



# Cambridge IELTS 15

## (Academic) Passage

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## From Saifur Rahman Khan

এই বই থেকে  
তুমি সবচেয়ে বেশি **benefitted** হবে,  
যদি তুমি নিচের ৩-টি কাজ করো:

- ১। Test-এর ব্যাখ্যা পড়ার আগে actual পরীক্ষার মতো ঘড়িতে সময় ধরে Reading Module-টি solve করে Answer-গুলো লিখো।
- ২। এর পরে **Cambridge-15**-এর শেষে দেয়া answer-গুলো মিলিয়ে নিজেকে marking করো।
- ৩। এর পর পরের পৃষ্ঠা থেকে লেখা ব্যাখ্যাগুলো পড়া শুরু করো।

এভাবে প্রতিটি Test-এ একই কাজ repeat করো।

প্রথমে নিজে solve না করে

আগেই উত্তর দেখে ফেললে যেমন বেশি লাভ হয় না,

তেমনি এই ব্যাখ্যাটা আগেই পড়ে ফেললে

তোমার দুর্বলতাগুলো তুমি ধরতে পারবে না।

ফলে ঐ ধরনের ভুলগুলো তুমি **real exam**-এ আবার করবে।

তাই আগে test-টা টেস্টের মতো করে দাও,

তারপর নিজেকে **marking** করো, পরে ব্যাখ্যা পড়ো।

আল্লাহ হাফেজ

# Test-1

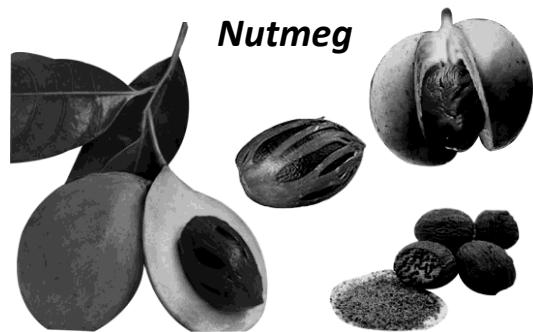
## Passage # 01

### Step - 01

First, we will read the title of the passage:

## Nutmeg – a valuable spice

From the title, we can easily understand that the passage will discuss a valuable spice called ‘*nutmeg*’. For many of us, *nutmeg* could be a completely unknown word. The good news is that there is no need to worry about the fact that ‘*nutmeg*’ is an unknown word, because finding answer to questions in IELTS does not depend at all on knowing the meaning of names.



### Step - 02

Now turning the page we go straight to the questions # 1 – 4 where we find ‘**CHOOSE ONE WORD ONLY**’ type question. This type of questions is comparatively easy to solve as it is less time-consuming because their answers are usually found one after another in a sequence within one paragraph or at most, two paras.

### Step - 03

The heading of the questions is ‘*The nutmeg tree and fruit*’ implying that these questions are about some characteristics of the nutmeg tree and its fruit. The first question is:

*‘the leaves of the tree are 1 ..... in shape’.*

The word ‘*leaves*’ is found neither in the title of the passage, nor in the title of the question. Therefore, the key word of question # 1 is ‘*leaves*’.

## Step - 04

Going back to the passage, we have to find out the key word '**leaves**'. Scanning from the beginning, we find the word '**leaves**' in line 4. The sentence reads as follows:

*"The tree is thickly branched with dense foliage of tough, dark green oval leaves",*

In the above sentence, it is stated that the nutmeg tree has **oval-shaped** leaves, so '**oval**' is the answer to question # 1.

## Word Meaning

**foliage** = plant leaves collectively; **oval** = egg-shaped.

## Step - 05

Having solved the first question, let's go to the next question:

*'the 2 ..... surrounds the fruit and breaks open when the fruit is ripe'*

Obviously, '**fruit**' is the key word in this question. Let's quickly return to the point in the passage, where answer of question # 1 was found. From there, we start reading. In the next line, we find the key word '**fruit**'. Now let's read that sentence carefully:

*The fruit is **encased** in a fleshy husk* (= the dry outer covering of some fruits = shell).

Here '**encase**' is the synonym of the word '**surround**', which means 'to cover something completely'. The sentence clearly says that '**a fleshy husk**' surrounds the fruit. Therefore, the answer to Q # 2 is '**husk**'.

