



HIPPO 2023 SEMI-FINAL ROUND READING TEST

CEFR **C2**
HIPPO CATEGORY **HIPPO S19**

Candidate Number _____

Date of Birth _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES:

Do NOT turn over the page until instructed.

Answer all the questions.

Use only black or blue PEN.

Dictionaries are not allowed.

Remember to transfer your answers onto the answer sheet.

Time allowed:

Reading 50 minutes

GATEHOUSE

AWARDS





Reading Task 1

Read the article and circle the best option to complete the text – a, b, c, or d. An example has been done for you.

Scientists invent 'transparent wood'

In an era of glass and steel construction, wood may seem 0)_____. But now researchers have produced transparent wood, a material that is sturdy, transparent, and able to store and release heat. The researchers say the material could be used in the 1)_____ of energy-efficient homes. They also hope to develop a biodegradable version to increase its eco-friendly credentials as an 2) _____ to plastic, glass or even cement.

“We created a material that is multifunctional – it can 3)_____ light very well and also it can store heat. We combined these two functions in a single material,” said Céline Montanari of the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.

To 4)_____ the material, the team built on previous work, in which they took balsa wood and removed its lignin – a component of wood that gives it strength and colour. Acrylic, which is non-biodegradable and water-repellent, was 5)_____ into the remaining elements of the wood. That helped maintain the wood’s structure and restored its strength. The outcome was a very strong, wood-based material: the transparent wood.

In the latest work, the acrylic was mixed with another substance called polyethylene glycol, which wood 6)_____ and retains well. Crucially polyethylene glycol also has another feature: when it is heated it retains energy and melts, but when temperatures fall it hardens, releasing energy in the 7) _____. This means the wood-based material could be used to make buildings more energy-efficient, with energy captured from the sun during the day released later to heat the rooms.

Materials containing substances that can store and release heat in such a way are not a new idea in the building industry. Various types of 8)_____ are available to reduce energy **consumption**. But the team say their approach is different because, they use a natural material that 9)_____ the need for oil-based materials and related CO₂ emissions.

However, Montanari said there was plenty of work still to do – including replacing the acrylic with a biodegradable variant, 10)_____ production of the material to meet the high demand, and carrying out computer models of buildings to see how transparent wood compares with glass.

Mark Miodownik, a professor at University College London who was not involved in the research, 11) _____ engineering the material to be biodegradable, saying it would make the wood less environmentally sustainable not more. “We need construction materials to be recyclable and reusable, not biodegradable,” he said, adding that one 12)_____ would be for the new type of wood to be recovered from disused buildings and used in new projects.



- Example: a) old-school b) obligatory c) expired d) popular
1. a) invention b) construction c) conclusion d) purchase
2. a) addition b) alternative c) amendment d) advantage
3. a) sustain b) surrender c) forward d) transmit
4. a) produce b) restore c) discover d) test
5. a) introduced b) received c) suggested d) organised
6. a) digests b) consumes c) inhales d) absorbs
7. a) past b) process c) way d) context
8. a) protection b) insurance c) insulation d) preservation
9. a) highlights b) diminishes c) requires d) considers
10. a) cutting back b) driving out c) scaling up d) passing on
11. a) misinterpreted b) advocated c) ruled out d) cautioned against
12. a) possibility b) disagreement c) hazard d) classification

(12 marks)



Reading Task 2

Read the text and answer the questions below. Circle the correct option, a, b, c, or d. An example has been done for you.

History of Playgrounds

Ontario Place is an entertainment and event venue, and park in Toronto, Canada. It is located on three artificial, landscaped islands in Lake Ontario. It opened on May 22, 1971, and operated as a theme park until 2012, when the Government of Ontario announced that it would close for redevelopment. It has since reopened as a park without admission charges, but several of the old attractions are no longer available. The Government of Ontario is currently considering further redevelopment of the site.

Para. 2 The original architect behind Ontario Place, Eberhard Zeidler, had created a stunning design comprising the artificial islands. The question of what to do with these architectural wonders, however, seemed to come second. When the park opened in summer 1971, while visitors were GAP) _____ by the park's amazing self-flushing toilets and impressive Imax movies, one thing quickly became clear: there wasn't enough for kids to do. When the park decided to remedy that issue the following year, its director, James Ramsay, turned to Eric McMillan.

Up to that point, Eric McMillan had spent little time thinking about how kids played. In 1971, the 29-year-old English immigrant was a design consultant living in Toronto. McMillan had been responsible for the park's most successful exhibition that year – a multimedia tour through the province's history called 'Explosions' – but he'd never built anything for children. During a meeting with Ramsay, McMillan remembers his boss asking for his opinion on the park. McMillan didn't hesitate. "I think it's boring," he said straightaway. "Well, what would you do?" asked Ramsay. "Well," said McMillan. "Give me two weeks."

