

## **READING COMPREHENSION - TEXT**

**NOTE:**

**James Lovelock** is an independent scientist, environmentalist, author and researcher, Doctor Honoris Causa of several universities throughout the world. He is considered as one of the main ideological and provocative leaders in the development of environmental awareness. He is the author of "The Gaia Theory", and "The Ages of Gaia", which consider the planet Earth as a self-regulated living being. More recently, professor Lovelock published his new book, "The Revenge of Gaia".

**Read the following text carefully:**

### 'Enjoy life while you can'

By Decca Aitkenhead, *The Guardian*, Saturday March 1 2008 (abridged and edited)



**James Lovelock.**  
Photograph: Eamonn McCabe

In 1965 the Shell company wanted to know what the world would look like in the year 2000. They consulted a range of experts, who predicted fusion-powered hovercrafts<sup>1</sup> and "all sorts of fanciful technological stuff". When the oil company asked the scientist James Lovelock, he said that the main problem in 2000 would be the environment. "It will be worsening then to such an extent that it will seriously affect their business," he said.

"And of course," Lovelock says, with a smile 43 years later, "that's almost exactly what's happened."

Lovelock has been dispensing<sup>2</sup> predictions from his one-man laboratory in an old mill in Cornwall since the mid-1960s, the consistent accuracy of which have earned him a reputation as one of Britain's most respected - if maverick<sup>3</sup> - independent scientists. Working alone since the age of 40, he invented a device that detected CFCs<sup>4</sup>, which helped detect the growing hole in the ozone layer, and introduced the Gaia hypothesis, a revolutionary theory that the Earth is a self-regulating super-organism. Initially

ridiculed by many scientists as new age nonsense, today that theory forms the basis of

<sup>1</sup> a vehicle or craft that travels over land or water on a cushion of air provided by a downward blast. (fusion = nuclear fusion)

<sup>2</sup> making and giving out

<sup>3</sup> unorthodox or independent-minded

<sup>4</sup> Chlorofluorocarbons

Klassen 4A, 4B, 4FIS, 4GL, 4ISW, 4LZ, 4MR, 4W, 5KSW

almost all climate science.

For decades, his support of nuclear power appalled<sup>5</sup> fellow environmentalists - but recently increasing numbers of them have come around to his way of thinking. His latest book, *The Revenge of Gaia*, predicts that by 2020 extreme weather will be the  
 20 norm, causing global devastation<sup>6</sup>; that by 2040 much of Europe will be Saharan; and parts of London will be underwater. The most recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) uses less dramatic language - but its calculations aren't a million miles away from his.

As with most people, my panic about climate change is equalled only by my confusion  
 25 over what I ought to do about it. A meeting with Lovelock therefore feels a little like an audience with a prophet. Buried down a winding track through wild woodland, in an office full of books and papers and contraptions<sup>7</sup> involving dials and wires, the 88-year-old presents his thoughts with a quiet, unshakable conviction that can be unnerving. More alarming even than his apocalyptic climate predictions is his utter  
 30 certainty that almost everything we're trying to do about it is wrong.

On the day we meet, the Daily Mail has launched a campaign to rid Britain of plastic shopping bags. The initiative sits comfortably with current eco ideas, next to ethical consumption, carbon offsetting<sup>8</sup>, recycling and so on - all of which are based on the calculation that individual lifestyle adjustments can still save the planet. This is,  
 35 Lovelock says, a misguided fantasy. Most of the things we have been told to do might make us feel better, but they won't make any difference. Global warming has passed the point of no return, and catastrophe is unstoppable.

"It's just too late for it," he says. "Perhaps if we'd gone along routes like that in 1967, it might have helped. But we don't have time. All these standard green things, like  
 40 sustainable<sup>9</sup> development, I think these are just words that mean nothing. I get an awful lot of people coming to me saying you can't say that, because it gives us nothing to do. I say on the contrary, it gives us an immense amount to do. Just not the kinds of things you want to do."

He dismisses eco ideas briskly, one by one. "Carbon offsetting? I wouldn't dream of  
 45 it. It's just a joke. To pay money to plant trees, to think you're offsetting the carbon? You're probably making matters worse. You're far better off giving to the charity Cool Earth, which gives the money to the native peoples to not take down their forests."

