

Select Readings, Second Edition
Intermediate, IELTS™-style Midterm

Read the passage and answer **Questions 1–15** which follow.

High-Tech Times

A

Flying cars! Robot teachers! Jet packs! Sounds like the stuff of the newest Hollywood science fiction blockbuster, right? Not anymore. Technological advances over the past 2,000 years have actually come about relatively slowly—electricity, the automobile, telecommunications, and air travel being some of the most obvious innovations of our modern times. However, since the arrival of the Internet some twenty years ago, it seems that we are suddenly moving at warp speed. Here, we take a look at some of the most exciting new technological creations of the past year and how they may just change all of our lives.

B

South Korea, which employs more than 30,000 foreigner educators to teach English, has some new plans for its English-language classrooms. Meet *RoboTeacher*. Starting in late 2009, students in several schools started learning from these brightly-colored little androids, and the results seem promising.

Down the line, the government plans to introduce the RoboTeacher into more and more schools—as many as 20 over the next year—in an effort to give South Korean students a head start in English. Not surprisingly, RoboTeacher has many flesh-and-blood teachers more than a little worried. With a cost far more modest than maintaining a human teacher, experts say the androids could eventually make foreign English teachers pretty much redundant¹.

C

Since the 1930s, when the first images of future transport appeared on movie screens, the jetpack has always stood out. However, with the exception of the clumsy *Bell Rocket Belt*, developed in the 1960s, no one has been able to make the idea ‘fly.’ Enter New Zealand inventor Glenn Martin, who has spent nearly 30 years developing what he calls the world’s first practical jetpack—the *Martin Jetpack*.

At first glance, the Martin Jetpack doesn’t really appear to be practical. It looks more like two leaf-blowers attached to a lawn mower² engine. While the design details may still need to be worked out, the Martin Jetpack could just bridge the gap between fantasy and reality. With its 200-horsepower engine, the jetpack is supposed to be able to take its operator to a height of 750 meters. The inventor hopes to start sales by early 2011. But with a price tag of around \$100,000, don’t expect to see too many people flying to school or work soon.

D

¹ **redundant** no longer necessary

² **lawn mower** a machine for cutting grass

When the co-founders of Massachusetts-based Terrafugia, husband and wife team Carl Dietrich and Anna Mracek Dietrich, teamed up with a group of aeronautics³ engineers, they entered an entirely new frontier. And their invention, the *Transition*, could just redefine the idea of door-to-door travel. The Transition is a street-legal, airbag-and-parachute-equipped flying car—and at only \$200,000, it costs less than a Lamborghini. The Transition can carry two passengers about 800 kilometers at a cruising speed of 169 km/h, and the first models will be available in 2011.

E

The *XOS2*, developed by Salt Lake City-based Raytheon Sarcos, is a real-life *Iron Man* suit. Demonstration videos have mesmerized all who have seen them. Allowing even the least muscular wearer to lift 90-kg weights easily, and to punch through thick pieces of wood that would ordinarily be difficult to cut with a saw, the *XOS2* is like a superhero fantasy. Don't get too excited, though—the suit will only be available to the military and emergency workers for the time being.

QUESTIONS 1–5

The Reading Passage has 5 sections **A–E**.

Choose the best headings for sections **A–E** from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number **i–x** in boxes 1–5 on your answer sheet.

- i** From garage to airport, and back again
- ii** A flying lawn mower cuts yard work in half
- iii** A different kind of English teacher
- iv** New robot teaches you to fly
- v** It may not look pretty, but it flies!
- vi** Military releases new power suit
- vii** Lamborghini launches its own airline
- viii** Science fiction is now reality
- ix** A faster Internet is now here
- x** Be your own super hero

- 1** Section A
- 2** Section B
- 3** Section C
- 4** Section D
- 5** Section E

QUESTIONS 6–9

³ **aeronautics** the study of flying through the air

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the Reading Passage?

In boxes 6–9 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

- 6 The cost of purchasing a *RoboTeacher* is lower than paying an English teacher for a year.
 7 The *Bell Rocket Belt* is considered to be the first usable jetpack.
 8 The *Transition* can be driven on roads legally as well as fly.
 9 Only muscular people can lift 90-kg objects when wearing the *XOS2*.

QUESTIONS 10–13

Complete the table below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 10–12 on your answer sheet.

RoboTeacher	Martin Jetpack	Transition	XOS2
English-teaching robot	first practical jetpack	10 _____	an “Iron Man” suit
developer not given	11 _____	Terrafugia	Raytheon Sarcos
South Korea	New Zealand	Massachusetts	12 _____
cost not given	\$100,000	13 _____	cost not given

QUESTIONS 14–15

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C** or **D**. Write your answers in boxes 14–15 on your answer sheet.

- 14 Why does the passage say that the Martin Jetpack doesn’t appear to be practical?
 A It’s made out of leaf-blowers and a lawn mower engine.
 B The design doesn’t look very sophisticated at the moment.
 C It doesn’t really fly yet.
 D It was created in the 1960s.
- 15 All of the following is true about the Transition EXCEPT
 A it can carry two passengers at a time.
 B it has both airbags and parachutes.
 C it costs less than a Lamborghini.
 D it currently goes about 800 km/h.