Para. 4 McMillan consulted with his assistant, David Lloyd, and when they returned, it was with a series of sketches for a playscape GAP) _____ seen before. Children's Village would be a massive success. It would launch McMillan's career. It would sit at the centre of children's entertainment for a generation of Torontonians and, briefly, promise to revolutionise the way the world plays.

The playground is a curious creation. The first one in North America was a simple pile of sand in Boston's north end, installed in 1885 by female philanthropists who wanted to give poor immigrant children a place to play and, crucially, a means to become part of American society (the fact that it was relatively inexpensive to put in place was an added bonus). That push and pull, between providing children with autonomy and limiting the risks they are exposed to, has been at the heart of playground design ever since. They are places to expand children's imagination while constraining their physical bodies.

Para. 6 In theme parks, where the joys of play meet the demands of capitalism, the balance between stimulating a child's creativity and keeping them under control becomes less clear. Theme parks in the style of Disneyland are, above all, about managing the play of children, moving them along efficiently, safely and profitably. The equipment is to be used in a GAP) _____ way, with no possibility of experimentation. The modern theme park seems to approach the concept of imagination in an odd way, offering endless creativity to its designers while leaving little scope for the children themselves.



McMillan wasn't interested in controlling kids. In designing Children's Village, his driving philosophy was simple: "What would I, as a child, like to do?" But his conception of what a child might like to do was so shaped by a childhood full of poverty, hunger and casual violence, that the idea of transplanting that experience to quiet 1970s Toronto was almost impossible to imagine.

Para.8

As a child, McMillan was often hungry and nearly always dirty. For a time, his family lived in the shadow of a Manchester prison. They were GAP)_____ enough that, one cold winter, his uncle and father broke into the prison to steal coal. He was constantly moving from one shared house to another and from school to school. His father was a day labourer, when he had work. On weekends, he would put on his one good suit and play the piano in local pubs, earning as much in a single night as he would in a week.

The other side of a childhood of neglect is absolute freedom. "My early memories were just being like a dog, let out in the mornings and let in at night," says McMillan. In those early years, he would play in old deserted buildings, playing violent games with bricks, or building paper airplanes out of the pages of discarded books. There were no restraints, no control.

When he left school at 15, he could barely read or write. "Have you seen when the live crabs at the market are trying to crawl out of their crates? You'll observe that the ones in the back are pulling back the ones that are trying to escape," says McMillan. "That's basically where I grew up."

Para.11

He got a job as a painter's apprentice and prepared for a life as a labourer. However, the school where he was learning happened to be attached to an art school. As he slowly began to talk with other students, members of a social class he had never really encountered, the idea of applying to the art school himself became fixed in his mind. He took the exams, got in and immediately entered a new world. After graduating a few years later and designing exhibitions in England, he saw adverts looking for a designer in Montreal, Canada, and GAP)_____ across the Atlantic Ocean.

Para.12

At Children's Village, McMillan was asked to commence the work with a \$700,000 budget. Extraordinarily protective of his vision, he demanded full control. The time in which he was working was a remarkably fertile one for children's design. In the post-war era, the "baby boom" resulted in the young parents having to seriously economise in an attempt to make their home budgets stretch far enough to cover the daily necessities, which GAP) ____tremendous resourcefulness. This was the era in which "junk playgrounds" or "adventure playgrounds" - places where tiny children were given tool belts and fistfuls of nails and left to build their own forts - multiplied across the western world.

At Children's Village, McMillan built two and a half acres of chaos under an orange canopy. In the safety of Toronto, he reproduced his wild childhood spent scrabbling through rubble, and playing with mountains of colourful vinyl and foam. He erected an enormous spider web structure that hung from soaring watchtowers. He built a series of wooden ladders that spun on their axes, hurling would-be climbers to the mats below. He strung swinging monkey bars over a pool of water and suspended a forest of punching bags at the centre of the village that was, for decades, the most reliable producer of bloody noses in Toronto.

When the park opened in July 1972, it immediately became the city's capital of kids' play. "I had never seen anything like it," remembers Irina Ceric, now a professor in British Columbia. "It was entirely designed just for kids in a way that other parks weren't. It was the best thing that I had ever seen."



Example: What is Ontario Place?

- a) a leisure facility
- b) a lake
- c) an island
- d) a government office

13. Ontario Place

- a) is no longer open to the public.
- b) is currently being redeveloped.
- c) has been open continuously since 1971.
- d) had been closed but is now open.

