



Welcome to IELTS, your ticket to study and work overseas!

In response to the growing popularity of IELTS the Taipei Times, in conjunction with the British Council, brings our readers an IELTS preparation page which will run every Saturday on p14 of the Taipei Times. Each week will focus on a different area of the test. IELTS, the International English Language Testing System, is an upper-intermediate test of English communication. It can be used for university entry and emigration around the English-speaking world and beyond. It measures your ability to communicate across the four language skills — reading, writing, listening and speaking — through authentic challenging tasks. With over 700,000 people taking IELTS annually, it is one of the fastest growing English tests in the world, trusted and accepted by over 4,000 organisations and faculties worldwide, and is a great alternative to TOEFL.

CREDIT: SIMON CARRIE, BRITISH COUNCIL, TAIPEI

READING TEST

That's ridiculous Darling! Internet campaign to ban treasury minister.

A An Internet campaign to ban Britain's treasury chief from the nation's pubs has struck a chord with the country's harried drinkers. Earlier this month, Treasury Chief Alistair Darling raised taxes on cars and cigarettes, but it is his new alcohol duties, which raised the price of a pint of beer, that have gotten Britons' backs up.

B So when a pub landlord in Darling's home town of Edinburgh barred the chancellor from his establishment, drinking holes across the country followed suit, posting pictures of the white-haired, bespectacled treasurer above the big red word "barred."

C Bar manager Andrew Little at the Utopia pub, which kicked off the campaign, told the Associated Press the poster was put up "tongue-in-cheek," but the sentiment snowballed. "It looks like we've touched a nerve," Little said. Hundreds have joined Internet groups devoted to running Darling out of every pub in the country, and establishments from the Tap And Spile in the northern England town of Lincoln to the Plough Inn in Finstock, near Oxford, said Darling would not be allowed to partake of their booze.

D The government has raised taxes on alcohol by six percent above the rate of inflation — which translates to an extra four pence (around eight US cents or six euro cents) for a pint of beer, 13 pence (around 26 US cents or 18 euro cents) for a bottle of wine and 55 pence (around US\$1.10 or 71 euro cents) a bottle for spirits such as whisky. The duties are scheduled to rise by another two percent above inflation in each of the next four years.

E Opposition Conservative leader David Cameron said the movement to bar Darling showed that Britons were angry at the government's tax hike. "Everybody knows that taxes have just gone up," Cameron said on March 26 at the prime minister's weekly question session in parliament. "Every time you fill up the car, taxes have gone up; every time you buy a car, taxes have gone up; every time the family goes shopping and so on. No wonder every pub in Britain is trying to ban the chancellor (Darling) from having a pint."

F Joe McCorry, who manages the Plough Inn, said the increased taxes would do nothing to control binge drinking and suggested they could force the closure of more pubs — institutions he said were "at the very heart of British society."

G The treasury said it was taking the campaign in stride, explaining that Darling wanted to raise money to fight child poverty and help families and the aged. "If this is the price he has to pay then so be it," a treasury spokesman said, speaking on the customary condition of anonymity.

H And at least one drinker seemed unfazed by the controversy. "It is inevitable that the government increases taxes on drink and cigarettes each year," said 52-year-old Neil Wilson, who was nursing a pint of dark beer at an Edinburgh pub. "They tax us for the simple pleasures in life," he said.

(AP)

Question A

▶ Match the headings to the appropriate paragraphs.



PHOTO: CATHERINE THOMAS, TAIPEI TIMES

List of Headings

i Do not enter	Section A	vii
ii Drink up!		
iii What are the reasons for the ban?	Section B	—
iv Why are taxes increased?	Section C	—
v Going from strength to strength	Section D	—
vi Drunk and disorderly	Section E	—
vii Annoyed locals	Section F	—
viii An opposite effect	Section G	—
ix An unsurprising tax increase	Section H	—
x The cause of the problem		

Answers

Section B	i
Section C	v
Section D	x
Section E	iii
Section F	viii
Section G	iv
Section H	ix

The Reading Test

One of the biggest problems for people doing the IELTS reading test is managing their time properly. Below are a few tips to help you work efficiently.

- ▶ Don't read the text from beginning to end.
- ▶ Look quickly at the text. What are the headings, sub-headings, special sections, captions, diagrams and illustrations?
- ▶ Read through the text quickly to get a general idea of what it's about.
- ▶ There are 40 questions in 60 minutes — that's about one minute per question.
- ▶ If you find a question very difficult, leave it and go on to the next question. Go back to it at the end.
- ▶ If you are not sure of an answer, write it down, but mark it so that you can check or change it again later.
- ▶ Remember, don't leave blank spaces — it's always better to guess!
- ▶ Finally, it's better to skip a few difficult questions and attempt all questions than to carefully answer two and a half sections and not have time to attempt the remaining half section.

Task Type: Headings

In this type of task you have to match headings to sections of a text. The headings are summaries of the information, so you need to find the main idea in each section.

Exam Strategy

- ▶ Look at the examples first. They will help to give you an idea of how to do the task.
- ▶ Read the first section. Think about an answer in your own mind.
- ▶ Is one of the headings similar to your own idea? This could be the answer!
- ▶ Choose the answer that best summarises the overall idea of the section.

Key Vocab



Strike a chord: If something strikes a chord with people, it is connected with their own lives or opinions.

Get people's backs up: When you annoy people, you get their backs up.

Touch a nerve: When people become upset, you have touched a nerve with them.

Partake of their booze: Drink their alcohol.

Unfazed: Even though the puppies were only a week old, they were unfazed by all the people.

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We currently operate in 109 countries and territories and have over 70 years of experience. In Taiwan our aim is to build lasting relationships between the UK and Taiwan by connecting people with learning opportunities and creative ideas from the UK.

- We offer free, professional and impartial support for studying in the UK.
- We organise collaborative events and exchanges in education, arts, science, and English language teaching.
- We support learners and teachers of English in Taiwan.
- We provide English language courses.
- We offer access to UK examinations — including IELTS.