

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

IELTS READING PASSAGE

Questions 1–9

Reading Passage 1 has nine paragraphs A–I.

Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.

List of Headings

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| i Island legends | vii The social nature of reef occupations |
| ii Resources for exchange | viii Resources for islanders' own use |
| iii Competition for fishing rights | ix High levels of expertise |
| iv The low cost of equipment | x Alternative sources of employment |
| v Agatti's favourable location | xi Resources for earning money |
| vi Rising income levels | xii Social rights and obligations |

- 1 Paragraph A
- 2 Paragraph B
- 3 Paragraph C
- 4 Paragraph D
- 5 Paragraph E
- 6 Paragraph F
- 7 Paragraph G
- 8 Paragraph H
- 9 Paragraph I

The coral reefs of Agatti Island

A Agatti is one of the Lakshadweep Islands off the southwest coast of India. These islands are surrounded by lagoons and coral reefs which are in turn surrounded by the open ocean. Coral reefs, which are formed from the skeletons of minute sea creatures, give shelter to a variety of plants and animals, and therefore have the potential to provide a stream of diverse benefits to the inhabitants of Agatti Island.

B In the first place, the reefs provide food and other products for consumption by the islanders themselves. Foods include different types of fish, octopus and molluscs, and in the case of poorer families these constitute as much as 90% of the protein they consume. Reef resources are also used for medicinal purposes. For example, the money cowrie, a shell known locally as Vallakavadi, is commonly made into a paste and used as a home remedy to treat cysts in the eye.

C In addition, the reef contributes to income generation. According to a recent survey, 20% of the households on Agatti report lagoon fishing, or shingle, mollusc, octopus and cowrie collection as their main occupation (Hoon et al, 2002). For poor households, the direct contribution of the reef to their financial resources is significant: 12% of poor households are completely dependent on the reef for their household income, while 59% of poor households rely on the reef for 70% of their household income, and the remaining 29% for 50% of their household income.

D Bartering of reef resources also commonly takes place, both between islanders and between islands. For example, Agatti Island is known for its abundance of octopus, and this is often used to obtain products from nearby Androth Island. Locally, reef products may be given by islanders in return for favours, such as help in constructing a house or net mending, or for other products such as rice, coconuts or fish.

E The investment required to exploit the reefs is minimal. It involves simple, locally available tools and equipment, some of which can be

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

used without a boat, such as the fishing practice known as Kat moodsal. This is carried out in the shallow eastern lagoon of Agatti by children and adults, close to shore at low tide, throughout the year. A small cast net, a leaf bag, and plastic slippers are all that are required, and the activity can yield 10–12 small fish (approximately 1 kg) for household consumption. Cast nets are not expensive, and all the households in Agatti own at least one. Even the boats, which operate in the lagoon and near-shore reef, are constructed locally and have low running costs. They are either small, non-mechanised, traditional wooden rowing boats, known as Thonis, or rafts, known as Tharappam.

F During more than 400 years of occupation and survival, the Agatti islanders have developed an intimate knowledge of the reefs. They have knowledge of numerous different types of fish and where they can be found according to the tide or lunar cycle. They have also developed a local naming system or folk taxonomy, naming fish according to their shape. Sometimes the same species is given different names depending on its size and age. For example, a full grown Emperor fish is called Metti and a juvenile is called Killokam. The abundance of each species at different fishing grounds is also well known. Along with this knowledge of reef resources, the islanders have developed a wide range of skills and techniques for exploiting them. A multitude of different fishing techniques are still used by the islanders, each targeting different areas of the reef and particular species.

G The reef plays an important role in the social lives of the islanders too, being an integral part of traditions and rituals. Most of the island's folklore revolves around the reef and sea. There is hardly any tale or song which does not mention the traditional sailing crafts, known as Odams, the journeys of enterprising 'heroes', the adventures of sea fishing and encounters with sea creatures. Songs that women sing recollect women looking for returning Odams, and requesting the waves to be gentler and the breeze just right for the sails. There are stories of the benevolent sea ghost baluvam, whose coming to shore is considered a harbinger of prosperity for that year, bringing more coconuts, more fish and general well-being.

H The reef is regarded by the islanders as common property, and all the islanders are entitled to use the lagoon and reef resources. In the past, fishing groups would obtain permission from the Amin (island head person) and go fishing in the grounds allotted by him. On their return, the Amin would be given a share of the catch, normally one of the best or biggest fish. This practice no longer exists, but there is still a code of conduct or etiquette for exploiting the reef, and common respect for this is an effective way of avoiding conflict or disputes.

