

Reading Passage 1



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

It is in everyone's pocket and we feel ill-at-ease when it is not. The ubiquitous mobile phone. The world of technology has come a long way since the first mobile phone was invented in 1973. From the bulky and awkward devices of the past to the sleek and powerful smartphones of today, the evolution of mobile phones has been rapid and impressive. To celebrate its fiftieth birthday we will explore the history of mobile phones and how they have changed the way we communicate with each other. We will also look at some of the most popular smartphones on the market today and how they are revolutionizing the way we interact with the world around us.

The Motorola DynaTAC 8000X was the first commercially available handheld cellular phone. It was released in 1983, and it was the first mobile phone to meet the FCC's stringent requirements for mobile phone use. The phone was designed to be used with the Motorola Cellular Network, which was the first cellular network in the United States. The phone had a weight of 28 ounces, and it was 9 inches tall. It had a black and white LCD display, and it had a numeric keypad for dialing numbers. The phone had a battery life of up to 30 minutes of talk time, and it could store up to 30 phone numbers in its memory. It also had a built-in speakerphone for hands-free conversations. The phone had an antenna that could be extended to improve reception, and it could be used with a car charger. The phone was considered to be a luxury item at the time, and it cost around \$3,995. It was a revolutionary device that changed the way people communicated and paved the way for the modern mobile phone.

The company that is credit to have made mobile phones affordable is Nokia. Contrary to popular belief, the company is not Japanese, but Finnish. The impact of Nokia on the mobile phone market has been immense. The company has been responsible for introducing a number of innovative features, such as the first color screens, the first mobile phone with a built-in camera, as well as the ability to access the internet. Nokia has also been instrumental in developing the technology behind 3G and 4G networks, allowing mobile phones to access high-speed data networks. Nokia has also had a major influence on the design of mobile phones. Its iconic Nokia 3310 was a huge hit when it was released in 2000 selling over 126 million units worldwide, and its design has been copied by many other manufacturers.

The most commercially successful mobile phone of all time is the renowned Apple iPhone. The iPhone was first released in 2007 and was an instant success. While it wasn't the first smartphone, it introduced the concept of a multi-functional touchscreen that dominates the body of the phone and minimal number of

IELTS Reading – Practice Test 16

physical buttons. The idea of App Store where users could download thousands of apps redefined the industry of mobile software. The iPhone was so successful that it paved way to a whole new era of similar devices, and to this day it remains the dominant force on the market. It is no wonder that it has gone through over ten generations, each improving on almost every single technological aspect of the device. Small wonder that largely thanks to iPhone Apple became the most valuable company in the world.

The country with the most phones per capita is the United Arab Emirates. This is mainly due to the country's high disposable income, as well as its strong infrastructure and connectivity. The UAE has been investing heavily in its telecoms sector, with mobile networks and internet speeds that are among the highest. It has one of the highest mobile penetration rates in the world, with more than 200 million active subscribers while they also boast the fastest internet speeds. Finally, the UAE is a popular tourist destination, with millions of people visiting it every year. This means that the country has to keep up with the latest trends in mobile technology in order to meet the needs of its visitors.

Despite the indisputable advantages cellphones offer there is a number of drawbacks to keep in mind. While many believe that the biggest risk factor is the radiation emitted by the gadget, statistics shows otherwise. People nowadays are too distracted to pay attention to their surroundings, which in some cases leads to serious injury or even death. The infamous “driving and texting” is the main culprit with a staggering 1.6 million traffic accidents each year according to the National Safety Council. Another issue to consider is the increasing social isolation associated with mobile devices. People nowadays prefer texting to face-to-face communication. Finally, with all the information such as credit card numbers and other sensitive data stored on our phones they potentially pose a very serious security threat – the fact that many people simply fail to realise.

Taking a look at today's latest models it is difficult to imagine what huge headway the technology has made. Modern devices are almost as powerful as full-fledged computers. The cameras can rival those of dedicated devices, the sound is crystal clear and the battery can last for days. Perhaps the real paradigm changer though is the fact how reliant we have grown on these little things and how much worse we would have been without them. It would definitely make us appreciate them more.

