

IELTS

# *Preparation and Practice*

*Reading and Writing*  
GENERAL TRAINING MODULE

WRITING

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Peggy Read

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## *Reading and Writing* GENERAL TRAINING MODULE

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INDONESIA AUSTRALIA LANGUAGE FOUNDATION

Melbourne

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

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UNIVERSITY PRESS

253 Normanby Road, South Melbourne, Australia

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.

It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship, and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Athens Auckland Bangkok Bogotá Buenos Aires Calcutta

Cape Town Chennai Dar es Salaam Delhi Florence Hong Kong Istanbul

Karachi Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Mumbai Nairobi

Paris Port Moresby São Paulo Singapore Taipei Tokyo Toronto Warsaw

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First published 1997

Reprinted 1999

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Cataloguing-in-Publication data:

Pejovic, Vladimir.

IELTS preparation and practice: reading and writing.

ISBN 0 19 554094 8.

1. English language — Textbooks for foreign speakers.

2. International English Language Testing System. 3. English language — Examinations, questions, etc. I. Nicklin, Michael. II. Read, Peggy. III. Title. IV. Title: International English Language Testing System preparation and practice. (Series: IELTS preparation and practice).

428

Edited by Eliza Collins

Cover and text design by Rob Cowpe Design

Illustrations by Juli Kent

Printed through Bookpac Production Services, Singapore





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# Preface

## How to Use this Book

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There are five main sections in this book. Each section looks at a different section of the IELTS General Training Module Reading and Writing tests.

At the beginning of each chapter there is a *Demonstration* to show you how a skilled reader and writer of English would answer the questions quickly and confidently. Instead of trying to answer the Demonstration questions by yourself, you should follow carefully the steps set out in the *How to Answer* section. In this way you will develop an understanding of the most efficient test strategies.

The *Analysis and Practice* section comes after the Demonstration and it is here the skills and strategies from the Demonstration will be explained in detail. You will have an opportunity to practise what you have learned in various activities; and, since working effectively in a limited time is very important in tests, each activity has a *Time target*. The Time target gives you a suggested time limit for completing the activity. Follow the instructions for each activity and when you have finished, check your answers in the *Answer Key* at the back of the book.

There are also *Practice Reading and Writing tests* for you to attempt once you have completed all the activities. There is a sample Reading *answer sheet* on page 155 for you to photocopy and use each time that you do a Practice Reading test. The answers for these tests are also included in the Answer Key.



# General Training Reading

## About the Reading Test

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The IELTS General Training Reading test takes 60 minutes. It is divided into three sections.

- **Section 1** has short texts which come from advertisements, timetables, instruction manuals and the like.
- **Section 2** has longer texts (usually two texts of about 500 words each) which give information and advice about education and training.
- **Section 3** has one longer text (about 700 words) with more complex language and structure. The text will be about a general topic and will come from sources like general interest magazines.

There are between 38 and 42 questions to answer. The questions may come *before* or *after* the reading texts. There is a variety of questions. Often there are examples of how to answer the questions.

You may mark or write on the question paper, but all answers must be written on the answer sheet.

## Section 1

---

For Section 1, you should use the following three-step strategy:

- Step 1 Look at the text quickly  
(Survey the text)
- Step 2 Read the instructions and the question(s)
- Step 3 Find the answer

We will now look at a demonstration of how to apply this strategy to various Section 1 questions. Later, the strategies will be discussed in more detail and you will be able to practise them.

## ***Demonstration—Text and Questions***

Do not read the following text and questions first. Go directly to the *How to Answer* section which will show you the most efficient way of answering the questions.



### **YOUR POST OFFICE at your service**



At our main offices we are introducing, where appropriate, a number of changes to help improve the standard of service provided to our customers.

Similar developments are taking place at many of our agency offices.

#### **Improvements:**

- more staff at peak periods for faster service
- a single queuing system for fairer service
- special service windows for some transactions
- Post-Shops in main offices with their own separate service till for greeting cards, stationery, stamps and gifts
- the refurbishment of a number of main offices to provide a better environment
- new vending machine services such as cash-change machines, and phonecard and stamp dispensers for faster service
- extended opening hours at selected main offices
- a new range of air package services.

