

Reading skills

- 1.1 Read the following extract from a passage and then answer the questions below.

To test the art discrimination abilities of pigeons, Watanabe first asked people to classify children's artwork as either 'good' or 'bad'. The pictures that were consistently classified as 'good' were placed into one group of pictures; those that were consistently classified as 'bad' were placed into a second group. The pigeons in this experiment were taught that pecking at the 'good' set of pictures would *yield* a grain reward, whereas pecking at the 'bad' ones would not do so. In an average of only 22 sessions, all of the pigeons that were so trained learned to *respond* most of the time to 'good' artwork and not to 'bad' artwork.

How had the pigeons done it? Although people might not immediately suspect *this strategy*, one possible way to solve this kind of discrimination task is to simply memorise most or all of the various pictures in each set, paying little attention to the categories themselves.

To test *this possibility*, Watanabe performed a generalisation test, in which new, similarly classified artwork was shown that the birds had never before seen. All of the birds were able to appropriately peck at the new 'good' pictures and to withhold pecking at the new 'bad' pictures. So, simple memorisation is probably not the main *avenue* by which they accomplished this complex visual discrimination.

- 1 A word can have many meanings. Look at the words in italics in the extract and circle the meaning used in this context.

<i>yield</i> :	agree	produce	give up	bend/break	stop
<i>respond</i> :	react	reply	answer		
<i>avenue</i> :	road	possibility	method		

- 2 Pronouns can give referencing clues. Match the highlighted pronouns in the extract with the following. Two of the pronouns match one word/phrase.

pigeons _____ pictures _____ the experiment _____

- 3 Do the underlined phrases in the extract refer forwards or backwards?

this strategy _____ this possibility _____



Test tip

You have 20 minutes to answer 13 or 14 questions on each reading passage. Divide up your time and practise sticking to a time limit, e.g.

- 3–4 minutes – quickly read the passage and items (this will tell you the gist of the passage and the types of question you need to answer).
- 13–14 minutes to answer each question – if a question is taking longer than a minute, move on to the ones you can answer more easily and come back to it later.
- 3–4 minutes to check difficult questions and to transfer your answers (NB no extra time is given to transfer answers).

1.2 A native speaker can read 100 words in 20 seconds. This reading passage has four paragraphs, or sections, of approximately 100 words each. Use a stopwatch and try to read each section in 30 seconds. At the end of 30 seconds, if you haven't finished a section, skip to the start of the next one. Read this passage to answer questions 2.1 – 2.10.

- A** Thirty years ago, two Hungarian educators, Laslo and Klara Polgar, decided to challenge the popular assumption that women don't succeed in areas requiring spatial thinking, such as chess. They wanted to make a point about the power of education. The Polgars home-schooled their three daughters, and as part of their education, the girls started playing chess with their parents at a very young age. Their systematic training and daily practice paid off. By 2000, all three daughters had been ranked in the top ten female players in the world. The youngest, Judit, had become a grandmaster at the age of 15, breaking the previous record by one month.
- B** To people who have never reached a high level of competition in sport, it may appear that excellence is simply the result of playing daily for many years. However, simply living in a cave doesn't make you a geologist. Not all practice makes perfect. You need a particular kind of practice – deliberate practice – to develop expertise. Deliberate practice entails considerable, specific, and sustained effort. To illustrate this point, let's imagine you are learning to play golf. In the early phases, you try to learn the basic strokes and focus on avoiding embarrassing mistakes such as hitting another player with a ball. You practise with novices like yourself and, in a surprisingly short time, your game improves. You work on your skills and practise until your strokes become automatic. Your golf game is now a social outing, in which you occasionally concentrate on your shots.
- C** However, from this point on, additional time on the golf course will not substantially improve your performance, which may remain at the same level for decades. Why does this happen? You don't improve, because when you are playing a game, you get only a single chance to make a shot from any given location. You don't get to figure out how you can correct mistakes. If you were allowed to take five to ten shots from the exact same location on the course, you would get more feedback on your technique and start to improve your control.
- D** This kind of deliberate practice can be adapted to developing any kind of skill. Deliberate practice involves two kinds of learning: improving the skills you already have and extending the reach and range of your skills. The enormous concentration required to undertake these twin tasks limits the amount of time you can spend doing them. The famous violinist Nathan Milstein wrote: 'Practise as much as you feel you can accomplish with concentration. Once I asked my mentor, Leopold Auer, how many hours I should practise, and he said, 'It really doesn't matter how long. If you practise with your fingers, no amount is enough. If you practise with your head, two hours is plenty.'

Question type 1

Objective items (choose the correct answer A, B, C, D, etc.)