Questions 1-7

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1-7 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

1. Initially, mobile phones were considerably heavier than they are now
2. The first mobile phone was sold in 1973
3. Motorola pioneered the mobile phone market
4. USA was the first country to have cellular network coverage
5. Motorola DynaTAC 8000X could be controlled using voice

IELTS Reading – Practice Test 16

- 6. Motorola introduced phone cameras to the market
- 7. Mobile access to the internet was only made possible by iPhone

Questions 8 and 9

*According to the text, which **TWO** facts are true about the iPhone?*

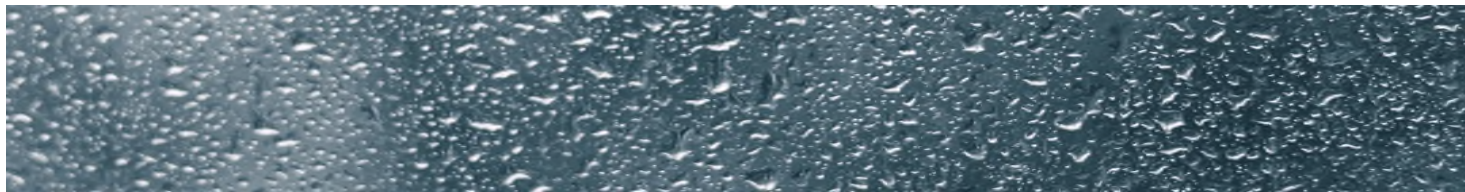
- A** it was the first phone with a touchscreen
- B** it was first to offer downloadable software
- C** the phone was immediately accepted by the public
- D** the phone only had one button
- E** it set the trend in the industry

Questions 10-13

*Using **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD** from the passage, complete the summary*

While mobile phones are indispensable in our daily lives they pose certain **10** ____ to the user. Even though many argue that it is **11** ____ emitted by the device the facts point at something entirely different. The truth is one might get too **12** ____ when talking on the phone or sending messages which can potentially cause very serious consequences. **13** ____ concern is another thing to keep in mind as phones store lots of sensitive data that can be easily compromised.

Reading Passage 2



You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-28, which are based on Reading Passage 2 on the following pages.

A

What inventions have changed the way we live for the better? If you set out to ask this question, most people will name the invention of the wheel or electricity. Some younger respondents might come up with something recent like the Internet. Older people might remember the printing press. However, very few are likely to mention discovering the method of producing glass despite its ubiquity and how long it has been around. So is glass the underdog of human civilisation?

B

Glass is an amorphous solid material that is transparent and brittle. It is composed of silica, sodium oxide, and calcium oxide. It is hard and has a high melting point. It is also a good insulator, meaning that it does not conduct electricity, and can be used to transmit light. Glass has a low coefficient of thermal expansion – in other words, it does not expand or contract much when exposed to heat or cold. It is also resistant to corrosion and does not react with many chemicals, making it perfect for outdoor applications, especially when it has to be exposed to the elements.

C

Glass has been around for millions of years occurring naturally, but it wasn't until about 3500 BC that humanity managed to produce it artificially, predating iron smelting. The earliest known use of glass was in Mesopotamia in the form of beads and other decorative objects. Around 1500 BC, glass-makers in Lebanon began creating glass by heating sand and other ingredients in a furnace. This process, known as glass-blowing, allowed glass-makers to give the molten glass a variety of shapes and sizes. This type of glass was used to make windows and primitive lenses, as well as decorative objects. In the first century AD, artisans in Rome pioneered the method of mixing glass, sand and other ingredients with lead oxide. Referred to as glass-staining, this technique makes it possible to introduce colors and texture alteration of glass.

