

## Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

**A** Recent years have seen a barrage of dystopian Young Adult novels grow in popularity almost overnight - from *The Hunger Games* to *The Maze Runner*, *Divergent*, and *The Knife of Never Letting Go*. These novels, set in postapocalyptic, totalitarian or otherwise ruthless and dehumanising worlds, have gained such momentum that the trend has seeped into the film and TV industry as well, with multimillion dollar movie adaptations and popular TV series gracing the big and small screen. But what is it about dystopian stories that makes them so appealing to readers and audiences alike?

**B** Dystopias are certainly nothing new. The word "dystopia" itself, meaning "bad place" (from the Greek *dys* and *topos*), has been around since at least the 19th century, and Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and Orwell's *1984* (1949), commonly regarded as the first dystopian novels that fit firmly into the genre, were published more than 75 years ago. Even the first YA dystopian novel is older than 20 - Lois Lawry's *The Giver*, which came out in 1993. While these are individual examples from previous decades, however, one would be hard-pressed to find a YA shelf in any bookstore nowadays that isn't stocked with dozens of dystopian titles.

**C** According to film critic Dana Stevens, it is the similarities that can be drawn between dystopian settings and the daily lives of teenagers that make YA dystopian stories so captivating: the high school experience involves the same social structure as the *Hunger Games* arena, for example, or the faction-divided world of *Divergent*. Teenagers might not literally have to fight each other to the death or go through horrendous trials to join a virtue-based faction for the rest of their lives, but there's something in each story that connects to their own backgrounds. The "cutthroat race for high school popularity" might feel like an "annual televised fight", and the pressure to choose a clique at school bears a strong resemblance to Tris's faction dilemma in *Divergent*.

**D** Justin Scholes's and Jon Ostenson's 2013 study reports similar findings, identifying themes such as "inhumanity and isolation", the struggle to establish an identity and the development of platonic and romantic relationships as alluring agents. Deconstructing a score of popular YA dystopian novels released between 2007-2011, Scholes and Ostenson argue that the topics explored by dystopian literature are appealing to teenagers because they are "an appropriate fit with the intellectual changes that occur during adolescence"; as teenagers gradually grow into adults, they develop an interest in social issues and current affairs. Dystopian novels, according to author and book critic Dave Astor, feel honest in that regard as they do not patronise their readers, nor do they attempt to sugar-coat reality.

**E** All of this still does not explain why this upsurge in YA dystopian literature is happening now, though. Bestselling author Naomi Klein, offers a different explanation: the dystopian trend, she says, is a "worrying sign" of times to come. What all these dystopian stories have in common is that they all assume that "environmental catastrophe" is not only imminent, but also completely inevitable. Moral principles burgeon through these works of fiction, particularly for young people, as they are the ones who will bear the brunt of climate change. Young Adult author Todd Mitchell makes a similar point, suggesting that the bleak futures portrayed in modern YA literature are a response to "social anxiety" brought forth by pollution and over-consumption.

**F** The threat of natural disasters is not the only reason YA dystopian novels are so popular today, however. As author Claudia Gray notes, what has also changed in recent years is humanity's approach to personal identity and young people's roles in society. Adolescents, she says, are increasingly dragooned into rigid moulds through "increased

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standardised testing, increased homework levels, etc." YA dystopian novels come into play because they present protagonists who refuse to be defined by someone else, role models who battle against the status quo.

**G** So, how long is this YA dystopian trend going to last? If The Guardian is to be believed, it's already been replaced by a new wave of "gritty" realism as seen in the likes of *The Fault in Our Stars*, by John Green. Profits have certainly dwindled for dystopian film franchises such as *Divergent*. This hasn't stopped film companies from scheduling new releases, however, and TV series such as *The 100* are still on air. Perhaps the market for dystopian novels has stagnated - only time will tell. One thing is for certain, however: the changes the trend has effected on YA literature are here to stay.

