IELTS Academic Reading Test 1

Time allowed: 60 minutes

Total questions: 40

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**• Answer all questions.  
• Write your answers on the answer sheet.  
• Write your answers in the boxes next to the question numbers.  
• If you need more space to write your answer, use the space at the bottom of the page.

# READING PASSAGE 1

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

## The History of Urban Vertical Farming

The concept of vertical farming—growing crops in vertically stacked layers within controlled environments—has emerged as a revolutionary solution to the challenges facing traditional agriculture in the 21st century. While the practice may seem futuristic, its roots trace back several decades, evolving from simple greenhouse cultivation to sophisticated, technology-driven operations that are reshaping urban food production.  
  
The term "vertical farming" was popularized by Dickson Despommier, a professor of environmental health sciences at Columbia University, who began developing the concept with his students in 1999. Despommier envisioned large-scale urban buildings dedicated entirely to food production, utilizing hydroponic and aeroponic growing systems powered by renewable energy. His work built upon earlier concepts of controlled environment agriculture, but proposed an unprecedented scale and integration with urban infrastructure that captured global attention.  
  
However, the theoretical foundations of vertical farming extend much further back. In 1915, American geologist Gilbert Ellis Bailey wrote about "vertical farming" in his book of the same name, though his vision focused more on utilizing building facades and rooftops rather than purpose-built agricultural structures. The actual implementation of intensive indoor farming began gaining traction in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s, when researchers at Chiba University pioneered hydroponic vegetable production in controlled environments. These early facilities demonstrated that crops could be grown year-round without soil, using nutrient-rich water solutions and artificial lighting.  
  
The economic viability of vertical farming remained questionable until the 21st century, when several technological advances converged to make the practice more feasible. The development of efficient LED lighting systems proved particularly crucial, as LEDs consume significantly less energy than traditional grow lights while generating less heat and allowing precise control over light wavelengths. This meant farmers could optimize plant growth by providing exactly the spectrum of light each crop required at different stages of development. Additionally, improvements in climate control systems, automation, and data analytics enabled operators to fine-tune growing conditions with unprecedented precision, reducing waste and maximizing yields.  
  
The environmental benefits of vertical farming have become increasingly apparent and compelling. By growing food in urban areas, vertical farms dramatically reduce the distance food must travel from farm to consumer—often called "food miles"—thereby lowering transportation costs and carbon emissions. The controlled environment eliminates the need for pesticides and herbicides, resulting in cleaner produce. Perhaps most significantly, vertical farms use up to 95% less water than conventional farming through recirculating hydroponic or aeroponic systems, making them particularly attractive in water-scarce regions. These facilities also protect crops from extreme weather events, which are becoming more frequent due to climate change.  
  
Despite these advantages, vertical farming faces substantial challenges that have prevented its widespread adoption. The initial capital investment required to construct a vertical farm is considerable, often running into millions of dollars for commercial-scale operations. Energy costs represent another major obstacle; while LED efficiency has improved dramatically, the electricity needed to power lighting, climate control, and other systems remains substantial, particularly in regions where renewable energy is expensive or unavailable. Critics also point out that vertical farms are currently limited to certain types of crops—primarily leafy greens and herbs—because staple crops like wheat, rice, and corn require too much space and energy to grow economically in vertical systems.  
  
The social and urban planning implications of vertical farming are complex and multifaceted. Proponents argue that these facilities can increase food security in cities, create local employment, and revitalize abandoned industrial buildings. Some urban planners envision vertical farms becoming community gathering spaces that reconnect city dwellers with food production. However, questions remain about who will benefit from these technologies. If vertical farming remains expensive, it may primarily serve affluent urban populations, potentially widening the gap in access to fresh, healthy produce. There are also concerns about the loss of traditional agricultural knowledge and the consolidation of food production in the hands of technology companies rather than independent farmers.  
  
Looking ahead, the future of vertical farming will likely depend on continued technological innovation and supportive policy frameworks. Researchers are exploring ways to expand the range of crops that can be grown vertically, investigating new lighting systems that mimic natural sunlight more closely, and developing artificial intelligence systems that can manage farms with minimal human intervention. Some experts predict that vertical farms will eventually be powered entirely by renewable energy and integrated into buildings' circulatory systems, using waste heat and carbon dioxide from other building functions. Others suggest that vertical farming will remain a niche solution, complementing rather than replacing traditional agriculture.  
  
