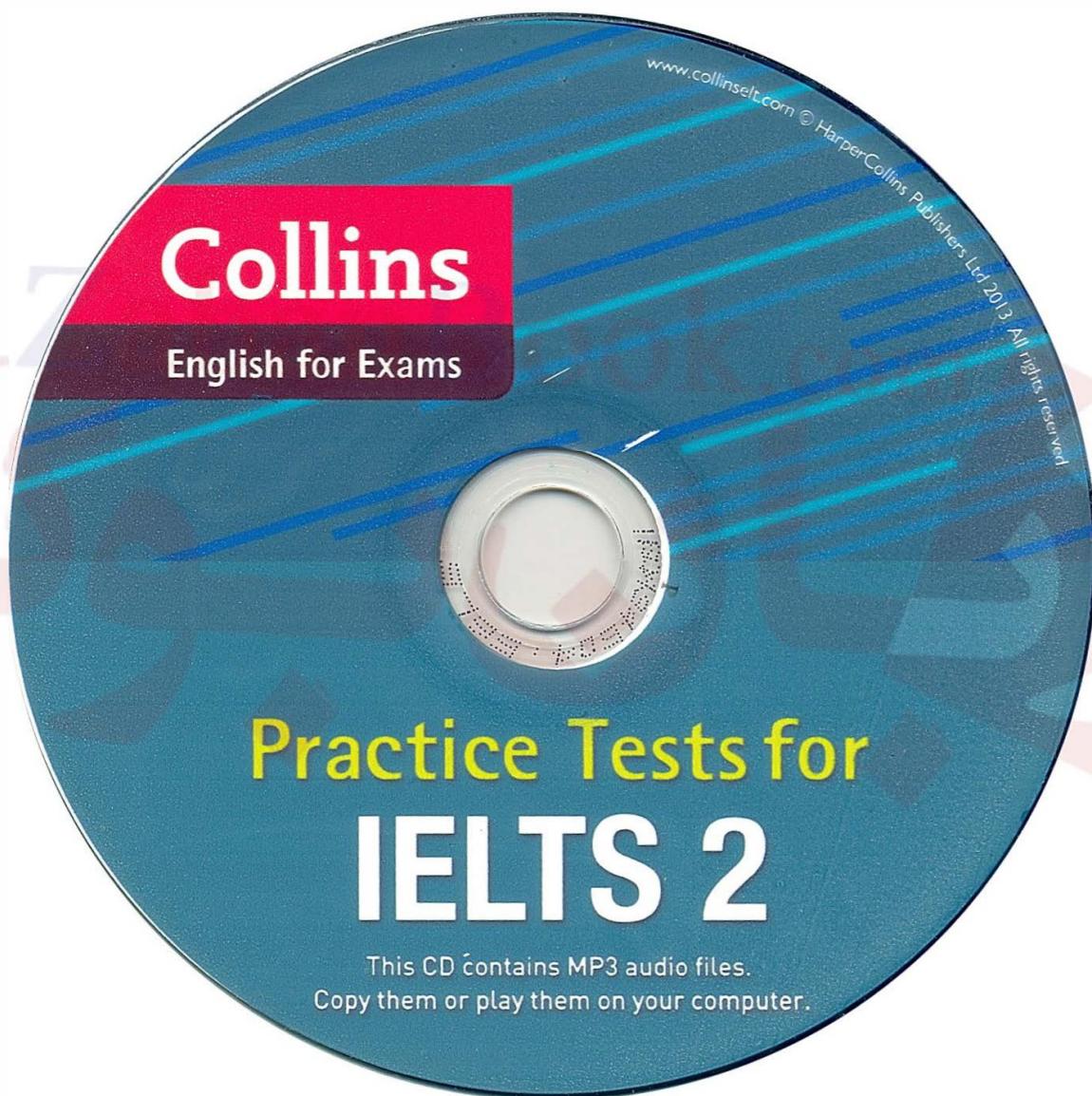
Practice Tests for

IELTS

4 Academic
+ 2 General
Training Papers
with answers

2

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Practice Tests for

IELTS

2

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Introduction

Who is this book for?

Practice Tests for IELTS 2 will prepare you for the IELTS test whether you are taking the test for the first time or re-sitting it. It has been written for learners with band score 5–5.5 who are trying to achieve band score 6 or higher. The book, with its answer key and model answers, has been designed so that you can use the materials to study on your own. However, the book can also be used as part of IELTS preparation classes.

Content

Practice Tests for IELTS 2 is divided into three sections. The first section contains an introduction, an overview of the IELTS test, and strategies for success in the test. The second section contains four complete Academic tests and two General Training tests for Reading and Writing. The third section contains a mini-directory, a full audio script, sample answer sheets, answer keys for the Listening and Reading components, and model answers for the Writing and Speaking questions.

