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General

Reading

Practice Test

8

READING

SECTION 1*Questions 1–14*

Read the text below and answer Questions 1–9.

Citywide Power Company

WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome you to Citywide.

We aim to make our customers' lives as simple as possible by offering a range of payment options and special discounts.

If you need to call us for any reason, freephone Customer Service on 1900 12 55 12.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Choose the option that suits your preference and rest assured that we offer everyone a 15% discount if the entire bill is paid before the due date.

Direct Debit

Set up a direct debit and your energy bill will be paid automatically each month (as long as you have sufficient funds in your chosen bank account). You qualify for a further 2% PromptPay Discount if you choose this method.

Internet Banking

Add Citywide Power to your bill payment options; receive your bill online; transfer the full amount owing before the due date and get a 2% PromptPay Discount. What could be easier?

Automatic Payment

If you want to pay your bills in smaller instalments at regular intervals, say weekly or fortnightly, then set up an automatic payment with your bank. This option is more suitable for customers with regular energy usage, although you can change the amount and the interval at any time.

Telephone Transfer

Fast and easy bill payment at your fingertips. Make Citywide Power one of your telephone transfer options at the bank and you can just pick up the phone and pay straight from your bank account when you receive your energy bill. The 2% PromptPay Discount applies if accounts are paid in full on time.

Credit Card

Register your credit card details with us, and we'll automatically debit your monthly bill from your credit card. To set up this form of payment, you'll need to phone us with your credit card details, account number and ICP number. We accept most credit cards—all the major ones anyway.

Cheque

Yes, we know there are still customers who prefer to pay by cheque. If this is the case, simply write the cheque—being sure to note your account number on the back—and mail it in your

pre-paid, reusable envelope in which you received your bill.

In Person

Got time to pay in person? Then pop into any branch of Citywide with your bill and the means to pay it.

Questions 1–9

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the text?

In boxes 1–9 on your answer sheet, write

- TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

- 1 Calls you make to Citywide Customer Service are not billed to you by the phone company.
- 2 Every Citywide customer receives a 15% discount.
- 3 If you do not have enough money in your bank account when the direct debit is due, a penalty of 2% is added to your bill.
- 4 With Internet banking, the bank does not automatically transfer the funds.
- 5 Automatic payment suits people on low incomes.
- 6 You should pay your bill straight away if you are using telephone transfer.
- 7 Citywide does not accept all credit cards.
- 8 There are no postage costs associated with sending a cheque to Citywide in the mail.
- 9 You should use cash to pay in person.

Questions 10–14

The following text has five sections, A–E.

Choose the correct heading for each section from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number, i–viii, in boxes 10–14 on your answer sheet.

List of Headings

- i** Add shine
- ii** Return to original condition
- iii** Avoid excessive wetness
- iv** Prevent damage
- v** Heat the straightening irons
- vi** Move the irons through the hair
- vii** Take only a second
- viii** Remove moisture

- 10 Section A
- 11 Section B
- 12 Section C
- 13 Section D
- 14 Section E

How to use your new Flemings Flat Irons

- A Make sure to coat strands with a heat-protective spray before use. This will stop the straightening irons from causing excessive dehydration and frizz, which can sap the integrity of the hair shaft.
- B Part hair into four or five large sections, and blow-dry each section using a paddle brush.
- C Take a one or two inch section of hair and clamp the iron down as close to the roots as possible. Pull the iron down towards the tips with a firm, steady hand. Be careful to not to tug or jerk on the hair, and do not pause for more than a split-second.
- D After straightening, smooth a serum gloss from mid-shaft to the tips. This creates a slightly reflective sheen, which gives a polished and healthy appearance to your hair.
- E Your new hairdo can withstand some moisture such as misty rain or mild humidity, but take care not to get it saturated. This will counteract the effect of the straightening, and the hair will return to its natural curly or wavy state.

SECTION 2 *Questions 15–27*

Read the text below and answer Questions 15–23.

Setting up pay structures in your workplace:

When it comes to setting up a pay structure for your new business, there are two broad options to choose from: the internal equity method, or the market pricing method.

The internal equity method

The internal equity method of pay structuring involves creating a series of grades with each grade representing a different level of pay within the company. Employment positions are set within these grades depending on the rank of internal advancement the job represents.