Do he and his wife try to limit the number of flights they take? "No we don't. Because we can't." And recycling, he adds, is "almost certainly a waste of time and  
 50 energy", while having a "green lifestyle" amounts to little more than "ostentatious<sup>10</sup> grand gestures". He distrusts the notion of ethical consumption. "Because always, in the end, it turns out to be a scam<sup>11</sup> ... or if it wasn't one in the beginning, it becomes one."

But he saves his thunder for what he considers the emptiest false promise of all -  
 55 renewable energy. "You're never going to get enough energy from wind to run a society such as ours," he says. "Windmills! Oh no. No way of doing it. You can cover the whole country with the blasted things, millions of them. Waste of time."

This is all delivered with an air of friendly wonder at the troublesome stupidity of people. "I see it with everybody. People just want to go on doing what they're doing.  
 60 They want business as usual. They say, 'Oh yes, there's going to be a problem up ahead,' but they don't want to change anything."

Lovelock believes global warming is now irreversible, and that nothing can prevent

<sup>5</sup> horrified, shocked

<sup>6</sup> destruction, ruin

<sup>7</sup> a machine or device that appears strange or unnecessarily complicated, and often badly made or unsafe.

<sup>8</sup> *German*: CO<sub>2</sub>-Kompensationen

<sup>9</sup> conserving an ecological balance by avoiding depletion of natural resources

<sup>10</sup> showy, pompous

<sup>11</sup> a fraud or swindle

Klassen 4A, 4B, 4FIS, 4GL, 4ISW, 4LZ, 4MR, 4W, 5KSW

- large parts of the planet becoming too hot to inhabit, or sinking underwater, resulting in mass migration, famine and epidemics. Britain is going to become a lifeboat for
- 65 refugees from mainland Europe, so instead of wasting our time on wind turbines we need to start planning how to survive. To Lovelock, the logic is clear. The sustainability brigade<sup>12</sup> are insane to think we can save ourselves by going back to nature; our only chance of survival will come not from less technology, but more.
- 70 Nuclear power, he argues, can solve our energy problem - the bigger challenge will be food. "Maybe they'll synthesise food. I don't know. Synthesising food is not some mad visionary idea; you can buy it in Tesco's<sup>13</sup>, in the form of Quorn. It's not that good, but people buy it. You can live on it." But he fears we won't invent the necessary technologies in time, and expects "about 80%" of the world's population to be wiped
- 75 out by 2100. Prophets have been foretelling Armageddon<sup>14</sup> since time began, he says. "But this is the real thing."  
[...]
- Interviewers often remark upon the discrepancy between Lovelock's predictions of doom<sup>15</sup>, and his good humour. "Well I'm cheerful!" he says, smiling. "I'm an
- 80 optimist. It's going to happen." Humanity is in a period exactly like 1938-9, he explains, when "we all knew something terrible was going to happen, but didn't know what to do about it". But once the Second World War was under way, "everyone got excited, they loved the things they could do, ... so when I think of the approaching crisis now, I think in those terms. A sense of purpose - that's what people want."
- 85 [...]
- "There have been seven disasters since humans came on the earth, very similar to the one that's just about to happen. I think these events keep separating the wheat from the chaff. And eventually we'll have a human on the planet that really does understand it and can live with it properly. That's the source of my optimism."
- 90 What would Lovelock do now, I ask, if he were me? He smiles and says: "Enjoy life while you can. Because if you're lucky it's going to be 20 years before it hits the fan<sup>16</sup>."

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<sup>12</sup> a group of people with a common characteristic or dedicated to a common cause (*informal and often derogatory*)

<sup>13</sup> a supermarket chain

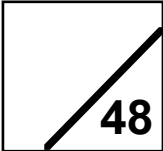
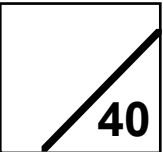
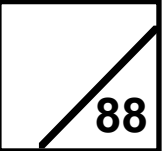

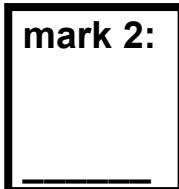
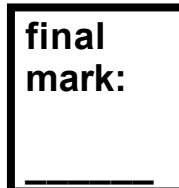
<sup>14</sup> (in the New Testament) the end of the world

<sup>15</sup> death, destruction, or some other terrible fate

<sup>16</sup> have exciting and grave consequences

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Content

<b>1. Reading Comprehension</b>	<b>(approx. 1½ hours)</b>	<b>48 points</b>	
<b>2. Grammar</b>	<b>(approx. ½ hour)</b>	<b>40 points</b>	
<b>Total</b>		<b>88 points</b>	
		<b>= mark 1</b>	
<b>3. Essay</b>	<b>(approx. 2 hours)</b>	<b>= mark 2</b>	
<b>Final mark: average of mark 1 and mark 2</b>			

