

## READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1–13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

### Pearls

- A** Long known as the “Queen of Gems”, pearls possess a history and allure far beyond what today’s wearer may recognize. Throughout much of recorded history, a natural pearl necklace comprised of matched spheres was a treasure of almost incomparable value, in fact, the most expensive jewelry in the world. Before the creation of cultured pearls in the early 1900s, natural pearls were so rare and expensive that they were reserved almost exclusively for the noble and very rich. The ancient Egyptians were particularly fond of their pearls. Many Egyptian leaders treasured pearls so much that they were often buried along with their cherished pearl collection. In the Orient and Persian Empire, pearls were ground into costly powders to cure anything from heart disease to epilepsy, with possible aphrodisiac uses as well. China’s long recorded history also provides ample evidence of the importance of pearls.
- B** Pearls usually fall into three categories—natural pearls, cultured pearls and simulated pearls. A natural pearl forms when an irritant, such as a piece of sand, works its way into a particular species of oyster, mussel, or clam. As a defense mechanism, the mollusk secretes a fluid to coat the irritant. Layer upon layer of this coating is deposited on the irritant until a lustrous pearl is formed. A cultured pearl undergoes the same process. The only difference between natural pearls and cultured pearls is that the irritant is a surgically implanted bead or piece of shell called Mother of Pearl. Often, these shells are ground oyster shells that are worth significant amounts of money in their own right as irritant-catalysts for quality pearls. The resulting core is much larger than in a natural pearl. Imitation pearls are a different story altogether. In most cases, a glass bead is dipped into a solution made from fish scales. This coating is thin and may eventually wear off. One can usually tell an imitation by biting on it. The island of Mallorca in Spain is known for its imitation pearl industry.
- C** Regardless of the method used to acquire a pearl, the process usually takes several years. Mussels must reach a mature age, which can take up to 3 years, and then be implanted or naturally receive an irritant. Once the irritant is in place, it can take up to another 3 years for the pearl to reach its full size. Often, the irritant may be rejected, the pearl will be terrifically misshapen, or the oyster may simply die from disease or countless other complications. By the end of a 5 to 10 year cycle, only 50% of the oysters will have survived. And of the pearls produced, only approximately 5% are of a quality substantial enough for top jewelry makers.

- D** How can untrained eyes determine a pearl's worth? Luster and size are generally considered the two main factors to look for. Luster, for instance, depends on the fineness and evenness of the layers. The deeper the glow, the more perfect the shape and surface, the more valuable they are. Size, on the other hand, has to do with the age of the oyster that created the pearl (the more mature oysters produce larger pearls) and the location in which the pearl was cultured. The South Sea waters of Australia tend to produce the larger pearls; probably because the water along the coastline is supplied with rich nutrients from the ocean floor. Also, the type of mussel being common to the area seems to possess a predilection for producing comparatively large pearls.
- E** In general, cultured pearls are less valuable than natural pearls, whereas imitation pearls have almost no value. One way that jewelers can determine whether a pearl is cultured or natural is to have a gem lab perform an X-ray of the pearl. If the X-ray reveals a nucleus, the pearl is likely a bead nucleated saltwater pearl. If no nucleus is present, but irregular and small dark inner spots indicating a cavity are visible, combined with concentric rings of organic substance, the pearl is likely a cultured freshwater pearl. Among cultured pearls, Akoya pearls from Japan are some of the most lustrous. Although imitation pearls look the part, they do not have the same weight or smoothness as real pearls, and their luster will also dim greatly.
- F** Historically, the world's best pearls came from the Persian Gulf, especially around what is now Bahrain. The pearls of the Persian Gulf were naturally created and collected by breath-hold divers. Unfortunately, the natural pearl industry of the Persian Gulf ended abruptly in the early 1930s with the discovery of large deposits of oil. The water pollution resulting from spilled oil and indiscriminate overfishing of oysters essentially ruined the pristine waters of the Gulf that once produced pearls. Still, Bahrain remains one of the foremost trading centers for high quality pearls. In fact, cultured pearls are banned from the Bahrain pearl market, in an effort to preserve the location's heritage. Nowadays, the largest stock of natural pearls probably resides in India. Ironically, much of India's stock of natural pearls came originally from Bahrain. Unlike Bahrain, which has essentially lost its pearl resource, traditional pearl fishing is still practiced on a small scale in India.
- G** Pearls also come in many colours. The most popular colours are white, cream, and pink. Silver, black, and gold are also gaining interest. In fact, a deep lustrous black pearl is one of the rarest finds in the pearling industry, usually only being found in the South Sea near Australia. Thus, they can be one of the more costly items. Nowadays, pearls predominantly come from Japan, Australia, Indonesia, Myanmar, China, India, the Philippines, and Tahiti. Japan, however, controls roughly 80% of the world pearl market, with Australia and China coming in second and third, respectively.

Questions 1–4

Reading Passage 1 has seven paragraphs, **A–G**.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter, **A–G**, in boxes 1–4 on your answer sheet.

- 1 difficulties in the cultivation process
- 2 causes affecting the size of natural pearls
- 3 ancient customs around pearls
- 4 distinctions between cultured pearls and natural ones

Questions 5–10

Complete the summary using the list of words, **A–K**, below.

Write the correct letter, **A–K**, in boxes 5–10 on your answer sheet.