#### ***Questions 1–3***

*Do the following statements agree with the information given in the reading passage above? Write:*

- |                  |                                                       |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TRUE</b>      | <i>if the statement is true</i>                       |
| <b>FALSE</b>     | <i>if the statement is false</i>                      |
| <b>NOT GIVEN</b> | <i>if the information is not given in the passage</i> |

*in the correct boxes on your answer sheet.*

- 1 All offices will have more staff throughout the day.
- 2 There will be special service windows for cash transactions at all main offices.
- 3 It will be possible to obtain some items from machines in many offices.

#### *Question 4*

Using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** answer the following question.

- 4 Which change will ensure that the customers are treated more fairly?

#### *Question 5*

Choose the correct answer by writing **A, B, C, or D**.

- 5 Which offices will stay open longer?
 

A all offices	B all main offices
C some main offices	D some agency offices

## **How to Answer**

---

### **BEFORE YOU ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS**

**Step 1—Look at the text quickly (survey the text)**

The heading tells you that the text is about *service* at post offices. The sub-heading and the points listed below it show *eight improvements* to the services.

### **QUESTION 1**

**Step 2—Read the instructions and the question**

The instructions for questions 1–3 tell you to write *True, False* or *Not Given* on the answer sheet.

You are looking for specific information in the passage. The key words for question one are:

All offices will have more staff throughout the day.

The question is about *more* (additional) *staff*. You should also note that the question specifies *all* (not just some) *offices* and it also mentions *throughout* the day (that is, *all* day, not just part of the day).

**Step 3—Find the answer**

The best way to find the answer is to look quickly through the text for the key words or their **synonyms** (words with similar meaning). Then, read the phrase or sentence that contains those words.



Looking for the word 'office', in the first section of the text you find that the changes are being introduced in 'our main offices' and 'many of our agency offices'. It seems that the changes do **not** refer to **all** offices.

The word 'staff' is in the first improvement listed. It says there are 'more staff at peak periods'. This means that there are only more staff at the busiest times of the day and **not** all day. Therefore, the answer is FALSE.

## QUESTION 2

### Step 2—Read the question

The key words are underlined:

There will be special service windows for cash transactions at all main offices.

You need to find information about *special service windows*, namely: their functions (are they used for cash transactions?) and where they are located (are they at *all main* offices?).

### Step 3—Find the answer

'Special service windows' are mentioned in the third point, but *cash transactions* are not mentioned. There is no information in the text about what kinds of transactions take place. Nor is there any information about whether these windows will be at *all main* post offices. Therefore, the correct answer is NOT GIVEN.

## QUESTION 3

### Step 2—Read the question

The key words are:

It will be possible to obtain some items from machines.

You should search the text for the word 'machines' or synonyms.

### Step 3—Find the answer

Point 6 mentions 'cash machines' and 'phonecard and stamp dispensers'. So you can *obtain* (get) cash (one item) from a machine, but what are 'dispensers'? The text tells you that they provide a faster service, and vending machines do that, so it is reasonable to guess that a dispenser is a kind of machine. So, you can get *some items* from machines. Therefore, the correct answer is TRUE.

**Note:** If you don't know the meaning of a word, you may be able to work out its meaning by looking at the words around it. This technique is called *guessing from context*. It is a very important skill and will be discussed in detail at the end of Section 2.

## QUESTION 4

### Step 2—Read the instructions and the question

Here you are instructed to write your answer in **up to three words** (i.e. one, two or three words).

The key words in the question 4 are:

Which change will ensure that the customers are treated more fairly?

All of the changes mentioned in the text are to 'help improve the standard of service'. Which one provides *fairer* service?

### Step 3—Find the answer

Point one provides 'faster service'. Point two provides 'fairer service'. You don't need to read further than this. The answer is 'single queuing system' (3 words).