## Step - 06

Having found the answer of # 2, we immediately return to the question section to read question # 3 carefully:

*'the 3 ..... is used to produce the spice nutmeg'.*

Step - 07

Now, from the question part we quickly return to the passage and read the next few lines of paragraph 1. In the last 4 lines we find:

*“Inside is a purple-brown shiny seed, 2–3 cm long by about 2 cm across, (which is) surrounded by a lacy red or crimson covering called an ‘aril’. These are the sources of the two spices nutmeg and mace, the former being produced from the dried seed and the latter from the aril”.*

In the last sentence, the word ‘**former**’ refers to the first of the two spices mentioned here, which is nutmeg. That is to say, the nutmeg is produced from the dried **seed**. So, the answer to question # 3 is **seed**.

Word Meanings

**lacy** = looking like lace; **crimson** = having a dark, deep red colour;  
**former** = denoting the first of two people or things mentioned;  
**latter** = denoting the second of 2 people or things mentioned previously.

Step - 08

Let’s go to question # 4:

*‘the covering known as the aril is used to produce 4 \_\_\_\_\_’*

While answering the previous question, we have got information about ‘**aril**’ which is a covering surrounding the seed. The last line states that ‘... and the latter from the aril’.

Two spices have been mentioned here – **nutmeg** and **mace**. The word ‘**latter**’ denoting the second of the two things mentioned refers to the spice mace, implying that the spice **mace** is produced from the aril. So **mace** is the answer to question # 4.

Step - 09

The next questions # 5 – 7 are **TRUE / FALSE** type question. Glancing through the questions, we find a name written in block capitals: **VOC**. Words written in capitals are easy to find in the passage. So let’s solve Q # 6 first. First, we have to read the sentence of # 6 attentively:

6. *‘The VOC was the world’s first major trading company’.*

## Step - 10

Now quickly returning to the passage and scanning for VOC, we find 'VOC' in the first line of paragraph 4. So, the answer must be somewhere in this 4<sup>th</sup> para. Reading attentively from the beginning of this para, we find in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> lines: *"By 1617, the VOC was the richest commercial operation in the world. The company had 50,000 employees worldwide, with a private army of 30,000 men and a fleet of 200 ships."*

The lines above emphasize the financial strength of VOC as *'the richest commercial operation'* of the world. But there is no information in these lines about VOC being the first trading company. Therefore, the answer of # 6 is **NOT GIVEN**.

## Step - 11

Since we have left Q # 5 unanswered, now, let's read question # 5:

*'In the Middle Ages, most Europeans knew where nutmeg was grown'.*

## Step - 12

As we have got the answer to Q # 6 in para 4, the answer to Q # 5 must be somewhere above the location of # 6, that is, either in para 2 or in para 3. Scanning from the beginning of para 2, we find the words 'Middle Ages' in the very 1<sup>st</sup> line of the para.

Keeping the information of # 5 in our mind, we read the next 3 lines carefully:

*"Throughout this period, the Arabs were the exclusive importers of the spice to Europe. They sold nutmeg for high prices to merchants based in Venice, but they never revealed the exact location of the source of this extremely valuable commodity."*

The above lines clearly indicate that in the Middle Ages the Arabs were the only people who had access to the source of the nutmeg and that they never let other people know about the exact location of where this nutmeg was grown. But the statement in the question says just the opposite of what has been said above. Therefore, the answer to # 5 is **FALSE**.

## Word Meanings

*exclusive* = sole = being one only; *reveal* = to let others know = disclose.



Step - 13

Now let's go back to the question section and read Q # 7:

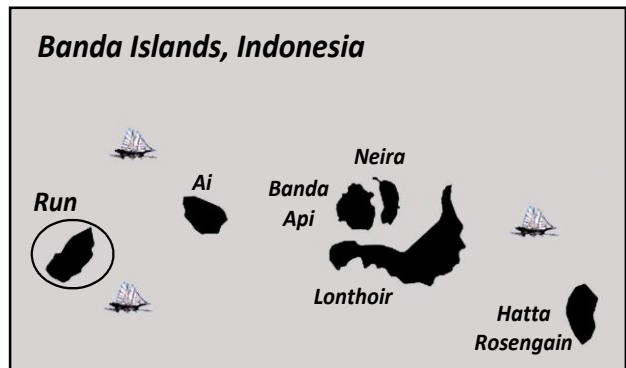
*'Following the Treaty of Breda, the Dutch had control of all the islands where nutmeg grew'.*

'Treaty of Breda' has its first letters written in capitals; so we will look for this phrase in the passage.