Specifically, the book contains:

- **Tips for success** – essential advice for success in the test
- **an Overview of the IELTS test** – a quick reference to IELTS whenever you need to remind yourself of what to expect on exam day
- **Strategies for success** – advice about how to tackle each of the components in the test
- **Common errors** – some common errors that candidates might make when taking the IELTS test and how to avoid these common errors
- **Practice tests** – four complete Academic tests and two General Training tests for Reading and Writing
- **Mini-dictionary** – definitions and examples of the most important high-level vocabulary from *Practice Tests for IELTS 2* (definitions are from Collins COBUILD dictionaries)
- **Audio script** – the full texts of what you will hear in the Listening and Speaking components
- **Sample answer sheets** – familiarise yourself with the answer sheets used in the Listening, Reading and Writing components of the IELTS test
- **Answer keys** – the answers for all the questions in the Listening and Reading components
- **Model answers** – example answers for the Writing and Speaking components, all of which would achieve the highest marks in the IELTS test
- **CD** – MP3 files with all of the Listening passages, questions from the Speaking components and the model answers for the Speaking components.

Other IELTS resources

This is the second book of practice tests. If you would like more practice tests, there are four more practice tests in *Collins Practice Tests for IELTS* (ISBN 978-0-00-749969-4).

Collins also offer a wide range of exam preparation books, including our Skills for IELTS series (*Reading for IELTS*, *Writing for IELTS*, *Listening for IELTS*, and *Speaking for IELTS*) and our *IELTS Dictionary*. Please go to www.collinselt.com to find these and other resources.

- **Pay attention if you hear someone spelling a word**

You might hear someone in a recording confirming the spelling of a word, often a name, e.g. *The surname is Goforth, G-O-F-O-R-T-H*. If a word or name is spelt out, it is very likely that it is the answer to one of the questions. Make sure you know how to say the letters of the alphabet in English, especially the vowels.

- **Practise listening to numbers**

You might be required to write down telephone numbers or other large numbers (e.g. 852,091). Practise by asking a friend or family member to read out a variety of large numbers while you write them down. Alternatively, listen to the news or radio programmes in English and write down any numbers you hear.

Common errors

Trying to read the questions, listen to the recording and write the answers all at the same time can put the multi-tasking skills of a candidate to the test. As the recording is played once only, this can add to the stress. Here are some common errors that candidates make when doing the Listening component and how to avoid them.

1 Not paying attention to the example in the recording

At the start of the Listening component, you might hear a variation of the following instructions.

Example (Listening Section 1)

Now turn to Section 1. You will hear a conversation between a travel agent and a student. First, you have time to look at questions 1–8.

You will see that there is an example that has been done for you. ... So the answer 'Morzine' has already been written in the gap.

Some candidates choose not to listen to the example question, seeing it as a waste of time. However, the example not only provides a model for that particular question type, it also helps set the context. A good grasp of the context can provide a framework for you to understand the information that you will hear.

When listening to the example, ask yourself the following questions.

- Who are the speakers in this conversation?
- Where are they?
- What do they want from each other?
- What information will they need from each other?

This will prepare you for the rest of the conversation.

2 Spending the time between sections worrying about answers in the last section

Use the time before the beginning of a new section to read the instructions and questions. Underline the key words so that you can listen for the important information in the recording. Try to predict what the answers might be. If the task is a gap-fill, ask yourself: *What kind of word could complete that gap? What part of speech? A verb, a noun, an adjective, an adverb? If a verb, what*

Tip: Listen out for traps

Do this by:

- listening carefully to the end of an utterance
- not making assumptions based on one or two words you hear that match a question
- listening for phrases or words that negate what was said previously.

4 Staying up all night before the test to revise

As you listen, you will have to read (and re-read) the questions, figure out the correct answers and write them down. That is a lot to do in a short time, so the Listening component requires a lot of concentration. You need to be alert, so make sure you get lots of rest beforehand.

To prepare for the Listening component, practise reading, listening and writing at the same time. Here are some ways to do this.

- Print out the script from the scene of a film. Watch the scene while reading the script and circling key words.
- Listen to the evening news in English while at the same time looking at that day's English newspaper, and try to find the same news story or facts in the newspaper.
- Write a summary of a film dialogue or news story as you watch or listen to it.
- Ask a friend to tell you a number of things in English, e.g. the foods they like, reasons why they love living in a city, the features of their new smartphone. Write them down as your friend is speaking.

5 Not analysing why an answer was incorrect

Some candidates do the listening sections of practice tests but then they just check their answers in the answer key and add up their marks; they fail to ask themselves why they got an incorrect answer. Refer to the audio script or listen to the recording again to see where you have gone wrong and learn from your mistakes.

