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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.



IELTS listening section 4

In the listening part of the exam you are required to answer questions on four different sections. The sections are slightly different in format:

	Number of speakers	Type of language
Section 1	2	Non-academic
Section 2	1	Non-academic
Section 3	2-4	Academic
Section 4	1	Academic

▶ Listening section 4

The listening test increases in difficulty as it progresses with section 4 being the most difficult. This is because section 4 contains a lot of academic words which may be unfamiliar to you. Don't panic! The key to success is to prepare yourself by focusing on the questions and then listening for the information which matches those questions.

▶ Types of questions

- Multiple choice
- Short answer questions
- Sentence completion questions
- Notes, table, form, summary, flow chart or diagram completion questions
- Classification questions

▶ Approach

Before each section of listening begins, you will be given time to study the questions. Make use of this time by trying to predict what the answers will be. You may sometimes be able to guess what the answer is, but if not you can help yourself by thinking about what kind of answer it will be. Is it a number or a day of the week? Could it be a person's name? What part of speech does the word need to be to fit grammatically into the space?

Look at questions 1-3 before you look at the tape script. What predictions can you make about the answers?



The British Royal Air Force's "Red Arrows" aerobatic team performs a flyby over the Statue of Liberty in New York City on June 25, 2008.

PHOTO: AP/ROYAL AIR FORCE

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.

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QUESTIONS

Questions 1-3

▶ Complete the sentences below. Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** or **A NUMBER** for each answer.

1. The world's first power station started making power in New York in _____.
2. Edison located his power station on _____ in lower Manhattan.
3. The buildings surrounding the power station were equipped with a _____.

▶ Notes

Question 1 could be a place name, but this is unlikely as New York is already given in the question. Instead it is likely to be a year as the gap is preceded by the preposition *in*.

Question 2 is likely to be the name of a place because of the use of the word *located*. It is not likely to be the name of a country or city because of the preposition *on*.

Question 3 is more difficult to predict, but we can say that the answer must be a noun because of the article *a*.

▶ Parallel expressions

A wide vocabulary is important for IELTS. One way questions are made more difficult is through the use of parallel expressions. These are words or phrases that have a similar meaning as each other. Study questions 4-6. Can you think of any other way to express the options given to you?

Now that you have spent some time thinking about the questions, you are ready to listen. Read the tape script and answer the questions. If you can get a friend to read the tape script to you then so much the better!

Questions 4-6

▶ Circle THREE letters A-F

- The disadvantages of gas light were:
- A It sucked oxygen out of rooms.
 - B It made rooms dirty.
 - C It caused diseases.
 - D It smelled bad.
 - E It was expensive.
 - F It caused explosions.



The script

Good afternoon everyone, and welcome to lecture 3 in our series "Powering the World". Yes, yes, yes settle down at the back please and I'll begin. Now those of you who attended last Thursday's lecture will remember that we discussed how before the 1880s, the power needed for industrial facilities was generated on site and was the responsibility of those individual businesses. We explored the kind of machinery employed and examined one machine in particular, that of Henry Burden's water wheel by the Wyantskill River built in 1851.

This system of a business providing its own power had many advantages, but towards the end of the 19th century it was becoming much too difficult for individual companies to provide the increasing amounts of power they needed. A revolution in the production of power was about to come along.

This revolution was started by Thomas Edison. Edison opened the first electricity generating plant in New York on Sep. 4, 1882. It was a very ambitious affair at the time, and the plant which he built in some warehouses on Pearl Street in lower Manhattan was an immediate success. The scale was small at first, with the power only being sent to other buildings in the immediate vicinity that were connected to the plant and had been fitted with a meter to show how much power they consumed. But soon other parts of the country began to be lit by Edison's amazing system.

The change was important for many people. Previously most homes and buildings had been lit using gas, and in the beginning this had seemed wonderful. Each home could be lit without the residents needing to constantly buy candles. It soon became clear, however, that gas had a number of disadvantages. First of all, homes using gas found that furniture, fixtures and walls became soiled by waste expelled by the combustion of the gas. More importantly, however, were the effects of gas light on the health of the public. Because gas needed to be burnt to provide light, it tended to draw oxygen out of buildings, making it more difficult to breathe. In drastic cases gas could also be responsible for explosions, killing people outright. Electricity, in contrast, was clean and with certain precautions very safe.

Edison's plant was a great success with a lot of potential, but he still had a long way to go...

Answers:

1. 1882 2. Pearl Street 3. meter 4. A 5. B 6. F



The Empire State Building is illuminated with green lights in honor of the Muslim holiday Eid-al-Fitr, that marks the end of Ramadan, on Oct. 12, 2007, in New York City. PHOTO: AFP