

**ESOL International
Sample English Reading Examination
Level C2 Proficient**

Instructions to learners

Check that you have the correct paper.

Please complete the information on your mark sheet.

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAPER.

Use black or blue ink. Do not use a pencil.

You may **NOT** use a dictionary.

There are 30 questions in this examination.

You must attempt all the questions.

Record your answers on the mark sheet.

Total marks available: 30

You have **75 minutes** to finish the examination.

**NOCN ESOL International Reading
Level C2 Proficient Paper BB
Sample Examination Task Sheet**



Text 1

Diversity deficit robs top firms of business opportunities, study shows	1
Britain's biggest companies have been warned that they are missing out on business opportunities because of the "diversity deficit" at the top of their organisations, where only a handful of senior roles are held by women or ethnic minorities.	2 3 4 5
A new analysis into the 100 top individuals at each of the 100 largest UK companies found that only three of the chairmen (there is only one woman chair in the FTSE 100) was not white, all but five chief executives were white and all but two of the finance directors were white. "Viewed from this perspective, the top leadership of the FTSE 100 remains almost exclusively male and white," the report, which was backed by Trevor Phillips, a former chair of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, said.	6 7 8 9 10 11
Chuka Umunna MP, shadow business secretary, said a future Labour government could introduce quotas to improve diversity if firms did not make progress themselves. "The continued existence of a glass ceiling for women and ethnic minorities in our boardrooms is undeniable and unacceptable. Whilst advances on non-executive appointments in recent years have been welcome, progress on executive positions has been lamentable," Umunna said.	12 13 14 15 16 17
Phillips, who is launching the report by Green Park headhunters in New York, called on companies to tackle the issue as they would any other business problem and do their own audits of their diversity. "They have to come up with an explanation and a remedy to it and treat it like any other business problem," said Phillips, who is a board advisor to Green Park and chair of its diversity analytics arm. One issue highlighted by the report is the absence of any individuals of Chinese descent holding executive positions in Britain's top 100 boardrooms. "As China grows to the largest consumer market in the world, and as the United States becomes a majority-minority society, the fact that two-thirds of our business companies have all-white executive teams – and apparently not one person of Chinese descent – should set off a big red flashing light that we aren't equipping ourselves to compete in these markets," said Phillips. It was self-defeating, he said, that so few women held senior full-time roles. Proposals from Lord Davies for 25% of FTSE-100 boardroom seats to be held by women by 2015 have pushed the proportion up to 20% – from 12.5% three years ago. But most of the positions are held by non-executive directors with the percentage of full-time directors standing at 7.2% up from 5.5% when Davies set the target three years ago, according to the latest data from the Professional Boards Forum's BoardWatch.	18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32
A formal update on the progress towards the Davies targets is due next month and Vince Cable _____ been writing to the remaining all-male boards to encourage progress. A spokeswoman for the business secretary said: "Vince has always maintained that as we restructure our economy, encouraging companies to tap into the broadest pool of talent available is paramount. Ensuring that those who sit around the top tables of our companies are more diverse is not about political correctness, it makes business sense".	33 34 35 36 37 38
According to the Green Park study, a dozen women were found among the 289 people holding the positions of chair, chief executive or finance director, while just 10 positions at this level were held by people from ethnic minorities. In the next layer down, the top 20 roles at each firm including non-executive directors, non-whites represent 5.1% of roles, while in the next layer, the top 100 roles, the proportion of non-whites is 6.2%, which the report said did "not hold out much promise of improvement at the higher levels in the near future". Of the firms analysed, Standard Chartered was found to be an outlier with 33% minority presence in this top 100 – the so-called pipeline – which the report said might be explained by its operations in Asia and the Middle East.	39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47
Boards with gender diversity do not necessarily have ethnic diversity. _____ companies in the national resources sector are the most ethno-culturally diverse but the least diverse when it comes to gender balance.	48 49

www.theguardian.com

1. According to the text, which of the following statements is true?
 - a. There are five white chief executives in the FTSE 100 companies
 - b. There are three white chairmen in the FTSE 100 companies
 - c. There is one woman chairperson in the FTSE 100 companies
 - d. A minority of the finance directors of the FTSE 100 companies is white