**All the best!**

M. Dambach  
C. Wirz  
H. Müller  
L. Leppich  
H. Stone  
F. Harris  
J. Dyer

**1. READING COMPREHENSION**

**1.1 Language**

**1.1.1 Explain the following in your own words or give a synonym: (2 points each)**


1.1.1.1 consistent (line 10)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1.1.1.2 launched (line 31)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1.1.1.3 charity (line 46)

\_\_\_\_\_ 

**1.1.2 Give the noun derived from the words below: (1 point each)**

1.1.2.1 to know (line 1) \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.2.2 quiet (line 28) \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.2.3 insane (line 67) \_\_\_\_\_



**1.1.3. Paraphrase the underlined parts:**

1.1.3.1 initially ridiculed (line 14f) (2 points)

\_\_\_\_\_

1.1.3.2 buried down a winding track (line 26) (3 points)

\_\_\_\_\_

1.1.3.3 he dismisses eco ideas briskly (line 44) (2 points)

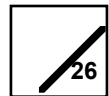
\_\_\_\_\_



**1.2 Comprehension questions**

**Answer the following questions in your own words as fully as possible. Write your answers on a separate piece of paper. No points will be awarded for repeated answers. Up to six additional points will be awarded for the quality of your language.**

- 1.2.1 In what way was James Lovelock’s prediction in 1965 different from that of his colleagues? 2 points
- 1.2.2 What does James Lovelock think of eco ideas? Answer this question by giving three examples from the text and by giving Lovelock’s reasons for his opinion. 6 points
- 1.2.3 Which are the two main problems that will have to be approached, and what, according to James Lovelock, will help? 4 points
- 1.2.4 What are Lovelock’s predictions about the consequences of global warming? 6 points
- 1.2.5 Explain why Lovelock is still cheerful and optimistic. 4 points
- 1.2.6 At the beginning of the article, Lovelock is described as ‘maverick’ - find two examples from the text that support this characterisation. 4 points



**Language in comprehension questions**



**2. GRAMMAR**

**2.1 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct form and write them into the gaps provided on this task sheet. Do not add any other words. (1/2 point each)**

**Rebecca Hosking - camerawoman to environment campaigner**

When (film) ..... for the BBC on an island off Hawaii, Rebecca Hosking (see) ..... the suffering of seabirds and turtles . They (die) ..... after (swallow) ..... plastic that (throw) ..... away. She (weep) ..... as a baby albatross (die) ..... in her arms because of the plastic it (swallow) ..... . This experience inspired her to take action.

When Rebecca, 33, who (work) ..... for the BBC’s Natural World programme at that time, returned to her home in the Devon village of Modbury, she was still angry enough to try and do something about the horrors she (see) .....

It is estimated that more than 17 billion plastic bags (give) ..... away by supermarkets annually producing almost 60,000 tonnes of waste.

She managed to persuade shops in the town to stop using plastic bags for six months and instead provide their customers with more environmentally friendly biodegradable alternatives.

Modbury, with its 43 shopkeepers serving 760 households, (become) ..... the first town in the UK to become officially plastic-bag free just a little over a year ago.

Since the start of the project, many other towns (get) ..... in touch (want) ..... to know how to follow her example. And thousands of people in Britain (write) ..... for information and to date more than 80 other towns and cities (decide) ..... to follow the little Devon town's lead.

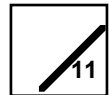
And her gesture (now turn) ..... into a campaign. She said: "It's estimated that 100 billion tonnes of plastic (float) ..... round our world's oceans entangling and being eaten by pretty much every single marine creature.

"What we witnessed was just heartbreaking and so unnecessary. All this damage is simply caused by our throwaway living and it seems to me that you have to stop the problem at source.

If plastic bags (enter) ..... the ocean, they (mistake) ..... by turtles and marine mammals as jellyfish, and if eaten they will clog up their stomachs and throats.

