Chuyên đề Sentence Completion IELTS READING (PHẦN 2)

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Đề thi thật 1: Computer Games The Early Days of the Video Game Business

It's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game. In the age of computers, that statement takes on new meanings. A video game cannot ever really be defeated because, no matter how high the score, it is always the human who tires first or makes the fatal error. But millions of people continue to play, because microelectronic technology has enabled game designers to conveniently and inexpensively transform plain screens into playfields of extraordinary capability. At the same time, a multi-billion dollar industry has grown from very humble beginnings in just a few decades.

The technological roots of video games can be traced back to 1962, when an MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) graduate student demonstrated Spacewar, a science-fiction fantasy game played on a mainframe computer and a large screen. That game immediately attracted a wide cult following among computer buffs. The next important step came in 1968, when a console was developed that could be used to play games on ordinary televisions. But it was not until the early 1970s that a young University of Utah engineer brought the concept to the point that the adaptation of Spacewar from a large computer into a coin-operated format, for use in video game arcades, was becoming economically feasible. Bushnell and his associates began working on such a machine in a converted bedroom workshop, but were unsuccessful. What they ultimately developed instead was a simple tennis-like game that they named Pong. Pong took the industry by storm and quickly became the first coin-operated video game hit. And soon thereafter, commercial Pong-style home video games also appeared. Yet despite early enthusiasm, consumer interest in this area proved less sustained than had been anticipated, and as prices started to drop and losses mounted, most of the early manufacturers withdrew from the field. Profits proved to be just as elusive at Bushnell's company, Atari, where a rapidly growing market presence in coin-operated machines and home video required greater injections of capital and more professional management than the company was able to provide. In 1976, the founders of Atari sold their share of the company for a sum that was only equivalent to their sales in that year.

At that point, coin-operated video games seemed just another passing fad. But the introduction of Space Invaders, an arcade model produced by the Japanese manufacturer Taito, proved otherwise. With its vibrant graphics, it was so different from the previous black-and-white games that Space Invaders immediately captured public interest. There soon followed a rush of popular video games that employed the same or better hardware and even more imaginative software. Of these, Pac-Man (1980) was especially significant, because now females began to take an interest.

Questions 1-6

Complete the notes below

Choose ONE WORD ONLY from the passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 1-6 on your answer sheet.

A History of Video Games

1960s

• Spacewar was first played on a computer and special screen.

1970s

• Advances in technology led to cheaper 1 _____ operated video games.

• The first successful coin-operated video game was 2 _____.

• 3 _____ was bought from its original owners and the possibility of coin-operated video games was growing.

• Space Invaders was successful because of its colourful 4 _____.

1980s

• Pac-Man was the first game to attract 5 _____.

1990s

• 6 _____ had become the biggest selling home entertainment product.

At first, one company dominated the market.

By the end of the decade, 6 _____ had captured up to 80 percent of the booming market.

By this time, the same software improvements and technological advances (faster microprocessors and larger memories) that permitted designers to produce spectacular audio and visual effects for coin-operated machines were also being applied to home video units. It was thus only a short while before the programmable consoles that had been unpopular for lack of software suddenly began to sell in large numbers: consumers had discovered that they could finally play a reasonable version of their favorite arcade games in the comfort of their own home. The impact on Atari was astounding. Unprofitable for the first three years, Atari had, by the end of 1979, become a success. By either self-designing or licensing the most popular arcade concepts for cartridge format for use at home, the company had captured some 80 percent of the worldwide market for home video games.

All of this, however, was too good to last. By late 1982, the public's fascination with arcade games had begun to slow down, and fewer potential best-sellers were becoming available for conversion to cartridges that could be used on an Atari machine. At the same time, the market was flooded with illegal software of all types. It was thus not until the late 1980s that the unstructured nature of the industry, at least on the software side, had stabilized and become restructured in a manner similar, in many respects, to the book publishing business.