2. What is meant by a 'glass ceiling for women and ethnic minorities'?
 - a. That the buildings that the top companies are in are predominantly made of glass
 - b. That women and ethnic minorities are not able to undertake senior roles
 - c. That there is an invisible barrier that cannot be broken through to attain the top jobs
 - d. That women and ethnic minorities are in glass offices

3. According to the article, there are claims that:
 - a. If we do not have people of Chinese descent in senior posts we will not be able to compete in China
 - b. If you do not have people of Chinese descent in senior posts we will not be allowed to compete in China
 - c. China is the biggest market in the world for UK goods and services
 - d. The United States has predominantly all-white executive teams

4. Who is Vince Cable?
 - a. The author of the Green Park Study
 - b. The business secretary for the government
 - c. A spokesperson for the business secretary
 - d. The chair of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission

5. The main purpose of the document is to:
 - a. Persuade companies to promote diversity in senior posts
 - b. Explain the business strategy of not having diversity in senior posts
 - c. Present statistics about the number of women and non-white executives
 - d. Instruct the reader how to recruit to senior posts whilst encouraging diversity

**NOCN ESOL International Reading
Level C2 Proficient Paper BB
Sample Examination Task Sheet**



6. There is a spelling mistake:
 - a. On line 10
 - b. On line 22
 - c. On line 31
 - d. On line 35

7. The word 'compete' in line 26 can be best replaced by:
 - a. fight
 - b. battle
 - c. race
 - d. contend

8. A grammatical mistake has been made:
 - a. On line 2
 - b. On line 7
 - c. On line 21
 - d. On line 25

9. The missing word or phrase starting the sentence on line 48 is:
 - a. Then
 - b. For example
 - c. Finally
 - d. Therefore

10. What is the correct grammatical form of a verb missing on line 33?
 - a. Has
 - b. Having
 - c. Had
 - d. Have

Text 2

Teachers Should Read More Children’s Books

Research has shown that there is value in helping teachers become reading role models for the pupils they teach, and that developing teachers’ subject knowledge of children’s literature can contribute to a child or young person’s enjoyment of reading. Teachers who read themselves and share their love of books in the primary classroom can, in turn, encourage children to read more.

3
4
5
6
7

A year-long children’s literature blog with primary school trainee teachers was set up, which was originally designed to support them in widening their range and knowledge of children’s literature and to develop their confidence to share and use texts _____ in the classroom. Researchers asked them to review three children’s books during the year, based on their own enjoyment of the book, the age range of children they had used the book with and ideas for use in the classroom.

8
9
10
11
12

The blog generated lots of data. There were two particularly interesting trends; firstly, it enabled researchers to measure whether the trainee teachers had been supported to develop their own subject knowledge of children’s literature – which it did. The blog period ended with a focus group and this was where the second trend emerged; as well as looking at how trainees subject knowledge of children’s books could be improved, researchers found that they had used books diagnostically to support their own wellbeing in the primary classroom. Reading for pleasure among the trainee teachers during the blog, was a common feature. The trainee teachers were also using children’s books, of all genres, as a form of escapism from the stresses and strains of teaching in the primary classroom.

13
14
15
16
17

During the focus group the trainees were asked a range of questions about reading for pleasure and what had made them become a reader. The joys of reading became apparent, namely, how they had enjoyed "getting totally lost in a book" or "absorbed" by the narrative.



