

**ESOL International  
Sample English Reading Examination  
Level B2 Independent User**

**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 **60 minutes** to finish the examination.

**NOCN ESOL International Reading  
Level B2 Independent User Paper AA  
Sample Examination Task Sheet**

**Text 1**

**Read the text about electronic cigarettes and answer the questions on the following page.**

Tobacco users worldwide are finally discovering the Electronic Cigarette. People working in small towns and big cities to the biggest movie stars are using them, but are they really a _____ and cheaper alternative to traditional cigarettes? Can they be the answer to quitting smoking? Actual users say they're now enjoy this healthier cigarette without the bad smell, second-hand smoke, and most importantly the cancer causing chemicals. With these big claims, we decided to investigate the new technology for our readers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Let's look at some of the claims of the electronic cigarette:	8 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contains zero tar, tobacco, carbon monoxide, and ash.</li><li>• Delivers the same amount of nicotine as real cigarettes.</li><li>• Can be used in bars, airports, restaurants.</li><li>• Each cartridge costs less than £2 and is equivalent to an entire pack of cigarettes.</li><li>• Average users can save over £1,000 each year.</li><li>• You won't "smell" like a smoker any longer.</li><li>• Emits harmless water vapour. No second-hand smoke.</li></ul>	10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
We looked to expert medical doctors and product users and found out what they had to say about electronic cigarettes and the results were surprising. Joel Nitzkin, Chair of the Tobacco Control Task Force for the American Association of Public Health Physicians concluded that "...if we get all tobacco smokers to switch from regular cigarettes to electronic cigarettes, we would eventually reduce the US death toll from more than 400,000 a year to less than 4,000, maybe as low as 400."	19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
Four very well-known doctors, from the popular TV show "The Doctors" also studied the electronic cigarette and it was even featured as one of their top 10 key health trends.	27 28 29 30
<i>"If you're one of the millions of people out there and you're addicted to smoking, there may finally be some hope for you. The electronic cigarette gives you nicotine, but it doesn't give you any of the other 4000 chemicals that can cause cancer among other problems."</i> Dr Travis Stork from "The Doctors", June 2013.	31 32 33 34 35

Adapted from 'Sheffield Lifestyle'

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1. According to the article, which statement is true?
  - a. Electronic Cigarettes are healthy and expensive
  - b. Electronic Cigarettes can be used in public places
  - c. Electronic Cigarettes are nicotine free
  - d. Electronic Cigarettes are used by people in towns only
  
2. An average person using an electronic cigarette can save:
  - a. 2 pounds a month
  - b. 2 pounds per a packet
  - c. 1000 pounds a year
  - d. 100 pounds a month
  
3. Which of these claims is not included in the text?
  - a. You will smell better
  - b. You will save money
  - c. You can use it in bars
  - d. You will not be addicted to nicotine
  
4. Joel Nitzkin claims that if US smokers use electronic cigarettes instead of regular cigarettes:
  - a. 400 to 4000 people will die instead of 400,000 a year
  - b. 400,000 fewer people will die every year
  - c. 4000 fewer people will die every month
  - d. 400 fewer people will die every month
  
5. According to the article, Dr. Travis Stork:
  - a. Is an actor starring in a TV show
  - b. Can cure cancer
  - c. Is a doctor on a TV show
  - d. Claims that the electronic cigarette is healthy

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6. A word has been omitted in line 2. The word should be:
- Health
  - Healthy
  - Healthier
  - Unhealthy
7. There is a grammatical mistake:
- In line 2
  - In line 4
  - In line 6
  - In line 9
8. Which word should always be spelt with a capital letter?
- June
  - Chair
  - Physician
  - Stork
9. There is a spelling mistake:
- In line 18
  - In line 23
  - In line 29
  - In line 34
10. The best word to replace the word *reduce* in line 25 is:
- Decrease
  - Increase
  - Improve
  - Impress