### Questions 1-7

Reading Passage 1 has seven paragraphs, labelled **A-G**. Choose the correct heading for paragraphs **A-G** from the list of headings below.

#### List of Headings

- I** Teens are increasingly urged to conform
- II** The dystopian model scrutinised
- III** Dystopian novels now focus on climate change
- IV** The original dystopias
- V** Dystopian literature's accomplishments will outlive it
- VI** A score of dystopian novels has taken over YA shelves
- VII** The roots of dystopia can be found in teenage experiences
- VIII** Dystopia is already dead
- IX** Dystopias promote ethical thinking

- 1 Paragraph A \_\_\_
- 2 Paragraph B \_\_\_
- 3 Paragraph C \_\_\_
- 4 Paragraph D \_\_\_
- 5 Paragraph E \_\_\_
- 6 Paragraph F \_\_\_
- 7 Paragraph G \_\_\_

### Questions 8-12

Answer the questions below with words taken from Reading Passage 1. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

- 8** According to the writer, what was the first dystopian novel?
- 9** According to the writer, which author initiated the YA dystopian genre?
- 10** How does Dave Astor describe dystopian novels?
- 11** According to Naomi Klein, which element is present in all dystopian novels?
- 12** According to Claudia Gray, things like increased standardised testing and homework levels are a threat to what?

### Question 13

Choose the correct Letter, **A, B, C** or **D**.

- 13** Which is the best title for Reading Passage 1?  
A A history of YA dystopian literature

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- B The wane of the dystopian phenomenon
- C How dystopian fiction has shaped the world
- D The draw of YA dystopian fiction

## Reading Passage 2

### Plant Wars

Mention the words "chemical warfare" or "deployed armies" in any conversation, and your interlocutor might immediately assume you're talking about wars between humans. In reality, however, there are other kinds of wars out there where these techniques are employed far more frequently and in a far more intricate manner: those waged in the plant kingdom.

We might not normally think of plants this way, but much like humans and animals, they too have to fight for survival on a daily basis. Nutrients, light and water are the three things any plant needs in order to grow; unfortunately, none of these is ample in supply, which means that the competition between plants can grow fierce. Some plants and trees are at an architectural advantage: taller trees have greater access to natural light, while plants with deeper roots have the ability to absorb more water and nutrients. Others, though, manage to defend their territory through "allelopathy", or chemical warfare.

So how does this chemical warfare work exactly? As Dr Robin Andrews explains, plants convert the nutrients they absorb from the ground to energy with the aid of a type of organic compound known as metabolites. These metabolites can be divided into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary metabolites are what allows a plant to live, playing a direct role in its growth and development, and are thus present in every plant. Secondary metabolites, on the other hand, can vary from plant to plant and often play the role of a defence mechanism against neighbouring competitors.

Out of these secondary metabolites, there are two that are incredibly interesting: DIBOA and DIMBOA. These two cyclic hydroxamic acids were at the forefront of a study conducted by Sascha Venturelli and colleagues in 2015, which found that once they are released into the soil by the plants that produce them, they degenerate into toxic substances that have the power to inhibit growth in nearby plants once they soak them up. As Dr Claude Becker notes, "the phenomenon itself has been known for years", but we now finally understand the "molecular mechanism" behind it - and its supreme intricacy would put to shame any chemical bombs created by humans.

But plants do not just fight wars against other plants; chemical warfare also comes into play in their defence against herbivores. As Brent Mortensen of Iowa State University describes, plants "actively resist" attacks made by herbivores through qualitative and quantitative chemical defences. What's the difference? Qualitative defences can be lethal even in small doses, and are often employed to protect "young" or "tender leaves or seeds". They can also be recycled when no longer necessary. Quantitative defences, in contrast, are only effective "in larger doses", but unlike qualitative defences, can protect the plant against all herbivores. Quantitative defences are also not as immediately lethal, as they usually lead to indigestion, pain, irritation of the mouth and throat, and inflammation or swelling in the skin.

