



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority

English – Grade 12

Reading

Practice Items

– Sample of Practice Items –

Part 1

Sample 1

Questions 1 – 6

Read the texts by four women about how they learnt to drive.

Match each question (1 – 6) to one of the texts (A – D).

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

There is an example (0) at the beginning.

Which woman

0 changed her driving instructor more than once? **A** **B** **C** **D**

1 needed to start practising in a place with no traffic to overcome her fear of driving? **A** **B** **C** **D**

2 found only one skill hard to get right? **A** **B** **C** **D**

3 gave up learning to drive for a period of time? **A** **B** **C** **D**

4 drove better after changing the type of car? **A** **B** **C** **D**

5 advises learners to try different instructors? **A** **B** **C** **D**

6 took her driving test only once? **A** **B** **C** **D**

[6 marks]

LEARNING TO DRIVE

A

When I decided to learn driving, every instructor I contacted was busy, so Mum persuaded Dad to teach me. My lessons were in an empty field behind our house. We never went farther than two streets around where we live. I found reverse parking difficult and I failed my first test once, but I took it again and passed.

B

I failed the test twice because of my changing gears and bad parking. So, I found an instructor with a smaller car, which I thought was easier, but I failed the test. Although I was advised to take a break from learning I continued, and I passed with a third instructor! Always use someone else if you're unhappy with whoever is teaching you.

C

Driving on busy roads scared me, so my instructor let me start in an empty car park opposite our house. I learned the basics there, which gave me confidence when we drove to other parts of the city. I went on to pass first time. It is worth telling your instructors exactly what you want from the lessons.

D

I had lessons in our manual car when I was 17 with Mum. We both got nervous, so Dad took over and things improved. I had to stop the lessons when I went to university, but when I began again it was in Dad's automatic jeep and I found that much easier to manage.

- Mark Scheme -

Part 1

Sample 1

Questions 1 – 6

Question Number	Answer	Mark	Total Marks
1	C	1	
2	A	1	
3	D	1	
4	D	1	
5	B	1	
6	C	1	6

- Sample of Practice Items -

Part 1

Sample 2

Questions 1 – 6

Read the reviews of four scuba diving courses to learn about coral gardens, which grow under the sea.

Match the information in each question (1 – 6) to one of the reviews (A – D).

Choose the correct answer **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

There is an example (0) at the beginning.

Which review mentions

0	the comfortable sea temperature?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D
1	the modern equipment provided on the boat?	A B C D
2	the surprising way in which different fish species benefit from one another?	A B C D
3	how far the divers were from the boat?	A B C D
4	how the divers recovered from the low water temperature?	A B C D
5	the safety measures in place for divers on the boat?	A B C D
6	how a particular area attracts a large number of fish?	A B C D

Reviews of Scuba Diving Courses

A

Dive Heaven

Before exploring the water, our instructor told us some interesting information about the coral gardens, and explained there would be a life guard on watch at all times. Luckily, the water was warm enough for us not to need wetsuits. The coral gardens were just a few metres below the surface, and the fish were very beautiful.

B

Deep Wonders

Our diving day started perfectly. We were delighted to see the boat had a great range of up-to-date diving gear. We quickly went into deep water, where we saw hundreds of fish in a huge coral garden. When we came to the surface, we were amazed to find ourselves over a hundred metres away from our boat.

C

Rocky Bay

We'd decided to explore a coral garden not far from the boat, but we found it right under the boat, where we were greeted by tiny fish and one huge but very friendly fish. I've always found it incredible how boats seem to draw such a mass of fish into their shadows. Once the dive was over, we had hot soup, perfect for warming up again after diving in such cold conditions.

D

Turtle Cove

We had dived in a sandy bay; it was a relief to find that there were no fast sea currents to drag us away from the boat. Sadly, we didn't spot any turtles, but we were amazed when we discovered small wrasse fish helpfully eating tiny insects off large trout fish. Then we were back on the boat again, putting our heavy diving equipment away.

- Mark Scheme -

Part 1

Sample 2

Questions 1 – 6

Question Number	Answer	Mark	Total Marks
1	B	1	
2	D	1	
3	B	1	
4	C	1	
5	A	1	
6	C	1	6

Part 2

Sample 1

Questions 7 – 11

Read the article about the benefits of being a ‘night owl’, a person who often stays up until late at night.

Five sentences have been removed from the article.

Choose from the sentences (A – F) the one which fits each gap (7 – 11).

There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

There is an example (0) at the beginning.

Why Night Owls are better than Early Birds

Most people are ‘early birds’, also known as ‘larks’ – they usually prefer to get up early and work in the morning. Fewer people are ‘night owls’, who prefer to get up late and stay up long past midnight. Night owls were once thought of as lazy, but it’s actually becoming an advantage to be a night owl as societies nowadays change from industrial to technological ones. (0) ____ G ____.