Checklist:

- ✓ Use the example to help you understand the context.
- ✓ Read the questions before the recording starts and predict the answers.
- ✓ In the last 10 minutes, transfer your answers carefully to the answer sheet.
- ✓ Listen carefully and make sure the answer matches what was said.
- ✓ Get enough sleep before the test to ensure you are alert.
- ✓ Practise listening, reading and writing at the same time.
- ✓ When doing practice tests, learn from your mistakes by studying the audio script.

Reading

The IELTS Reading component consists of three reading passages. The texts for the Academic test come from authentic sources such as magazines, journals, books and newspapers, while texts for the General Training test could also include advertisements, leaflets and instruction manuals.

The Reading component takes 60 minutes and there are 40 questions.

Here are some tips for preparing yourself for both the Academic and the General Training Reading component.

- **Read widely**

As the reading passages are based on authentic materials, reading newspapers, blogposts, magazines, books, etc. will help to familiarise you with different styles of writing (descriptive, discursive, argumentative, etc.) and expose you to a variety of language about different topics. It will also help you to practise dealing with unknown words and topics – a skill that comes in very useful during the test.

- **Be prepared for the fact that the reading passages get more difficult**

The first reading passage is the easiest of the three, so try not to spend too much time on it. It is also the one for which you could score the most marks, so ensure you check your answers to the questions and avoid careless mistakes.

The third passage is the most difficult of all, but do not get disheartened when you are tackling the questions based on it. Remember that the IELTS test is graded from 0 to 9 and there are bound to be difficult questions designed to distinguish between candidates who will get a band score of 7 or 8 from those who deserve a band score of 9.

- **Do not make careless spelling and grammar mistakes**

When you are copying words from a passage, make sure you spell them correctly; spelling mistakes will cost you marks.

- **Find the topic sentence of each paragraph**

The topic sentence summarises the main idea or expresses the main point of a paragraph. It is often the first sentence of a paragraph, but it can be anywhere in a paragraph. Can you find the topic sentence in the following paragraph?

Example (Reading, all parts)

The pressures and deadlines a person faces at work are often blamed for causing stress, but stress can also come from a lack of recognition and appreciation for the work someone does. If someone suffers from a stress-related illness, the first step to getting better is to identify the cause. Stress can also be exacerbated by the lack of support from family members. Understanding its causes can help people to actively seek a solution to the problem.

Identifying the topic sentence of a paragraph (in this case, *Understanding its causes [the causes of stress] can help people to actively seek a solution to the problem*), will give you a better idea about what the paragraph is about, and this will help you to find information in the passage more quickly. Moreover, finding the topic sentence helps greatly in tasks where you are required to match headings to paragraphs.

12 Moving from point to point without elaboration

The writer of the paragraph in the example below made several good points that are relevant to the question. However, the points were badly organised and the candidate did not explain or support the points he was making.

Example (Academic and General Writing Task 2)

Home schooling can be good for children because they can study what they want. But some people say there is no structure for these children. Also, they will have no friends their age. But they don't need to listen to boring teachers and study subjects that are useless in real life.

Follow up the topic sentence (your main point) with supporting evidence in the form of statistics, examples, scenarios, reasons and explanations.

Example (Academic and General Writing Task 2)

Home schooling can be good for children because they can work at their own pace and study what they want. In a regular school, slower students are sometimes not able to follow lessons and feel demotivated, while faster students find the lessons boring and stop paying attention. Several homeschooled children claim that being able to choose a curriculum that suits their interests and ability helps them to learn more than the average school student.

Checklist:

- ✓ Understand what the question requires you to do.
- ✓ Answer the question and do not go off topic.
- ✓ Provide supporting evidence by giving reasons, examples and explanations.

Speaking

The IELTS Speaking component takes place with a candidate and an examiner in an examination room. The test takes 11–14 minutes and has three parts.

Part 1: Introduction and overview

The examiner asks the candidate questions about familiar topics, e.g. family and friends, hobbies, favourite foods.

Part 2: Individual long turn

The examiner gives the candidate a task card with some prompts and the candidate has a minute to prepare to speak about the topic on the card. The candidate speaks for 1–2 minutes on the given topic. The examiner then follows up with one or two questions about the topic.

Part 3: Two-way discussion

The examiner asks the candidate some abstract questions related to the topic in Part 2. The candidate is required to give opinions and discuss issues.

Here are some tips for preparing yourself for the Speaking component.

- **Focus on your breathing while you wait**

As you sit outside the examination room waiting for your name to be called, you will inevitably feel nervous. However, nervousness could have a negative effect on your ability to speak in English. Focus on your breathing and try to clear your mind as you wait. Practise tongue twisters like *Peter Piper picked a pack of pickled peppers* to loosen up the muscles of your mouth and keep stress at bay.