And what about the "deployed armies" I mentioned before? Well, chemical attacks are not the only way plants elect to defend themselves against herbivores. Some plants, such as the African acacia, also recruit armies to assist them in their war. As Angela White of the University of Sheffield explains, the acacia tree has "hollowed-out structures"

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which invite ant colonies to build a home in them by providing not just shelter, but also food in the form of a special nectar. In return, ants protect them against herbivores - and this includes not just the small ones like bugs, but also the ones as big as giraffes.

At this point, of course, you might be wondering what all this has to do with you. The territorial nature of plants might be fascinating in its own right, but what is its application in real life? Well, Dr Venturelli of the 2015 study mentioned before has an answer for you: apparently, certain allelochemicals - the aforementioned chemical compounds that are responsible for stunting growth in plants - have been found to have an effect on human cancer cells, too. According to Michael Bitzer and Ulrich Lauer of the same study, "clinical trials at the University Clinics Tubingen currently assess the efficacy of these plant toxins in cancer patients". This means that comprehending the way plants defend themselves against the enemies in their environment might not just be of interest to plant biologists alone, but to medical researchers as well.

### Questions 14-20

Complete the sentences below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from Reading Passage 2 for each answer.

- 14 Plants are very similar to \_\_\_\_\_ as they also struggle to stay alive every day.
- 15 The height of a tree or plant can affect how much \_\_\_\_\_ it receives.
- 16 Chemical warfare in plants also goes by the name of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 17 Water and nutrients are both taken from the soil, and the latter is later turned into \_\_\_\_\_.
- 18 Secondary metabolites are an \_\_\_\_\_ that functions as a defence mechanism for plants.
- 19 DIBOA and DIMBOA are two types of secondary metabolites that can \_\_\_\_\_ once absorbed by a plant.
- 20 The 2015 study by Sascha Venturelli and colleagues examined the \_\_\_\_\_ of chemical warfare in plants.

### Plant Defences Against Herbivores

#### Qualitative

- can kill a herbivore in 21 \_\_\_\_\_
- can be recycled when no longer necessary

#### Secondary

- only works in larger doses
- effective against 22 \_\_\_\_\_
- causes a variety of symptoms, none 23 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Indirect

- uses the help of ant colonies that reside in its 24 \_\_\_\_\_
- ants can protect it against herbivores of all sizes, even 25 \_\_\_\_\_

### Questions 26-27

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2?

Write

- TRUE** if the statement is true according to the passage  
**FALSE** if the statement is false according to the passage  
**NOT GIVEN** if the information is not given in the passage

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26 Allelochemicals are secondary metabolites.

27 Plant biologists and medical researchers are currently cooperating to assess the efficacy of plant toxins in preventing the growth of cancer cells.

### Section 3

#### Deafhood

**A** At this point you might be wondering: what does 'deafhood' mean? Is it a synonym for 'deafness'? Is it a slightly more politically correct term to express the very same concept you've grown accustomed to - a person who lacks the power of hearing, or a person whose hearing is impaired? What's wrong with terms like 'hard of hearing' or 'deafness'? Have they not represented the deaf community just fine for the past few centuries? Who came up with the term 'Deafhood' anyway, and why?

**B** The term 'Deafhood' was first coined in 1993 by Dr Paddy Ladd, a deaf scholar in the Deaf Studies Department at the University of Bristol in England. First explored through his doctoral dissertation in 1998, and later elaborated on in his 2003 book, 'Understanding Deaf Culture - In Search of Deafhood', the idea behind Deafhood is twofold: first, it seeks to collect everything that is already known about the life, culture, politics, etc. of Sign Language Peoples (SLPs); secondly, it attempts to remove the limitations imposed on SLPs through their colonisation from hearing people.

