

Advanced level Reading sample

Put the words in the box in the right gaps of the text. Keep in mind that there are three extra words that are not to be placed anywhere.

a) assist b) crafts c) drop d) endures e) huts f) range g) raise h) runs
i) sought-after j) tan k) witness

TRAVELLER'S GUIDE: DUBAI

Blissfully balmy by day, cool and breezy in the evenings – the weather is what brings most visitors to Dubai at the start of the year. Temperatures in the emirate **1** _____ considerably from a peak of about 45C in July, and the humidity dissipates. Now the days are warm enough to work on your **2** _____ or take a dip in the Arabian Sea, while the nights are decidedly cooler, averaging about 15C.

For locals, life moves back out of air-conditioned rooms and into the outdoors. This is also the time when myths are discredited. People do walk in Dubai and it does have a cultural agenda: a highlight this spring is the contemporary Art Dubai event from 21-24 March. Right now, the hot ticket is the Dubai Shopping Festival, which **3** _____ until 5 February and offers retail discounts, competitions and entertainment.

Dubai is one of seven emirates that form the United Arab Emirates. Last month, the UAE celebrated 40 years of independence from Britain. The celebrations' theme is "Spirit of the Union"—and one of the events still running is a market of local **4** _____ at the Global Village (until 12 March).

Another winter highlight is the racing season, which culminates in the Dubai World Cup Carnival on 31 March. **5** _____ tickets can be bought online from 350 dirhams (£60). Be sure to book in advance.

Winter is also when Emiratis participate in traditional events, including weekend evening gatherings at the heritage villages to recite poetry or dance the popular folk dances from the Arabian peninsula. There's also the chance to see rifle-throwing competitions and to **6** _____ elaborate re-enactments of traditional Bedouin weddings.

A good place to start is at Dubai's Heritage and Diving Village on the waterfront at Al Shindagha, which is the oldest part of Dubai and lies at the mouth of Dubai Creek. Here a simple fishing and pearling village of palm-frond **7** _____ has sprawled along the waterfront for hundreds of years.

For visitors, golf is another big lure, and there are several courses where you can take a swing. Alternatively, you can watch some of the biggest names in world golf tee off in professional tournaments such as the Dubai Desert Classic at the Emirates Golf Club from 6-12 February.

Dubai airport has an astonishing 13 non-stop flights a day from Heathrow, with British Airways, Royal Brunei, Virgin Atlantic and Emirates. Emirates also flies daily from Gatwick, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle and Glasgow. Etihad Airways flies from Heathrow and Manchester to Abu Dhabi, with free coach connections to Dubai, a 60- to 75-minute drive. Many other airlines, including Air France, Turkish Airlines and Qatar Airways, fly from a **8** _____ of UK cities via their hubs to Dubai.

Key

- 1 drop
- 2 tan
- 3 runs
- 4 crafts
- 5 sought-after
- 6 witness
- 7 huts
- 8 range