2.1 MATCHING HEADINGS Choose the best heading for section A.

- i High intelligence does not guarantee success
- ii Disproving a commonly held belief about gender
- iii Establishing a link between success and age



Test tip

Notice that the headings cover the main point of a section and matching information items focus on specific details within a section.

2.2 MATCHING INFORMATION Which section (A–B) contains the following information?

- 1 an explanation of the type of preparation required to succeed
- 2 the specific aim of one particular experiment

2.3 IDENTIFYING INFORMATION Say if the following statements are **TRUE**, **FALSE** or **NOT GIVEN**.

- Laslo Polgar gave up work in order to teach his children.
- Judit Polgar was one month younger than the previous holder of the title of youngest chess grandmaster.

2.4 IDENTIFYING WRITER'S VIEWS/CLAIMS Do the following statements reflect the claims of the writer? Write **YES**, **NO** or **NOT GIVEN**.

- Many people believe that women perform well in tasks requiring spatial thinking.
- The Polgars might have produced the same results with a less punishing training schedule.

2.5 MULTIPLE CHOICE Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.

- Why does the writer mention geologists in section B?
 - to illustrate the need for deliberate practice
 - to represent a broad range of scientific study
 - to provide an example of a field of study requiring special expertise.
 - to explain why physical ability may be necessary in some areas of science.

2.6 MATCHING FEATURES Scan the passage for the people listed in the box below and then match them with the statements (1–2).

- It is the quality rather than the quantity of practice that is the most important.
- Males and females have equal chances of achieving success.

List of people

A Polgar B Milstein

2.7 MATCHING SENTENCE ENDINGS Choose the best ending for the following sentences.

- When people begin to learn a new skill they may
- If people find it difficult to make any progress they should

A practise as often and for as long as possible.
 B practise with people of a similar level.
 C change the type of practice they do.



Test tip

Notice that *True / False / Not given* items focus on concrete facts. *Yes / No / Not given* items are based on claims or opinions. The difference between *False / No* and *Not given* is that *False / No* items are the opposite of the information in the passage. *Not given* items are neither true nor false because the information is not included in the passage.



Test tip

For multiple choice items, you may need to choose more than one letter. These items might focus on the way language is used in the passage, the reason a word or phrase is used, or the meaning of one part of the passage or the whole passage.



Test tip

Here, the questions are not in the same order as the passage.



Test tip

Here, the sentence beginnings are in the same order as the information in the passage, but the sentence endings are out of order.

Question type 2

Productive items (choose one or more words from the passage)

2.8 SENTENCE COMPLETION Complete the following sentences with **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD** from the passage.

- When people are learning a new skill, they often practise with other _____.
- Deliberate practice cannot be done for a long period of time because it requires a great deal of _____.

2.9 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS Answer the questions with **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage.

- Where were Laslo and Klara's children educated?
- In what year did the Polgars achieve their aim?

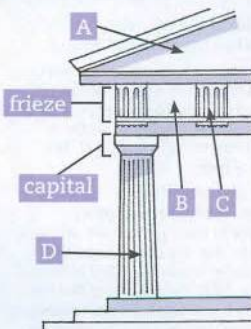
2.10 SUMMARY, NOTE, TABLE, FLOW CHART, COMPLETION Complete the following notes with no more than **ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage.

Deliberate practice

- requires a great deal of focused 1 _____ over a long period of time.
- according to Milstein, practising for 2 _____ hours each day may be enough to become an expert.

2.11 DIAGRAM LABELS In some reading passages, you will have to label a diagram. Greek Doric columns are described in the passage below. Write the correct letter, **A–E**, for each part of the column (1–4).

- | | | | |
|----------|---|------------|---|
| 1 metope | — | 3 triglyph | — |
| 2 shaft | — | 4 pediment | — |



The Doric order of architecture is very plain, but powerful-looking in its design.

Of the main classical styles found in Greece, Doric columns are the simplest and the capital at the top has two pieces. The tall, vertical shaft of the column has 20 sides and stands directly on the flat pavement of the temple. There is no base in the Doric order. The area above the column is called the frieze. This consists of the metopes and triglyphs. The metope is a plain rectangular element that fills the space between two decorated triglyphs. The triglyphs are thought to represent wooden beam ends. The frieze supports the roof section including the large triangular pediment.



Test tip

For all of the productive item types, pay careful attention to the type of word you need to find (a noun? a number? a date?). You will not score any marks if you write too many words or copy words incorrectly.



Test tip

The following item types are based on concrete facts in the passage and you may need to write a number. Use figures not words to avoid making spelling mistakes.



Study tip

When you have answered the questions in this book, look over the passages and study the vocabulary used. Make a note of any words you think are useful. Remember, technical words and low-frequency words may not be useful for you to record and learn.