14. In paragraph 2, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) awed
- b) shocked
- c) startled
- d) intimidated

15. What was the initial issue with Ontario Place?

- a) There weren't enough islands on the lake.
- b) The space was not big enough for all the visitors.
- c) The park was predominantly adult-centred.
- d) The architectural designs were not well received.

16. How did Eric McMillan respond to the request to remedy the initial issue?

- a) He underestimated its extent.
- b) He was very reluctant to accept the job.
- c) He was concerned about his lack of experience in this area.
- d) He couldn't present an on-the-spot solution.

17. In paragraph 4, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) beneath those
- b) unlike any
- c) only ever
- d) just like

18. What is the central idea behind the design of a traditional playground?

- a) It is meant to be affordable to build.
- b) It is meant to foster children's creativity at all cost.
- c) It is meant to encourage children to play as a group.
- d) It is meant to achieve a balance between freedom and safety.

19. In paragraph 6, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) random
- b) visionary
- c) progressive
- d) specific



20. Compared to traditional playgrounds, theme parks

- a) are better at encouraging creativity.
- b) are equally good at encouraging creativity.
- c) are not as good at encouraging creativity.
- d) are created by designers who lack creativity.

21. In paragraph 8, the best word to complete the gap is

- a) threatening
- b) intolerable
- c) desperate
- d) definite

22. McMillan mentions the crab behaviour in order to illustrate

- a) how resourceful people can be
- b) the mentality of some people
- c) the common food at the time
- d) the job he did after leaving school

23. In paragraph 11, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) travelled back
- b) made his way
- c) missed the boat
- d) followed suit

24. McMillan's decision to study art can be best described as

- a) a lifelong aspiration.
- b) an ambition forced upon him by others.
- c) a result of a coincidence.
- d) a mistake that he later regretted.

25. In paragraph 12, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) led to
- b) prevented
- c) resulted from
- d) hindered

26. Which best describes McMillan's project at Children's Village?

- a) It was successful at eliminating any physical risks to kids.
- b) It was significantly influenced by his childhood experience.
- c) It was not as much fun as the experiences he had as a child.
- d) It did not attract as much interest as everyone had hoped.

(14 marks)



Reading Task 3

A) Read the four texts and answer the questions below by indicating which text each question relates to: A, B, C or D.

An example has been done for you.

Text A

For decades, researchers seeking the origin of our species have investigated the Great Rift Valley of East Africa. Now, their GAP 1) _____ has taken an unexpected turn west to Morocco: researchers have, with a high degree of accuracy, re-dated a skull from a cave to a startling 300,000 years ago. The result is the oldest evidence of *Homo sapiens* (modern humans) which has moved back the date that scientists thought our kind first appeared by 100,000 years. "This stuff is a time and a half older than anything else considered as the remains of *Homo sapiens*," says the lead researcher at the State University of New York, John Fleagle, whose team travelled to the discovery site to examine the skull. The discoveries, reported in the magazine *Nature*, suggest that our species evolved modern facial features first, at a time when the back of the skull was much longer, like those of much earlier forms of human sub-species. The GAP 2) _____ also suggest that the earliest chapters of our species' story may have played out across the African continent. "We know very little about these early people and their precarious existence. The extent of evidence we currently have pertaining to the way of life of those people is not, in my opinion, sufficient, and warrants further investigation." says Mr Fleagle.

Text B

It wasn't easy to make a meal of teosinte, a grass that was the ancient ancestor of maize. Each piece of maize was tiny, shorter than your little finger, and held only about 12 seeds. But in a dramatic example of crop domestication, around 9000 years ago people in Mexico and the Southwestern U.S.A modified teosinte into the many-seeded maize that today feeds hundreds of millions around the world. Today, researchers have identified a handful of genes involved in this GAP)_____. Now, studies of ancient DNA by two rival research groups have come to the same conclusion: that genetics changed over time as generations of people selected plants with their preferred features. "These results sharpen the focus of what we know of this early period," says Professor Michael Blake, an anthropologist at the University of British Columbia, who had hoped to be able to participate in the original research but didn't due to personal circumstances. "They have implications for understanding later developments in maize domestication and help us to see what people were selecting at the time."

Text C

If you travel along the Sepik River of New Guinea, it quickly becomes apparent that the people along the banks speak distinct languages. Researchers decided to investigate whether this linguistic diversity reflected real genetic differences - could it suggest that the inhabitants simply didn't mix? Unexpectedly, the research team has recently concluded that the genetic



variations between the distinct groups of people date back just 10,000 to 20,000 years, rather than to 50,000 years ago, which was the main hypothesis in the early research.

