

## IELTS Reading Passage 1

Read the passage and answer the questions. Use your predicting skills. Note the type of questions:

### Zulu Beadwork

The South African province of KwaZulu-Natal, more commonly referred to as the Zulu Kingdom, is named after the Zulu people who have inhabited the area since the late 1400s. KwaZulu translates to mean "Place of Heaven." "Natal" was the name the Portuguese explorers gave this region when they arrived in 1497. At that time, only a few Zulu clans occupied the area. By the late 1700s, the AmaZulu clan, meaning "People of Heaven," constituted a significant nation. Today the Zulu clan represents the largest ethnic group in South Africa, with at least 11 million people in the kingdom. The Zulu people are known around the world for their elaborate glass beadwork, which they wear not only in their traditional costumes but as part of their everyday apparel. It is possible to learn much about the culture of the Zulu clan through their beadwork.

The glass bead trade in the province of KwaZulu-Natal is believed to be a fairly recent industry. In 1824, an Englishman named Henry Francis Fynn brought glass beads to the region to sell to the African people. Though the British are not considered the first to introduce glass beads, they were a main source through which the Zulu people could access the merchandise they needed. Glass beads had already been manufactured by the Egyptians centuries earlier around the same time when glass was discovered. Some research points to the idea that Egyptians tried to fool South Africans with glass by passing it off as jewels similar in value to gold or ivory. Phoenician mariners brought cargoes of these beads to Africa along with other wares. Before the Europeans arrived, many Arab traders brought glass beads down to the southern countries via camelback. During colonization, the Europeans facilitated and monopolized the glass bead market, and the Zulu nation became even more closely tied to this art form.

The Zulu people were not fooled into believing that glass beads were precious stones but, rather, used the beads to establish certain codes and rituals in their society. In the African tradition, kings were known to wear beaded regalia so heavy that they required the help of attendants to get out of their thrones. Zulu beadwork is involved in every realm of society, from religion and politics to family and marriage. Among the Zulu women, the craft of beadwork is used as an educational tool as well as a source of recreation and fashion. Personal adornment items include jewelry, skirts, neckbands, and aprons. Besides clothing and accessories, there are many other beaded objects in the Zulu culture, such as bead-covered gourds, which are carried around by women who are having fertility problems. Most importantly, however, Zulu beadwork is a source of communication. In the Zulu tradition, beads are a part of the language with certain words and symbols that can be easily read. A finished product is considered by many artists and collectors to be extremely poetic.

The code behind Zulu beadwork is relatively basic and extremely resistant to change. A simple triangle is the geometric shape used in almost all beaded items. A triangle with the apex pointing downward signifies an unmarried man, while one with the tip pointing upward is worn by an unmarried woman. Married women wear items with two triangles that form a diamond shape, and married men signify their marital status with two triangles that form an hourglass shape. Colors are also significant, though slightly more complicated since each color can have a negative and a positive meaning. Educated by their older sisters, young Zulu girls quickly learn how to send the appropriate messages to a courting male. Similarly, males learn how to interpret the messages and how to wear certain beads that express their interest in marriage.

The codes of the beads are so strong that cultural analysts fear that the beadwork tradition could prevent the Zulu people from progressing technologically and economically. Socioeconomic data shows that the more a culture resists change the more risk there is in a value system falling apart. Though traditional beadwork still holds a serious place in Zulu culture, the decorative art form is often

modified for tourists, with popular items such as the beaded fertility doll.

▶▶ **Matching**

**Questions 1-3**

Match each definition in List A with the term it defines in List B.

Write the correct letter **A - E** in boxes **1 - 3** on your answer sheet. There are more terms than definitions, so you will not use them all.

<b>List A</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
<b>1</b>	It means Place of Heaven.
<b>2</b>	It is the Portuguese name for southern Africa.
<b>3</b>	It means People of Heaven.

