

ISE III

Sample Independent listening task – Saving water in Bermuda

Examiner rubric

You're going to hear part of a talk about an environmental issue. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

The task will play once.

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

Give the candidate some blank notepaper.

Now listen to the task again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to summarise the different ways Bermuda deals with the lack of water and outline the effectiveness of these methods. Are you ready?

The task will play once.

Now summarise the different ways Bermuda deals with the lack of water and outline the effectiveness of these methods. I'll stop you after one minute.

Audio script

Welcome to the programme. Today, we are looking at the issue of water on the island of Bermuda in the Caribbean. This island has no fresh-water sources, so the earliest inhabitants were completely dependent on collecting rainwater in order to survive. And the people of Bermuda have gone about solving the problem in an interesting way.

So, how do people deal with the lack of fresh water? Well, the first thing that visitors to Bermuda notice is the stepped roofs on the island's houses, which allows for the rainwater to be collected easily. Each roof is constructed as a series of long steps, rather than the smooth slope you find on conventional roofs. But can we make sure this water is safe to drink? Well, the problem of the lack of drinkable water is solved by painting the roofs white. The sun reflects and purifies the water as it runs down the roof.

Another way of dealing with this issue is having water tanks under houses. These tanks are able to fill up quickly during periods of heavy rain. This may sound strange, but these tanks are actually a very efficient way of storing rainwater. Overall, it's an ingenious solution to a constant problem.

And now let's take a closer look at how effective this solution actually is. Well the first thing to consider is that currently it allows householders to be self-sufficient in water rather than relying on government-funded supplies, which are expensive. And then, of course, this way of managing the water supply also has the effect of making local people very careful about their water use. When people are responsible for their own supply, they tend not to waste it.

Unfortunately, though, I fear that the country is likely to outgrow these ways of managing water in the future. We may well find that water collection becomes insufficient for the increased number of residents. Clearly a growing population is a challenge to the traditional ways of managing their water supply.

Although the island is also very reliant on tourism, we can't ignore the tourists' expectations for an unlimited water supply. They expect to have easy access to leisure facilities such as swimming pools that require huge amounts of fresh water. I'm sure you'd agree that this puts a lot of pressure on Bermuda's water supply.

Despite this, Bermuda's roofs are a great inspiration for the future and it's hoped that architects may be able to incorporate this idea into their designs. Next week, we'll examine some more eco-friendly designs.

Answers

Main point/gist: The speaker is talking about ways of saving water in Bermuda and how effective they are.

Summarise the different ways Bermuda deals with the lack of water

- ▶ Stepped roofs – rainwater collected easily
- ▶ Roofs are white – sun reflects and purifies the water
- ▶ Water tanks are under the house – fill up and store rainwater efficiently

Outline the effectiveness of these ways

- ▶ Residents are self-sufficient in water – government-funded water is expensive
 - ▶ People are more responsible with water – less waste
- But:
- ▶ Outgrow these ways of managing water – insufficient for the population
 - ▶ Tourists expect an unlimited supply of water – leisure facilities (eg swimming pools)