A company determines how many grades it needs based on the number of employees and the variety of jobs in the organisation. The number of grades can be expanded at any point. As a result of their frequent use of hybrid positions, small businesses do not always benefit from pay grades.

Each grade should also be given a spread, so that employees can move within their grade as they progress within their current position. Creating a minimum and a maximum spread for the company is also recommended. There should be a 15 percent progression between grades. This is vital for ensuring that promotions incur meaningful pay increases and maintain incentives for the employee to rise within the company.

Market pricing method

An alternative to this more traditional, grid-based method of remuneration is what is called the market pricing approach. This is quickly becoming the dominant method of pricing jobs. This approach involves an employee's position being compensated in relation to the market value of that job, not the level that specific position holds within the organisation.

Using the internal equity method, for example, the chief financial officer (CFO) will probably be in the top grade and remunerated higher than an information technology worker in that organisation. Under the

market pricing method there is no guarantee of this. An information technology worker with a highly demanded skill-set may be paid much more than what the CFO earns.

Which is right for your business?

Only you can decide which pay method is right for your business. As a general rule you may find that small, dynamic, high-turnover and high-speed growth-orientated businesses respond well to the market pricing method. This way you can individually select the most qualified and skilled candidates for each position by remunerating them at or just above the market rate so that your precious capital is not wasted on simply rewarding status.

For those companies that seek to expand in a firm, controlled and more cautious manner while maintaining robust internal cohesion and high levels of staff loyalty and discipline, the internal equity method may be more suited.

Questions 15–23

Complete the notes below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 15–23 on your answer sheet.

Internal equity method

Pay organised according to a range of **15**—each one denotes different level of pay based on employee's position within the company.

The company decides on the number of grades according to how many workers and how many different **16**

Not suitable for **17** which often have **18**

Gaps between pay grades are important to **19** for promotion.

Market pricing method

Pay is based on the job's **20**

A worker with sought-after **21** may earn more than a CFO.

How to decide?

Internal equity good for maintaining steady growth and keeping constant, reliable **22**

Market pricing—Money does not go on paying for **23** alone, but acquiring the best performers.

Read the text below and answer Questions 24–27.

If you want to find a job that motivates you, maybe change your career or start out on your own in a small business or as a freelancer, or even make a fresh start after redundancy, think about making a quick planner to help you identify your interests and motivating factors.

To be successful and happy at work, you have to figure out what it is you really love—you need to recognise your passion. To do well at self-employment or freelance work too, you need to know what your own personal strengths are. More than that, you should be aware of your working styles—things like

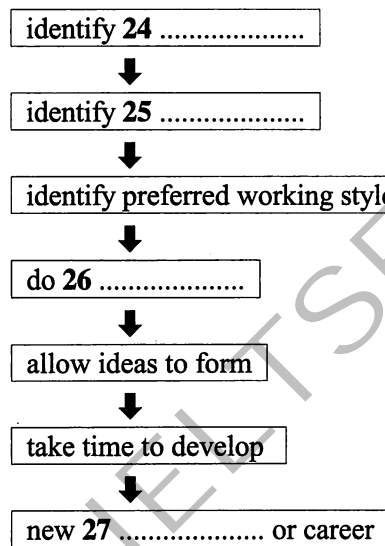
whether you are good around people or not; whether you are better at working with figures, design or text. Perhaps you like working with machinery or certain materials. The next step is very important: investigate the potential for your ideas, in other words, carry out some research and educate yourself about all the possibilities. Don't rush it. Let your ideas take shape slowly and work out your plans for the future. Time is crucial for refining and developing what you have to offer. At the end of it all, you'll be in the most appropriate and fulfilling job for you whether it's running your own business or enjoying being in a new occupation.

Questions 24–27

Complete the flow chart below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 24–27 on your answer sheet.



SECTION 3

Questions 28–40

Read the text below and answer Questions 28–40.

Chickens

As pets and useful garden animals

Before making a decision whether to keep chickens either as pets or convenient egg-layers and insect-eaters, it would be wise to check with the local council. Regulations vary from region to region and, although some cities still allow residents to keep chickens, the practice is far from usual today. Some communities prohibit roosters because of their early morning crowing and only allow the much quieter hens. However, in most rural areas, there are generally no restrictions on keeping chickens either as ornamental or practical birds.