**C** In order to understand what Deafhood represents, it's first important to understand what is meant by colonisation. To do that, we need to examine two terms: Oralism and Audism. Oralism is a philosophy that first emerged in the late 19th century, and which suggests that a reduced use of sign language would be more beneficial to SLPs, as it would allow them to integrate better to the hearing world. In that respect, sign language is dismissively regarded as a mere obstacle to listening skills and acquisition of speech - treated, in effect, in the same manner as the languages of other peoples who were oppressed and colonised, e.g. the Maori in New Zealand, or the Aborigines in Australia. Audism, however, is an even more sinister ideology: first coined in 1975 by Dr Tom Humphries of the University of California in San Diego, it describes the belief that deaf people are somehow inferior to hearing people, and that deafhood - or, in this case, we should say 'deafness' - is a flaw, a terrible disability that needs to be eliminated. It is the effect of these two ideologies that Deafhood seeks to counter, by presenting SLPs in a positive light, not as patients who require treatment.

**D** But even if we understand the oppression that SLPs have suffered at the hands of hearing people since the late 1800s, and even if we acknowledge that 'deafness' is a medical term with negative connotations that needs to be replaced, that doesn't mean it's easy to explain what the term Deafhood represents exactly. This is because Deafhood is, as Dr Donald Grushkin puts it, a 'physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, cultural and linguistic' journey that every deaf person is invited - but not obligated - to embark on.

**E** Deafhood is essentially a search for understanding: what does being 'Deaf' mean? How did deaf people in the past define themselves, and what did they believe to be their reasons for existing before Audism was conceived? Why are some people born deaf? Are they biologically defective, or are there more positive reasons for their existence? What do terms like 'Deaf Art' or 'Deaf Culture' actually mean? What is 'the Deaf Way' of doing things? True Deafhood is achieved when a deaf person feels comfortable with who they are and connected to the rest of the deaf community through use of their natural language, but the journey there might differ.

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**F** Aside from all those questions, however, Deafhood also seeks to counter the effect of what is known as 'neo-eugenics'. Neo-eugenics, as described by Patrick Boudreault at the 2005 California Association of the Deaf Conference, is a modern manifestation of what has traditionally been defined as 'eugenics', i.e. an attempt to eradicate any human characteristics which are perceived as negative. Deaf people have previously been a target of eugenicists through the aforementioned ideologies of Audism and Oralism, but recent developments in science and society - such as cochlear implants or genetic engineering - mean that Deafhood is once again under threat, and needs to be protected. The only way to do this is by celebrating the community's history, language, and countless contributions to the world, and confronting those who want to see it gone.

**G** So, how do we go forward? We should start by decolonising SLPs - by embracing Deafhood for what it is, removing all the negative connotations that surround it and accepting that deaf people are neither broken nor incomplete. This is a task not just for hearing people, but for deaf people as well, who have for decades internalised society's unfavourable views of them. We should also seek recognition of the deaf community's accomplishments, as well as official recognition of sign languages around the world by their respective governments. Effectively, what we should do is ask ourselves: how would the Deaf community be like, had it never been colonised by the mainstream world? And whatever it is it would be like, we should all together - hearing and Deaf alike - strive to achieve it.

### Questions 28-34

*The reading passage has seven paragraphs, A-G.*

*Which paragraph contains the following information?*

- 28 Examples of other groups treated the same way as deaf people \_\_\_
- 29 Why the word 'deafness' is no longer appropriate \_\_\_
- 30 The definition of the word 'deaf' \_\_\_
- 31 Why deaf people might sometimes think negatively of themselves \_\_\_
- 32 How one can attain deafhood \_\_\_
- 33 Where the word 'deafhood' came from \_\_\_
- 34 Why deafhood is currently imperilled \_\_\_

### Questions 35-37

*Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.*

- 35 According to Dr Paddy Ladd, Deafhood
  - A is a more appropriate term than 'hard of hearing'.
  - B doesn't colonise SLPs as much as 'deafness' does.
  - C strives to get rid of the effects of colonisation.
  - D contributes positively to the life and culture of deaf people.
- 36 Oralism suggests that
  - A SLPs have no use for sign language.
  - B SLPs don't belong in the hearing world.
  - C hearing people are superior to SLPs.
  - D SLPs are unable to acquire speech.
- 37 Aborigines in Australia are similar to deaf people because
  - A eugenicists also tried to eradicate them.
  - B they were also considered inferior by their oppressors.