I Exploitation of such vast and diverse resources as the reefs and lagoon surrounding the island has encouraged collaborative efforts, mainly for purposes of safety, but also as a necessity in the operation of many fishing techniques. For example, an indigenous gear and operation known as Bala fadal involves 25–30 men. Reef gleaning for cowrie collection by groups of 6–10 women is also a common activity, and even today, although its economic significance is marginal, it continues as a recreational activity.

(www.elt.oup.com)

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

Approach

1. Paragraph heading questions, like the one here (Question 1-9), nearly always come as the first block of questions. If this happens, ignore them and move immediately to the next block of questions – in this case, the multiple-choice questions (Questions 10-13).

***Why ignore the paragraph heading questions?** This type of question requires you have to have a basic knowledge of what each paragraph contains but at the start you have no idea so you would need a lot of time to scan the paragraphs. Multiple-choice questions, however, require you to scan for specific information. Whilst you are doing this, you will gain a general idea of the topic of each paragraph. You could even underline/ circle repeated key words so that when you come back to the paragraph heading questions, you can see the main topic of each paragraph very quickly.*

2. Read all of the multiple-choice questions and answers. Underline the key words as you read and make predictions about the answers you might expect and also the synonyms of the key words that you might find in the text.

***Why read all the questions at once?** There are several reasons for this:*

- *Reading all the questions will give you a general idea of the topic of the text, which might make you feel more confident when you move your eyes across to start scanning that long piece of writing.*
- *Sometimes, when you are looking for the answer to one question you might actually find the answer to another question but if you haven't read that question, you don't realise you have found it. This is particularly the case when answers do not appear in order in the text, which can sometimes happen.*
- *You need to be more familiar with and understand more fully the questions than you do the text. It doesn't matter if you haven't understood everything in the text but it does matter if you haven't understood the question. Reading through the questions all together and then moving back to each one individually means you have at least two chances to read and understand the question.*

***Why underline the key words in the questions?** There are a few reasons for this also:*

- *The reading test is partly a test of your vocabulary knowledge and in the majority of cases finding the answer in the text will mean identifying the synonyms of the key words in the questions. So, when you underline the key word it can help to start thinking and predicting the words you might find in the text so it can help you to scan and identify the answers more quickly.*
- *Underlining words on the paper and making that physical mark is scientifically proven to make you remember that word more – it is like you are writing that word onto the paper in your brain, meaning you are more likely to focus on it and remember it when you start looking for the answers in the text.*

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

3. When you have read all the questions in that section and underlined the key words, move back to the first question in the section and read it again. Then move your eyes to the text and start looking for the answer.

4. When you think you have found the answer in the text, underline/ circle it.

Why underline the answer in the text? Usually the answers come in order in the text so when you have looked back at the next question you can go back to the text and start reading from the point where you found the previous answer. If you don't circle/ underline it, you will have to start scanning again from the start of the text, wasting valuable seconds. Every second counts in this test.

5. When you have found an answer in the text, immediately write it onto your answer paper.

Why write the answer immediately on your answer paper? In the reading text you do not have extra time to transfer your answers like you do in the listening test so it is better to do it as you go along because otherwise you risk running out of time and having no answers on your answer paper. Also, it is easy to lose track of where you are on the answer paper and start filling in answers in the wrong place, making everything incorrect.

6. If you feel you are spending too much time on one question (you have 1.5 minutes per question), make a guess by writing something in the gap on your answer paper and move to the next.

Why make a guess? Even if you do not find an answer, you should write something in the space on the answer paper so that you do not get confused about which answer goes where – it is easy if you leave a space to find yourself having written the answers in the wrong spaces, making everything wrong. Also, in some cases (think of True, False, Not given), you have a 33.3% chance of getting the right answer so it is always worth putting something.

7. When you are scanning for the answers to the multiple-choice questions, put a circle/ underline any words you see repeated in the paragraphs or any key word you find summarises the topic of that paragraph. This will help you when you come back to the paragraph heading questions.

8. After completing the multiple-choice questions, move back to the heading questions. Read all the headings and underline the key words. Underlining the key words is again for the same reasons as mentioned before (step 2).

9. As you read the headings, try to recall the different paragraphs and you might be able to make a guess immediately. If you do, write the answer on your answer sheet and put a line through that heading in the list.

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

Why should you put a line through the heading in the list? This can save you wasting valuable time when you read the titles again. Every second is needed in this test and if that heading has already been used, you do not need to move your eyes over it again. Crossing it out stops you from focussing on it as an option.

10. If you then cannot match any more, you will have to move to the individual paragraphs and scan your eyes over them for the repeated key words (which you might have already identified) and any synonyms of the key words identified in the headings. Sometimes you can find two similar headings with the same key words you then you have to focus more on the exact message of the paragraph. This can take time and if you feel it is taking too much time, make a guess based on the key words only.

Answers

The key words have been underlined in the questions and explanations offered for the answers. The answers have also been underlined and numbered in the text.