18
19
20
21
22

The term bibliotherapy is becoming more widely recognised, increasingly moving away from its original medical model – whereby practitioners ‘prescribed’ self-help books to patients suffering from depression or eating disorders, for example. New ideas on reading for wellbeing are now increasingly looking at the use of books as a form of escapism. In order for reading to have wellbeing effects, readers should identify with the characters in a story and form an emotional connection with them. By doing so, it is then easier for the reader to use situations in a book, to solve their own problems, and also realise that their problems are not unique to them, nor unsolvable. Teaching is a stressful occupation. The research has highlighted that reading for pleasure can alleviate stress; escaping into the pages of a book at the end of a busy day, can help and support teachers.

23
24
25
26
27

28
29
30
31

The researchers also found that trainee teachers often don’t read purely for pleasure, citing time constraints as the reason. The blog project forced them to read as part of their professional development, and because they wanted to improve their subject knowledge. Wellbeing was secondary, but nonetheless became part of the project, almost by default. One of the students summed it up nicely: "Books are like best friends during stressful times."

32
33
34
35

36
37
38
39
40

41
42
43
44
45
46

Adapted from: www.theguardian.com

11. Which of these was NOT the purpose of the blog?
- To develop trainee teachers' confidence in using books in the classroom
 - To help widen the trainee teachers' interest in children's books
 - To encourage the trainee teachers to review children's books
 - To share what children thought of the books
12. The tone of this document can be best described as:
- Analytical and scientific
 - Formal and factual
 - Light hearted and factual
 - Humorous and descriptive
13. One of the results from the blog was:
- That a focus group took place
 - That the trainee teachers expanded their understanding of children's books
 - It proved that teaching is stressful
 - Books had been used to diagnose children's reading ability
14. According to the text, bibliotherapy:
- Was originally linked to a medical approach to improve the well-being of patients through reading children's books
 - Was originally linked to a medical approach to improve the well-being of patients through reading self-help books
 - Used to relate to the practice of reading self-help books to children in school.
 - Used to be used to relieve stress in teachers during their training if they did not have enough time for reading.
15. According to the text, which statement is true?
- Trainee teachers never have time for reading
 - Improving trainee teachers well-being was one of the aims of the project
 - Reading for pleasure can help people cope with stress
 - You understand books better if you form a link with the characters

**NOCN ESOL International Reading
Level C2 Proficient Paper BB
Sample Examination Task Sheet**

16. A spelling mistake has been made:

- a. On line 5
- b. On line 11
- c. On line 20
- d. On line 38

17. A word has been missed out in line 10. It is:

- a. finally
- b. creatively
- c. together
- d. effortlessly

18. A grammatical mistake has been made:

- a. On Line 15
- b. On line 26
- c. On line 35
- d. On line 44

19. 'Getting totally lost in a book' in line 28 means:

- a. Being completely absorbed in a book
- b. Not having time to read the book
- c. Not being able to find a way through the book
- d. Losing a book

20. There is a missing apostrophe in:

- a. Line 8
- b. Line 18
- c. Line 22
- d. Line 31

Text 3

Gardens: Seeing Stars

The night garden is full of interest: dusk-shrouded flowers, the rustle of nocturnal animals, the scent of damp leaf litter. But look up, and there's a celestial light show to enjoy, too.

With the return of *The Sky At Night* with a new presenter this month, and the success of BBC2's *Stargazing Live*, public gardens are beginning to cater for a new type of visitor, too busy looking up at the stars to worry about what's going on below. The National Botanic Garden of Wales recently became the first botanic garden to receive Dark Sky status, meaning it's free enough from light pollution to get a good view of the stars. "The Dark Sky sites are a response to the question, 'Where is the best local place to see the stars?'," says Dan Hillier of the Science and Technology Facilities Council, who leads the Dark Sky Discovery network. "You don't have to go to a serious observatory to enjoy the stars. **It comes down to three simple things**: darkness; getting away from sources of light; good sightlines. You need an open sky and good public access."

Stars in your garden

You may think backyard star-spotting in built-up areas is doomed to failure: the orange glow of street lamps reflects off clouds and water vapour in the atmosphere, blotting much celestial action.