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C their languages were also disrespected.

D their languages were also colonised.

### Questions 38-40

*Answer the questions below with words taken from Reading Passage 3.*

*Use **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.*

**38** What should deaf people use to communicate with each other, according to deafhood?

**39** Who has used oralism and audism to attack the deaf community?

**40** What does the deaf community strive to achieve for sign language worldwide?



## Answer Keys

### Section 1

1. **VI.** Even though 'shelves' are not mentioned in the text, it should be understood figuratively: the genre has become very popular.
2. **IV.** The first ever (the original) dystopias are mentioned, as well as the first YA dystopian title.
3. **VII.** The paragraph draws parallels between teenager's real life experience at school, the struggles of Young Adult dystopias' characters and how teenagers can relate to them. experiences.
4. **II.** To scrutinise is to give a closer look, to pay attention to details in order to find information. In the paragraph the author attempts to analyse the reasons of dystopian literature success by deconstructing its 'model'.
5. **IX.** 'Moral principles burgeon...!', 'modern YA literature are a response to "social anxiety" brought forth by pollution and over-consumption' point at the books' attempt to raise awareness of current issues and therefore 'promote ethical thinking'. **III** - Dystopian novels now focus on climate change' doesn't fit here as no such information is given - even though the aspect of climate change is mentioned, it is neither the main focus of the books nor has it gained more attention from the writers recently ('now').
6. **I.** To conform means to follow certain customs, to behave in a certain way that is accepted by the society you live in. The paragraph mentions how young people are expected to live up to these standards and how they refuse to.
7. **V.** Last sentence of the paragraph sums up the idea - the effect of YA dystopian literature is going to be long-lasting and will outlive the popularity of this genre.
8. **Brave New World.** Paragraph B, second sentence. The dates make it easy to pick the earliest book. Make sure to capitalise all three words as it is a title - a proper name.
9. **Lois Lawry.** The middle of Paragraph B. Lois Lawry pioneered the genre of YA dystopian novel with *The Giver*.
10. **Honest.** Last sentence of Paragraph D. Even though you can use up to three words, there is nothing else to include here.
11. **Environmental catastrophe.** Paragraph E, third sentence. Make sure to get the spelling right!
12. **Personal identity.** Paragraph F states that teenagers are '*dragooned into rigid moulds*', or to put simpler, forced to conform to a certain standard. 'Personal identity' is mentioned before this paragraph. Mind the spelling. **Status quo** is an incorrect answer because it is exactly what the characters oppose - the accepted order of things.
13. **D.** The draw is the appeal, the reason it is so interesting. The paragraph focuses on different aspects of YA dystopias success and popularity. Other titles focus on secondary aspects of the text. Remember that a title should reflect the content of its respective paragraphs.

### Section 2

14. **Humans and animals.** Paragraph Two, the first sentence. As you can use up to three words, you have to mention both humans and animals, otherwise you don't get a point.
15. **Natural light.** Second half of Paragraph Two. Once again, include the adjective 'natural' in your answer.
16. **Allelopathy.** Last sentence of Paragraph Two. Be sure to spell the word correctly.



