

Task 2 – Multi-Text Reading: The Future of Our Planet

At a glance

Level: ISE III

Focus: Task 2 – Multi-text reading

Aims: To familiarise students with interpreting short reading texts, images and tables quickly

Objectives: To work on different strategies for tackling the skills needed to answer a reading test

Skill: Skimming and scanning, dealing with unknown vocabulary, writing questions, describing changes in 3 images and interpreting data

Topic: The future of our planet

Language functions: Deducing and inferring, hypothesising and evaluating options

Lexis: Using signposting language and vocabulary specific to the topic.

Materials needed: Student worksheet

Timing: 60 minutes

Procedure

Preparation

Print off one student worksheet per student.

In class

1. Explain to the class that today they are going to focus on Task 2 – Multi-text reading in the ISE III Reading & Writing exam, which involves reading multiple texts; including images, diagrams, graphs and tables. Tell the students that for this part of the test, there are 4-5 short texts that they have to read or interpret, then 15 questions to answer in 20 minutes. Therefore, the students will only have approximately one minute to answer each question.
2. Explain that the first five questions involve matching the appropriate 4-5 texts to questions. These questions involve the use of skimming and scanning techniques.

3. Give out a student worksheet to each student. Tell the students the topic of the class today is "***The future of our planet***". Ask the students for their opinions and views on this. You could try asking more specific questions such as:

- *Is everything OK with our planet at the moment? Why/why not?*
- *Do we need to be concerned about the future of our planet? In which ways?*
- *Will we always live on earth, or will we move to live on another planet someday?*

This should generate some lively discussion. Divide the class into groups of approximately four students and ask them to discuss the questions for approximately ten minutes. Whilst the students are completing this task, walk around the groups checking they understand the questions and helping them with any unknown vocabulary.

4. Bring the activity to a close and nominate one person per group to present the ideas from their group. Discuss these ideas as an open-class activity.

5. Now, divide the class into pairs (A and B), and ask students A to scan *Text A* in only one minute and to try to remember as much of the text as they can. Meanwhile, student B should read the first sentence of *Text A* "*What is the future of our planet?*" and try to predict what the text will be about. Then, ask all student A's to give their information to student B's, and vice versa. Repeat this activity with *Text B*.

6. Now, ask students to underline any unknown vocabulary in *Text A*, for example:

fuss over, commensurate, lifespan, supercontinents, mass extinctions, annihilate, exhaust, orbit

Explain that on the day of the test, they will not be able to check the meanings of these unknown words so they will have to *infer meaning*, or make an *educated* guess. Ask the students what they think this is? Explain that it is their idea, based on their understanding of the rest of the text, and looking closely at the words surrounding the unknown word.

7. Ask the students to work in pairs, trying to give a definition of the words they underlined in *Text A*, (answers in teacher's notes). Carry out the same process with *Text B*. Unknown vocabulary may include:

viable, contemplate, diminish, mass, wasteland (see teacher notes)

8. Now look at *Text C* as a class. Ask the class what kind of text it is (*Answer: a speech*). Explain that for this activity that they are going to

practise **writing 4 questions** based on this text. Give a couple of examples of questions (or illicit from students), for example:

Who is the NASA family?

When did the first humans land on the moon?

Ask students to scan the text and write down their own questions.

9. Go through these questions as a whole class activity, choosing 5-10 students at random.

10. Now ask the students to look at Text D. Text D involves interpreting an image. Tell students to look at the image for **ten seconds**, cover it up, and tell their partner as much as they can remember. Then repeat this for another **ten seconds**, giving any extra information they can.

11. Text E involves understanding the data given in a survey. Go through the important information, such as the years given at the top and the % growth; the areas on the left of the survey – *population billion, GDP Trillion USD, TPES Mtoe...etc.* It is important to get a general idea of the data, for example, the big % increases, the ones which are similar. Tell the students to look for patterns or trends.