Everyone in the town (be) ..... very supportive and I do think people's attitudes (change) ..... We're quite an old-fashioned town and you always used to see older people with baskets, and now there are a lot more younger people carrying them too."

source of original text: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/main.jhtml?xml=/earth/2007/11/27/eabags127.xml> (heavily edited)



**2. 2 Rewrite the sentence using the word given so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence. Use gerunds or infinitives. Do not change the word given. (1 point each)**

- 2.2.1 Michael said to Jane: "I wouldn't travel to China now if I were you."  
**advise** Michael ..... travel to China.
- 2.2.2 Patrick likes playing football very much.  
**keen** Patrick ..... football.
- 2.2.3 She looked after our horses when she was a teenager.  
**used to** She ..... after our horses when she was a teenager.
- 2.2.4 Susan forced Mark to come to the cinema with her.  
**made** Susan ..... to the cinema with her.

2.2.5 Julie no longer went out with Freddy.

**stopped** Julie ..... out with Freddy.

2.2.6 Bill said to Hillary: "You never help with the housework."

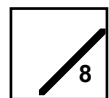
**accuse** Bill ..... with the housework.

2.2.7 I am sorry I didn't recognize you.

**apologize** I ..... you.

2.2.8 Jimmy said to Maggie: "Help me!"

**wanted** Jimmy ..... him.



**2.3 Combine the following sentences, using conditional sentences with "if".**  
**(2 points each)**

2.3.1 Mark failed his driving test. He drove through a red light.

.....  
.....

2.3.2 It is raining hard. We can't go for a walk.

.....  
.....

2.3.3 John loves her so much. That's why he doesn't leave her.

.....  
.....

2.3.4 I forgot to bring a tin opener. We can't eat the apricots.

.....  
.....





**2.4 Below, you find four statements that a scientist made last week according to a newspaper article. Report what he said, using reporting verbs in the past tense. Do not use the same reporting verb twice. (2 points each)**

2.4.1 "The glacier at the back of the valley is no longer there. It has vanished."

.....  
.....

2.4.2 "In 1970, the tip of the glacier still nearly reached the lake."

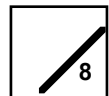
.....  
.....

2.4.3 "Will tourists no longer come to this place because they can't see the glacier?"

.....  
.....

2.4.4 "The owners of the hotel must find a new way to attract tourists."

.....  
.....



**2.5 Correct the mistake in the following sentences. (1/2 point each)**

2.5.1 She knows my sister good.

2.5.2 We have been looking into this matter since twenty years.

2.5.3 He didn't say something before he left.

2.5.4 He couldn't give me an advice.

2.5.5 I paid the coffee and left the restaurant.

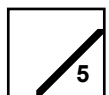
2.5.6 She explained me that she wouldn't have enough time to complete the job.

2.5.7 Don't you think that the soup smells deliciously?

2.5.8 What are you thinking of Ian McEwan's latest novel?

2.5.9 He always giggles and chats, what makes his teacher really furious.

2.5.10 Ouch!! --- What's the matter? -- I've just hit the head against the open cupboard door.



### III. ESSAY

- **Choose one of the following topics to write an essay of 400-600 words.**
- **Hand in a fair copy.**
- **Count your words and state the number at the end of your essay.**

1. "Building a peaceful and better world in the Olympic Spirit ... requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play."  
*(Olympic Spirit Group, based in Geneva, Switzerland is officially authorised by the International Olympic Committee to design, develop and manage Olympic Spirit Centers worldwide)*

*Discuss to what extent a sports event like the Olympic Games in Beijing can make a contribution to a better world.*

2. "Anyone who lives within their means<sup>2</sup> suffers from a lack of imagination."  
*Oscar Wilde (Irish playwright, novelist, poet, 1854-1900)*

*What does Wilde mean and what are the social implications? Discuss how far you agree or disagree with the quotation.*

3. "Enjoy life while you can!"

*Write a critical assessment from your point of view of James Lovelock's ideas and opinions, as they are reported in the article in the Reading Comprehension part of this exam.*

4. "Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon... which cuts without wounding and ennobles<sup>3</sup> the man who wields<sup>4</sup> it. It is a sword that heals."  
*Martin Luther King, Jr., (1929 – 1968), Baptist minister and a leader in the American civil rights movement.*

*"To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving<sup>5</sup> peace."  
George Washington (1732 – 1799), the first President of the United States.*

*Explain these two statements and compare the different points of view. Present your own opinion.*

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<sup>1</sup> mutual: shared by two or more parties/people

<sup>2</sup> means: all the money that someone has

<sup>3</sup> ennobles: gives (somebody) a better moral character

<sup>4</sup> wields: holds and uses

<sup>5</sup> preserving: keeping (something in its original state)