**Text 2**

**Read the article about relaxation and answer the questions on the following page.**

**Try These 7 Tricks for Instant Calm** *From Health magazine*

<p><b>1. Slow down and reenergize</b></p> <p>Feeling stressed? Try some of our easy ways to relax, refresh, and reenergize. Lavender: A soothing scent. Sniffing lavender is an instant antidote to anxiety, according to a Japanese study. Try a lavender-scented candle. Its 60-hour burn time will keep you calmer longer.</p>	<p><b>2. Spend less, give more</b></p> <p>Feeling overwhelmed are a common complaint. Quick fix: Volunteer at a local charity.</p> <p>A growing body of research shows that volunteers experience a stress-reducing “helpers’ high” and other health _____.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8</p>
<p><b>3. Turn up the tunes</b></p> <p>Anxious? Listen to your favourite music, whether it’s jazz or the latest from Jay-Z. Research from the University of Maryland _____ that hearing music you love can relax blood vessels and increase blood flow. That not only calms you down but is good for your heart, too.</p>	<p><b>4. Your recipe for relaxation</b></p> <p>Craving something sweet? Try a delicious mango pie. The sweet <u>scent</u> of mangoes—whether they’re fresh or in a jar —may alter your blood chemistry and send a wave of calm over your body, research from Japan shows. Bake your own fragrant pie with our recipe.</p>	<p>9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16</p>
<p><b>5. Let it out</b></p> <p>A full 85% of women say a good cry makes them feel better, according to biochemical researchers. Permission to break down—granted!</p>	<p><b>6. Squeeze here</b></p> <p>Applying firm pressure on the fleshy skin between your index finger and thumb (called the “hoku” spot in traditional Chinese medicine) is a proven de-stressor, researchers at Hong Kong Polytechnic University say: Just 30 seconds of acupressure reduces upper-body tension by 39%.</p>	<p>17 18 19 20 21 22 23</p>
<p><b>7. Just 1 minute...</b></p> <p>_____ of intense exercise can boost energy and help combat stress, according to a recent study. Try Powerhouse Hit the Deck exercise cards from exercise physiologist, Jenny Evans.</p>		<p>24 25 26</p>

11. According to the article, what is a great remedy to help you relax?

- a. Smell of lavender
- b. Drink of lavender
- c. Gentle exercise
- d. All of the above

12. The title in Text 3 suggests that you should:

- a. Listen to your music quietly
- b. Listen to your music loudly
- c. Do not listen to the music at all
- d. Go to the cinema

13. The 'Hoku' as described in Text 6 is:

- a. The name for traditional Chinese medicine
- b. Chinese name for your thumb
- c. The place between your index finger and your thumb
- d. Name of a researcher from Hong Kong Polytechnic

14. When you feel stressed you should:

- a. Have some chocolate
- b. Have some mango pie
- c. Have some ice cream
- d. Have apple pie

15. According to the article, what is described as "helpers' high"?

- a. Earning a lot of money while helping others
- b. Working to help others without being paid
- c. Looking after family members
- d. Working in a local shop

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16. The word *scent* in line 11 can be best replaced with:
- Smell
  - Taste
  - Feel
  - Sight
17. There is a spelling mistake on:
- Line 2
  - Line 11
  - Line 13
  - Line 14
18. A grammatical mistake has been made on:
- Line 2
  - Line 8
  - Line 10
  - Line 20
19. The best word to complete the sentence in line 8, Text 2 is:
- Problems
  - Factors
  - Changes
  - Benefits
20. What is the best word or phrase to complete the sentence in Text 3?
- Showing
  - Shows
  - Have been shown
  - Will show