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- 17.**Energy**. Paragraph Three, second sentence. Nutrients are turned into energy. **Metabolites** is an incorrect answer as it is a substance that assists in the transformation.
- 18.**Organic compound**. Same sentence in Paragraph Three. The indefinite article 'an' hints at the words that begins with a vowel sound. Note that both primary and secondary metabolites are organic compounds. The difficulty here is that the word 'secondary metabolites' is mentioned later, whereas the word for the answer is found earlier in the text.
- 19.**Inhibit growth**. To inhibit is to slow some process down (usually to slow down growth). Paragraph Four, second sentence contains the answer.
- 20.**Molecular mechanism**. Last sentence of Paragraph Four. Names and dates are great [keywords](#) as they usually stand out in the text because of capitalisation.
- 21.**Small doses**. Paragraph Five, sentence five. Keep in mind that you can use no more than three words so answer 'even in small doses' will be incorrect.
- 22.**All herbivores**. Paragraph Five, second half. The word 'against' is already in the task, make sure not to use it again.
- 23.**(Are) immediately lethal**. Last sentence of Paragraph Five. The usage of verb to be is optional. However, you have to include 'immediately' as without it the meaning is changed dramatically. 'Not immediately lethal' implies that it doesn't cause death on the spot, but the effect is postponed. 'Not lethal' means that it never causes death. Also mind the spelling.
- 24.**Hollowed-out structures**. Paragraph Six. To reside means to live or to occupy.
- 25.**Giraffes**. Another [tricky word to spell](#).
- 26.**TRUE**. It is important to understand that secondary metabolites are those that are used for defence, e.g. stunting growth. Third sentence of the last paragraph: '*... certain allelochemicals-the aforementioned chemical compounds that are responsible for stunting growth in plants...*'.
- 27.**NOT GIVEN**. Nothing about such cooperation in mention. Only the fact that the research is conducted. In order for this answer to be TRUE, every statement in the question has to be mentioned in the text.

### Section 3

- 28.**C**. The Maori of New Zealand and Australia's indigenous people are the examples of other groups treated similarly to deaf people.
- 29.**D**. The paragraph mentions the word 'deafness' having negative connotations. In other words - its meaning is bad. That is why it is no longer considered appropriate. Paragraph C is incorrect as the given definition of deafness there is used in connection with Audism views.
- 30.**A**. Second sentence gives the definition of the word 'deaf', but it does so indirectly. Do not be misguided by the introductory questions of Paragraph E: 'What does being 'Deaf' mean?'. It doesn't focus on the meaning of the word, but on the experience of deaf people in general.
- 31.**G**. Third sentence in this paragraph goes: "... who have for decades internalised society's unfavourable views of them". In other words, deaf people, hearing society's unwelcoming opinions about them, have themselves adopted such views.
- 32.**E**. Last sentence of Paragraph E mentions how 'true Deafhood' how be achieved through 'natural language' used within deaf people community.
- 33.**B**. First sentence of the paragraph gives the origin of the term 'Deafhood'.
- 34.**F**. 'Imperilled' means being at risk of harm or destruction, endangered. Neo-eugenics is the source of such danger that aims to eradicate deafness by various means such as technology or genetic engineering.

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- 35.C. Last sentence of Paragraph B mentions Deafhood attempting 'to remove the limitations imposed' by colonisation of hearing people. Answers A, B and D do not fit as they do not relate directly to Ladd's voiced opinion.
- 36.A. Third and fourth sentence of Paragraph C: "... a reduced use of sign language would be more beneficial to SLPs", "... sign language is dismissively regarded as a mere obstacle". Other answers are not mentioned in the text.
- 37.C. Fourth sentence of Paragraph C states that just like sign language, Australia's indigenous people's language was too perceived as inferior, standing in the way of listening and speaking skills.
- 38.Natural language. Last sentence of Paragraph E. Note that you can only use up to two words, so answering 'their natural language' is incorrect.
- 39.Eugenicists. Middle of paragraph F contains the answer. Be sure to spell the word correctly.
- 40.Official recognition. Middle of the last paragraph: "We should also seek... official recognition of sign languages around the world"

## Vocabulary

The vocabulary below is meant to help you with the more difficult words. If the word isn't on the list then you are either supposed to know it or it is too specific to be worth learning and you don't have to know it to answer the question. Symbols in brackets mean part of speech (see bottom of the list). Sentences in italics give examples of usage for some more complex words and phrases.