But Tom Kerss, astronomer at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, says you can start close to home. Even in urban areas there are good views of brighter objects such as Jupiter, Saturn, Mars and the moon, and transient events such as meteor showers and comets. There's even a stargazing group in central London. "The Baker Street Irregular Astronomers use Regent's Park for star parties," says Kerss, "but if you have a back garden with no street lights and turn off the house lights, it is ideal for family stargazing. "The darker it gets and the more you look, the more you will see. In a good site, you can see the Andromeda galaxy, which is 2.5m light years away, with the naked eye. The best thing to do is to get away from direct light sources. Your ability to adapt to the dark is the biggest factor, and after 30 minutes your eyes become more sensitive."



Photo taken by: Michael J. Bennett

There will even be a constellation-inspired garden at this year's Chelsea Flower Show in May. The planting of designers Harry and David Rich's Night Sky Garden will echo colours of the Milky Way, using white foxgloves, starry white foam flowers and the violet flower spikes of whorled clary. Two circular pools (designed to call to mind black holes) will reflect the sky, with boulders resembling meteorites and a rooftop stargazing platform.

To look up from our green world at a star-encrusted sky, the heavenly bodies seem remote and frosty; but perhaps we are not as self-contained as we imagine. "The history of the Earth is an astronomical event," says Dan Hillier. "Today's plants are the survivors of changes to the Earth's orbit of the sun and catastrophic asteroid impacts. We think of the Earth as a closed ecosystem, but our geology and ecology are affected by activity way beyond our own planet. We are part of a much grander scheme."

**NOCN ESOL International Reading
Level C2 Proficient Paper BB
Sample Examination Task Sheet**

21. What is meant by the phrase 'nocturnal animals'?
- A specific type of animal found in gardens
 - Animals that only come out at night
 - Animals that do not come out at night
 - Animals that make a noise
22. Where would you likely to see the above text?
- In a scientific study
 - In a textbook
 - In an advertisement
 - In a national newspaper
23. The above text can be described as:
- Chatty and descriptive
 - Informal and persuasive
 - Formal and factual
 - Formal and persuasive
24. According to the text, which statement is true?
- You can see the stars at the Chelsea Flower Show
 - You can see the Andromeda galaxy without a telescope
 - You need a direct light source to be able to see the rest of the stars
 - Water vapour in the atmosphere helps star gazing
25. The phrase 'It comes down to three simple things' relates to:
- Star gazing
 - The Royal Observatory
 - The Dark Sky Discovery network
 - The best place to see stars

Text 4

What is mental wellbeing?

Sarah Stewart-Brown, professor of public health at the University of Warwick and a wellbeing expert, says that when we talk about mental wellbeing, we mean more than just happiness. “It’s useful to start with the idea that overall wellbeing involves both the mind and the body. And we know that physical and mental wellbeing are closely related. Of course, feeling happy is a part of mental wellbeing. But it is far from the whole. There is a deeper kind of wellbeing, which is about living in a way that is good for you and good for others around you. Feelings of contentment, enjoyment, confidence and engagement with the world are all a part of mental wellbeing. Self-esteem and self-confidence are, too. So is a feeling that you can do the things you want to do. Also good relationships, which bring joy to you and those around you, are important. Of course, good mental wellbeing does not mean that you never experience feelings or situations where you feel out of your depth. But it does mean that you feel you have the resilience to cope when times are tougher than usual.” Mental wellbeing can take many different forms, but a useful description is feeling good and functioning well.

Wellbeing and society

Over the last 50 years, we in Britain have become richer. Despite this, evidence from population surveys – in which people were asked to rate their own happiness or mental wellbeing – shows that mental wellbeing has not improved. This suggests that many of the things we often think will improve our mental wellbeing – such as more possessions, more money to spend or expensive holidays – on their own do not lead to a lasting improvement in the way we feel about ourselves and our lives.

The message is clear: it’s time to rethink wellbeing.