<b>List B</b>	<b>Terms</b>
<b>A</b>	Phoenician
<b>B</b>	Phoenician
<b>C</b>	AmaZulu
<b>D</b>	Explorer
<b>E</b>	KwaZulu

▶▶ **Short-Answer Questions**

**Questions 4-6**

Answer the questions below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.  
Write your answers in boxes 4-6 on your answer sheet.

- 4** Which country does the Zulu clan reside in?
- 5** When did the Portuguese arrive in KwaZulu-Natal?
- 6** How many members of the Zulu Kingdom are there?

▶▶ **True-False-Not Given Questions**

**Questions 7-11**

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the passage?

In boxes 7-11 on your answer sheet, write

- TRUE** if the statement is true according to the passage  
**FALSE** if the statement contradicts the passage  
**NOT GIVEN** if there is no information about this in the passage

- 7** The British were the first people to sell glass beads in Africa.

8 Henry Frances Flynn made a lot of money selling glass beads to the Zulu people.

9 The Zulu people believed that glass beads were precious stones.

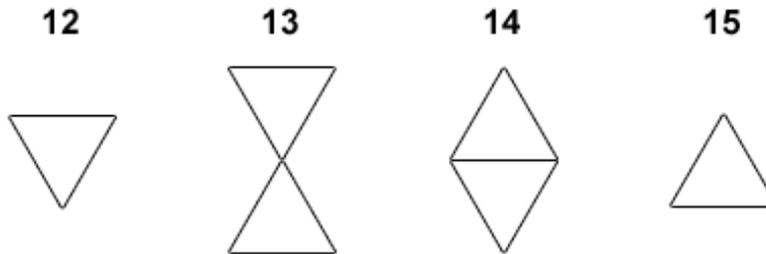
10 The Zulu people use glass beads in many aspects of their daily lives.

11 Zulu women believe that bead-covered gourds can help them have babies.

### ▶▶ Labeling a Diagram

Label the diagram below. Choose one or two words from the reading passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 12-15 on your answer sheet.

## Zulu Beadwork Code



### Answer Key

1. (E) Paragraph 1 states: "KwaZulu translates to mean "Place of Heaven."
2. (B) Paragraph 1 states: "'Natal' was the name the Portuguese explorers gave this region when they arrived in 1497"
3. (C) Paragraph 1 states: "By the late 1700s, the AmaZulu clan, meaning "People of Heaven,' constituted a significant nation."
4. South Africa. The first sentence of Paragraph 1 states that KwaZulu-Natal is a South African province.
5. 1497. Paragraph 1 states: "Portuguese explorers ..: arrived in 1497."
6. 11 million. Midway through paragraph 1 the passage states: "Today the Zulu clan represents the largest ethnic group in South Africa, with at least 11 million people in the kingdom."
7. False. Paragraph 2 talks about how the Egyptians were the first to bring beads to the area, though the British later facilitated the trade.
8. Not Given. Paragraph 2 states that Henry Frances Flynn brought glass beads to the region, but it doesn't state anywhere that he earned a lot of money doing this.
9. False. Paragraph 3 states: "The Zulu people were not fooled into believing that glass beads were precious stones but, rather, used the beads to establish certain codes and rituals in their society."
10. True. Paragraphs 3 discusses how beads are used for adornment, education, recreation, and communication.
11. True. Paragraph 3 discusses how bead-covered gourds are carried around by women who are

having fertility problems. "Fertility problems" means difficulty becoming and staying pregnant.

**12.** unmarried man. Paragraph 4 states: "A triangle with the apex pointing downward signifies an unmarried man."

**13.** married man. Paragraph 4 states that "married men signify their marital status with two triangles that form an hourglass shape."

**14.** married woman. Paragraph 4 states: "Married women wear items with two triangles that form a diamond shape."

**15.** unmarried woman. Paragraph 4 states that a triangle "with the tip pointing upward is worn by an unmarried woman."