## QUESTION 5

### Step 2—Read the instructions and the question

The instruction tells you to write a **letter** (A, B, C or D), not a **word**.

The key words in the question are underlined:

Which offices will stay open longer?

The answer choices also help here. Factors such as the type of office (*main* or *agency*) and whether it is *some* or *all* offices are relevant.

### Step 3—Find the answer

We have already looked for the key word 'office' (in question 1) and found that the changes are being introduced in 'our main offices' (sentence 1) and 'many of our agency offices'. It seems that the changes do not refer to all offices.

Looking quickly for *stay open longer* or synonyms, we find 'extended opening hours' in the seventh improvement. However, it mentions only 'selected main offices'. The answer is therefore C—'some main offices'.

## Analysis and Practice

---

The three different kinds of questions used in the Demonstration are the most common question types in Section 1 of the Reading test.

- True-False-Not Given (questions 1–3)
- short answer of no more than three words (question 4)
- Multiple choice (question 5)

Following the three-step strategy:

- survey the text
- read the instructions and the question(s)
- find the answers

is usually the fastest and surest way of doing the kinds of questions you will find in Section 1. We will now look at each of these steps in more detail.

### STEP 1—SURVEY THE TEXT

You can quickly obtain a lot of useful information about a text by just looking at:

- the title
- section headings or subheadings
- any words in special print (**bold**, *italics*, CAPITALS or underlined)
- any diagrams, tables or pictures
- any unusual features of the text (e.g. layout or boxed text).



Surveying tells you about the topic or subject of the text. It may also tell you something about how the text is organised (subheadings are especially useful). Surveying may also tell you something about the writer's purpose—whether the intention is to give instructions, to compare, to give information, and so on.

### ACTIVITY 1

In the following text you can see only the layout, the title, the subheadings, the illustration and a few words in special print above the illustration. These are the features of the text you look at when you survey. With only this information, answer the questions that follow the text.

Time target: up to 2 minutes

## HEART ATTACK

[Redacted text block]

### Signs of a heart attack

- [Redacted text]
- [Redacted text]
- [Redacted text]
- [Redacted text]

### Action to take

[Redacted text block]

## Preventing a heart attack

### Stop smoking

[Redacted text block]

### Take regular exercise

[Redacted text block]

### Check your blood pressure

[Redacted text block]

### Eat a sensible diet

[Redacted text block]

### Keep your weight down

[Redacted text block]

### Avoid any unnecessary stress

[Redacted text block]

*Put the patient in a semi-recumbent position*



- 1 What is the text about?
  - A the heart
  - B smoking
  - C healthy habits
  - D heart attacks
- 2 How many signs of a heart attack are described?
- 3 Name two things that are not good for your heart.
- 4 The semi-recumbent position is dangerous for someone who has had a heart attack. Is this statement TRUE, FALSE or is the information NOT GIVEN?

Check your answers with the Answer Key.

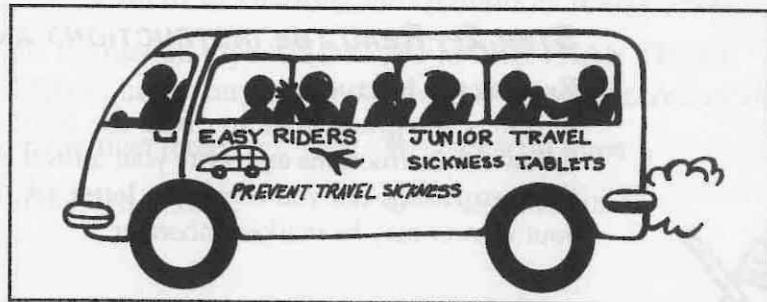
The next activity gives you a complete text, but **do not read the complete text in the normal way**. You should be able to answer the questions below the text by only *surveying* the text.



## ACTIVITY 2

Survey the following text and then answer the questions using the strategy described in the Demonstration.

Time target: 2 minutes



If you travel by bus, car, boat, plane or train with your children, make sure that travel-sickness doesn't spoil the journey.