- **Listen to the examiner's questions carefully**

What key words does the examiner use? What grammatical structures does he/she use in the questions? Listening for key words can help you to focus on what is required of you, while the grammatical structures could give you hints as to what tenses you should use in your answer.

- **Let the topic bring up the vocabulary that you know**

When the examiner marks you for your lexical range, he/she is not trying to find out the entire scope of your knowledge of English vocabulary. Instead, he/she is listening to the words, phrases and collocations you use while talking about a particular topic.

What phrases do you think might come up naturally when you are talking about your favourite restaurant? What if you were talking about healthcare in your country? Wouldn't the vocabulary set be quite different? Practise recalling relevant words and phrases for different topics.

Speaking Part 1

- **Make sure you know enough vocabulary to talk about familiar topics**

Do you know your job title or your parents' job titles in English? Do you know the necessary vocabulary to talk about your hobby or the most important festivals in your country/town? Can you explain why you like certain types of music or films?

The topics in Part 1 are fairly predictable, so practise talking about them and note down the key phrases that you will need to express yourself.

- **Use the right tenses**

When you talk about your life experiences, use the present perfect tense, but switch to the past simple tense when you tell stories about the past. Use the present simple to talk about daily routines, regular occurrences and how you feel about your life and the people around you.

Speaking Part 2

- **Make use of your one-minute preparation time wisely**

One minute is not a long period of time, so you cannot write out your two-minute speech. Instead, use the minute to plan what you are going to say. Use the following question words to guide you: *Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?*

Example (Speaking Part 2)

Talk about a present that you received.

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27–40, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

- A A major cause of blindness in the industrialised world is age-related macular degeneration (AMD). It affects approximately three million people globally and accounts for around nine per cent of all blindness. These statistics are expected to double by the year 2020 as the world population increases. Scientists have been working on a new treatment for one type of the disease by using stem cells to repair damage to the retina, with positive results. Two women in America, both registered as blind, were given the new treatment and say their vision improved just weeks after they were injected with the stems cells. With such promising results for a condition which previously had no treatment, researchers are positive about the direction of the stem cell treatment.
- B AMD usually affects the elderly although younger people can also develop a version of the condition. People with AMD typically have dark patches at the centre of their vision – the deterioration takes place over months and years. Although people with AMD do not lose their sight completely, they do lose central vision, which is vital for detailed work and activities like reading and driving, so that leading a normal life can become impossible over time. In the cases of the two American women, one was a graphic artist who began to lose her vision in her twenties. As she lost most of her central vision, she became unable to work, and then eventually it became impossible for her to recognise people or watch TV. The second woman became unable to recognise faces, had to stop driving and in the end could not leave her home.
- C To understand AMD, we need to understand how our eyes work. Essentially a hollow ball, the eye has a number of layers. The outer layer consists of the white of the eye and the cornea. The cornea is the transparent area in front of the coloured iris and the black pupil at the centre of the iris. The middle layer of the eye includes blood vessels and the iris, which regulates the amount of light entering the eye. Just behind the iris is the lens, which focuses images on the retina, which covers the inside of the eyeball. The retina is the part of the eye that contains photoreceptors – cells that sense light. Nerve fibres from the photoreceptors in the retina join together to form the optic nerve, which then exits the eyeball and transmits visual information to the brain. The photoreceptors are of two types, rods and cones: the rods are sensitive to light intensity and the cones are sensitive to colour. They are mostly concentrated in the part of the retina called the macula. This is only the size of a grain of rice, but it is responsible for our central vision, most of our colour vision and our visual acuity, or sharpness of vision. The photoreceptor cells lie on a thin layer of cells that provide them with nutrients and carry away waste. When these underlying cells die or are damaged, the photoreceptor cells cannot function properly, and this leads to a loss of vision.

- D Damage to the macula can result from a variety of factors. Age is the main risk factor but smoking also damages blood vessels and the structure of the eye. Smokers are three times more likely to develop AMD, as are people with poor diets. A diet lacking in fruit and vegetables cannot help the body defend itself against free radical molecules which damage cells. Fruit and vegetables contain antioxidants, which protect the body against these free radicals. Finally, people with high blood pressure are one and a half times more likely to contract AMD, as are those people with a family history of the disease.
- E The new treatment for AMD, developed by Dr Robert Lanza at Advanced Cell Technology, involves changing embryonic stem cells into more specialised eye stem cells and injecting 50,000 of them into the layer of the eye that supports the photoreceptors. A stem cell is a primary cell that has the ability to divide and form specialised cells that perform various functions within the body. First, a single stem cell was taken from a human embryo and grown into a colony of millions of cells. The cells were checked to make sure they were healthy. Then another procedure encouraged the stem cells to develop into the type of cell that forms the layer under the photoreceptor cells. The eye stem cells were injected below the retina through a cut into the eyeball, where they filled in the gaps left by dead and damaged cells and began functioning again.
- F For the two patients, the results have been stunning. Tests have indicated that healthy cells have grown where the stem cells were injected. The first woman has regained enough vision to be able to cycle. Meanwhile, the second woman can read, cook and go shopping by herself again. The hope is that the treatment could be a way forward for other currently incurable conditions so that other people can lead normal lives again.