The island's independent invention of agriculture 10,000 years ago did not GAP) ____ the genetic differences between peoples, as it did in Europe or parts of Asia. In Europe, farmers replaced local hunter-gatherers and erased much of their genetic contribution. That this did not happen on New Guinea is 'a big surprise' according to geneticist Chris Tyler-Smith, who led the team. The researchers analysed variation among 1.7 million DNA markers from 381 Papua New Guinea residents. They concluded that the people of New Guinea were isolated from Asians for most of prehistory, and that highland and lowland dwellers separated from each other 10,000 to 20,000 years ago.

Text D

Scientists have traced the origins of the GAP) ____ of zero to an ancient Indian text, known as the Bakhshali manuscript – a text which has been housed in the UK since 1902, but which until recently had not been examined by experts. The technology used to date the fragments of the original reveals that the text, which is inscribed on 70 pieces of tree bark and contains hundreds of zeroes, dates to as early as the 3rd or 4th century AD – about 500 years older than scholars previously believed. This makes it the world's first mention of the zero symbol that we use today. Marcus du Sautoy, professor of mathematics at the University of Oxford, who re-examined the manuscript on behalf of the University, said: "Today, we take it for granted that zero is and has always been used across the globe, and our whole digital world is based on nothing or something. But there was a moment when zero didn't exist." The Bakhshali manuscript was found in 1881, buried in a field in a village called Bakhshali, near Peshawar, in what is now a region of Pakistan. It was discovered by a local farmer and later bought by the Bodleian Library in Oxford, England.

Which text	Text
<i>Example</i> describes research that took place on the African continent?	A
27. describes how humans improved agricultural yields?	-----
28. reveals a date of origin closer to modern times than previously thought?	-----
29. describes an object that crossed continents?	-----
30. describes the origins of a concept that is common in modern society?	-----
31. includes the views of an expert not involved in the initial work?	-----
32. compares differences in the development of two civilisations?	-----
33. includes a call for more research?	-----
34. describes a process involving competing researchers?	-----



B) Now answer the following questions by circling the correct option.

35. In Text A, the best option to complete the first gap is

- a) outing
- b) retreat
- c) itinerary
- d) quest

36. In Text A, the best option to complete the second gap is

- a) inventions
- b) findings
- c) creations
- d) innovations

37. In Text B, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) transformation
- b) renewal
- c) conservation
- d) correction

38. In Text C, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) wipe out
- b) move on
- c) make up
- d) push forward

39. In Text D, the best option to complete the gap is

- a) approach
- b) feeling
- c) notion
- d) replacement

40. In Text D, the underlined expression 'we take it for granted' means

- a) something must be started again
- b) something must involve money
- c) something doesn't need to be checked
- d) something is to be increased

(14 marks)

END OF READING ASSESSMENT.

HIPPO 2023

Semi-final Round

HIPPO S19 Writing Test

Time allowed: 45 minutes



Candidate Number

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Date of Birth

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y

2. Write the names of the objects in the pictures.



- | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ | |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ | |

3. Complete each word using the letters given and blank spaces.

11. The singer's __ a m __ y __ __ lifestyle has only contributed to rumours about his infidelity.
12. Please don't _ x _ g _ _ _ a __. It was a team effort, everybody contributed to victory, not just me.
13. Such a cultural orientation would _ o _ _ p _ _ y traditional notions of self-determination and the work ethic.
14. Many cold openings in sitcoms do not set up the plot but usually involve physical comedy or _ a _ t _ _.
15. His last investments in the stock _ x _ _ a _ _ _ were disastrous and paved his way to bankruptcy.
16. _ x _ _ s _ _ _ e exercise can sometimes cause health problems.
17. I made a __ u n __ r by getting his name wrong. He never forgot that until the day...
18. All salespeople seem to have the same _ h _ _ e _ smile.

HIPPO 2023

Semi-final Round

HIPPO S19 Writing Test

Time allowed: 45 minutes



Candidate Number

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Date of Birth

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y

19. He is a very dear, a __ e _ t _ _ n _ _ _ child.

20. She is very _ a _ e _ n _ _ _ towards her employees. She even prepares them breakfast.

4. Decide if the sentences are correct or incorrect. Mark the sentences with C or I and correct the ones that are incorrect.

21. The rise in crime is extremely small – almost ineligible, in fact.

22. Only a handful of people offered to help setup the event.

23. The manager commended him on his behaviour on the pitch.

24. Amazingly enough, instead of getting discouraged or disheartened about the situation, she quickly learned...

25. Why are you so dead set against having a roommate?

26. She's just saying that for effect; she doesn't mean it.

27. It's time to lay down the law to the twins about the bedtimes.

28. I've got to summon up the courage to tell my parents that I am not going to university.

29. You were lucky to get out with just a warning.

30. Little I realised that it was actually all a joke.