**Text 3**

**Read the article about losing weight and answer the questions on the following page.**

Should you lose weight fast?	1
<b>When you're trying to lose weight, it's tempting to want results as fast as possible. But remember, very rapid weight loss is unlikely to help you to maintain a healthy weight long-term. And it comes with health risks.</b>	2 3 4 5 6
You can monitor your weight loss progress using our healthy weight calculator. If you're trying to lose weight, you're probably keen to see, and feel, a difference quickly. It can be tempting to put your trust in one of the countless schemes that promise rapid, easy weight loss. Unfortunately, even if these fad diets do help you to lose weight, you're unlikely to maintain a healthy weight in the months and years afterwards.	7 8 9 10 11 12 13
If you're visualising a future in which you've shed your excess weight, the best choice is to make healthy changes to your diet and levels of physical activity that lead to a safe, steady rate of weight loss, and that last a lifetime. Weight loss tends to plateau after a while and you may need to make further changes. If after six to nine months you haven't achieved a healthy weight, talk to your GP for advice on the next steps.	14 15 16 17 18 19 20
<b>Safe rates of weight loss</b>	21
If you're trying to lose weight, the safe weekly rate of weight loss is between 0.5kg and 1kg. That's between around 1lb and 2lb a week. Lose weight faster than this, and you are at risk of health problems that include malnutrition and gallstones, as well as feeling tired and unwell. Fad diets (that involve simply changing your diet for a few weeks) associated with very rapid weight loss are also unlikely to lead you to a healthy weight in the long-term.	22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
<b>Take action</b>	30
You can learn more about the diet and physical activity changes that can lead you to a healthy weight future. Remember: the goal is not overnight success. The secret is sticking to the changes you've made, and you can find useful tips from real-life slimmers in the article about weight loss motivation. You can monitor your progress using our healthy weight calculator. This interactive tool calculates your body mass index (BMI), which is a measure of whether you are a healthy weight for your height.	31 32 33 34 35 36 37



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21. What is the main purpose of the text?
- To inform
  - To explain
  - To persuade
  - To describe
22. According to the text, a fad diet:
- Should not last more than a few weeks
  - Is a healthy way to lose weight
  - Can be a long term diet
  - Does not help to lose weight
23. To maintain healthy weight loss, you should:
- Use an interactive tool
  - Visualise your future
  - Make realistic changes to your diet and lifestyle
  - Be on a diet for no longer than 9 months
24. 'Sticking to the changes' in line 33 means:
- Making sure you do not alter your diet too often
  - Maintain the changes you have introduced
  - Stop dieting for a while
  - Introduce further changes
25. When should you consult a doctor?
- Before going on a diet
  - During first weeks of dieting
  - It is not necessary to see a doctor
  - If you have not achieved a healthy weight after half a year

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**Text 4**

**Read the article about London and answer the questions on the following page.**

London is the capital of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is situated in the southeast of England, sitting along the River Thames. Inner London, Outer London and the City of London form the Greater London area, which is the London we usually talk about. It has an area of 1600 square kilometres with a population of 7.5 million. It is divided into 33 districts. The city has a mayor, a parliament and a city hall.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
This historic city was built in 43BC by the Romans. In around the 1st century AD, under the reign of Rome, England used the River Thames as a vital traffic line, and built the city construction along the banks of the river. Even now people can see the ancient walls left by the Romans. The ancient Romans abandoned the city in the 5th century, and later Angles, Saxons and Danish people all wanted to occupy the city. William the Conqueror invaded the city in 1066 which ended the war. In 1087, William the Conqueror built the Tower of London, which is a well-known tourist attraction all over the world.	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
The 12th and 13th centuries were extremely important in the history of London, because London became the hub of government during this period, which lay the foundation for the prosperous London in the Middle Ages. Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and many law schools were built in this period.	17 18 19 20 21 22
It enjoys a glorious history in the 16th and 17th centuries, during which the culture and power of this nation had been improved a lot. Then, the Protestant Reformation, the peasant uprising, and the Civil War happened one by one. The Black Death, the Great Fire of London and the breakout of the Second World War brought severe damage to this city. However, no matter what adversity it was facing, this city survived. Today, London has lost its dominant status in the world, but it is still attracting people from home and abroad.	23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
Many people get to know the Tower of London, St. Paul's Cathedral, Buckingham Palace, and the British Museum, even though they have not been to London. I think everyone has a London of their own after visiting this place.	31 32 33 34 35

26. According to the text, which statement is true?
- There were many banks built in Roman times
  - There were many banks built along the River Thames
  - The city was founded by the Romans
  - The city was built in 1 AD
27. When could you first study at a law school in London?
- In 1087
  - In the 12<sup>th</sup> century
  - In the 16<sup>th</sup> century
  - In the 17<sup>th</sup> century
28. What is meant by 'glorious history' in line 23?
- It is a period of growth for the country
  - This period in history is very tragic
  - There was no cultural significance during this period
  - The country lost its power
29. What tragic event is not mentioned in the text?
- Fire of London
  - The Black Death
  - World War I
  - World War II
30. Which is the oldest landmark in London mentioned in the text?
- Buckingham Palace
  - The Tower of London
  - Roman Walls
  - St. Paul's Cathedral

**End of Examination**

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