

PTE Practice Paper

PTE Writing Practice Paper 1

Read the passage below and summarize it using one sentence. Type your response in the box at the bottom of the screen. You have 10 minutes to finish this task. Your response will be judged on the quality of your writing and on how well your response presents the key points in the passage.

1. Here's a term you're going to hear much more often: plug-in vehicle, and the acronym PEV. It's what you and many other people will drive to work in, ten years and more from now. At that time, before you drive off in the morning you will first unplug your car - your plug-in vehicle. Its big onboard batteries will have been fully charged overnight, with enough power for you to drive 50-100 kilometres through city traffic. When you arrive at work you'll plug in your car once again, this time into a socket that allows power to flow from your car's batteries to the electricity grid. One of the things you did when you bought your car was to sign a contract with your favourite electricity supplier, allowing them to draw a limited amount of power from your car's batteries should they need to, perhaps because of a blackout, or very high wholesale spot power prices. The price you get for the power the distributor buys from your car would not only be most attractive to you, but it would also be a good deal for them too, their alternative being very expensive power from peaking stations. If driving home or for some other reason your batteries looked like running flat, a relatively small, but quiet and efficient engine running on petrol, diesel or compressed natural gas, even bio-fuel, would automatically cut in, driving a generator that supplied the batteries so you could complete your journey. Concerns over 'peak oil', increasing greenhouse gas emissions, and the likelihood that by the middle of this century there could be five times as many motor vehicles registered worldwide as there are now, mean that the world's almost total dependence on petroleum-based fuels for transport is, in every sense of the word, unsustainable.
2. UCLA neurology professor Paul Thompson and his colleagues scanned the brains of 23 sets of identical twins and 23 sets of fraternal twins. Since identical twins share the same genes while fraternal twins share about half their genes, the researchers were able to compare each group to show that myelin integrity was determined genetically in many parts of the brain that are key for intelligence. These include the parietal lobes, which are responsible for spatial reasoning, visual processing and logic, and the corpus callosum, which pulls together information from both sides of the body. The researchers used a faster version of a type of scanner called a HARDI (high-angular resolution diffusion imaging) — think of an MRI machine on steroids — that takes scans of the brain at a much higher resolution than a standard MRI. While an MRI scan shows the volume of different tissues in the brain by measuring the amount of water present, HARDI tracks how water diffuses through the brain's white matter — a way to measure the quality of its myelin. "HARDI measures water diffusion," said Thompson, who is also a member of the UCLA Laboratory of Neuro-Imaging. "If the water diffuses rapidly in a specific direction, it tells us that the brain has very fast connections. If it diffuses more broadly, that's an indication of slower signalling and lower intelligence."

3. As warmer winter temperatures become more common, one way for some animals to adjust is to shift their ranges northward. But a new study of 59 North American bird species indicates that doing so is not easy or quick -- it took about 35 years for many birds to move far enough north for winter temperatures to match where they historically lived. For example, black vultures have spread northward in the last 35 years and now winter as far north as Massachusetts, where the minimum winter temperature is similar to what it was in Maryland in 1975. On the other hand, the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker did not alter its range at all despite the warming trend, possibly because it's very specific habitat requirements precluded a range shift. Both of these scenarios could represent problems for birds, La Sorte said. Species that do not track changes in climate may wind up at the limits of their physiological tolerance, or they may lose important habitat qualities, such as favored food types, as those species pass them by. But they also can't move their ranges too fast if the habitat conditions they depend on also tend to lag behind climate.

4. Scientists believe they may have found a way to prevent complications that can arise following cataract surgery, the world's leading cause of blindness. Detailing why complications can occur after surgery, researchers from the University of East Anglia (UEA) explained that while cataract surgery works well to restore vision, a few natural lens cells always remain after the procedure. Over time, the eye's wound-healing response leads these cells to spread across the underside of the artificial lens, which interferes with vision, causing what's known as 'posterior capsule opacification' or secondary cataract. UEA's School of Biological Sciences academic, Dr Michael Wormstone, who led the study, said: "Secondary visual loss responds well to treatment with laser surgery. But as life expectancy increases, the problems of cataract and posterior capsule opacification will become even greater in terms of both patients well being and economic burden. We must find better ways to manage the condition in future." As a result, researchers are designing new artificial lenses that can be placed into a capsular bag that stays open, instead of shrink-wrapping closed, which currently occurs. It is believed that, through the new approach, fluid in the eye can flow around the artificial lens, therefore diluting and washing away the cell-signalling molecules that encourage cell re-growth.

5. When Christopher Columbus arrived at Hispaniola during his first transatlantic voyage in the year A.D. 1492, the island had already been settled by Native Americans for about 5,000 years. The occupants in Columbus's time were a group of Arawak Indians called Tainos who lived by farming, were organized into five chiefdoms, and numbered around half a million (the estimates range from 100,000 to 2,000,000). Columbus initially found them peaceful and friendly, until he and his Spaniards began mistreating them. Unfortunately for the Tainos, they had gold, which the Spanish coveted but didn't want to go to the work of mining themselves. Hence the conquerors divided up the island and its Indian population among individual Spaniards, who put the Indians to work as virtual slaves, accidentally infected them with Eurasian diseases and murdered them. By the year 1519, 27 years after Columbus's arrival, that original population of half a million had been reduced to about 11,000, most of whom died that year of smallpox to bring the population down to 3,000.

You will have 20 minutes to plan, write and revise an essay about the topic below. Your response will be judged on how well you develop a position, organize your ideas, present supporting details, and control the elements of standard written English. You should write 200-300 words.

1. Belching and unauthorised behaviour is unacceptable in modern offices. How far you support this view? Give your response with justification.
2. University only requires to apply digital media rather than continuously upgrading textbook. Agree or disagree.
3. Government should reduce their investment in arts, music and painting. Agree or disagree.
4. Which should require more financial support from the government? Health or education? To what extent do you agree or not. Use your experience.
5. Do you think cardless society is realistic and why? What are the advantages and disadvantages?