

READING PASSAGE 2

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

The history of the Celtic language

- A** In November 1897, in a field near the village of Coligny in eastern France, a local inhabitant unearthed two strange objects. One was an imposing statue of Mars, the Roman god of war. The other was an ancient bronze tablet, 1.5 metres wide and 1 metre high. It bore numerals in Roman but the words were in Gaulish, a version of the Celtic language spoken by the inhabitants of France before the Roman conquest in the first century BC. The tablet turned out to be one of the most important sources of words from this extinct language.
- B** Two researchers, geneticist Dr Peter Forster and linguist Dr Alfred Toth, have now used the calendar and other Celtic inscriptions to reconstruct the history of Celtic and its position in the Indo-European family of languages. They say that Celtic became a language in its own right and entered the British Isles much earlier than supposed. Then in the first century BC, the Romans defeated the Celts, both in France and in Britain, so decisively that their language, Latin, and its successor languages displaced Celtic over much of its former territory. In the British Isles, Celtic speakers survived in two main groups: the Goidelic branch of Celtic, which includes Irish and Scots Gaelic, and the Brythonic branch, formed mainly of Welsh and Breton, a Celtic tongue carried to Brittany in France by emigrants from Cornwall.
- C** Because languages change so fast, historical linguists have little faith in language trees that go back more than a few thousand years. Dr Forster has developed a new method for relating a group of languages, basing it on the tree-drawing techniques used to trace the evolutionary relationships among genes. The method will work on just a handful of words, a fortunate circumstance since only some 30 Gaulish words have known counterparts in all the other languages under study. Dr Forster and Dr Toth have used the method to draw up a tree relating the different branches of Celtic to one another and to other Indo-European languages like English, French, Spanish, Latin and Greek. In a published article, they say that soon after the ancestral Indo-European language arrived in Europe over 5,000 years ago, it split into different branches leading to Celtic, Latin, Greek and English. Within Celtic, their tree shows that Gaulish – the mainland European version of the language – separated from its Goidelic and Brythonic cousins, much as might be expected from the facts of geography.

- D** The researchers' method even dates the points at which their language tree divides, although the dates have a wide range of possibility. They calculate that the Indo-European language initially fragmented in Europe around 8100 BC, plus or minus 1,900 years, and the divergence between the mainland European and British versions of Gaelic took place in 3200 BC, plus or minus 1,500 years. These dates are much earlier than previously estimated. The traditional date of the Indo-European fragmentation has been 4000 BC for some time, said linguist Dr Merritt Ruhlen. He said the new method 'seems pretty reasonable' and should be useful in tracing back the earlier history of the Indo-European language.
- E** Specialists have long debated which country was the homeland of the Indo-Europeans, and whether their language was spread by conquest or because its speakers were the first agriculturists whose methods and tongue were adopted by other populations. The second theory, that it was spread by agriculture, has been advocated by archaeologist Dr Colin Renfrew. Dr Forster, who works with Dr Renfrew, said in an interview that the suggested date 8100 BC for the arrival of Indo-European in Europe 'does seem to vindicate Renfrew's archaeological idea that the Indo-European languages were spread by farmers.' Agriculture started to arrive in Europe from the Near East around 6000 BC, much earlier than the traditional date proposed by linguists for the spread of Indo-European. This timing would fit with the lower end of Dr Forster's range of dates.
- F** Dr Forster said that his estimated date of 3200 BC for the arrival of Celtic speakers in the British Isles was also much earlier than the usual date, 600 BC, posited on the basis of archaeological evidence. Dr Forster and Dr Toth said their method of evaluating groups of languages against each other was unfamiliar to historical linguists, many of whom restrict their research to how words in only one single language have changed over time. Asked what linguists thought of his approach he said: 'To be honest, they don't understand it, most of them. They don't even know what I'm talking about.' The method used by Dr Forster and Dr Toth has two parts. One is to draw a tree on the basis of carefully chosen words; the second is to date the splits in the tree by calibrating them with known historical events. This is similar to the way geneticists date their evolutionary trees by tying one or more branch points to known dates from the fossil record.
- G** Dr April McMahon, a linguist at the University of Sheffield in England, said that Dr Forster's method 'seems to me to be a good start', and that it was reasonable to base a language family tree on just a handful of well-chosen words. She had less confidence in the dating method, she said, because language changes in an irregular way based on social factors like the size of the speaker's group and its degree of contact with others.

Questions 14–18

Reading Passage 2 has seven paragraphs, A–G.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter, A–G, in boxes 14–18 on your answer sheet.

- 14** a difference of opinion about where a group of languages originated
- 15** a reference to a mythological figure
- 16** an expression of one person's doubt about a particular method of analysing scientific data
- 17** an explanation of how one particular Celtic language spread due to the movement of people
- 18** a reason why some language experts distrust language trees

Questions 19–22

Look at the following statements (Questions 19–22) and the list of researchers below.