12. Now, tell students to work in pairs and practise asking and answering questions from each other about the information given. For example:

What was the figure for Nuclear TWh in 2011?

Which category nearly doubled in growth between the years 1993-2011?

13. Finally, to bring the lesson to an end, ask students what type of questions they will have to answer on the test, and what strategies they could use to answer them successfully.

Ask the students what they learned from looking at:

Texts A and B? (Possible answer: *learning how to deal with unknown vocabulary, predicting skills, memory skills, summary skills*).

From Text C? (Possible answer: *Writing possible questions*).

From Text D? (Possible answer: *Learning to interpret a diagram, graphic or illustration*).

From Text E? (Possible answer: *practising interpreting information on a table, asking and answering questions based on this information*).

Explain that they can prepare for the test by using these strategies whenever they read something in English.

Extension activity

More advanced students can be asked to summarise all of the texts.

Further support activity

Weaker students can be given more time to work on the texts, and only asked to complete 2 out of the 5 tasks

After class

Ask the students to complete their own research on “the future of our planet” using the links to the websites as shown. Then, ask the students to write a summary of some of the articles they found using approximately 100 words.

Student Worksheet

Task 2 – Multi-Text Reading:
The Future of Our Planet

Before reading discussion

- What do you think about *the future of our planet*? Think about this for a minute and be ready to tell your teacher your opinions and views.
- Work in your group and discuss this for approximately 10 minutes.
- Choose one person from your group to explain your views and opinions to the rest of the class.

ISE III Task 2 – Multi-text reading Practice Texts

The following are examples of reading texts you might find on the ISE III Task 2A Reading test.

TASK 1 – Read Texts A & B in pairs

- In pairs, student A has one minute to read Text A, whilst student B reads only the first sentence (*so, do we need to fuss over climate change, or are we safe for generations to come?*) and tries to predict the content of the text.
- Student A gives their information to student B, and vice versa.
- Do the same with Text B. Student B reads the text in one minute, whilst student A reads only the first sentence "As far as we know, the earth is our only viable habitat".
- Student B gives their information to student A, and vice versa.

Text A

So, do we need to fuss over climate change or are we safe for generations to come? Are we unnecessarily worried? Can we indeed, predict the future of our planet?

The biggest transformations don't occur overnight but rather over hundreds of billions of years. Supercontinents change, mass extinctions annihilate almost all life, and alterations in the encompassing solar system all have an effect.

It is basically the sun that will decide the fate of our planet. In billions of years, as our ageing star begins to exhaust hydrogen fuel, it will transform into a red giant and broaden out into the inner solar system as remote as the Earth's orbit.

Text B

Our Planet

As far as we know, the earth is our only viable habitat. But for how long though?

We often make predictions about the weather - will it rain tomorrow, will it be sunny at the weekend? We can only contemplate the bigger questions though, such as, will the greenhouse gases in our atmosphere reach an upper limit and start to diminish? Will the earth become a mass of burning rock like Venus, or a frozen wasteland like Mars?

TASK 2 - Dealing with unknown vocabulary.

- Underline any unknown words in Text A
- With your partner, try to *guess their meaning from context*

TASK 3 - Practise writing questions based on a text

- Skim read Text C. Where is it taken from?
- Now, **you** are going to practise **writing** questions for Text C, instead of just answering them. For example: What is the purpose of the speech? Who were the key players in the Space Shuttle program? Why was the success unprecedented?
- Read the text quickly and formulate 4 questions that you can ask your partner about the text.

i) _____

ii) _____

iii) _____

iv) _____

Text C

Kennedy Space Center

July 21, 2014

Thank you, Bob. I want to echo Bob's thanks to all the members of the NASA family and the KSC community who are with us today.

Forty-five years ago, NASA's journey to land the first humans on the moon began right here.