Questions 27–32

Reading Passage 3 has six paragraphs, A–F.

Which paragraphs, A–F, contain the following information?

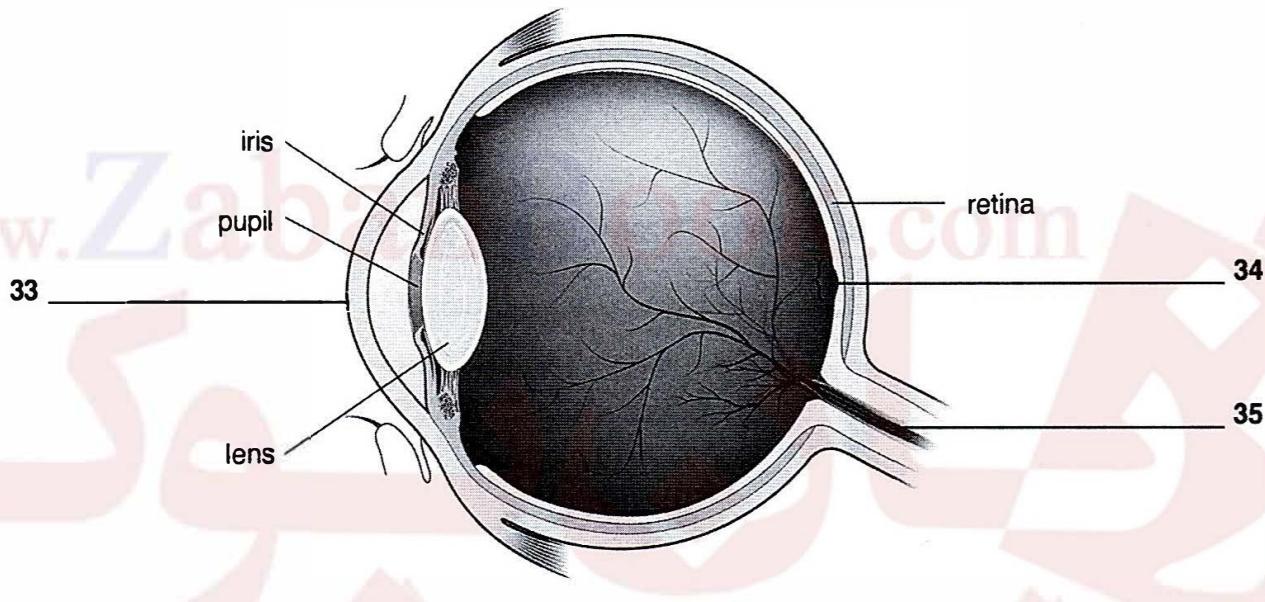
Write the correct letter, A–F, next to Questions 27–32.

- 27 the symptoms of AMD
- 28 details about the treatment process
- 29 factors that may contribute to AMD
- 30 the physical causes of AMD
- 31 potential future uses of stem cell treatment
- 32 the frequency of occurrence of AMD

Questions 33–35

Label the diagram below using words from the box.

macula
cornea
optic nerve



Questions 36–40

Complete the summary below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in spaces 36–40.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is one of the main causes of loss of sight in the (36) _____. Although AMD can affect (37) _____, the majority of sufferers are older. Despite being very small, the macula is essential to our (38) _____ as well as detailed vision and some colour vision. AMD happens when the cells beneath the (39) _____ cells are damaged or die. A new treatment to repair the damaged cells involves (40) _____ 50,000 stem cells under the retina, after which they regenerate the damaged area.