Throughout history, people in **5** \_\_\_\_\_ used pearls for medicine and philtres. There are essentially three types of pearls: natural, cultured and imitation. Natural and cultured pearls share a similar growing process, while imitation pearls are different. And **6** \_\_\_\_\_ owns the reputation for its imitation pearl industry. The country **7** \_\_\_\_\_ usually produces the larger pearls due to the favourable environment along the coastline, while the nation of **8** \_\_\_\_\_ manufactures some of the most glistening cultured pearls. In the past, the country **9** \_\_\_\_\_ in the Persian Gulf produced the world's best pearls. At present, the major remaining suppliers of natural pearls are in **10** \_\_\_\_\_.

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|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <b>A</b> America | <b>B</b> Philippines | <b>C</b> Australia | <b>D</b> Bahrain |
| <b>E</b> China   | <b>F</b> Japan       | <b>G</b> India     | <b>H</b> Egypt   |
| <b>I</b> Myanmar | <b>J</b> Persia      | <b>K</b> Mallorca  |                  |

Questions 11–13

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 11–13 on your answer sheet, write

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

- 11 A cultured pearl's centre is often significantly larger than that in a natural pearl.
- 12 Imitation pearls are usually the same price as natural ones.
- 13 Akoya pearls from Japan glow more deeply than South Sea pearls from Australia.

一、段落匹配 (Q1–4)

题号	答案	精确定位句	解释
1. difficulties in the cultivation process	C	“Often, the irritant may be rejected, the pearl will be terrifically misshapen, or the oyster may simply die from disease or countless other complications.” (第 3 段)	“irritant may be rejected (排斥) / misshapen (变形) / die (死亡)” 直接说明培育过程中的困难与失败率。
2. causes affecting the size of natural pearls	D	“Size... has to do with the <b>age of the oyster</b> ... and the <b>location</b> in which the pearl was cultured... The South Sea waters of <b>Australia</b> tend to produce the larger pearls; probably because the water... is supplied with <b>rich nutrients</b> ... Also, the <b>type of mussel</b> ... has a predilection for producing comparatively large pearls.” (第 4 段)	明确给出影响珍珠大小的多种原因：母贝年龄、产地位置、营养与贝种。
3. ancient customs around pearls	A	“The ancient <b>Egyptians</b> ... were often <b>buried</b> along with their cherished pearl collection. In the <b>Orient and Persian Empire</b> , pearls were <b>ground into costly powders</b> to cure diseases... with possible <b>aphrodisiac</b> uses as well.” (第 1 段)	讲述古代与珍珠相关的 风俗与用途 (随葬、入药、春药)。
4. distinctions between cultured pearls and natural ones	B	“The <b>only difference</b> between natural pearls and cultured pearls is that the irritant is a <b>surgically implanted bead or piece of shell</b> ...” (第 2 段)	直接对比“天然珠”与“养殖珠”的差别 (是否人工植入核)。

二、概要填空 (Q5–10)

选项表： A America | B Philippines | C Australia | D Bahrain | E China | F Japan | G India | H Egypt | I Myanmar | J Persia | K Mallorca

题号	答案	精确定位句	解释
5	J (Persia)	“In the <b>Orient and Persian Empire</b> , pearls were <b>ground into costly powders</b> to cure anything from heart disease to epilepsy, with possible <b>aphrodisiac</b> uses...” (第 1 段)	“medicine and philtres (药与春药)” 对应波斯/东方的用法。
6	K (Mallorca)	“The island of <b>Mallorca</b> in Spain is <b>known for its imitation pearl industry</b> .” (第 2 段)	直接点名马略卡以仿珍珠产业闻名。
7	C (Australia)	“The South Sea waters of <b>Australia</b> tend to <b>produce the larger pearls</b> ...” (第 4 段)	说明澳大利亚因海域条件而出大珠。
8	F (Japan)	“Among cultured pearls, <b>Akoya pearls from Japan</b> are some of the <b>most lustrous</b> .” (第 5 段)	日本 Akoya 以光泽度高著称。
9	D (Bahrain)	“Historically, the world’s best pearls came from the <b>Persian Gulf</b> , especially around what is now <b>Bahrain</b> .” (第 6 段)	历史上最好的珍珠产自波斯湾，尤以巴林附近。
10	G (India)	“Nowadays, the <b>largest stock of natural pearls</b> probably resides in <b>India</b> .” (第 6 段)	现今天然珍珠主要存量在印度。

三、判断题 (Q11–13)

题号	答案	精确定位句	解释
11	TRUE	“The resulting <b>core is much larger</b> than in a natural pearl.” (第2段)	养殖珠因植入珠核 (bead/shell)，其“中心/核心”更大，与题干一致。
12	FALSE	“In general, cultured pearls are less valuable than natural pearls, whereas <b>imitation pearls have almost no value.</b> ” (第5段)	题干称仿珠与天然珠同价，文中明确仿珠“几乎没有价值”，与之矛盾。
13	NOT GIVEN	相关信息：a) “Among cultured pearls, <b>Akoya</b> pearls from <b>Japan</b> are some of the <b>most lustrous.</b> ” (第5段) b) “The South Sea waters of <b>Australia</b> tend to <b>produce the larger pearls ...</b> ” (第4段)	文中只说日本 Akoya 很有光泽，澳洲南洋珠个头大，未直接比较二者“glow more deeply/光泽更深”的强弱关系，因此未给出。