The debate over vertical farming ultimately reflects broader questions about the future of food production in an urbanizing world facing climate change and resource scarcity. While vertical farms alone cannot solve global food security challenges, they represent an innovative approach to producing fresh food sustainably in cities. As the technology matures and becomes more economically accessible, vertical farming may play an increasingly important role in feeding the world's growing urban populations, though its ultimate impact will depend on how societies choose to develop and deploy this technology.

## Questions 1-6

Reading Passage 1 has eight paragraphs, A-H.  
  
Which paragraph contains the following information?  
  
Write the correct letter, A-H, in boxes 1-6 on your answer sheet.  
NB: You may use any letter more than once.

1. a reference to the earliest published use of the term "vertical farming"

2. mention of the types of crops currently unsuitable for vertical farming

3. a description of how LED technology benefits plant cultivation

4. concerns about inequality in access to vertical farming produce

5. the origins of hydroponic farming research in Asia

6. potential future uses of renewable energy in vertical farming

## Questions 7-10

Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.  
  
Write the correct letter in boxes 7-10 on your answer sheet.

7. According to the passage, Dickson Despommier's contribution to vertical farming was

A. inventing hydroponic growing systems

B. proposing large-scale urban integration of food production

C. developing the first commercial vertical farm

D. creating renewable energy systems for agriculture

8. What does the writer suggest about vertical farming in the 1970s and 1980s?

A. It was economically profitable from the start

B. It proved crops could be grown without soil year-round

C. It was rejected by researchers at Chiba University

D. It relied entirely on natural sunlight

9. The main advantage of vertical farming in terms of water usage is that it

A. requires no water at all

B. uses rainwater exclusively

C. recirculates water in its systems

D. imports water from other regions

10. According to the passage, which factor has prevented vertical farming from becoming widespread?

A. lack of suitable crops

B. consumer rejection

C. government regulations

D. high initial investment costs

## Questions 11-13

Complete the sentences below.  
  
Choose NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS from the passage for each answer.  
  
Write your answers in boxes 11-13 on your answer sheet.

11. Growing food locally through vertical farming reduces \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which lowers carbon emissions.

12. Vertical farms protect crops from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which are increasing due to climate change.

13. Some urban planners believe vertical farms could help \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ reconnect with food production.

# READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14-26, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.

## The Cognitive Benefits of Bilingualism

For decades, researchers have investigated the cognitive effects of speaking more than one language, and recent studies have revealed that bilingualism offers significant advantages beyond the obvious benefit of being able to communicate with more people. These cognitive benefits affect multiple aspects of brain function, from executive control to creativity, and persist throughout the lifespan. Understanding these effects has important implications for education policy, healthcare, and our understanding of how the human brain processes language.  
  
One of the most robust findings in bilingualism research concerns executive function—the set of mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks. Bilingual individuals consistently demonstrate enhanced executive control compared to monolinguals. This advantage arises because bilingual speakers must constantly manage two language systems, even when using only one language. The brain must activate the intended language while inhibiting the other, a process that provides continuous mental exercise. Studies using brain imaging techniques have shown that this linguistic juggling act strengthens the brain's executive control networks, particularly in the prefrontal cortex, which governs decision-making and problem-solving.  
  
Research by Ellen Bialystok and her colleagues at York University has been particularly influential in establishing the cognitive advantages of bilingualism. In a series of experiments, Bialystok demonstrated that bilingual children perform better than monolingual children on tasks requiring conflict resolution and attention control. For example, when shown a picture of a small fish among large fish and asked about the small fish's direction, bilingual children more successfully focus on the relevant information while ignoring distracting elements. This enhanced ability to control attention persists into adulthood and may even help protect against cognitive decline in old age.  
  