D

It is worth noting that glass is technically not a human invention as it can occur naturally in various forms and shapes. It is most commonly formed when certain types of rocks are heated to high temperatures and then cooled quickly. Such glass can be found in the form of obsidian, a black, glass-like rock, and tektites, which are small, glassy objects that are thought to have been created by meteorite impacts. Fulgurites are probably the first form of glass, colloquially referred to as natural glass, which is formed when lightning strikes a sandy beach or desert. The intense heat melts the sand and creates a glass-like material. To an uninitiated, however, it won't look like glass at all as it is usually impossible to see anything through it. The

IELTS Reading – Practice Test 16

few natural examples of glass that do resemble man-made material are usually not transparent, but translucent – you can see light coming through them, but it is difficult to make out the object on the other side – one of the hallmark qualities of “real” glass.

E

Glass has been used by humans for thousands of years, and the range of its usage has only grown over time. From windows to drinking vessels, glass has become an integral part of our lives. Today, glass is used in a variety of industries, ranging from construction to medicine. In construction, glass is used in windows, doors, and skylights. These allow natural light to enter a building, reducing the need for artificial lighting and thus saving energy. Glass is also used in conservatories and greenhouses, which help to regulate temperatures and ensure optimal environment for plants. Glass is also used in the automotive industry with windshields and lights being only few examples of how this material can be used there. Food and drink containers made of glass are said to better preserve the taste and aroma.

F

Glass is created through a process known as smelting, which involves heating sand, soda ash, and limestone at extremely high temperatures. One of the unwanted consequences of this is the infamous carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, that gets released into the atmosphere. Additionally, the production of glass requires a large amount of energy, which is often generated from burning fossil fuels, thereby indirectly contributing to further environmental damage. Glass production also requires the use of chemicals such as sulfuric acid, which can be harmful to the environment if not properly disposed of. Furthermore, the disposal of glass can be problematic. Glass is not biodegradable, meaning it can take thousands of years to decompose, and it is not easily recycled. As a result, it often ends up in landfills, where it takes up valuable space and while the material itself is chemically stable and therefore does not cause damage, the sheer amount of it still presents a problem.

G

Like most things, glass as a material has its limitations. It is not always the best choice due to its fragility, weight, and cost. Nowadays, there are materials that can replace glass, offering the same or better performance depending on the application. One of the most common materials that can replace glass is polycarbonate. Polycarbonate is a thermoplastic that is lightweight, strong, and shatter-resistant – it does not break into multiple small pieces if damaged. It is often used in place of glass for things like bulletproof windows, safety shields or eye protection. Another sphere of wide adoption is in the automotive industry, where its shatterproof qualities proved irreplaceable when making headlights, taillights, and windshields.

H

So, what does the future hold for glass? A lot of uncertainty is the only thing that can be said for sure! Even though glass itself is more eco-friendly than comparable materials such as plastics and its many derivatives, making, transporting and disposing of it entails higher financial and ecological overheads. This is the main reason why the glass bottle that rules the supermarket shelves till late nineties is a rare sight nowadays, replaced by a more versatile, even if less charismatic plastic counterpart. And it's just a taste of things to come.

IELTS Reading – Practice Test 16

Questions 14-21

Reading Passage 1 has eight paragraphs labelled **A-I**.

Choose the most suitable headings for paragraphs **B-I** from the list of headings below.

Write the appropriate numbers (**I-XII**) in boxes **14-20** on your answer sheet.

One of the headings has been done for you as an example.

Note: There are more headings than paragraphs, so you will not use all of them.

Example: Paragraph A — Answer III

List of Headings

- I** Glass in nature
- II** Bottles to be banned
- III** Underappreciated
- IV** How to use glass
- V** Taking a closer look
- VI** Dim prospects
- VIII** Through the looking glass of time
- XI** Taking a toll on nature
- X** A thousand applications
- XI** Not without a fault
- XII** Irreplaceable – or is it?

