

READING COMPREHENSION

Task 1: Read the text carefully. Complete the task on the next page.

The Baby Boom

Even people with no knowledge of demographics have heard of the group born from 1946 to 1966. These are the baby boomers. In fact, when they were 20, baby boomers weren't much different from the 20-year-olds who had preceded them. And now that many of them are in their late 50s, they are behaving just as middle-aged people have always behaved. The only thing special about the baby boomers is that there are so many of them.

Canada's was the loudest baby boom in the industrialized world. In fact, only three other Western countries – the United States, Australia, and New Zealand – had baby booms. Part of the reason was that these four countries were immigrant receivers, and immigrants tend to be in their 20s, the prime childbearing years. The U.S. boom started earlier, in 1946, and it also ended earlier, in 1964. That's why American periodicals in 1996 were full of articles about baby boomers turning 50, an event that was delayed until 1997 in Canada.

At its peak in 1957, the U.S. boom hit 3.7 children per family, nearly half a baby fewer than Canadian women were producing at the peak of the Canadian boom. The Americans started their boom earlier because more of their war effort was in the Pacific, and the Pacific war wound down sooner. The U.S. troops were brought home in 1945 and kids started appearing in 1946. Canadian troops came home later, so Canadian births did not leap upward until 1947. As for the Australians, they never got much higher than three babies per woman, but they compensated by continuing their boom ten years longer than Canada did. That happened because Australian women were slower than their North American counterparts to enter the workforce in large numbers.

Why did the baby boom happen? A likely explanation is that during those 20 years, Canadians knew they could afford large families. The post-war economy was robust, the future seemed full of promise, and young couples wanted to share that bright future with a big family. A second reason was the high immigration levels that prevailed during the 1950s; as noted earlier, immigrants tend to be people of childbearing age, and they made an important contribution to the boom. The combination of two ingredients – lots of people in their high fertility years and high incomes – is a sure-fire recipe for filling up maternity wards.

Why did the boom end? Toward the end of the 1960s, an increasing number of women were pursuing higher education or entering the workforce. As a result, they were postponing childbirth and deciding to have fewer children. The introduction of the birth control pill made this easier than ever to achieve.

READING COMPREHENSION – TASK

Task: Based on what you have read in the article, complete the statements below. You have to fill in between 1 – 3 words (the number of missing words is indicated). The statements do not follow in the same order as the information appears in the article.

1. Canadian children were born later than American kids because Canadian
..... returned home later. (1 word)
2. The baby boom happened primarily due to the flourishing economy. (1 word)
3. The writer refers to the age of immigrants as the foremost years. (1 word)
4. The Australian boom, compared to the Canadians, lasted
..... longer. (2 words)
5. According to the writer, baby boomers are unique only because there are
so (3 words)
6. In the author's opinion, the mixture of productive years and
..... led naturally to the baby boom. (2 words)
7. One of the most essential reasons why the baby boom happened in four
particular countries was their acceptance of (1 word)
8. Australian women did not join the as massively as Canadian women. (1 word)
9. In Canada, the baby boom's period was in comparison to the U.S. (2 words)
10. America's earlier start to the baby boom was connected with their
..... in the Pacific. (2 words)

..... / 10 pts

V O C A B U L A R Y

Task 1: Read the text and decide which option (A, B, C or D) best completes each collocation or fixed phrase. Circle the letter representing the correct option.

SAVING VENICE

A team of experts has arrived in Venice to save it from increasing **(1)** of flooding. A controversial plan to construct a barrier with 79 gates, each weighing 300 tonnes, has been given permission to **(2)** ahead. Once constructed, this will be raised whenever a high tide **(3)** to cover the city.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. A situations | B occasions | C circumstances | D incidences |
| 2. A be | B proceed | C go | D advance |
| 3. A endangers | B threatens | C risks | D jeopardizes |

..... / 3 pts

Task 2: Fill each blank space in the article below with the correct form of the word in capital letters.

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G R A M M A R

Task 1: Fill in each of the numbered blanks in the passage with one suitable word.

NEW ZEALAND – HER DESTINATION

EXAMPLE: (0) in

Born **(0)** Sydney, Australia, Lucy Kramer left **(1)** London when she was 23 to further her career as a stockbroker. “London certainly lived **(2)** to my expectations and I had a very exciting, very hectic lifestyle,” Lucy explains. But after four years, she felt burnt **(3)** and was becoming increasingly disillusioned with her job. “People at work were far **(4)** competitive for my liking,” she says. It was at this time that she made two life-changing decisions. “I signed **(5)** for a teacher-training course and shortly after that met my partner Graeme. He asked me to come back to New Zealand with him and I didn’t hesitate.” It wasn’t long **(6)** she found work in a large Auckland school and, since **(7)** , she **(8)** rapidly worked her way up to a management position. “It’s fair to say I’m not earning what I used **(9)** but my New Zealand colleagues are much more easy-going. Sometimes it bothers me that we’re so remote – you can feel a bit cut **(10)** from what’s going on in the rest of the world, but **(11)** the whole, I’d say it’s one of the best moves I **(12)** made.

..... / 12 pts

Task 2: Circle the correct answer.

13. *However / Although / In spite of / Despite* James is intelligent, he shows contempt for anyone he feels is uneducated.
14. Many people refrain *at / with / from / for* smoking while having a meal with non-smokers.
15. He shut the door to avoid *to be / to have been / being / of being* overheard.

..... / 3 pts

...../ 15 pts

LISTENING

You will hear Aisling Bea – a comedian, actress and writer, talking about different aspects of her life. In the sentences below, choose the correct answer by circling the corresponding letter.

 AISLING BEA

1. Aisling Bea found inspiration for her first sitcom “This Way Up” in
 - a/ the outside world.
 - b/ her co-writer Sharon Horgan.
 - c/ her own family relations.
 - d/ her professional life.
2. In her play, Aisling Bea analyses various aspects of
 - a/ the English language.
 - b/ teaching children.
 - c/ communication conflicts.
 - d/ feeling isolated.
3. Aisling Bea thinks that mental health issues are
 - a/ not typical of celebrities.
 - b/ not discussed sufficiently.
 - c/ becoming part of political debates.
 - d/ as important as physical health problems.
4. Aisling Bea appreciates people who
 - a/ are talkative.
 - b/ are conscientious.
 - c/ tend to develop.
 - d/ like to communicate.
5. Aisling Bea’s empathy is aimed at people who are
 - a/ disabled.
 - b/ lonely.
 - c/ outcasts.
 - d/ unlike.

..... / 5 pts