The protective effects of bilingualism against dementia have generated considerable scientific interest. Several studies have found that bilingual individuals develop dementia symptoms approximately four to five years later than monolingual individuals with similar education levels and cognitive abilities. This delay is substantial and comparable to the benefits gained from pharmaceutical interventions currently used to treat Alzheimer's disease. The cognitive reserve built through managing two languages appears to enable the brain to better compensate for age-related neural deterioration. However, researchers emphasize that bilingualism is not a cure for dementia but rather one factor among many—including education, social engagement, and physical exercise—that can support cognitive health in aging.  
  
Beyond executive function, bilingualism influences other cognitive domains in fascinating ways. Metalinguistic awareness—the ability to think about language as a system—tends to be more developed in bilinguals. Because they experience language in multiple forms, bilingual individuals often show greater sensitivity to the structure and rules of language, making them more effective at detecting grammatical errors and understanding language patterns. This heightened awareness can facilitate learning additional languages, as bilinguals have already developed strategies for navigating linguistic systems. Some research also suggests that bilinguals may demonstrate enhanced creativity, possibly because managing multiple languages encourages flexible thinking and the ability to see problems from different perspectives.  
  
The social and cultural dimensions of bilingualism add another layer of cognitive benefits. Growing up bilingual often means engaging with multiple cultural frameworks, which can enhance cultural sensitivity and perspective-taking abilities. Research indicates that bilingual children may develop theory of mind—the understanding that other people have thoughts, feelings, and perspectives different from one's own—earlier than monolingual children. This advanced social cognition likely stems from their experience navigating different linguistic and cultural contexts, where meaning must often be negotiated rather than assumed.  
  
However, bilingualism is not without challenges and potential drawbacks. Some studies have found that bilinguals may have slightly smaller vocabularies in each individual language compared to monolinguals, and they sometimes experience tip-of-the-tongue moments where they know a concept but struggle to retrieve the word in the desired language. These phenomena occur because the mental lexicon must accommodate two languages, which can lead to competition for retrieval. Additionally, bilingual children may initially show slower vocabulary development than their monolingual peers, though they typically catch up by school age and their total vocabulary across both languages often exceeds that of monolinguals.  
  
The implications of bilingualism research extend to education policy and language learning practices. Some educational systems have questioned the value of bilingual education programs, concerned that instruction in multiple languages might confuse children or impede academic progress. However, research overwhelmingly supports the cognitive benefits of bilingual education when properly implemented. Rather than hindering development, learning in two languages enhances cognitive flexibility and academic achievement. These findings have encouraged many countries to preserve and promote bilingual education, particularly for minority language speakers.  
  
Nevertheless, important questions remain about the precise mechanisms underlying bilingualism's cognitive effects and the conditions necessary to produce them. Not all bilingual experiences are equal; factors such as the age of second language acquisition, proficiency level, frequency of language switching, and the linguistic distance between languages may all influence cognitive outcomes. Current research is exploring how different bilingual experiences shape the brain differently and whether certain patterns of language use maximize cognitive benefits. Understanding these nuances will be crucial for developing evidence-based recommendations for language education and for supporting the cognitive development of bilingual individuals.  
  
As our world becomes increasingly multilingual through globalization and migration, understanding the cognitive science of bilingualism grows ever more important. While speaking multiple languages has always been valued for its practical and cultural benefits, we now recognize that bilingualism fundamentally shapes how we think, providing cognitive advantages that extend far beyond communication. This knowledge should inform how societies approach language education and support the maintenance of linguistic diversity, recognizing bilingualism not as a burden or complication but as a cognitive asset that benefits individuals and communities.

## Questions 14-18

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2?  
  
In boxes 14-18 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

14. Bilingual people must use both languages simultaneously when speaking.

15. Brain imaging studies show that managing two languages strengthens the prefrontal cortex.

16. Bilingual individuals develop dementia symptoms later than monolinguals with similar backgrounds.

17. Bilingualism completely prevents the development of Alzheimer's disease.

18. Research shows that bilingual education always produces better academic results than monolingual education.

## Questions 19-22

Look at the following cognitive abilities (Questions 19-22) and the list of groups below.  
  
Match each ability with the correct group, A, B or C.  
  
Write the correct letter, A, B or C, in boxes 19-22 on your answer sheet.  
  
NB: You may use any letter more than once.