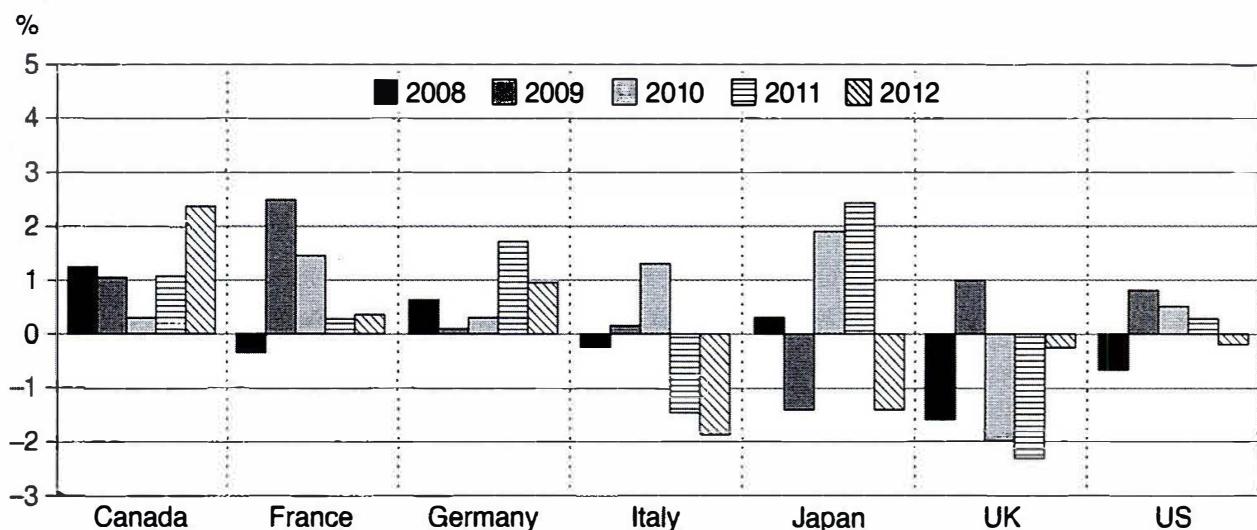
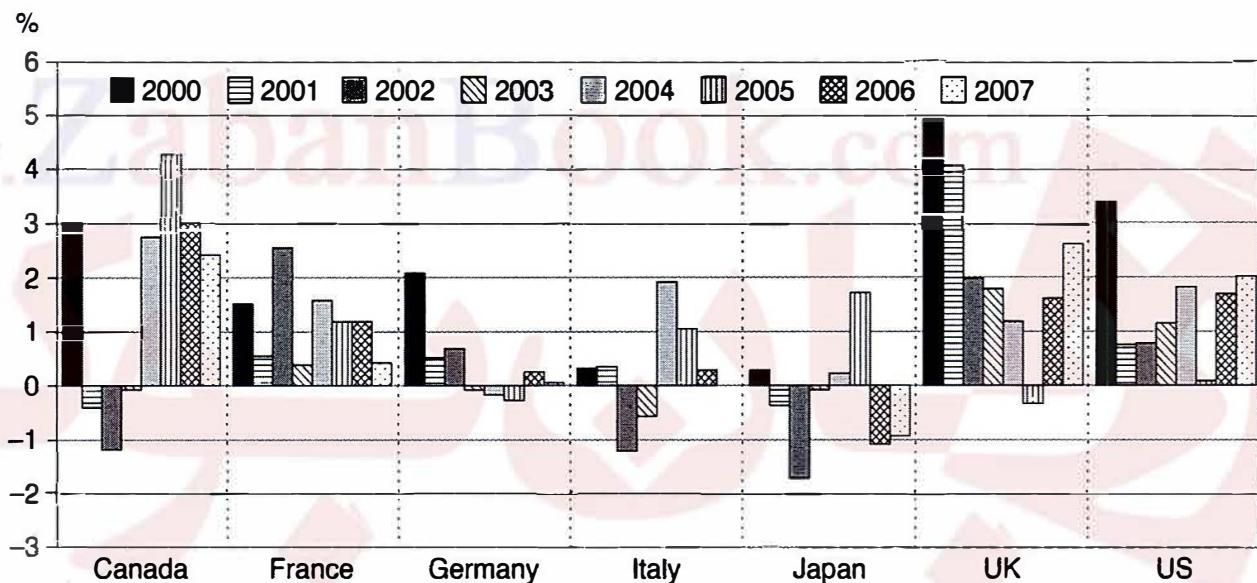
WRITING

WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graphs below show the growth in wages within the G7 nations between 2000–2007 and 2008–2012.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



Write at least 150 words.

