

PTE Practice Paper

PTE Writing Practice Paper 4

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. I knew it was a good idea because I had been there before. Born and reared on a farm I had been seduced for a few years by the idea of being a big shot that lived and worked in a city rather than only going for the day to wave at the buses. True, I was familiar with some of the minor disadvantages of country living such as an iffy private water supply sometimes infiltrated by a range of flora and fauna (including, on one memorable occasion, a dead lamb), the absence of central heating in farmhouses and cottages, and a single track farm road easily blocked by snow, broken-down machinery or escaped livestock. But there were many advantages as I told Liz back in the mid-Seventies. Town born and bred, eight months pregnant and exchanging a warm, substantial Corstorphine terrace for a windswept farm cottage on a much lower income, persuading her that country had it over town might have been difficult.
2. All non-human animals are constrained by the tools that nature has bequeathed them through natural selection. They are not capable of striving towards truth; they simply absorb information and behave in ways useful for their survival. The kinds of knowledge they require of the world have been largely pre-selected by evolution. No animal is capable of asking questions or generating problems that are irrelevant to its immediate circumstances or its evolutionarily-designed needs. When a beaver builds a dam, it doesn't ask itself why it does so, or whether there is a better way of doing it. When a swallow flies south, it doesn't wonder why it is hotter in Africa or what would happen if it flew still further south. Humans do ask themselves these and many other kinds of questions, questions that have no relevance, indeed make little sense, in the context of evolved needs and goals. What marks out humans is our capacity to go beyond our naturally-defined goals such as the need to find food, shelter or a mate and to establish human-created goals. Some contemporary thinkers believe that there are indeed certain questions that humans are incapable of answering because of our evolved nature. Steven Pinker, for instance, argues that "Our minds evolved by natural selection to solve problems that were life-and-death matters to our ancestors, not to commune with correctness or to answer any question we are capable of asking. We cannot hold ten thousand words in our short-term memory. We cannot see ultra-violet light. We cannot mentally rotate an object in the fourth dimension. And perhaps we cannot solve conundrums like free will and sentience.
3. If your recruiting efforts attract job applicants with too much experience a near certainty in this weak labour market you should consider a response that runs counter to most hiring managers modus operandi: don't reject those applicants out of hand. Instead, take a closer look.

New research shows that overqualified workers tend to perform better than other employees, and they don't quit any sooner. Furthermore, simple managerial tactic empowerment can mitigate any dissatisfaction they may feel.

The prejudice against too-good employees is pervasive. Companies tend to prefer an applicant who is a perfect fit over someone who brings more intelligence, education, or experience than needed. On the surface, this bias makes sense: Studies have consistently shown that employees who consider themselves overqualified exhibiting her levels of discontent.

But even before the economic downturn, a surplus of overqualified candidates was a global problem, particularly in developing economies, where rising education levels are giving workers more skills that are needed to supply the growing service sectors. If managers can get beyond the conventional wisdom, the growing pool of too-good applicants is a great opportunity.

4. For decades, space experts have worried that a speeding bit of orbital debris might one day smash a large spacecraft into hundreds of pieces and start a chain reaction, a slow cascade of collisions that would expand for centuries, spreading chaos through the heavens. In the last decade or so, as scientists came to agree that the number of objects in orbit had surpassed a critical mass or, in their terms, the critical spatial density, the point at which a chain reaction becomes inevitable they grew more anxious.

Early this year, after a half-century of growth, the federal list of detectable objects (four inches wide or larger) reached 10,000, including dead satellites, spent rocket stages, a camera, a hand tool and junkyards of whirling debris leftover from chance explosions and destructive tests. So our billion dollars of satellites are at risk.

As space experts have worried that orbital debris might one day smash a large spacecraft into pieces and start a chain reaction, the scientist recently came to agree that the number of orbital debris had surpassed the critical spatial density, which will inevitably lead to a chain reaction that puts our billion dollars of satellites at risk.

5. How can we design great cities from scratch if we cannot agree on what makes them great? None of the cities where people most want to live such as London, New York, Paris and Hong Kong comes near to being at the top of surveys asking which are best to live in.

The top three in the most recent Economist Intelligence Units livability ranking, for example, were Melbourne, Vancouver and Vienna. They are all perfectly pleasant, but great? The first question to tackle is the difference between livability and greatness. Perhaps we cannot aspire to make a great city, but if we attempt to make a livable one, can it in time become great?

There are some fundamental elements that you need. The first is public space. Whether it is Vienna's Ringstrasse and Prater park, or the beaches of Melbourne and Vancouver, these are places that allow the city to pause and the citizens to mingle and to breathe, regardless of class or wealth. Good cities also seem to be close to nature, and all three have easy access to varied, wonderful landscapes and topographies.

A second crucial factor, says Ricky Burdett, a professor of urban studies at the London School of Economics, is a good transport system. Affordable public transport is the one thing which cuts across all successful cities, he says.

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. Younger employees have more skills, knowledge and more motivated than older employees. To what extent do you agree or disagree, support your argument with your own experience?
2. Some people think that life experience is more important than the formal education provided in schools and universities. How far do you agree with this statement, and provide examples?
3. A study needs time, peace and comfort, whereas employment needs the same thing. Someone says it is impossible to combine those two because one distracts one another. Do you think this is realistic in our life today?
4. Environment pollution is too alarming to be managed by individuals. Real change can be made at the government level. What extent do you agree or disagree?
5. Positive And Negative Effects Of Technology Information Through Mass Media