A. Bilingual children

B. Bilingual adults

C. Both bilingual children and adults

19. Better performance on attention control tasks

20. Delayed onset of dementia symptoms

21. Enhanced metalinguistic awareness

22. Earlier development of theory of mind

## Questions 23-26

Complete the summary below.  
  
Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.  
  
Write your answers in boxes 23-26 on your answer sheet.

Bilingualism and Language Challenges  
  
While bilingualism offers many cognitive benefits, it also presents certain challenges. Bilinguals may have slightly smaller 23 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in each language compared to monolinguals. They may also experience 24 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ moments when they cannot retrieve a specific word. This happens because their 25 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ must accommodate two languages. Additionally, bilingual children might show slower 26 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ initially, though they typically catch up to their monolingual peers.

# READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

## The Economics of Happiness

The relationship between economic prosperity and human wellbeing has preoccupied philosophers, economists, and policymakers for centuries. While conventional economic wisdom assumes that increased wealth leads to greater happiness, empirical research over the past few decades has revealed a far more complex picture. This complexity has given rise to a new field—happiness economics—which challenges traditional assumptions about the goals of economic policy and offers alternative frameworks for measuring societal success.  
  
The foundational paradox in happiness economics was identified by economist Richard Easterlin in the 1970s. The "Easterlin Paradox" refers to the observation that while wealthier individuals within a country tend to be happier than their poorer compatriots, increasing a nation's overall wealth does not reliably increase its citizens' average happiness once basic needs are met. In other words, making everyone richer does not necessarily make everyone happier. This finding contradicted the prevailing assumption that economic growth automatically translates into improved wellbeing and sparked decades of research into the determinants of human happiness.  
  
Subsequent research has identified several mechanisms that explain the Easterlin Paradox. One crucial factor is hedonic adaptation, also known as the "hedonic treadmill." This psychological phenomenon describes humans' tendency to quickly return to a baseline level of happiness after positive or negative changes in circumstances. When people receive a salary increase or purchase a desired object, they experience an initial boost in happiness, but this elevation proves temporary. They soon adapt to their new situation, and their happiness returns to its previous level. This adaptation means that continued increases in income yield diminishing returns in terms of wellbeing, as people constantly adjust their expectations upward.  
  
Social comparison represents another mechanism limiting the happiness benefits of economic growth. People evaluate their wellbeing not in absolute terms but relative to others in their reference group. If everyone's income increases proportionally, relative positions remain unchanged, and happiness may not increase despite absolute gains in wealth. Research by psychologist Philip Brickman found that lottery winners were not significantly happier than non-winners after an initial period of excitement, partly because their aspirations and reference points shifted upward to match their new financial status. Similarly, people living in affluent neighborhoods report lower life satisfaction than those with equivalent incomes in less wealthy areas, suggesting that being surrounded by even wealthier people diminishes one's sense of accomplishment and contentment.  
  
The role of materialism in happiness has received considerable attention from researchers. Studies consistently show that people who prioritize material possessions and financial success over other life goals report lower wellbeing and greater psychological distress. This negative relationship between materialism and happiness holds across different cultures and age groups. One explanation is that materialistic values focus attention on extrinsic goals—those pursued for external rewards or social approval—rather than intrinsic goals like personal growth, relationships, and community contribution, which are more closely associated with lasting happiness. Consumer culture's emphasis on acquisition and status competition may therefore undermine wellbeing even as it drives economic activity.  
  
However, the relationship between money and happiness is not entirely negative or absent. Research by psychologist Daniel Kahneman and economist Angus Deaton found that emotional wellbeing rises with income up to approximately $75,000 per year (in 2010 dollars), after which the relationship flattens. Below this threshold, lack of money creates genuine hardship and stress that undermines happiness. Money matters enormously for those struggling to meet basic needs for food, shelter, healthcare, and security. The happiness economics literature thus suggests that policies reducing poverty and ensuring basic economic security can significantly improve wellbeing, while policies merely promoting wealth accumulation among the already comfortable may have limited impact on societal happiness.  
  