Until 1986, when Japan-based Nintendo introduced a more technologically sophisticated and user-friendly game console, the hardware side was also in disarray. But with tight control of software development and marketing, Nintendo was able to revive and then capture up to 80 percent of a once-again booming market in which no significant competition appeared until the early 1990s. By that point, the annual operating profits of Nintendo had already grown to over $1 billion—an amount exceeding the 1991 profits of all the major Hollywood film studios combined. In 1999, sales of game hardware and software, led by Playstation, were equal in size (around $57 billion) to US domestic box office revenue.

With change the only constant, the game industry has moved on to become what it is today. However, no matter what the technology or the format, the essence of a successful game will always be the same: it is simple to understand and to play on an elementary level, but it is compulsive and maddeningly difficult—in fact, forever impossible to masterfully.

Questions 7-13

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 7-13 on your answer sheet, write:

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

1. *Spacewar was unpopular at first.*
2. *Bushnell and his team failed to create a coin-operated version of Spacewar.*
3. *From the beginning, the home video game market has been commercially successful.*
4. *Atari was successful for the first time in 1979.*
5. *Video arcade game usage continued strongly in the 1980s.*
6. *The time taken to produce a video game can be compared to producing a book.*
7. *The qualities needed for a video game to become successful have been researched thoroughly.*

Đề thi thật 2 Keeping the water away

A.Recently, winter floods on the rivers of central Europe have been among the worst for 600 to 700 years, and dams and dykes (protective sea walls) have failed to solve the problem. Traditionally, river engineers have tried to get rid of the water quickly, draining it off the land and down to the sea in rivers re-engineered as high-performance drains. But however high they build the artificial riverbanks, the floods keep coming back. And when they come, they seem to be worse than ever

B.Engineers are now turning to a different plan: to sap the water's destructive strength by dispersing it into fields; forgotten lakes and floods plains. They are reviving river bends and marshes to curb the flow, and even plugging city drains to encourage floodwater to use other means to go underground. Back in the days when rivers took a winding path to the sea, floodwaters lost force and volume while meandering across flood plains and inland deltas, but today the water tends to have a direct passage to the sea. This means that, when it rains in the uplands, the water comes down all at once.

C.Worse, when the flood plains are closed off, the river's flow downstream becomes more violent and uncontrollable; by turning complex river systems into the simple mechanics of a water pipe, engineers have often created danger where they promised safety. The Rhine, Europe's most engineered river; is a good example. For a long time engineers have erased its backwaters and cut it off from its plain. The aim was partly to improve navigation, and partly to speed floodwaters out of Alps and down to the North Sea. Now, when it rains in the Alps, the peak flows from several branches of the Rhine coincide where once they arrived separately, and with four-fifths of the Lower Rhine's flood plain barricaded off, the waters rise. The result is more frequent flooding and greater damage. The same thing has happened in the US on the Mississippi river, which drains the world's second largest river catchment into the Gulf of Mexico. Despite some $7 billion spent over the last century on levees (embankments) the situation is growing worse.

D.Specialists in water control now say that a new approach is needed - one which takes the whole landscape into consideration. To help keep London's feet dry, the UK Environment Agency is reflooding 10 square kilometres of the ancient flood plain of the River Thames outside Oxford. Nearer to London, it has spent £100 million creating new wetlands and a relief channel across 16 kilometres of flood plain. Similar ideas ate being tested in Austria, in one of Europe's largest river restorations to date. The engineers calculate that the restored flood plain of the Drava River can now store up to 10 million cubic metres of floodwater, and slow down storm surges coming out of the Alps by more than an hour, protecting towns not only in Austria, but as far downstream as Slovenia and Croatia.