**And remember — you are not given a vocabulary list (or a dictionary) at your real exam.**

### Reading Section 1

**Barrage of smth** - a great number of something, such as questions, complaints (or in this case books). *The footballer faced a barrage of questions after a recent scandal involving his girlfriend.*

**Ruthless** (adj) - if a person is ruthless, they do not care about other people's pain or suffering. *I remember my boss as a cold, ruthless businessman.*

**Seep into** - (usually of a liquid) to enter something slowly through a hole or small opening. Here it is used figuratively in the meaning 'to find or make its way into something'. *The modern attitude to gender questions have seeped into the books, films and other media.*

**Appealing** (adj) - attractive or interesting. *None of the business partners found our proposition appealing enough to fund the project.*

**Hard-pressed** (adj) - find something difficult to do, esp. due to lack of time or money. *I would be hard-pressed to pay the rent on my own without your help.*

**Captivating** (adj) - very interesting or fascinating, taking your attention. *Mike could tell even the most ordinary story in a captivating way.*

**A score of** - twenty or approximately twenty. *There was a score or so people waiting in line.*

**Sugar-coat** (v) - to make something less unpleasant or more attractive, even though by nature it's nothing good. *You don't have to sugarcoat it for me - I know I have failed the exam and will have to stay for another year at school.*

**Upsurge** (n) - a sudden and dramatic increase. *The bread prices usually see an upsurge in war time.*

**Burgeon** (v) - grow or develop rapidly. *Her confidence started to burgeon after landing a job with one of the big companies.*

**Brunt** (n) - to bear the brunt in the text means to experience the main negative effect of something unpleasant.

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*Throughout her school years Jane had to bear the brunt of her mother's mood swings.*

**Gritty** (adj) - (here) having unpleasant details presented in a realistic way. *His last bestselling novel was a gritty account of life in the London seedy underbelly.*

**Dwindle** (v) - to decrease in size or amount. *Our money reserves dwindled over the months I had been looking for a job.*

**Stagnate** (v) - to stop progressing, changing or developing. *The business had been stagnating for almost half a year and eventually had to be closed.*

**Conform** (v) - to follow certain customs or established norm. *Younger generations are forced to conform by their parents, teachers and even their older friends.*

**Scrutinise** (v) - to examine closely and with great attention. *The company's financial documentation is going to be scrutinised in light of the recent money-laundering scandal.*

### Reading Section 2

**Ample** (adj) - more than enough, abundant. *We have ample space to put a pool table in the living room*

**Fierce** (adj) - (here) strong and energetic. *The recent alterations to work schedule were met with fierce protests.*

**Inhibit** (v) - to stop or prevent from developing. *Malnutrition is known to inhibit growth and development of children.*

**Soak up** - to absorb something, usually liquid. Can be used figuratively e.g. *he soaked up all the information presented to him.*

**Herbivores** (n) - animals that only eat plants. *A cow is the first thing that springs to mind when I think of herbivores.*

**Stunt** (v) - to slow or stop something from growth or developed. *Alcohol addiction stunted his academic progress.*

### Reading Section 3

**Impaired** (adj) - reduced in strength, damaged. *His hearing is impaired because of the car crash he's been in.*

**Elaborate** (v) - to explain or to provide facts to back up a statement. *Could you elaborate on your statement about math being useless in real life?*

**Twofold** (adj) - twice as big or made of two parts. *The benefit of renting a flat is twofold: low initial price and versatility.*

**Dismissive** (adj) - if somebody is dismissive, they refuse to consider something, believing it not worth their attention. *Maria remained dismissive of my suggestions to buy a car.*

**Inferior** (adj) - of lesser quality or worth. *My skills and experience seem to be inferior to John's - he's so much more proficient.*