NASA astronauts, beginning with the Mercury 7 and continuing through the Gemini and Apollo years, launched from these famous shores. For 30 years, the unprecedented success of our Space Shuttle program was made possible by these men and women.

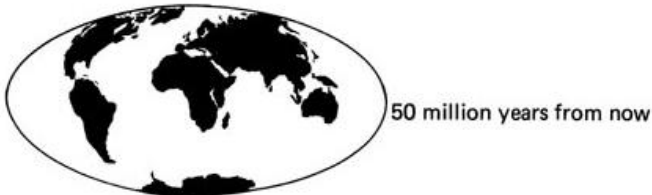
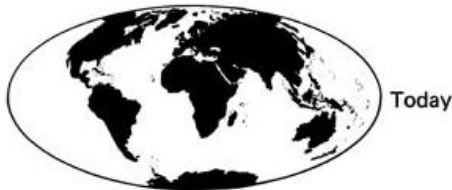
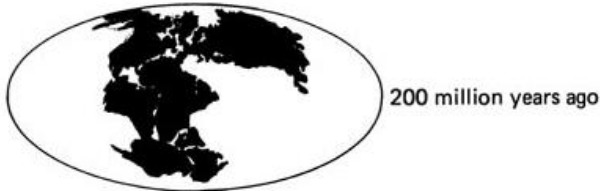
TASK 4 – Interpreting images

Text D involves interpreting 3 different images.

- Look at the images for **10 seconds** and tell your partner what you remember. Now look again for another **10 seconds** and write down the key information.

Text D

Continental drift



TASK 5 – Understanding survey information

Text E involves understanding information given in a survey.

- Look at the information at the top of the table – the years and percentage growth
- Look at the left-side axis for the categories and try to remember some of them
- Now look for patterns or trends in the table, for example, *have they all increased? What is the range of percentage growth?*
- Work with a partner asking and answering questions about the table such as “what was the figure for Nuclear TWh in 2011?” or “Which category nearly doubled on growth between the years 1993-2011?”

Text E

	1993	2011	2020	% growth 1993-2011
Population, billion	5.5	7	8.1	27%
GDP				
Trillion USD	25	70	65	180%
TPES Mtoe	9 532	14 092	17 208	48%
Coal Mt	4 474	7 520	10 108	68%
Oil Mt	3 179	3 973	4 549	25%
Natural gas bcm	2 176	3 518	4 049	62%
Nuclear TWh	2 106	2 386	3 761	13%
Hydro Power TWh	2 286	2 767	3 826	21%
Biomass Mtoe	1 036	1 277	1 323	23%
Other renewables Twh	44	515	1 999	n/a

Teacher Notes

Possible answers to unknown words from text A (taken from www.thesaurus.com)

Include

Fuss over – worry about, be concerned about, concern oneself, make a fuss about

Commensurate – proportionate, appropriate, equivalent, fitting

Lifespan – lifetime, generation

Supercontinents – the whole world together

Mass extinctions – (mass = majority, block, load) elimination, death, destruction, annihilation

Annihilate – see above

Exhaust – drain, use up, sap, weaken, bankrupt, burn out, wear down, suck dry

Orbit – path, trajectory, course, track, circumgyration

Possible answers to unknown words from text B include

Viable – applicable, feasible, possible, workable, operable, within possibility

Contemplate – consider, envisage, foresee, propose, think of, deliberate, speculate, meditate on, reflect upon

Diminish – decline, decrease, lessen, lower, reduce, shrink, weaken, die out, become smaller

Wasteland – desert, swamp, bad lands, marsh, moor, wilds

Original Sources

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/earth/earth timeline/future earth](http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/earth/earth_timeline/future_earth)

<http://www.cifarnbq.ca/questions/what-does-the-future-hold-for-our-planet/>

http://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/final_cb_armstrong_renaming.pdf

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[http://www.worldenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Complete WER 2013 Survey.pdf](http://www.worldenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Complete_WER_2013_Survey.pdf)