Beyond individual psychology, societal factors play a crucial role in determining the relationship between economics and happiness. Research across countries has identified several social conditions that strongly predict national happiness levels: strong social connections and support networks, trust in institutions and fellow citizens, political freedom and democratic governance, low corruption, and economic equality. Scandinavian countries like Denmark, Norway, and Finland consistently rank among the world's happiest nations not because they are the wealthiest but because they combine decent living standards with strong social safety nets, high levels of trust, and relatively equal income distribution. These findings suggest that how wealth is distributed and used to support social institutions matters as much for happiness as the absolute level of wealth.  
  
The implications of happiness economics for policy have been significant and controversial. Some governments have experimented with measuring and promoting happiness alongside traditional economic indicators. Bhutan famously developed a "Gross National Happiness" index as an alternative to GDP, measuring citizens' wellbeing across multiple dimensions including psychological wellbeing, health, education, time use, cultural diversity, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity, and living standards. New Zealand has adopted a "wellbeing budget" that evaluates government spending based on its contribution to citizens' quality of life rather than purely economic metrics. These initiatives reflect a growing recognition that maximizing GDP growth may not be equivalent to maximizing human flourishing.  
  
Critics of happiness economics raise several concerns. Some argue that happiness is too subjective and culturally variable to serve as a reliable policy target. Different cultures conceptualize and value happiness differently; what constitutes a good life in one society may not align with another's values. There are also philosophical objections: should governments be in the business of making people happy, or should they focus on creating conditions for people to pursue happiness as they define it? Additionally, some economists worry that de-emphasizing economic growth could reduce innovation and prosperity, ultimately harming long-term wellbeing.  
  
Nevertheless, happiness economics has fundamentally challenged the assumption that economic growth is the primary measure of societal progress. While money clearly matters for wellbeing, particularly for those living in poverty, the relationship between wealth and happiness is neither simple nor linear. Factors like social relationships, equality, trust, and meaningful activity appear to matter as much or more than material consumption for human flourishing. As societies grapple with questions about sustainable development and quality of life, the insights from happiness economics offer valuable perspective on what truly contributes to a good life, suggesting that the richest societies may not necessarily be the happiest ones unless that wealth is thoughtfully employed to support the conditions that enable human wellbeing.

## Questions 27-30

Reading Passage 3 has nine paragraphs, A-I.  
  
Choose the correct heading for paragraphs B, D, F and H from the list of headings below.  
  
Write the correct number, i-x, in boxes 27-30 on your answer sheet.

List of Headings

i. The temporary nature of happiness from increased income

ii. Government initiatives to measure wellbeing

iii. The importance of meeting basic human needs

iv. Criticisms of focusing on happiness in policy

v. The influence of surrounding wealth on satisfaction

vi. Cross-national factors affecting happiness

vii. The negative effects of prioritizing possessions

viii. Early economic assumptions about wealth

ix. Psychological explanations for adaptation

x. The role of democracy in national happiness

27. Paragraph B

28. Paragraph D

29. Paragraph F

30. Paragraph H

## Questions 31-35

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in Reading Passage 3?  
  
In boxes 31-35 on your answer sheet, write  
  
YES if the statement agrees with the views of the writer  
NO if the statement contradicts the views of the writer  
NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

31. Economic growth is the most important goal for any society to pursue.

32. People living in poverty experience significant improvements in happiness when their income increases.

33. All cultures define and value happiness in exactly the same way.

34. Scandinavian countries are happy primarily because of their high income levels.

35. Governments should focus exclusively on economic metrics rather than happiness.

## Questions 36-40

Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.  
  
Write the correct letter in boxes 36-40 on your answer sheet.

