

## Reading – Listening – Writing – Speaking (RLWS): ALL-IN-ONE exercise

About this exercise:

1. same piece of material applying to four skills (LSRW) + vocabulary/ grammar learning (minimalism)
2. objective for new IELTS test takers: be familiar with the question type in IELTS reading (make tests simple)
3. objective for B1 learners: to do more integrated exercises for LSRW in one go (80/20 Principle)

### I. Reading

*When my contract with a university in Guangdong expired I had to take a break from my teaching career. I returned to Hong Kong and turned to a new page, going on with something meaningful.*

*I decided to organize an English study club solely for the deprived teenagers in Yuen Long (a region in the New Territories of Hong Kong) because I was annoyed by the attitude of many racists who stereotyped the residents (both Chinese and non-Chinese) in Tin Shui Wai, a relatively low-income area in Hong Kong, as losers. They just looked down on others but never gave practical assistance.*

*Posters were put up and a few dozens of students, male and female, Chinese and non-Chinese, joined. All of them were attracted by the idea of making progress in their studies but I didn't think they had understood the real situation. If they did, they would have a picture of painful training and tons of extra exercises. Still, I am positive about the project and believe that a certain percentage of the applicants will stay and fight for their future.*

*I also have faith in the local community which would provide venue for our lessons and activities. Even the regional support is very limited, the project can be run in an e-mode, namely, on the Internet.*

1. Assumption: learners of this exercise have reached CEFR B1 - B2<sup>1</sup> level
2. Tips for IELTS “True/ False/ Not Given” questions

| Question (Statement)   | Answer    | Tricks and Logic   |
|--|-----------|--|
| The writer does a lot of meaningful reading.                         | Not given | - Traps: <i>new page</i> , university, meaningful<br>- Logic: no hints in the passage imply that the writer reads or does not read. There is <i>no direct evidence</i> showing that he does NOT read at all — we cannot conclude “false”.                                      |
| The racists that the writer mentioned degrade losers.                | True      | - Traps: key words related are far apart in the passage<br>- Key words: synonyms (degraded = looked down), was annoyed, stereotyped  |
| Some deprived adult applicants will stay and fight for their future. | False     | - Trap: wordings in the passage “ <i>a certain percentage of the applicants will stay and fight for their future</i> ” look very similar to those found in the question<br>- Hint: the study club was <i>solely</i> for the <i>deprived teenagers</i> , no adults are included |

<sup>1</sup> CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference for Languages; B2 (a relatively wide band) is approximately equal to IELTS 5.5 – 6.5, Hong Kong DSE English grade 2 to 4, PRC NCEE (高考) English 125 – 145 or Pass/Credit in Cambridge First Certificate. B1 is a half-band lower.

3. More tips for tackling IELTS Reading
  - a) Hints for answers found in the passage are basically sequential.
  - b) Hints can be found in any paragraph; “jumping” is possible, though sequentially.
  - c) Alternative expressions and synonyms are more inclined to “True”.
  - d) Exclusive contradictions imply “False”.
  - e) Open-ended, or without specific evidence, try “Not Given”.
  - f) Mind the exaggeration in the question, like: **only, 100%, always, never**, either “False” or “Not Given” is possible.

## II. Listening (slow speed)

1. Hints: look up unfamiliar key words, phrases and expressions found in the script (*the Reading*) in a dictionary.
2. Scan the QR code and listen to the audio clip once and check if you understand basically everything, otherwise:
3. Listen to the audio clip, sentence after sentence, each REPEATEDLY until you fully understand it (but no more than 5 times) and move on to the next. For those confusing sentences, you should refer to the script (*the Reading* here in this exercise) and check what has gone wrong before listening to them again, and again, until you understand completely what you hear. A demanding dictation is a waste of time, if your target score is 8 or above, especially when you are running out of time. Please don't do it.



## III. Writing

1. Re-write the second paragraph of *the Reading* in present tense.
2. Using the grammar and vocabulary learned in the second paragraph, write two sentences in response to a Task 2 IELTS question: “*Should wealthy nations be required to share their wealth among poorer nations by providing things as food and education?*” (C1-2-2)
3. Referring to the second and third paragraph, write four sentences (including the two you have done in ‘2’ above) and form a full response to the same Task 2 question.

## IV. Speaking

1. Part 2 question: Describe a situation that made you a little angry. Look for words and expressions that might be helpful in preparing the outline for ‘1’ above.
2. Jot down the outline and present to yourself accordingly. In loud voice, do it slowly first; speed up a bit then, and again in the following rounds, until you are happy with your fluency.
3. Tell the story (repeat what you have practiced in ‘2’) to your friends or kin, even they don't speak English.

*For sample answers, see p.3 below*

## V. Sample Answers

### A. Writing

#### 1. Re-writing in present tense

I **decide** to organize an English study club solely for the deprived teenagers in Yuen Long (a region in the New Territories of Hong Kong) because I **am** annoyed by the attitude of many racists who **stereotype** the residents (both Chinese and non-Chinese), in Tin Shui Wai, a relatively low-income area in Hong Kong, as losers. They just **look down** on others but never give practical assistance.

#### 2. Responding in two sentences (present tenses)

Should wealthy nations be required to share their wealth among poorer nations by providing things as food and education?

**Stereotyping** poor nations as hopeless entities is never a wise **attitude**. Instead of **looking down** people in the developing nations, well-off countries should **organize** projects to boost the economy of **the deprived area**.

- Highlight and bold: learned from the Reading;
- Underlined: useful and frequently used terms

#### 3. Full response in four sentences

**Stereotyping** poor nations as hopeless entities is never a wise **attitude**. Instead of **looking down** people in the developing nations, well-off countries should **organize** projects to boost the economy of **the deprived area**. The richer countries can **provide training**, financial **support** and other **practical assistance** to their poor counterparts. If both the developed and underdeveloped **fight for the future** together, they will **make progress** and eventually draw a win-win picture of no **losers**.

[4 sentences; 73 words]

- Highlight and **bold**: learned from *the Reading*;
- Underlined: useful and frequently used terms

### B. Speaking

#### Terms and Outline:

*background*: summer, teaching posts, attracted by handsome pay;

*job interview*: company for rich teenagers, on/off-line;

*annoyed*: stereotyped attitude towards my geographical background — looking down on me;

*fellow students*: experienced no such humiliation

*still positive about*: background and future

#### Script:

In last July I was **taking** a summer **break** and went to a big city to apply for some teaching posts in (your expertise). I was **attracted by** the handsome pay of a local company which **provided** courses, both **e-mode** and off-lines, due to the Covid-19, for **teenagers** from wealthy families. Though I was offered an interview, **I was annoyed by the attitude of** the interviewer who **stereotyped** students from my hometown, a relatively low-income area. I simply felt that she was just **looking down on** me and judging me by my geographical background, but not my ability.

The **real situation** was: a couple of fellow students of mine, **male and female**, from my hometown, attended similar job interviews in other companies, which they joined finally; they did not experience humiliation at all. Though I have had an unhappy job interview, I am still **positive about** my background and believe that I will be fine in my future career. Definitely I will **fight for my future**.

Audio for Sample Answer (Speaking) ↓:

