

IELTS General Reading Sample Paper 4

Reading Passage 1

Savanna

Savanna, also spelled savannah, vegetation type that grows under hot, seasonally dry climatic conditions and is characterized by an open tree canopy (i.e, scattered trees) above a continuous tall grass understory (the vegetation layer between the forest canopy and the ground). The largest areas of savanna are found in Africa, South America, Australia, India, Myanmar (Burma)–Thailand region in Asia, and Madagascar.

Environment

In general, savannas grow in tropical regions 8° to 20° from the Equator. Conditions are warm to hot in all seasons, but significant rainfall occurs for only a few months each year—about October to March. The dry season is typically longer than the wet season, but it varies considerably. Savannas may be subdivided into three categories—wet, dry, and thorn bush—depending on the length of the dry season. In wet savannas, the dry season typically lasts 3 to 5 months, in dry savannas 5 to 7 months, and in thorn bush savannas it is even longer. An alternative subdivision recognizes savanna woodland, with trees and shrubs forming a light canopy; tree savanna, with scattered trees and shrubs; shrub savanna, with scattered shrubs; and grass savanna, from which trees and shrubs are generally absent. Other classifications have also been suggested.

The tree component of savannas generally becomes more important as rainfall increases, but other factors such as topography, soil, and grazing intensity all exert influences in complex and variable ways. Dry-season fires, fuelled by dried grass, may kill some trees, especially the more-vulnerable young saplings, and, therefore, their severity also greatly affects the nature of savanna vegetation. Because grazing and fire are strongly affected by human activities and have been for thousands of years, humans continue to have a controlling influence on the nature, dynamics, development, structure, and distribution of savannas in many parts of their global range.

1. The savannas are found in various parts of the world.

True

False

Not Given

2. The savanna vegetation only thrives in the hot and humid climate.

True

False

Not Given

3. Humidity lasts for more time compared to dry seasons.

True

False

Not given

4. It is the duration of the dry season that determines the classification of the Savanna

True

False

Not Given

5. There are multiple classifications of the Savanna based on the type of vegetation

True

False

Not Given

6. The tree component of the forests is only important when there is more rainfall.

True

False

Not Given

7. The influence of human beings on vegetation cannot be ignored.

True

False

Not Given

Reading Passage 2

DOPAMINE

SECTION A

What do drug addiction and Parkinson's disease have in common? Improper levels of dopamine (DOAP-uh-meen). This chemical acts as a messenger between brain cells. Dopamine is important for many of our daily behaviors. It plays a role in how we move, for instance, as well as what we eat, how we learn, and even whether we become addicted to drugs.

SECTION B

Chemical messengers in the brain are called neurotransmitters. They shuttle across the spaces between cells. These messengers then bind to docking-station molecules called receptors. Those receptors relay the signal carried by the neurotransmitter from one cell to its neighbour. Different neurotransmitters are made in different parts of the brain. Two

main brain areas produce dopamine. One is called the substantia nigra (Sub-STAN-sha NY-grah). It's a tiny strip of tissue on either side of the base of your brain. It sits in a region known as the midbrain. Close by is the ventral tegmental area. It, too, makes dopamine.

SECTION C

The substantia nigra is very important for movement. The term means “black substance” in Latin. And sure enough, this area of your brain is dark grey or black! The reason: Cells that produce dopamine also make another chemical that stains the area a dark color.

SECTION D

These two brain areas are very thin and tiny. Together they are smaller than a postage stamp. But the dopamine they produce relays signals that travel throughout the brain. Dopamine from the substantia nigra helps us begin movements and speech. When the brain cells that make dopamine in this area start to die off, a person can have trouble initiating movement. It's just one of the many symptoms ravaging people with Parkinson's disease (a condition best known for uncontrollable tremors). To move normally, patients with Parkinson's take a drug that lets them make more dopamine (or they get an implant that stimulates deep regions of the brain).

SECTION E

The dopamine from the ventral tegmental area doesn't help people move — at least, not directly. Instead, this area usually sends dopamine into the brain when animals (including people) expect or receive a reward. That reward might be a delicious slice of pizza or a favorite song. This dopamine release tells the brain that whatever it just experienced is worth getting more of. And that helps animals (including people) change their behaviors in ways that will help them attain more of the rewarding item or experience.

SECTION F

Dopamine also helps with reinforcement — motivating an animal to do something again and again. Dopamine is what prompts a lab animal, for instance, to repeatedly press a lever to get tasty pellets of food. And it's part of why humans seek out another slice of pizza. Reward and reinforcement help us learn where to find important things such as food or water so that we can go back for more. Dopamine even affects moods. Things that are rewarding tend to make us feel pretty good. Lowering dopamine can make animals lose pleasure in activities like eating and drinking. This joyless state is called anhedonia (AN-heh-DOE-nee-uh). Because of its roles in reward and reinforcement, dopamine also helps animals focus on things. Anything that's rewarding, after all, is usually well worth our attention.

SECTION G

But dopamine has a more sinister side. Drugs such as cocaine, nicotine, and heroin cause huge boosts in dopamine. The “high” people feel when they use drugs comes partly from that dopamine spike. And that prompts people to seek out those drugs again and again — even though they are harmful. Indeed, the brain “reward” associated with that high can lead to drug abuse and eventually to addiction.

1. Cells that make dopamine have dual functionality.

True

False

Not Given

2. Parkinson's disease is always due to a lack of dopamine.

True

False

Not Given

3. The dopamine from the ventral tegmental area doesn't help people move.

True

False

Not Given

4. Dopamine influences animals for repetitive actions

True

False

Not Given

5. Dopamine has no direct effect on mood.

True

False

Not Given

6. Drug addiction can be blamed on dopamine

True

False

Not Given

Reading Passage 3

Pandemics

A pandemic is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents or worldwide, affecting a substantial number of people. A widespread endemic disease with a stable number of infected people is not a pandemic. Widespread endemic diseases with a stable number of infected people such as recurrences of seasonal influenza are generally excluded as they occur simultaneously in large regions of the globe rather than being spread worldwide.

Throughout human history, there have been a number of pandemics of diseases such as smallpox and tuberculosis. The most fatal pandemic in recorded history was the Black Death (also known as The Plague), which killed an estimated 75–200 million people in the 14th century. The term was not used yet but was for later pandemics including the 1918 Influenza Pandemic (Spanish flu). Current pandemics include Covid-19 and HIV/AIDS.

1. A pandemic affects inhabitant only in small regions.

True

False

Not Given

2. A widespread endemic disease with a stable number of infected people is a pandemic.

True

False

Not Given

3. Smallpox and tuberculosis have been the most prominent pandemics of recent history.

True

False

Not Given

4. The most fatal pandemic in recorded history was the Black Death (also known as The Plague), which killed an estimated 75–200 million people in the 16th century.

True

False

Not Given

5. Most pandemics last not more than 2 years.

True

False

Not Given

6. Youths are at less risk during pandemics.

True

False

Not Given