



Reading (I)

Read the passages fluently using the correct pronunciation.

Reading Passage 1

The elderly man squatting by the side of the road received many pitiful stares, but that was all he got – stares. He looked so frail, a sign that he might have been deprived of food far longer than he should have been.

Several passers-by dropped their loose change into the bowl in front of the man. With each clink, the man nodded to show his appreciation.

Just then, a young man dashed forward and grabbed the bowl of coins. Surprisingly, the elderly man rose and fought him off aggressively. Several people stopped to stare, preferring not to intrude. A young lady who noticed the crowd jostled her way to the front. Upon seeing the scene before her, she marched up without hesitation and pulled the two men apart. There was little consolation for the coins had scattered everywhere and most of them had rolled into a gutter. It was impossible to retrieve them.

Reading Passage 2

Our trip was beset with problems from the start. First, the flight was delayed. We wasted three hours at the airport before the announcement was made telling us that we could board the plane.

When we eventually reached our destination, the weather turned out to be much colder than we had expected. The low temperature was intolerable. The queue at the taxi stand was long and we only got into a taxi half an hour later.

Our hotel was in a residential area and as we arrived close to midnight, the surroundings were eerily quiet. The taxi driver told us that it was not advisable to be out in the streets so late at night. That night we went to bed hungry as it was doubtful that there were any eateries opened. We were reluctant to venture too far from our hotel as well. We wondered if we should look for alternative accommodation in the heart of the city.