Take a of packet of EASY RIDERS.

Easy Riders are **chocolate flavoured** but they aren't lollies. They're children's travel-sickness tablets.

The tablets contain doses that are **safe for children**, so there's no danger of overdose if you follow the instructions on the packet.

You can give EASY RIDERS to your children as a preventative measure or wait to see if travel-sickness develops and then give one.

So if you're taking your children on a journey, don't forget the EASY RIDERS.

An easy ride for your children means an easier ride for you.

*Available from your local chemist or drugstore.*

Produced by

**LUCKY PHARMACEUTICAL CO.**

*Questions 1–3*

1 Easy Riders are:

- A a kind of game
- B a travel company
- C a kind of medicine
- D special bus tickets

2 Name one place where you can buy Easy Riders?

3 Who are Easy Riders for?

Check your answers with the Answer Key.

**STEP 2—READ THE INSTRUCTIONS AND THE QUESTION**

**Reading the instructions**

It is very important that you read the instructions carefully. If you do not follow the instructions and write your answer the wrong way—for example, if the instructions tell you to write a letter (A, B, C) and you write a word—your answer may be marked incorrect.



**ACTIVITY 3**

Here are some questions about the first part of this book. The questions are followed by a candidate's sample answers. Is the information in each answer correct? Try to check the answer by scanning earlier parts of this book. Also, check that the questions have been answered in the correct way. If not, what is wrong with them?

*Questions 1–3*

*Using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS**, answer the following questions.*



- 1 Who published this book? Oxford University Press
- 2 Where must the candidates write their answers in the IELTS Reading test? On the official answer sheet
- 3 Name one thing a reader can learn about a text by surveying it.  
The topic, organisation and writer's purpose

*Questions 4 –6*

*Read the statements below. Write:*

- TRUE**                      *if the statement is true*  
**FALSE**                    *if the statement is false*  
**NOT GIVEN**    *if there is no information about this in the text*

- 4 The first section of the Reading test has longer texts than the other sections in the test. False
- 5 Candidates should read instructions carefully before writing their answers. T
- 6 Most IELTS Reading texts come from British publications.  
no information

*Questions 7 –8*

*Answer the questions by choosing the appropriate letters A–D.*

- 7 If the instruction says 'USING NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS', how many words should you write? one, two or three  

A more than three	B exactly three
C one, two or three	D less than three
- 8 Which of the following do you NOT do when surveying a text?  
A read the title  
B read most of the words in the text carefully  
C look at illustrations and diagrams  
D read section headings and/or subheadings  
B

Check your answers with the Answer Key.

In the real IELTS Test, it is also essential that you write your answer **in the correct box** on the answer sheet. You should keep checking that you are writing every answer in the box that has the same number as the question. You will have a chance to practise this when you do the Practice tests at the end of this book.

### Reading the question

You should try to identify:

- the topic (the subject, or what the question is about)
- exactly what you need to know about the topic.

It is a good idea to underline the key words in the question as you read. (Remember that you can write on the question booklet.) Look back at the Demonstration answers for Reading Sample 1 to see how you should do this. For multiple choice questions you may have to underline key words in the answer choices as well as in the question.

### STEP 3—LOOKING FOR THE ANSWERS

In exams you do not have time to read every word carefully. **Remember that your task is to answer the questions, not to understand all of the text.** It is often only necessary to read *a small part of the text* carefully to answer the questions.

The best way to find details quickly is to use *scanning*. Scanning is searching for key words or synonyms by looking quickly through the text. Your eyes move across and down through the text without reading in the normal way. For example, you *scan* when you look for a word in a dictionary. You do not read every word as you search for the word(s) you want.

It is easiest to scan for numbers or words which start with capital letters (such as most names) because these stand out in a text.



### ACTIVITY 4

Answer the questions that follow the next text by scanning. Use the names and numbers to find the answers to the questions.