Morning people might be more reliable, but night-time individuals are cleverer. Researchers discovered that evening types scored higher than morning types in tests of logical thinking. (7) _____. It was also found that those who prefer to go to bed late have higher level jobs and incomes.

(8) _____. This characteristic makes night owls extremely creative. Programmer Swizec Teller explains that programmers generally like to code at night. That’s when they can engage in mentally challenging and freethinking work.

Because of their higher IQs, creative and risk-taking abilities, some night owls achieve astonishing success. (9) _____. For example, multimillionaire author Michael Lewis prefers to write between 7 p.m. and 4 a.m. “Late nights are wonderfully tranquil, no phone calls, no interruptions”, says Lewis, “I like the feeling of knowing that nobody is trying to reach me.”

- Sample of Practice Items -

Night owls have extra brainpower that early birds lack. Also, it is commonly believed that larks are as lively in the morning as owls are at night. (10) _____. Night owls on the other hand, become energetic around 9 p.m. and can maintain their focus until early morning.

Everyone needs to take advantage of their best working hours. (11) _____. Early birds should take jobs that require being up early to get ahead of the group. Night owls should make good use of night-time productivity, and consider flexible businesses that can make the happiest and wealthiest owls possible.

- A** The truth, however, is that early birds only stay consistently productive until mid-afternoon when their energy falls considerably.
- B** It's important for people to know what time of the day suits them best.
- C** Studies show that people working at night are better at thinking than those working in the morning.
- D** New research suggests being early to rise will not make you wealthy or wise.
- E** This skill is linked to creativity and higher IQs in young people.
- F** Certainly, some of the most successful people internationally are night owls.
- G** This new working environment is perfect for night owls to achieve success and wealth.

[5 marks]

- Mark Scheme -

Part 2

Sample 1

Questions 7 – 11

Question Number	Answer	Mark	Total Marks
7	E	1	
8	C	1	
9	F	1	
10	A	1	
11	B	1	5

Part 3

Sample 1

Questions 12 – 16

Read the article below about the true story of a fisherman who was lost at sea for over a year.

Choose the correct answer **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

There is an example (0) at the beginning.

The fisherman who vanished for 14 months

In November 2012, José Alvarenga went on a shark fishing trip off the coast of Mexico. He had just finished a day of shark fishing when the motor died. He wasn't worried at first when he couldn't get a radio signal. At the time, there was a wind that pushed him further out. Two days later, he was caught in a heavy storm and found himself in the middle of the sea on a 7-metre boat. All he could do was wish the winds would blow him and his boat safely to the coast.

Certain that he would live, Alvarenga explained that he decided not to scratch messages on the boat to record his journey because he planned on telling his story in person. Instead, he figured out how to fish and catch approaching seabirds using only his hands and a knife. When it rained over the sea, he was able to drink the rainwater. He kept dreaming of meeting his family and eating his favourite food - tortillas.

In order not to lose his mind by expecting the worst, Alvarenga pretended he was not lost. “I'd believe I was wandering the world. By doing this, I could make myself think I was doing something.” So he did not lose track of time, Alvarenga used the sun and the moon to count the months and weeks he had been at sea, but days eventually looked the same. He remembers seeing ships and waving at them but did not know if they were real or if his mind was playing tricks. For limited entertainment, Alvarenga sometimes carefully swam alongside the boat or played games with the birds.

– Sample of Practice Items –

Eventually, Alvarenga saw a small island. He started to swim, and the waves helped to carry him to the beach. The reality of seeing the first faces for 438 days was unbelievable. Alvarenga was on an island 12,500 kilometres away from Mexico. By this time, he was in poor health and could barely walk or stand.

When his fellow fishermen saw his story on TV, they wanted him to come back to Mexico. Alvarenga thought differently. He returned to his home country, El Salvador, which he had left thirteen years before, to live with his parents and teenage daughter. During his time lost at sea, Alvarenga had imagined his return home, “I’ll be a good son and a good father,” he promised himself. He even gave his daughter driving lessons. Now, rather than long deep-sea fishing adventures, he enjoys short boat trips.

It was hard enough for Alvarenga to survive 14 months left at sea in a small boat longer than anyone in recorded history. It was even harder to confirm his story was true, as many could not imagine how it happened. Some fishermen say nobody can live more than three months in those conditions. However, stories of survival in the Pacific are not uncommon. For example, in 2006, three Mexicans were discovered in a boat, nine months after failing to return from a shark-fishing expedition.

Example

0 What happened to Alvarenga a couple of days after he went on a fishing trip?

- A** He was left without communication.
- B** His boat's engine broke down.
- C** His boat was driven by wind to the shore.
- D** He got lost due to a strong storm.

12 How did Alvarenga survive while he was lost at sea?

- A** He had faith that he would see his family again.
- B** He fed himself using his hands and a knife.
- C** He left messages on the boat for help.
- D** He drank seawater when he was thirsty.