Evidence and wellbeing

Over the last 20 years, new evidence has emerged about what really causes lasting improvements to mental wellbeing. “Some of this evidence comes from observational studies, in which scientists look at the behaviour and wellbeing of certain sections of the population,” says Professor Stewart-Brown. “Other evidence comes from trials in which scientists take a group of people and ask them to change their behaviour or participate in a treatment or other intervention – such as an exercise programme – and then watch what happens to their wellbeing.”

To gain evidence on wellbeing, scientists have to find ways to measure it. Often, scientists measure wellbeing using a series of questions that ask subjects how they feel about themselves, their lives and the world around them. Find out how happy you are: use our interactive Wellbeing self-assessment tool.

Wellbeing in your life

Many factors influence our wellbeing. Evidence shows that the actions we take and the way we think have the biggest impact. It can help to think about “being well” as something you do, rather than something you are. The more you put in, the more you are likely to get out. “The first thing you can do for your own wellbeing is become curious about it,” says Professor Stewart-Brown. “Start to think about what you’ve done in the past to promote mental wellbeing, and whether it worked. Then think about new things that you can try. Remember, no one can give wellbeing to you. It’s you who has to take action.”

26. The word 'resilience' used in the first paragraph can be best replaced with:
- inflexibility
 - elasticity
 - rigidity
 - strength
27. The text suggests that it is difficult to gain evidence on wellbeing, because:
- There is no single tool to measure it
 - It is not easy to promote happiness
 - Behaviour may change
 - Evidence comes from trials
28. According to the text, which statement is true:
- Our mental wellbeing has improved over the last 50 years
 - Our mental wellbeing has improved because we have become richer
 - Our mental wellbeing has not improved
 - Our happiness improved over the last 50 years
29. The phrase 'out of your depth' could be best understood as:
- not having the knowledge, experience, or skills to deal with a particular subject or situation
 - in water that is so deep that it goes over your head when you are standing
 - not having come across a situation before
 - struggling to cope with something
30. Which factors are NOT stated in the article as being related to well-being?
- What we do and how we do it has a big impact on well-being
 - If you put effort into your own well-being it can make you feel better
 - You need to think about what you did to make you feel good in the past
 - Trying new things will always work to improve your well-being

End of Examination

**NOCN ESOL International Reading
Level C2 Proficient Paper BB
Sample Examination Task Sheet**



NOCN
The Quadrant
Parkway Business Centre
99 Parkway Avenue
Sheffield
S9 4WG
UK

E-mail: nocn@nocn.org.uk

Tel: +44 (0)114 2270500
Fax: +44 (0)114 2270501

NOCN ESOL International
Level C2 Proficient
Sample Reading Mark Sheet

Learner Name _____

Learner Registration Number _____ Examination Date _____

Centre Name _____ Centre Number _____

Instructions: Draw a line through either a, b, c or d to answer each question. ~~b~~
 If you change your mind black out the wrong answer and choose a new one with a line. ~~b~~
 If you think your first answer was right, black out the wrong answer and circle your first answer.

NOCN Use Only

1	a	b	c	d	
2	a	b	c	d	
3	a	b	c	d	
4	a	b	c	d	
5	a	b	c	d	
6	a	b	c	d	
7	a	b	c	d	
8	a	b	c	d	
9	a	b	c	d	
10	a	b	c	d	
11	a	b	c	d	
12	a	b	c	d	
13	a	b	c	d	
14	a	b	c	d	
15	a	b	c	d	
16	a	b	c	d	
17	a	b	c	d	
18	a	b	c	d	
19	a	b	c	d	
20	a	b	c	d	
21	a	b	c	d	
22	a	b	c	d	
23	a	b	c	d	
24	a	b	c	d	
25	a	b	c	d	
26	a	b	c	d	
27	a	b	c	d	
28	a	b	c	d	
29	a	b	c	d	
30	a	b	c	d	
Total Marks					

Learner Signature _____

Date _____