36. The Easterlin Paradox suggests that

A. poor people are happier than wealthy people

B. national wealth increases do not always increase average happiness

C. happiness is impossible to measure accurately

D. economic growth should be a government's primary goal

37. According to the passage, hedonic adaptation means that

A. people never experience happiness

B. income increases produce permanent happiness gains

C. people return to baseline happiness levels after changes

D. adaptation prevents all forms of happiness

38. Research on lottery winners indicates that

A. winning money guarantees long-term happiness

B. winners adjust their expectations after winning

C. lottery tickets should be banned

D. winners become less happy than before

39. The research by Kahneman and Deaton found that

A. money has no relationship with happiness

B. only extremely wealthy people are happy

C. emotional wellbeing increases with income up to a point

D. happiness decreases as income rises

40. What is the writer's main point about happiness economics?

A. It proves that money is irrelevant to happiness

B. It challenges the idea that economic growth equals societal progress

C. It demonstrates that happiness cannot be studied scientifically

D. It shows that poor countries are happier than rich ones

# ANSWER KEY - ACADEMIC READING TEST 1

**1.** C (Paragraph 3: "In 1915, American geologist Gilbert Ellis Bailey wrote about 'vertical farming'")

**2.** F (Paragraph 6: "staple crops like wheat, rice, and corn require too much space")

**3.** D (Paragraph 4: "LEDs consume significantly less energy... allowing precise control over light wavelengths")

**4.** G (Paragraph 7: "If vertical farming remains expensive, it may primarily serve affluent urban populations")

**5.** C (Paragraph 3: "intensive indoor farming began gaining traction in Japan during the 1970s and 1980s, when researchers at Chiba University pioneered hydroponic")

**6.** H (Paragraph 8: "vertical farms will eventually be powered entirely by renewable energy")

**7.** B (Paragraph 2: "proposed an unprecedented scale and integration with urban infrastructure")

**8.** B (Paragraph 3: "These early facilities demonstrated that crops could be grown year-round without soil")

**9.** C (Paragraph 5: "use up to 95% less water... through recirculating hydroponic or aeroponic systems")

**10.** D (Paragraph 6: "The initial capital investment required... is considerable")

**11.** food miles (Paragraph 5)

**12.** extreme weather events (Paragraph 5)

**13.** city dwellers (Paragraph 7)

**14.** FALSE (Passage states they must "inhibit" the other language, not use both simultaneously)

**15.** TRUE (Paragraph 2: "brain imaging techniques have shown that this linguistic juggling act strengthens the brain's executive control networks, particularly in the prefrontal cortex")

**16.** TRUE (Paragraph 4: "bilingual individuals develop dementia symptoms approximately four to five years later")

**17.** FALSE (Paragraph 4: "bilingualism is not a cure for dementia but rather one factor")

**18.** NOT GIVEN (The passage states bilingual education enhances development "when properly implemented" but doesn't say it "always" produces better results)

**19.** A (Paragraph 3: "bilingual children perform better... on tasks requiring conflict resolution and attention control")

**20.** B (Paragraph 4: refers to bilingual individuals/adults developing dementia later)

**21.** C (Paragraph 5: mentions bilinguals generally, not limited to children or adults)

**22.** A (Paragraph 6: "bilingual children may develop theory of mind... earlier than monolingual children")

**23.** vocabularies (Paragraph 7)

**24.** tip-of-the-tongue (Paragraph 7)

**25.** mental lexicon (Paragraph 7)

**26.** vocabulary development (Paragraph 7)

**27.** i (Paragraph B discusses hedonic adaptation - temporary happiness from income)

**28.** v (Paragraph D discusses social comparison and surrounding wealth)

**29.** iii (Paragraph F discusses the $75,000 threshold and basic needs)

**30.** ii (Paragraph H discusses government initiatives like Bhutan's GNH and New Zealand's wellbeing budget)

**31.** NO (The writer challenges this view throughout, particularly in the final paragraph)

**32.** YES (Paragraph 6: "Money matters enormously for those struggling to meet basic needs")

**33.** NO (Paragraph 9: "Different cultures conceptualize and value happiness differently")

**34.** NO (Paragraph 7: happy "not because they are the wealthiest but because they combine decent living standards with strong social safety nets")

**35.** NO (The writer supports measuring happiness alongside economic metrics)

**36.** B (Paragraph 2 defines the paradox)

**37.** C (Paragraph 3: "humans' tendency to quickly return to a baseline level of happiness")

**38.** B (Paragraph 4: "their aspirations and reference points shifted upward")

**39.** C (Paragraph 6: "emotional wellbeing rises with income up to approximately $75,000")

**40.** B (Final paragraph: "fundamentally challenged the assumption that economic growth is the primary measure of societal progress")