13 How did the fisherman remain positive while lost at sea?

- A** He relied on finding passing ships.
- B** He observed the sun and moon to record the days.
- C** He imagined he was travelling around the world.
- D** He amused himself by doing some exercise.

14 When he reached land after being lost, Alvarenga was surprised because

- A** he was far away from his homeland.
- B** he felt sick and found it difficult to move.
- C** he was pushed back by waves into the sea.
- D** he met people for the first time after a while.

- Sample of Practice Items -

15 After his survival, Alvarenga decided to

- A** move back to his family in El Salvador.
- B** go back to work with his old friends in Mexico.
- C** remain at sea for another adventure.
- D** teach his daughter to drive.

16 Why was it hard for some people to believe Alvarenga's story?

- A** It had not happened before.
- B** His tale was difficult to prove.
- C** Fishermen agreed that his survival was impossible.
- D** There were very few similar tales in the Pacific.

[5 marks]

Part 3

Sample 1

Questions 12 – 16

Question Number	Answer	Mark	Total Marks
12	B	1	
13	C	1	
14	D	1	
15	A	1	
16	B	1	5

Part 3

Sample 2

Questions 12 – 16

Read the text about a newly qualified vet who is travelling to a job interview.

Choose the correct answer **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

There is an example (0) at the beginning.

Memories of a Vet

It was a crowded little bus to Darrowby. I was on the warm side where the sun shone on the windows. I moved uncomfortably inside my best suit and eased a finger inside the tight white collar of my shirt. I felt it was a foolish suit for this weather. There was still some distance to go to where my potential employer was waiting for me.

Some of my happiest years had previously been spent back in that old building in Glasgow, storing bits of knowledge like a squirrel with its nuts. I began with plant science and the study of the smallest forms of life, working up to lectures and experiments on animals. Then I was introduced to different diseases and their secrets, followed by exams in surgery and drugs, and then finally, using my new knowledge to help sick animals.

There was a lot depending on this interview. Being a newly qualified vet usually meant being unemployed. I had almost given up any hope of actually working as a vet. Unlike me, friends who had graduated with me were now applying for jobs in the shipyards. Many tried to join the army, but the government said “NO” to a career in the army for new graduates.

There were usually only two or three vacant job positions advertised weekly in the newspaper and over eighty people applied for each one! I thought it was a mistake when the letter came from Darrowby, Yorkshire. Unexpectedly, Mr. Siegfried Farnon, an experienced vet, wanted to meet me on Friday. I was to come to tea, and, if we got on well I could start as his assistant.

– Sample of Practice Items –

I had never been in Yorkshire before, but the name had always created the image of a region that was dull and unromantic. I was prepared for loneliness and a lack of charm, but as the bus struggled its way higher, I began to wonder. We moved from dark mountains to beautiful grassy hills and wide valleys. In the valley bottoms, lonely pale grey stone farmhouses stood in the green fields. Darrowby was described in guidebooks as a little town on the river Darrow, with an old fashioned market place and little of interest except its two ancient bridges.

From the square, I had my first sight of the well-constructed Skeldale House. Like most houses in the village, it had fine, white-painted windows wide and attractive on the ground floor but small and square far above. I could tell it was the right place before I was near enough to read “S. Farnon M.R.C.V.S.” on the door. It was because what the letter had said — the only house with ivy, the dark green untidy leaves which climbed to the highest windows. This could be where I would work for the first time as a real vet.

Example

0 On his way to Darrowby, what mistake did the writer believe he had made?

- A** taking the wrong means of transport
- B** wearing the wrong clothes
- C** choosing the wrong seat
- D** travelling in the wrong destination

12 The “old building in Glasgow” in line 5 refers to a

- A** college.
- B** laboratory.
- C** hospital.
- D** pharmacy.

13 Before receiving the letter, the writer felt he was very likely to

- A** work in the shipyards.
- B** remain unemployed.
- C** join the army.
- D** become a vet.

14 What had surprised the writer about the letter he received?

- A** He was given the wrong job.
- B** He was contacted by post.
- C** He was invited to tea.
- D** He was chosen for an interview.

– Sample of Practice Items –

15 What was the writer's impression of Yorkshire as the bus drove through it?

- A** It was more appealing than he had expected.
- B** Fewer people lived there than he had imagined.
- C** Travelling around it was more difficult than he had thought.
- D** The landscape was as boring as he had predicted.

16 How did the writer first identify Skeldale House?

- A** by the architecture of the building
- B** by the name written on the sign
- C** by the plant growing on the walls
- D** by the colour and shape of the windows

[5 marks]

– Mark Scheme –

Part 3

Sample 2

Questions 12 – 16

Question Number	Answer	Mark	Total Marks
12	A	1	
13	B	1	
14	D	1	
15	A	1	
16	C	1	