- 14** Paragraph B
- 15** Paragraph C
- 16** Paragraph D
- 17** Paragraph E
- 18** Paragraph F
- 19** Paragraph G
- 20** Paragraph H

Questions 21-24

In boxes 21-25 on your answer sheet, write

YES if the statement agrees with 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

- 21** Glass is not the first thing that comes to mind as a groundbreaking invention
- 22** As a material, glass became popular owing to its practicality when used outside
- 23** Iron smelting was invented before production of glass was possible
- 24** Introducing additives to the mixture enabled glass to have various desirable properties

Questions 25-29

Choose the appropriate letters A- C and write them in boxes 9-15 on your answer sheet.

25 Glass that occurs naturally

A Shares few desirable properties with artificial glass

B Can mostly be found in desert landscapes

C Is prized for its unique properties

26 The main ecological concern when it comes to glass is that

A Its production creates an undesirable by-product

B Glass fragments contain sulfuric acid

C Burying it underground requires special safety measures

27 The main advantage of Polycarbonate over traditional glass is

A It is cheaper to make

B It provides certain safety benefits

C It is eco-friendly

28 What does the author imply in the closing sentence of the text?

A The taste of liquids held in bottles is likely to be affected by plastic

B Bottles will be able to hold many different things

C The replacement trend is likely to continue

Reading Passage 3



You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 29-40, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

Monkeys are fascinating creatures that have been a source of wonder and curiosity for many people throughout history. These intelligent animals have captured our imagination with their impressive agility, social behavior, and even their similarities to humans, unsurprisingly so since they have been scientifically proven to be our distant genetic relatives.

The relation is primarily based on their shared genetic makeup. Studies have shown that monkeys and humans share a high percentage of genetic similarity, which indicates a common evolutionary ancestry. Additionally, both monkeys and humans belong to the same scientific order, primates. This classification means that they share many anatomical and behavioural characteristics that are not found in other animal groups. Fossil evidence has also provided insights into the evolutionary relationship between monkeys and humans. Fossils of early primates, such as Proconsul and Aegyptopithecus, have features that resemble both monkeys and humans, suggesting that they were ancestral to both groups.

There are more than 200 species of monkeys, and each one has its own distinctive traits, ranging from the red-tailed monkey's long tail to the mandrill's colorful face. But today we would like to focus on three notable species: the chimpanzee, the howler monkey, and the spider monkey.

The Chimpanzee

Chimpanzees are among the most intelligent primates, with cognitive abilities that are comparable to those of human children. They are natural problem-solvers and possess a high level of emotional intelligence. In fact, studies have shown that chimpanzees are capable of understanding the emotions of others and even display empathy towards their peers.

Chimpanzees are found in the forests of central and western Africa, where they live in groups of up to 100 individuals. These groups are led by dominant males and consist of both male and female chimpanzees. They are primarily herbivores but will also eat insects, birds, and small mammals when the opportunity arises, making them omnivorous.

One of the most notable characteristics of chimpanzees is their ability to use tools. They have been observed using sharp sticks to extract insects from tree bark, bashing stones on nuts to crack them open, and even wrapping their faces in big leaves as protection from rain! Some chimpanzees have been known to fashion primitive weapons such as spears and use them to hunt small game.

Scientists have observed a wide range of social behaviors among chimpanzees, including grooming, hugging, and kissing. They also engage in aggressive behaviors, such as screaming, hitting, and biting, when there is conflict within the group. While the latter is not indicative of animals of higher intellectual order, the former shows signs of empathy mentioned earlier which is generally uncommon among animals.

IELTS Reading – Practice Test 16

Sadly, chimpanzees are endangered due to habitat loss and hunting. Many are also captured for the illegal pet trade, which has contributed to their decline. However, conservation efforts are underway to protect these remarkable animals and their habitats.

The Howler Monkey

Howler monkeys are one of the most vocal primates, and their distinctive calls can be heard up to three miles away. They are in fact one of the loudest animals on Earth, rivaled by much bigger blue whale and lion. They are found in the forests of Central and South America and can live up to 20 years in the wild.

The howler monkey is a large and slow-moving animal, with males weighing up to 22 pounds and females weighing up to 16 pounds. They are primarily herbivorous and feed on leaves, fruits, and flowers.