Match each statement with the correct researcher or researchers, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

Write the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**, in boxes 19–22 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

- 19** An approach commonly used in language research has too narrow a focus.
- 20** The number of people who use a language has an effect on the modifications the language undergoes.
- 21** The Celtic language has been a distinct language for longer than experts previously thought.
- 22** The use of one family of languages may have become more extensive due to farming practices.

List of Researchers

- A** Dr Peter Forster & Dr Alfred Toth
- B** Dr Merritt Ruhlen
- C** Dr Colin Renfrew
- D** Dr April McMahon

Questions 23–26

Complete the sentences below.

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

Write your answers in boxes 23–26 on your answer sheet.

- 23 The script on the bronze tablet discovered in Coligny in France was written in a form of Celtic called _____.
- 24 After the success of the Roman Empire in conquering many parts of Europe, _____ became one of the predominant languages.
- 25 _____ is known to have occurred among the various versions of the Gaelic language around 3200 BC.
- 26 For social reasons, developments in languages are _____.

Disclaimer

Compiled, formatted, and lightly proofread by ZYZ Reading Walks.

All copyright in the underlying works remains with the original authors and publishers.

No affiliation with or endorsement by any rights holder (including IELTS® owners).

For non-commercial educational use only. This notice must remain intact in all copies.

Available free of charge from ZYZ Reading Walks. Resale or any paid distribution is prohibited.

Questions 14–18 段落配对

题号	答案	题干翻译	定位句 (原文)	定位句翻译	详细解释
14	E	关于“一组语言起源在哪里”的不同观点	“Specialists have long debated which country was the homeland of the Indo-Europeans , and whether their language was spread by conquest or because its speakers were the first agriculturists whose methods and tongue were adopted by other populations.” (E)	“专家们长期以来一直在争论哪一个国家是印欧人真正的故乡，以及他们的语言究竟是通过征服传播的，还是因为他们是最早的农民，他们的技术和语言被其他族群采纳。”	题干要是的是“关于某一组语言起源地的不同看法”。段落 E 说 specialists have long debated which country was the homeland , 正是“对起源地存在分歧”的意思，因此选 E。其它段落要么讲方法，要么讲时间，不谈“哪国是故乡”的争论。
15	A	对某个神话人物的提及	“One was an imposing statue of Mars, the Roman god of war .” (A)	“其中一个气势逼人的玛尔斯雕像，他是罗马神话中的战神马尔斯。”	题干中的 mythological figure (神话人物) 在 A 段直接出现：Mars, the Roman god of war, 是罗马神话中的战神，因此 15 对应 A。
16	G	某人对一种分析科学数据方法的怀疑	“Dr April McMahon ... said that Dr Forster’s method ‘seems to me to be a good start’ ... She had less confidence in the dating method , she said, because language changes in an irregular way ...” (G)	“谢菲尔德大学语言学家 April McMahon 博士说，福斯特的方法‘在我看来是一个不错的开端’.....但她表示，她对这种测定年代的方法信心不足，因为语言的变化方式并不规则.....”	题干强调“某个人表达出对某种分析科学数据方法的怀疑”。G 段中 McMahon 明说 she had less confidence in the dating method, 对“测定年代”的分析方法持怀疑态度，完全对应这一点，所以选 G。
17	B	解释某一特定凯尔特语因人口迁移而传播的过程	“In the British Isles, Celtic speakers survived in two main groups ... and the Brythonic branch, formed mainly of Welsh and Breton, a Celtic tongue carried to Brittany in France by emigrants from Cornwall .” (B)	“在不列颠群岛，凯尔特语使用者保留在两大支系.....以及布立吞支系，主要包括威尔士语和布列塔尼语——一种由康沃尔移民带到法国布列塔尼的凯尔特语言。”	题干说“解释一种凯尔特语言如何因人口迁移而传播”。B 段说明 Breton 是由 emigrants from Cornwall 带到 Brittany 的，即通过迁移传播，很精确地对应题干，因此选 B。
18	C	说明为什么一些语言学家不信任语言树	“ Because languages change so fast, historical linguists have little faith in language trees that go back more than a few thousand years.” (C)	“由于语言变化太快，历史语言学家对时间跨度超过几千年的语言树几乎不抱什么信心。”	题干问“某些语言专家为什么不信任语言树”。C 段一上来就给出原因：because languages change so fast, 因此他们 have little faith in language trees. 这就是题干要找的“原因”，故答案为 C。

