READING PASSAGE 1

*You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 on pages 2 and 3.*

Jewels from the sea

Indigenous necklaces in Tasmania

Necklace-making is the most significant cultural tradition of Tasmanian Aboriginal women. It is also one of the few traditions that have continued without interruption since before the Europeans settled in Tasmania, the island to the south of the mainland of Australia, in 1803. Whereas colonisation disrupted or destroyed so much of Tasmanian Aboriginal life and heritage, necklace-making has not only continued but also evolved in various ways.

The knowledge and skills of shell processing and stringing have been passed down through generations of women, particularly the women of the Furneaux Islands, off Tasmania's north-east coast. Necklace-making is an opportunity for women of all ages to get together and share stories, pass knowledge to younger generations and continue to affirm their culture. Aunty Dulcie Greeno, an elder of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, has been making necklaces for more than 40 years, but first began practising as a child. 'My grandmother used to do shell necklaces and a couple of my aunties did too,' she said in an interview for Australian Museums and Galleries Online. 'We'd go round with them on the beach and collect shells with them.' Now her sister (Corrie Fullard), daughter (Betty Grace), daughter-in-law (Lola Greeno) and niece (Jeanette James) – all celebrated artists in their own right – make necklaces.

Shell necklaces were originally made as an adornment, as gifts and tokens of honour, and as objects to be exchanged with other groups for tools or for ochre, which could be used in important ceremonies. Archaeologist Rhys Jones found shells that had been pierced for a necklace dating back at least 2,000 years. After European colonisation, necklaces were also sold or exchanged for food, clothing and other essential supplies. Now, the artists are often commissioned to create necklaces for museums, galleries and private collectors.

Early European explorers remarked on the beauty of these treasures, and held them in high esteem. The French naturalist Jacques Labillardière, travelling with the d'Entrecasteaux expedition of 1791-94, observed women wearing 'strings of brilliant pearly blue spiral shells upon their bare heads'. 18th- and 19th-century images show Tasmanian Aboriginal people wearing necklaces, including a photograph taken around 1866 of the leader and spokeswoman Truganini.

Shell-stringing was, and remains, a painstaking process, requiring knowledge of coastal resources and a great deal of patience. Aunty Dulcie's daughter Patsy Cameron has explained how the women pierced each shell with a tool consisting of a jawbone and sharpened tooth of a kangaroo or wallaby. The shells were then threaded on string made from natural fibres, smoked over a fire, and rubbed in grass to remove their outer coating and reveal the pearly surface. The shells were later treated with penguin or muttonbird oil.

European colonisation introduced new tools and materials, including acidic liquids such as vinegar to clean the shells and steel punches to make holes in them. Needles and cotton or synthetic thread enabled the women to incorporate smaller shells into increasingly intricate designs.

Necklace-making is dependent on the availability of shells, and shell collection has its season. Aunty Dulcie regularly returns to the Furneaux Islands to replenish her supplies. 'We still walk for miles on the beach,' she said. 'We take our lunch and crawl along on our hands and knees to get the shells.' Men often help women collect the shells, especially the maireeners (rainbow shells), which are found on kelp, a type of seaweed. These shells are best when picked directly from the sea. 'We don't use the ones we pick up on the beach because they are too brittle and they lose their colour,' said Aunty Dulcie.

After colonisation, women started making longer necklaces. In 1835, Benjamin Duterrau sketched Tanleboneyer, 'a native of the district of Oyster Bay', and Bruny Island man Woorraddy, Truganini's husband, with long strands looped around their necks. Wortabowigee, a woman from Port Dalrymple, who is featured in an 1837 portrait by Thomas Bock, wears five loops of what must have been a necklace of astonishing beauty. It is possible that the new European tools adopted by the women enabled them to make longer necklaces, but it also indicates the changing circumstances of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Historian Brian Plomley points out that long necklaces would have been impractical for women accustomed to a traditional lifestyle of diving for crabs, crayfish and abalone, digging for root vegetables, hunting seals or climbing trees to catch possums. Men tracking kangaroo, wallaby and emu through the bush would not have risked getting snagged by long necklaces – or risked damaging the valuable necklaces themselves.

The change in necklaces after colonisation also points to the Tasmanians' courageous assertion of their identity, and a continuation of their culture at a time when their world was being taken apart.

The connection of shell necklaces with the distinct culture and story of the Tasmanian Aboriginal people and with the Tasmanian natural environment means they have iconic status in the wider Tasmanian community. In 2009, they were listed as a Tasmanian Heritage Icon by the National Trust of Australia. The cultural and aesthetic value of the necklaces is also demonstrated by their inclusion in many national and international museum, gallery and private collections.

Questions 1 – 6

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

In boxes 1-6 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*

1 After European settlement, Tasmanian Aboriginals stopped making necklaces for a short time.

2 Aboriginal women on the Furneaux Islands made the most beautiful necklaces.

3 An 1866 photograph of the leader Truganini shows her wearing a necklace she had made herself.

4 Men assist in gathering shells growing on sea plants.

5 Tasmanian Aboriginal men wore long necklaces when hunting.

6 Tasmanian Aboriginal necklaces are appreciated outside Australia.

Questions 7 – 13

Complete the notes below.

*Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.*

Write your answers in boxes 7-13 on your answer sheet.

The process of shell-stringing

Shell-stringers must have patience and an understanding of resources available near the sea.

The traditional procedure

- hole put in shell with an instrument made of animal's bone and **7** .....
- shells strung on natural fibre and smoked
- shells wiped with **8** ..... to achieve a pearly surface
- animal **9** ..... applied

Changes after Europeans arrived

- cleaning substances like **10** ..... were used
- more complex designs achieved using needles as a tool

Furneaux Islands

- shells need to be gathered in the right **11** .....
- shell collectors walk along the beach then **12** ..... in order to pick up shells
- shells from beach not suitable as do not keep **13** ..... and break easily