Howler monkeys are arboreal animals, meaning they spend most of their time in trees. They have a prehensile tail, which acts like another limb and enables them to grasp onto branches tightly. This feature is particularly important for mother monkeys, who use their tails to carry their young as they move from tree to tree.

Howler monkeys are also notable for their social behaviors. They live in groups of up to 18 individuals, which consist of a dominant male, several females, and their offspring. The male is responsible for protecting his group from predators, while the females take care of the young. They are also very territorial, with males using their howl to intimidate as well as to signal their position. Interestingly enough, female Howlers do not howl at all.

In terms of conservation, howler monkeys face a variety of threats, the biggest one is deforestation of Amazon rainforest, their prime habitat.

The Spider Monkey

Spider monkeys are known for their long limbs and tails, which enable them to move through trees with great agility. They are found in the forests of Central and South America, where they live in groups of up to 35 individuals. Similar to Howler Monkey, they are chiefly arboreal, mostly living in the trees, preferring not to get down to the ground without a compelling reason.

The name comes from their tail that they effectively use as fifth limb that facilitates locomotion, helps them clear various obstacles with surprising ease. Because of the five limbs taking part in the process they visually resemble a spider crawling.

Spider monkeys are omnivorous and have a varied diet of fruits, leaves, flowers, and insects. They have a distinctive jaw structure that enables them to crack open hard nuts and seeds, without having to resort to tools for that.

Mother spider monkeys carry their young on their backs for the first few months of their lives, similarly to Howler Monkey using its tail as a safety belt for their offspring. Once the baby is old enough, it will learn how to move from tree to tree and eventually become independent.

The Spider Monkey is one species that especially suffers from forest fragmentation. This is a situation when a continuous forest breaks up into smaller and isolated patches due to human activities such as agriculture, urbanization, and road building.

Despite their stark differences, there is one disturbing similarity with these three species. All three are in one way or another face risk of extinction – a situation that is shameful, especially given human understanding of how important biodiversity is.

Questions 29-36

Complete the table below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

	Chimpanzee	Howler Monkey	Spider Monkey
Habitat	Central and Western Africa	Central and South Americas	Central and South Americas, predominantly 29 ____
Social and diet habits	Groups of up to 30 ____ specimen; largely omnivorous	Diet is mostly 31 ____ . Males live with several females	Omnivorous, has no need for 32 ____ to eat nuts. Live in larger groups
Peculiarity	Demonstrate 33 ____ towards others; highly intelligent	Impressive 34 ____ abilities	Extremely developed tail that aids 35 ____ as well as ensuring offspring safety
Endangerment status	Endangered	Loss of 36 ____	Suffer from forest fragmentation

Questions 37-40

For each question, choose the appropriate letter **A-C**

37. Monkeys and human are believed to be related because

- A** They are genetically identical
- B** They are uniquely similar in certain respects
- C** They possess anatomic resemblance

38. One peculiarity that makes Chimpanzee stand out is the fact they

- A** Like humans, make use of makeshift tools
- B** Prefer to live in larger social groups
- C** Favour mostly plant-based foods

39. What behavioural activities point at higher cognitive development among chimpanzees?

- A** grooming, kissing and hugging
- B** biting, screaming and hitting
- C** neither of these

40. Which monkey species is mentioned to have clearly defined gender roles?

- A** the chimpanzee
- B** the howler monkey
- C** the spider monkey

IELTS Reading – Practice Test 16

Answer Keys

1 TRUE
2 NOT GIVEN
3 TRUE
4 NOT GIVEN
5 NOT GIVEN
6 FALSE
7 FALSE
8, 9 C, E
10 risks
11 radiation
12 distracted
13 security
14 V
15 VIII
16 I
17 X
18 XI
19 XII
20 VI

21 YES
22 NOT GIVEN
23 NO
24 YES
25 A
26 A
27 B
28 C
29 arboreal
30 100
31 herbivorous
32 tools
33 empathy
34 vocal
35 locomotion/movement
36 habitat
37 B
38 A
39 A
40 B