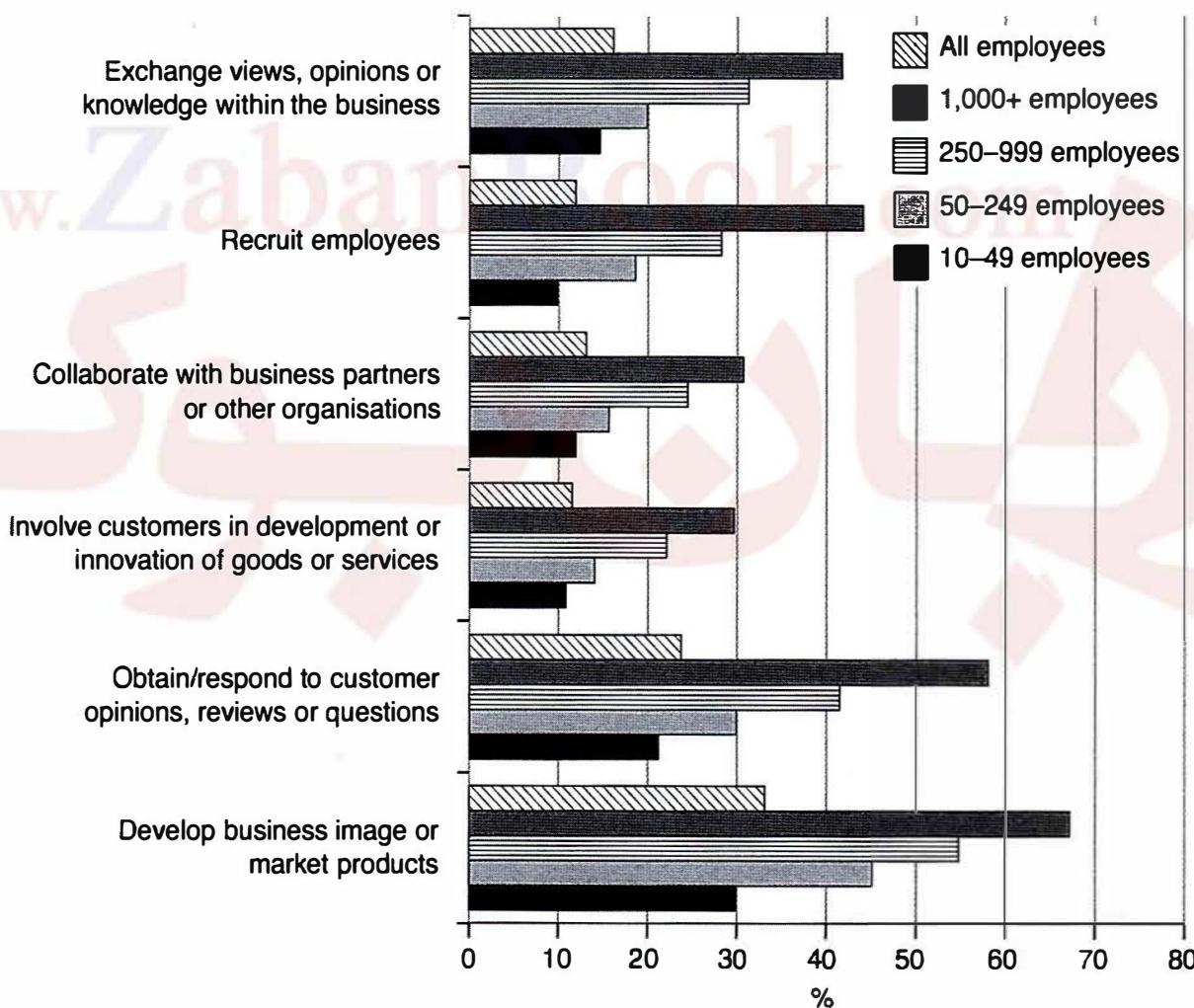
WRITING

WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows the reasons for the use of social media by businesses, by size of business, in 2012.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



Write at least 150 words.

SECTION 2**Questions 15–26**

Read the information below and answer Questions 15–26.

University Curling: equipment, players and basic rules



Equipment

- All equipment will be provided, including stones. Take care of the stones. They are extremely heavy and should never be lifted. Stones (also called rocks) should not be thrown overly hard and should always be stopped using your brush, not your foot, otherwise they may injure you or knock you over. Curling stones are expensive and replacement costs exceed £800 per stone.
- Players must wear appropriate clothing – the arena can be chilly. Wear warm, loose-fitting clothing; gloves and hats are optional.
- Lockers are free of charge, but you must bring your own lock.

Club rules

- A valid student card must be brought to the game and produced on request. The sports manager will frequently check players' student cards. Failure to produce a valid card will automatically lead to a player being disqualified.
- No street shoes are permitted on the arena surface. You must wear a clean pair of shoes.
- Alcohol consumption is not permitted during games.

Section 3 Questions 21–30

- | | |
|------|------|
| 21 B | 26 C |
| 22 A | 27 B |
| 23 A | 28 A |
| 24 C | 29 A |
| 25 C | 30 C |

- | | |
|------|------|
| 9 D | 12 A |
| 10 H | 13 E |
| 11 F | 14 C |

Section 4 Questions 31–40

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 31 confused | 36 September |
| 32 population(s) | 37 food / feeding |
| 33 location | 38 shipping |
| 34 website | 39 wider |
| 35 west coast | 40 subtropical |

Section 2 Questions 15–26

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 15 FALSE | 22 coin toss |
| 16 NOT GIVEN | 23 rotation |
| 17 TRUE | 24 sweeping |
| 18 NOT GIVEN | 25 centre circle |
| 19 FALSE | 26 strategy |
| 20 TRUE | |
| 21 two / 2 hours | |