Questions 19–22 研究者配对

题号	答案	题干翻译	定位句 (原文)	定位句翻译	详细解释
19	A (Forster & Toth)	一种在语言研究中常用的方法研究视角太狭窄	“Dr Forster and Dr Toth said their method of evaluating groups of languages against each other was unfamiliar to historical linguists, many of whom restrict their research to how words in only one single language have changed over time .” (F)	“福斯特和托特说，他们用来比较语言族群的方法对历史语言学家来说并不熟悉，许多历史语言学家只把研究局限在一种语言内部词汇随时间的变化。”	题干说“常用方法的关注点太窄”。F 段中 Forster & Toth 批评很多历史语言学家只研究“一种语言的词是如何变化的”，即研究范围过于局限，说明他们认为传统方法 focus 太 narrow, 因此 19 对应 Forster & Toth → A。
20	D (McMahon)	使用某种语言的人数会影响语言发生的变化	“She had less confidence in the dating method, she said, because language changes in an irregular way based on social factors like the size of the speaker’s group and its degree of contact with others .” (G)	“她表示对测年方法信心不足，因为语言的变化方式并不规则，而是取决于一些社会因素，例如说话群体的规模以及与其他人的接触程度。”	题干提到“人数多少会影响语言的变化”。G 段 McMahon 说变化取决于 social factors like the size of the speaker’s group , 直接讲人数大小对语言变化的影响，因此 20 选 McMahon → D。
21	A (Forster & Toth)	凯尔特语作为一种独立语言存在的时间比人们原先认为的更长	“They say that Celtic became a language in its own right and entered the British Isles much earlier than supposed .” (B)	“他们说，凯尔特语很早就成为一种独立的语言，并且比人们原先以为的更早进入不列颠群岛。”	题干：Celtic has been distinct for longer than previously thought. B 段中 “became a language in its own right... much earlier than supposed” 就是“比原以为更早成为独立语言”，与题干完全同义，因此 21 对应 Forster & Toth → A。
22	C (Renfrew)	某一语系的广泛使用可能是因为农业活动而得以扩展	“The second theory, that it was spread by agriculture , has been advocated by archaeologist Dr Colin Renfrew.”; “... the suggested date 8100 BC for the arrival of Indo-European in Europe ‘does seem to vindicate Renfrew’s archaeological idea that the Indo-European languages were spread by farmers.’ ” (E)	“第二种理论认为，印欧语是通过农业传播的，这一观点由考古学家 Colin Renfrew 博士提出。”；“福斯特说，关于印欧语 8100 年前传入欧洲的日期，‘似乎证实了 Renfrew 的考古观点——印欧语系是由农民传播开的。’ ”	题干说“某一语系的使用可能因农耕而扩展”。E 段明确写 Renfrew 的 theory: Indo-European languages were spread by farmers , 也就是通过农业实践扩散。因此 22 匹配 Renfrew → C。

Questions 23–26 填空题 (ONE WORD ONLY)

题号	答案	题干翻译	定位句 (原文)	定位句翻译	详细解释
23	Gaulish	在法国科利尼发现的青铜铭牌上的文字，是一种名为 _____ 的凯尔特语形式。	<i>"The other was an ancient bronze tablet ... It bore numerals in Roman but the words were in Gaulish, a version of the Celtic language spoken by the inhabitants of France before the Roman conquest ..."</i> (A)	“另一件是一块古老的青铜铭牌.....上面刻的是罗马数字，但文字是高卢语 (Gaulish)，一种凯尔特语的变体，在罗马征服之前由法国居民使用。”	题干问“这种凯尔特语叫什么”。A 段直接说 words were in Gaulish, a version of the Celtic language, 故填 Gaulish。注意只要一个单词，首字母大写。
24	Latin	在罗马帝国征服了欧洲许多地区之后， _____ 成为主要语言之一。	<i>"... the Romans defeated the Celts ... so decisively that their language, Latin, and its successor languages displaced Celtic over much of its former territory."</i> (B)	“罗马人击败了法国和不列颠的凯尔特人，胜利如此彻底，以至于他们的语言——拉丁语，以及其后继语言——取代了凯尔特语在大部分原有领土上的地位。”	题干说“罗马帝国征服后哪种语言成为主要语言之一”。B 段指出 Latin 和后续语言取代了 Celtic，说明拉丁语成为主导语言，因此答案是 Latin。
25	divergence	大约公元前 3200 年，不同版本的盖尔语之间发生了 _____。	<i>"... and the divergence between the mainland European and British versions of Gaelic took place in 3200 BC, plus or minus 1,500 years."</i> (D)	“...欧洲大陆版和英伦版盖尔语之间的分化发生在公元前 3200 年，上下浮动约 1500 年。”	题干中的 “is known to have occurred among the various versions of the Gaelic language” 对应原文的 “the divergence between ... versions of Gaelic took place”。唯一可填名词就是 divergence (分化/分歧)，与题干语法也吻合。
26	irregular	由于社会方面的原因，语言的发展是 _____ 的。	<i>"She had less confidence in the dating method, she said, because language changes in an irregular way based on social factors ..."</i> (G)	“她说自己对测年方法信心不足，原因是语言的变化方式并不规则，而是受一些社会因素的影响.....”	题干说“因为社会原因，语言发展的特点是怎样的”。G 段给出原因：language changes in an irregular way。把 in an 去掉，填形容词 irregular，与句子 “developments in languages are irregular” 语法正确。