Time target: 3 minutes



### SOURCES OF VITAMINS



Most vitamins we need are available in sufficient quantities in vegetables and fruits. To give some examples, we need about 50mg of vitamin C per day, and we can get it readily from citrus fruits, tomatoes and green vegetables. Vitamin A (800mcg per day) is also available mainly from green vegetables.

Some vitamins, however, can only be found in sufficient quantities in animal products. For example, vitamin B12, of which we need about 2mcg per day for healthy red blood cells, is usually obtained from liver, sardines and eggs. The

15mg of niacin we need is most readily obtained from lean meats and fish.

Vitamin D is unusual in that it is usually produced by our own bodies after receiving sunlight on our skin. The growth and development of bones and teeth relies partly on us having 10mcg of vitamin D per day.

- 1 What is one source of Vitamin A?
- 2 We need 15mg per day of which vitamin?
- 3 We need 2mcg per day of which vitamin?
- 4 How much Vitamin D should we have per day?

Check your answers with the Answer Key.

Scanning for normal words is a bit more difficult than scanning for numbers or names, but if you practise you will be able to do it more quickly and efficiently.



#### ACTIVITY 5

Go back to the text 'Easy Riders' extract on page 7. Answer the following question by scanning only.

- 1 How many times is the word 'children' mentioned in the text?

Time target: 20 seconds

Check your answer in the Answer Key.



#### ACTIVITY 6

Now try to answer some IELTS-type questions about the 'Easy Riders' text. First, survey the text (Step 1) again. Read the instructions and the question (Step 2). Decide which words from the following questions are key words and then scan for those key words or their synonyms to find the answer (Step 3).

Time target: 2 minutes

*Questions 1–3*

*Do the following statements agree with the information given in the Reading text?*

*Write:*

- |                  |                                                    |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TRUE</b>      | <i>if the statement is true</i>                    |
| <b>FALSE</b>     | <i>if the statement is false</i>                   |
| <b>NOT GIVEN</b> | <i>if the information is not given in the text</i> |

- 1 Easy Riders can be used for land, sea or air travel.
- 2 Easy Riders are chocolates.
- 3 An overdose of this medicine is not dangerous.

*Question 4*

*Choose the correct answer by writing A, B, C or D.*

- 4 When should you give Easy Riders to children?
  - A only before the journey begins
  - B only when the child is sick
  - C both one before the journey starts and another during the journey if there are symptoms of travel sickness
  - D either one before the journey begins or one during the journey if there are symptoms of travel sickness



Check your answers with the Answer Key.

**ACTIVITY 7**

In this activity we will again practise scanning for synonyms. The complete 'Heart Attacks' text follows. Do not read the text in the normal way. Look at the underlined words and phrases below and scan for their synonyms in the text.

Time target: 3 minutes

- 1 The person who has had the heart attack may not be conscious.
- 2 Check the heart rate and breathing.
- 3 Try to lose weight.
- 4 Victims of heart attacks have difficulty breathing.
- 5 Pain may begin suddenly in the centre of the chest.
- 6 The person should sit in a way that does not put too much pressure on the chest.

Check your answers in the Answer Key.

**HEART ATTACK**

A heart attack is caused by a reduction in the blood supply to the heart muscles. This is most commonly caused by a blood clot obstructing an artery in the heart. Heart attacks can be mild or severe. If you suspect that someone has had a heart attack call for medical help immediately.

## **Signs of a heart attack**

- Sudden onset of pain in the centre of the chest. The pain will be vice-like, crushing. It could be confused with very severe indigestion. It may spread upwards and outwards to the throat, jaw and arms.
- Shortness of breath.
- The pulse rate may become faster or weak and irregular.
- The casualty will become pale and sweaty and show signs of shock (page 39).

## **Action to take**

Call an ambulance. Check the heartbeat and breathing. If it has stopped, then commence external chest compression and mouth-to-mouth ventilation immediately (see page 6).

If the casualty is conscious, move gently and as little as possible into a comfortable position. A semi-recumbent position (shown below) is the best. It is easiest for the casualty to breathe in this position and takes some of the strain off the heart.