Questions 1–9

List of Headings

- | | |
|---|--|
| i <u>Island legends</u> | vii <u>The social nature of reef occupations</u> |
| ii <u>Resources for exchange</u> | viii <u>Resources for islanders' own use</u> |
| iii <u>Competition for fishing rights</u> | ix <u>High levels of expertise</u> |
| iv <u>The low cost of equipment</u> | x <u>Alternative sources of employment</u> |
| v <u>Agatti's favourable location</u> | xi <u>Resources for earning money</u> |
| vi <u>Rising income levels</u> | xii <u>Social rights and obligations</u> |

1 Paragraph A **v Agatti's favourable location**

The first paragraph of an article often talks about the place, setting the scene. The first line talks about its 'location': Agatti is one of the Lakshadweep Islands off the southwest coast of India. The last line refers to the 'stream of diverse benefits' to the inhabitants of Agatti Island, showing the location is 'favourable'.

2 Paragraph B **viii Resources for islanders' own use**

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

Here, you have to recognise the synonymous phrases of 'islanders' own use' and 'consumption by the islanders themselves'. 'Use' refers to 'consumption' and 'own' to 'themselves'.

3 Paragraph C **xi Resources for earning money**

The synonyms here are 'earning money' and 'income generation'. The paragraph talks about how the islanders make their money/ an income through using the reef products.

4 Paragraph D **ii Resources for exchange**

Here, the paragraph says how 'reef products are given in return for' other things, 'in return for' being synonymous of 'exchange'.

5 Paragraph E **iv The low cost of equipment**

The paragraph contains several synonyms of 'low cost', including 'minimal investment', 'not expensive' and 'low running costs'. It talks of items such as nets and boats that are used, i.e. equipment.

6 Paragraph F **ix High levels of expertise**

The paragraph refers several times to the 'intimate knowledge' the islanders have of fishing and the 'skills and techniques' they have developed over many, many years. 'Knowledge' is the synonym here for 'expertise'.

7 Paragraph G **i Island legends**

The paragraph uses several words that could relate to or be synonymous with 'legends', including 'traditions and rituals', 'folklore', 'tale or song', 'stories'.

8 Paragraph H **xii Social rights and obligations**

The first line would cover the sense of 'social rights' as it says: all the islanders are entitled to use the lagoon and reef resources, 'entitled to' highlighting the sense of their 'rights'. Later on in the paragraph it refers to 'a code of conduct or etiquette', which could include 'obligations' they have.

9 Paragraph I **vii The social nature of reef occupations**

This one is a lot less clear and the answer might only be noticed in the very last words of the paragraph 'recreational activity' as a synonym of 'social' and 'occupation'.

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

Questions 10–13

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

10 What proportion of poor households get all their income from reef products?

- A **12%** B 20% C 29% D 59%

Here you would scan for the percentages and of course find all of them so read around the numbers. The key word here is ‘completely’ as a synonym of ‘all’.

11 Kat moodsal fishing

A is a seasonal activity.

C requires little investment.

B is a commercial activity.

D requires use of a rowing boat.

Here, you would scan for the strange word ‘kat moodsal’ and find the exact same word ‘investment’ and the synonym of ‘little’ ‘minimal’. You could also do this through a process of elimination:

It is not A) a seasonal activity because it says: ‘This is carried out in the shallow eastern lagoon of Agatti by children and adults, close to shore at low tide, throughout the year’.

It is not B) a commercial activity because it says: A small cast net, a leaf bag, and plastic slippers are all that are required, and the activity can yield 10–12 small fish (approximately 1 kg) for household consumption.

It is not D) requires use of a rowing boat because it says: It involves simple, locally available tools and equipment, some of which can be used without a boat, such as the fishing practice known as Kat moodsal.

12 Which characteristic of present-day islanders do the writers describe?

A physical strength

C courage

B fishing expertise

D imagination

Paragraph F discusses the ‘intimate knowledge’ the islanders have regarding fishing. ‘Intimate knowledge’ is a synonym here for ‘expertise’.

13 What do the writers say about the system for using the reef on Agatti?

A Fish catches are shared equally.

C The reef owner issues permits.

B There are frequent disputes.

D There is open access.

READING: PARAGRAPH HEADINGS + MULTIPLE CHOICE – IMPORTANCE OF SYNONYMS

The key here is to understand that 'open access' means everyone can use it. The text says in Paragraph H: The reef is regarded by the islanders as common property, and all the islanders are entitled to use the lagoon and reef resources. 'Common property' is the synonym here, meaning it is for everyone. Also, through elimination:

It is not A) Fish catches are shared equally because the text says: the Amin would be given a share of the catch, normally one of the best or biggest fish.