TEST 4 Reading

Passage 1 Questions 1–13

- | | |
|---------------------|------|
| 1 50 | 8 G |
| 2 29.7 kilometres | 9 A |
| 3 20 to 30 / 20–30 | 10 E |
| 4 36.5 | 11 C |
| 5 54,000 kilometres | 12 D |
| 6 1,200 | 13 F |
| 7 B | |

Section 3 Questions 27–40

- | | |
|--------------|---------|
| 27 NOT GIVEN | 34 TRUE |
| 28 FALSE | 35 A |
| 29 NOT GIVEN | 36 B |
| 30 FALSE | 37 A |
| 31 FALSE | 38 C |
| 32 TRUE | 39 B |
| 33 TRUE | 40 B |

GENERAL TRAINING TEST B Reading

Passage 2 Questions 14–26

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 14 A | 20 high-tech |
| 15 B | 21 range of punishments |
| 16 D | 22 waste collection |
| 17 D | 23 fine |
| 18 best (environmental) option | 24 landfill sites |
| 19 coherent strategy | 25 burning |
| | 26 D |

Section 1 Questions 1–14

- | | |
|---------|--------------|
| 1 vii | 8 NOT GIVEN |
| 2 ii | 9 TRUE |
| 3 vi | 10 NOT GIVEN |
| 4 i | 11 TRUE |
| 5 ix | 12 FALSE |
| 6 iii | 13 TRUE |
| 7 FALSE | 14 FALSE |

Passage 3 Questions 27–40

- | | |
|------|------|
| 27 E | 34 C |
| 28 A | 35 B |
| 29 D | 36 A |
| 30 B | 37 C |
| 31 F | 38 C |
| 32 C | 39 B |
| 33 C | 40 A |

Section 2 Questions 15–25

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------|
| 15 ii | 21 NOT GIVEN |
| 16 i | 22 TRUE |
| 17 viii | 23 staff development form |
| 18 iv | 24 purchase request |
| 19 iii | 25 expense claim |
| 20 FALSE | |

GENERAL TRAINING TEST A Reading

Section 1 Questions 1–14

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1 FALSE | 5 NOT GIVEN |
| 2 TRUE | 6 TRUE |
| 3 NOT GIVEN | 7 FALSE |
| 4 TRUE | 8 TRUE |

Section 3 Questions 26–40

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 26 TRUE | 34 pits |
| 27 TRUE | 35 one / 1 mile |
| 28 NOT GIVEN | 36 sealed |
| 29 TRUE | 37 earthquakes |
| 30 TRUE | 38 over-reliance |
| 31 FALSE | 39 [real] issue |
| 32 FALSE | 40 bridge |
| 33 high pressure | |

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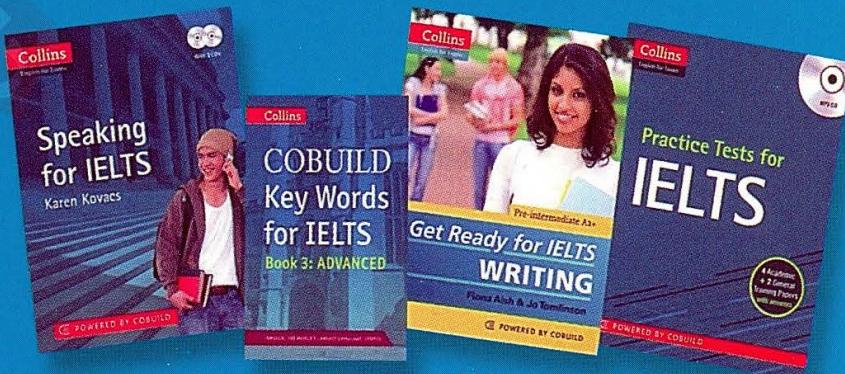
Practice Tests for IELTS 2 is designed to familiarise students with the level and format of the IELTS exam. Candidates will feel completely confident about what to expect when they take the exam.

Candidates benefit from:

- four complete Academic IELTS tests *PLUS* two General Training Reading and Writing papers
- a clear guide to each part of the IELTS exam
- a section on common mistakes and how to avoid them
- an MP3 CD and audio script for the Speaking and Listening papers
- answers for all papers, including model answers for the Speaking and Writing papers.

Written by experienced IELTS tutors, the book can be used in class or for self-study.

To help candidates prepare for IELTS, use Collins' wide range of products:



You can trust Collins COBUILD

Practice Tests for IELTS 2 contains a mini-dictionary with definitions based on COBUILD content. The 4.5-billion-word Collins Corpus is the world's largest database of the English language. It is updated every month and has been at the heart of Collins COBUILD for over 25 years.

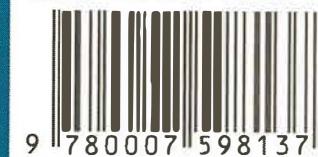
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