Questions 1-6

Reading Passage 2 has seven paragraphs, A-G,

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter. A-G, in boxes 1-6 on your answer sheet

1 how legislation has forced building designers to improve water use

2 two reasons why one river was isolated from its food plain

3 how natural water courses in the past assisted flood control

4 an example of flood control on one river, affecting three countries

5 a country which has partly destroyed one of its most typical features in order to control water

6 the writer's comment on the comparative cost effectiveness of traditional flood control and newer methods

E.The Dutch, for whom preventing floods is a matter of survival, have gone furthest. This nation, built largely on drained marshes and seabed, has had several severe shocks in the last two decades, when very large numbers of people have had to be evacuated. Since that time, the Dutch have broken one of their most enduring national stereotypes by allowing engineers to punch holes in dykes. They plan to return up to a sixth of the country to its former waterlogged state in order to better protect the rest.

F.Water use in cities also needs to change. At the moment, cities seem to create floods; they are concreted and paved so that rains flow quickly into rivers. A new breed of 'soft engineers' wants cities to porous, Berlin is one place where this is being done. Tough new rules for new developments mean that drains will be prevented from becoming overloaded after heavy rains. Architects of new urban buildings are diverting rainwater from the roofs for use in toilets and the irrigation of roof gardens, while water falling onto the ground is collected in ponds, or passes underground through porous paving. One high-tech urban development can store a sixth of its annual rainfall, and reuse most of the rest

G.Could this be expanded to protect a whole city? The test case could Los Angeles. With non-porous surfaces covering 70% of the city, drainage is a huge challenge. Billions of dollars have been spent digging huge drains and concreting riverbeds, but many communities still flood regularly. Meanwhile this desert city ships water from hundreds of kilometres away to fill its taps and swimming pool. Los Angeles has recently launched a new scheme to utilise floodwater in the Sun Valley section of the city. The plan is to catch the rain that falls on thousands of driveways, parking lots and rooftops in the valley. Trees will soak up water from parking lots; houses and public buildings will capture roof water to irrigate gardens and parks, and road drains will empty into old gravel pits to recharge the city's underground water reserves. Result: less flooding and more water for the city. It may sound expensive, until we realise how much is spent trying to drain cities and protect areas from flooding, and bow little this method achieves

Questions 7-8

Choose TWO letters A-E.

Write the correct letter, in boxes 7-8 on your answer sheet

According to the article, which TWO of these statements are true of the new approach to flood control?

A It aims to slow the movement of water to the sea.

B It aims to channel water more directly into rivers.

C It will cost more than twice as much as former measures.

D It will involve the loss of some areas of land.

E It has been tested only in The Netherlands.

Questions 9-13

Complete the sentences below.

Choose NO MORE THAN MO WORDS from the passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 9-13 on your answer sheet.

9. Some of the most severe floods for many centuries have recently occurred in parts of 9

10. The Rhine and the 10 rivers have experienced similar problems with water control

11. An area near Oxford will flooded to protect the city of 11

12. Planners who wish to allow water to pass more freely through city surfaces are called 12

13.A proposal for part of the city of 13 could show whether small-scale water projects could apply on a large scale.

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Đề thi thật 3: A Survivor's Story

One native bird in New Zealand that has managed to survive the introduction of non-native species.

As an island country with a fauna dominated by birds, New Zealand was once home to an owl species which is now extinct. The laughing owl, named for its distinctive cry. This bird was widespread throughout the islands when European settlers arrived in the middle of the 19th century and remained in good numbers for some years thereafter. Where other native birds suffered from predation by the Polynesian rat, the laughing owl turned the tables and adapted its diet to include the rodent. It was also capable of catching and killing the other New Zealand owl, the morepork, and even larger birds, such as the weka. However, the laughing owl was wiped out around the beginning of the 20th century, its demise caused by specimen collectors, habitat changes, and non-native predators including cats and stoats. Surprisingly, it is the smaller owl, the morepork, that has managed to survive until this day.

At dusk, the melancholy sound of the morepork can be heard in forests and parks as it calls to other moreporks and claims territory. Its Maori name, ruru, echoes its two-part cry. In the tradition of the Maori people of New Zealand, the morepork, or ruru, was often seen as a careful guardian. A number of sayings referred to the bird's alertness. As a bird of the night, it was associated with the spirit world. Moreporks were believed to act as messengers to the gods in the heavens, flying along spiritual paths in the sky. They were the mediums used to communicate with the gods. The occasional high, piercing call of the morepork signified bad news, but the lower-pitched and more common ruru call heralded good news.