There are some Asian ornamental varieties with eye-catching plumage: the Cochin and Silkie from China have distinctive feathery feet and the Phoenix from Japan has a strikingly long tail. These are

examples of birds that have been imported by western countries to serve mainly ornamental purposes, even appearing in exhibitions.

Chickens do not have to be especially beautiful to make loving and gentle companions and raising a few as garden pets is not at all difficult. The main concern is protection from predators—both domestic predators such as dogs and wild predators such as stoats and weasels. Backyard poultry need a secure place to roost at night. A cage or other structure which provides shelter, perches and nesting boxes with a lock-up door will suffice. Straw or non-toxic wood shavings can be spread on the floor and in the nesting boxes. Nocturnal predators are a danger and most chickens cannot flap their wings well enough to escape from peril. However, as they will naturally return to the same roost at night, they will enter the cage of their own volition as dusk falls and as long as the door is shut after them, they will remain secure till morning. If the birds are expected to stay in the chicken coop all day, a much larger structure is called for.

Chickens which are allowed to roam around the back garden during the day will prove to be safe, natural and effective methods of insect control. Not only that, but their constant scratching in search of insects will take care of unwanted weeds under bushes and other plants and even provide some beneficial soil cultivation. Chickens are great recyclers too and will eat almost any kind of kitchen scraps—leftovers and wastage are turned into usable, fresh, nutritious eggs! One of the benefits of free-ranging poultry is that they are exposed to the benefit of abundant sunshine which is a great health boost. On the other hand, wet weather can be perilous and make them more prone to disease. A planned approach to disease and parasite control is needed for the general health and well-being of backyard fowls. This may include a vaccination programme, health supplements in their feed, and keeping them in a clean, dry pen in times of extremely rainy weather. In dry weather, there is nothing more luxurious for a hen than a good dust bath to take care of mites and other problems.

Young chicks are effortlessly turned into tame pets by hand feeding and simply spending time with them. Older hens also respond well to being fed by hand or they can be helped to forage for themselves if small rocks and other items are turned over allowing them access to the bugs and worms beneath. In both these cases, human presence is undoubtedly associated with food and will not only be tolerated but welcomed. Thus, companionship is assured and sought after! Chickens are said to be loyal, intelligent and even cheeky but it probably depends on the depth of their avian-human relationships.

Breeding chickens will obviously require a rooster to fertilise the hens' eggs. If local by-laws allow it, invest in a rooster and watch his fascinating courting behaviour. Typically, when he finds food, he clucks in a high pitch to attract the hens and lets them eat first. When he is courting a particular hen, he may circle her, dragging one wing on the ground—attracting her attention in this way is just part of the mating ritual.

When a hen goes 'broody', she stops laying eggs and sits on the nest to incubate the clutch of eggs under her. She will rarely leave the nest during this stage, even to eat or drink, because she must keep the eggs at a constant temperature and humidity. Incubation takes approximately three weeks but the eggs do not hatch all at the same time so she will stay on the nest for a few more days. After the eggs have hatched, she will take care of the new chicks. This is a time when it is naturally important to keep predators away.

Raising chickens can be a satisfying and enjoyable hobby. They do not need as much care and attention as most pets and there is always the reward of wholesome and nourishing eggs to look forward to.

Questions 28–35

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the text?

In boxes 28–35 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE	<i>if the statement agrees with the information</i>
FALSE	<i>if the statement contradicts the information</i>
NOT GIVEN	<i>if there is no information on this</i>

- 28 Keeping chickens in some cities is common practice.
- 29 Male chickens make a lot of noise.
- 30 In the country many people keep chickens.
- 31 Some species of chickens are popular because they have beautiful feathers.
- 32 Certain tame, household animals may pose a threat to chickens.
- 33 At night chickens like to sleep on straw or other bedding scattered on the floor of the hen house.
- 34 Most chickens will manage to fly out of harm's way.
- 35 Free-range chickens do not need a large hen house.

Questions 36–40

Complete the sentences below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 36–40 on your answer sheet.

- 36 Chickens in the garden are a good form of
- 37 Scratching in the dirt not only helps the soil but it also gets rid of
- 38 Hens prefer to rain.
- 39 Chickens can be successfully hand-reared and tamed easily if they learn to make a connection between people and
- 40 Incubating eggs must have a consistent level of warmth and