Step - 14

Glancing through the remaining paras of the passage, we find the 'Treaty of Breda' mentioned in the last part of para 5. Now let's read these sentences very carefully:

*After decades of fighting for control of this tiny island, the Dutch and British arrived at a compromise settlement, the Treaty of Breda, in 1667. Intent on securing their hold every nutmeg-producing island, the Dutch offered a trade: if the British would give them the island of Run, they would in turn give Britain a distant and much less valuable island in North America.*



The above lines tell us about the 'Treaty of Breda' which ended a long-standing conflict between the Dutch and the British over the ownership of a tiny island called Run. Determined to bring every nutmeg-producing island including Run under their control, the Dutch proposed to give Britain another island in exchange for the island of Run which was then under the control of the British.

Word Meanings

**secure xyz** = get xyz;      **tiny** = very small;  
**hold** = control;      **decade** = a period of ten years;  
**settlement** = an official agreement that ends an argument;  
**intent on xyz** = determined to achieve xyz.

To find the answer we will continue to read the last 3 lines of para 5:

*The British agreed. That other island was Manhattan, which is how New Amsterdam became New York. The Dutch now had a monopoly over the nutmeg trade which would last for another century.*

The above lines clearly indicate that by mutual consent the *British* and *Dutch* signed the *Treaty of Breda*, which brought the island of *Run* under the control of the *Dutch*. Consequently, the *Dutch* now had complete control of all the islands where nutmeg grew. Therefore, answer to question # 7 is **TRUE**.

### Word Meanings

*monopoly* = complete control of the trade; *last* = to continue to exist.

### Step - 15

In questions 8 – 13, there is a table which has two columns. In the left column, some periods are mentioned; in the right column, some events related to those periods are mentioned. We have to complete the table with **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage.

### Step - 16

Now let's read question no 8: *Nutmeg was brought to Europe by the 8 \_\_\_\_\_*

This event is related to the Middle Ages which is mentioned in para 2.

While answering Q # 5, we have learnt that in the *Middle Ages*, *Arabs* were the only people who used to bring the nutmeg to Europe: *Throughout this period (= the Middle Ages), the Arabs were the exclusive importers of the spice (= nutmeg) to Europe.*

So, it is clear that the answer to question # 8 is *Arabs*.

### Step - 17

Let's read the sentence of question # 9 carefully:

*Demand for nutmeg grew, as it was believed to be effective against the disease known as the 9 .....*

Question 9 is concerned with the *name of a disease* which spread in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Step - 18

Going back to the passage, let's find out 17<sup>th</sup> century (= 1600-1699). While solving question # 6, we got the first mention of 17<sup>th</sup> century in line 2 of para 4: *By 1617, the VOC was ....* . Glancing through the para, we find the name of a disease called the *plague* in line 4 of para 4, which goes as follows:

*At the same time, thousands of people across Europe were dying of the plague, a highly contagious and deadly disease.*

Let's read two more sentences about the disease: *Doctors were desperate for a way to stop the spread of this disease, and they decided nutmeg held the cure. Everybody wanted nutmeg, and many were willing to spare no expense to have it.*

So the answer to # 9 is *plague*.

Word Meanings

*desperate* = needing or wanting something very much;

*spare no expense* = to do everything possible to get something without limiting expense.

Step - 19

Now let's go on to the next question:

*put 10 ..... on nutmeg to avoid it being cultivated elsewhere outside the islands.*

Step - 20

Returning to the passage, let's scan the remaining paras to find out another year belonging to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In line 3 of para 5, we get year 1621 and start reading from that point:

*In 1621, the Dutch arrived and took over. Once securely in control of the Bandas, the Dutch went to work protecting their new investment. They concentrated all nutmeg production into a few easily guarded areas.*

Reading further, just two lines below we find:

*In addition, all exported nutmeg was covered with lime to make sure there was no chance a fertile seed which could be grown elsewhere would leave the islands.*

The above lines highlight the activities of the Dutch aimed at preventing the cultivation of nutmeg outside their islands. They put *lime*, a chemical substance, on all exported nutmeg so that no fertile seed could be transferred elsewhere. Therefore, **lime** is the answer to question # 10.

### Word Meanings

<b>guarded</b>	= protected;	<b>lime</b>	= a white caustic substance;
<b>elsewhere</b>	= in other places;	<b>take over</b>	= get control of a company;
<b>concentrate</b>	= to bring something together in one place;		
<b>securely</b>	= <b>safely</b> = in a way that protects someone or something from being harmed by any risk or threat.		

### Step - 21

Now, let's read question # 11: *Finally obtained the island of 11 ..... from the British.*

While solving Q # 7, we have come to know about the *Treaty of Breda* which entitled the Dutch to have the island of Run from the British. So **Run** is the answer to question # 11.

### Step - 22

Now let's read the sentence of question # 12:

*nutmeg plants were secretly taken to 12 .....*

The event in the question took place in **1770**.