Speckled dark brown, with yellow eyes and long tails, they are around 20 centimeters long from head to tail and 175 grams in weight. Moreporks have hinges on the edge of their feathers, so they can fly almost silently and not alert potential prey. They have acute hearing and their large eyes are very sensitive to light. Moreporks nest in tree hollows, in clumps of plants, or in cavities among rocks and roots. In the wild, moreporks usually start nesting in October, although zoo specimens have been recorded nesting in midwinter, possibly stimulated by an ample food supply. The female lays up to three white eggs, which she incubates for 20 to 30 days. During this time, she rarely hunts, and the male brings food to her. Once the chicks hatch, she stays mainly on the nest until the young owls are fully feathered. When hatched, chicks are covered in light grey down, and have their eyes closed. The eyes do not open until the eighth day after hatching. They can fly at around 35 days.

Questions 1-7

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1-7 on your answer sheet, write:

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information FALSE if the statement contradicts the information NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

1. Early European settlers made detailed studies of the morepork.
2. The Polynesian rat had a negative effect on the number of laughing owls.
3. The laughing owl was larger than the morepork.
4. Rats pose a risk to young moreporks.
5. The New Zealand Department of Conservation is hoping to limit the population of moreporks.
6. Other bird species are frightened away when they hear the morepork's cry.
7. In Maori tradition, the low call of the morepork had negative associations.

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Đề thi thật 3: A Survivor's Story

By day, moreporks sleep in crevices. By night, they hunt a variety of animals mainly large invertebrates including scarab and huhu beetles, moths, caterpillars and spiders. They also take small birds and mice. They can find suitable food in pine forests as well as native forest. A morepork will swoop to catch or stun its prey, which it then carries away in its bill. Moreporks are clever hunters and birds such as robins, grey warblers and fantails can end up as their prey. In the day, these small birds sometimes mob drowsy moreporks and chase them away from their roosts. They have a more peaceful life

The New Zealand Department of Conservation

The New Zealand Department of Conservation is taking steps to ensure the preservation of New Zealand's only native owl. The department is involved in measuring the population of moreporks and has put transmitters on a number of birds to determine survival and mortality. As well as being New Zealand's only native owl, the morepork has symbolic and spiritual importance, so in monitoring the bird it is hoped that the morepork will continue to survive and thrive.

Other Threats to Moreporks

- Predation by non-native predators: Cats, stoats, and ferrets are a major threat to moreporks, especially nestlings and young owls.
- Habitat loss: Deforestation and urban development are reducing the amount of suitable habitat for moreporks.
- Pesticides: The use of pesticides can poison prey species, which can then accumulate in the food chain and harm moreporks.
- Road mortality: Moreporks are often killed by cars when they fly across roads at night.

Conservation Efforts

In addition to the efforts of the New Zealand Department of Conservation, there are a number of community groups and individuals working to protect moreporks. These efforts include:

- Nest box installation: Providing artificial nest boxes for moreporks to breed in.
- Predator control: Trapping and poisoning predators to reduce their impact on morepork populations.
- Education and awareness: Educating the public about the importance of moreporks and how to help protect them.

By working together, we can help ensure that the morepork continues to be a part of New Zealand's natural heritage for generations to come.

Questions 8-13

Complete the notes below.

Choose ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 8-13 on your answer sheet.

The Morepork

Appearance

- approximately 8 _____ in length
- large yellow eyes
- feathers with fringes to enable quiet flight

Nesting

- nests in trees, plants or spaces in roots and 9 _____
- after about 25 days, baby moreporks are capable of leaving the nest

Hunting

- transports prey using its 10 _____
- can be chased away by other birds during the 11 _____
- attacked by 12 _____ that had been introduced to Motuora Island

Threats

- may be exposed to 13 _____ in their prey