It is not B) There are frequent disputes because the text says: This practice no longer exists, but there is still a code of conduct or etiquette for exploiting the reef, and common respect for this is an effective way of avoiding conflict or disputes.

It is not C) The reef owner issues permits because the text says: In the past, fishing groups would obtain permission from the Amin (island head person) and go fishing in the grounds allotted by him... This practice no longer exists.

The coral reefs of Agatti Island

A (1) Agatti is one of the Lakshadweep Islands off the southwest coast of India. These islands are surrounded by lagoons and coral reefs which are in turn surrounded by the open ocean. Coral reefs, which are formed from the skeletons of minute sea creatures, give shelter to a variety of plants and animals, and therefore have the potential to (1) provide a stream of diverse benefits to the inhabitants of Agatti Island.

B (2) In the first place, the reefs provide food and other products for consumption by the islanders themselves. Foods include different types of fish, octopus and molluscs, and in the case of poorer families these constitute as much as 90% of the protein they consume. Reef resources are also used for medicinal purposes. For example, the money cowrie, a shell known locally as Vallakavadi, is commonly made into a paste and used as a home remedy to treat cysts in the eye.

C In addition, (3) the reef contributes to income generation. According to a recent survey, 20% of the households on Agatti report lagoon fishing, or shingle, mollusc, octopus and cowrie collection as

their main occupation (Hoon et al, 2002). For poor households, the direct contribution of the reef to their financial resources is significant: **(10) 12% of poor households are completely dependent on the reef for their household income**, while 59% of poor households rely on the reef for 70% of their household income, and the remaining 29% for 50% of their household income.

D Bartering of reef resources also commonly takes place, both between islanders and between islands. For example, Agatti Island is known for its abundance of octopus, and this is often used to obtain products from nearby Androth Island. Locally, **(4) reef products may be given by islanders in return for favours**, such as help in constructing a house or net mending, or for other products such as rice, coconuts or fish.

E (5/ 11) The investment required to exploit the reefs is minimal. It involves simple, locally available tools and equipment, some of which can be used without a boat, such as the fishing practice known as Kat moodsal. This is carried out in the shallow eastern lagoon of Agatti by children and adults, close to shore at low tide, throughout the year. A small cast net, a leaf bag, and plastic slippers are all that are required, and the activity can yield 10–12 small fish (approximately 1 kg) for household consumption. Cast nets are **(5) not expensive**, and all the households in Agatti own at least one. Even the boats, which operate in the lagoon and near-shore reef, are constructed locally and have **(5) low running costs**. They are either small, non-mechanised, traditional wooden rowing boats, known as Thonis, or rafts, known as Tharappam.

F (6/ 12) During more than 400 years of occupation and survival, the Agatti islanders have developed an intimate knowledge of the reefs. They have knowledge of numerous different types of fish and where they can be found according to the tide or lunar cycle. They have also developed a local naming system or folk taxonomy, naming fish according to their shape. Sometimes the same species is given different names depending on its size and age. For example, a full grown Emperor fish is called Metti and a juvenile is called Killokam. The abundance of each species at different fishing grounds is also well known. **(6) Along with this knowledge of reef resources, the islanders have**

developed a wide range of skills and techniques for exploiting them. A multitude of different fishing techniques are still used by the islanders, each targeting different areas of the reef and particular species.

G The reef plays an important role in the social lives of the islanders too, being an integral part of **(7) traditions and rituals**. Most of the island's **(7) folklore** revolves around the reef and sea. There is hardly any **(7) tale or song** which does not mention the traditional sailing crafts, known as Odams, the journeys of enterprising 'heroes', the adventures of sea fishing and encounters with sea creatures. Songs that women sing recollect women looking for returning Odams, and requesting the waves to be gentler and the breeze just right for the sails. There are **(7) stories** of the benevolent sea ghost baluvam, whose coming to shore is considered a harbinger of prosperity for that year, bringing more coconuts, more fish and general well-being.

H (8/ 13) The reef is regarded by the islanders as common property, and all the islanders are entitled to use the lagoon and reef resources. In the past, fishing groups would obtain permission from the Amin (island head person) and go fishing in the grounds allotted by him. On their return, the Amin would be given a share of the catch, normally one of the best or biggest fish. This practice no longer exists, but there is still **(8) a code of conduct or etiquette for exploiting the reef**, and common respect for this is an effective way of avoiding conflict or disputes.

I Exploitation of such vast and diverse resources as the reefs and lagoon surrounding the island has encouraged collaborative efforts, mainly for purposes of safety, but also as a necessity in the operation of many fishing techniques. For example, an indigenous gear and operation known as Bala fadal involves 25–30 men. **(9) Reef gleaning for cowrie collection by groups of 6–10 women is also a common activity, and even today, although its economic significance is marginal, it continues as a recreational activity.**