Loosen any clothing around the neck and reassure that help is on its way. Monitor heart rate and breathing regularly until help arrives. If the person becomes unconscious move to the recovery position.

## **Preventing a heart attack**

### **Stop smoking**

Smoking is the major cause of heart disease. It damages the arteries and the circulation of blood. Stop immediately.

### **Take regular exercise**

Steady and regular exercise is very beneficial. Walking is a good form of exercise.

### **Check your blood pressure**

High blood pressure can cause a heart attack. Ask your doctor to check your blood pressure.

### **Eat a sensible diet**

Cut down on the amount of fatty foods that you eat. Cut fat off meat.

### **Keep your weight down**

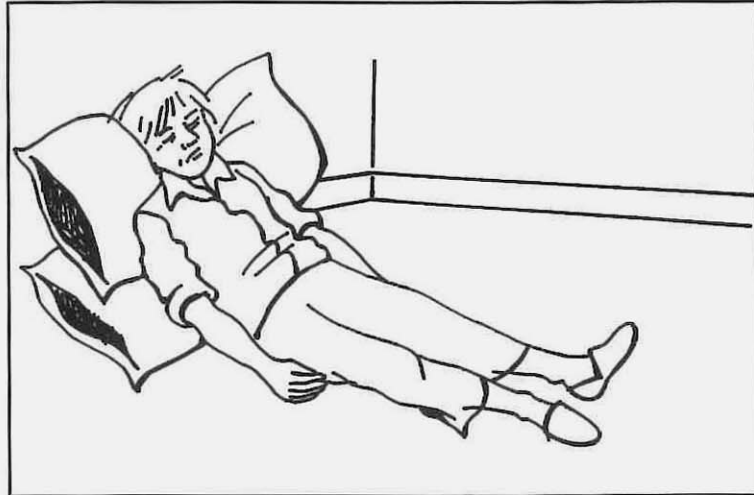
If you are overweight, this puts an extra strain on the heart. Shed those excess pounds now!



### Avoid unnecessary stress

Do not push yourself to unrealistic targets. Be sensible about the amount of work you do each day.

*Put the patient in a semi-recumbent position*



### ACTIVITY 8

Now try to do some IELTS-type questions about the 'Heart Attacks' text. First, survey the text quickly again (Step 1). Read the instructions and the question (Step 2) and then finally scan for the answer (Step 3).

Time target: 5 minutes

#### Questions 1–2

*Choose the appropriate letters A–D.*

- 1 What causes a heart attack?
  - A too much blood getting to the heart muscle
  - B not enough blood getting to the heart muscle
  - C an artery in the heart
  - D an obstructed heart muscle
- 2 Which of the following is *not* a sign of a heart attack?
  - A pain in the centre of the chest
  - B indigestion
  - C breathing difficulties
  - D fast or weak and irregular pulse rate

#### Questions 3–4

Complete the sentences below with words taken from the reading passage. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

3 If you think someone has had a heart attack, try to get  
\_\_\_\_\_

4 After calling an ambulance, check the casualty's  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Questions 5–7

Do the statements below agree with the information in the Reading passage?

Write:

**TRUE** if the statement is true

**FALSE** if the statement is false

**NOT GIVEN** if the information is not given in the passage

#### Example

#### Answer

External chest compression and mouth-to-mouth ventilation should only be given by someone with medical training.

**NOT GIVEN**

- 5 Avoid moving the casualty more than necessary.
- 6 Sitting in a semi-recumbent position strains the heart.
- 7 Loosening clothing around the neck reduces the casualty's blood pressure.

Check your answers with the Answer Key.

## Summary—Section 1

### QUESTION TYPES

The most common question types in Section 1 of the Reading test are:

- multiple choice
- True, False or Not Given
- short answers (of no more than 3 words).

### STRATEGIES

Step 1 Survey (look quickly at) the text

- look for any parts of the text which stand out such as titles or pictures

Step 2 Read the instructions and the questions

- make sure you know *how* you must answer
- underline the key words in the question (and instructions)

Step 3 Look for the answers

- scan for key words and synonyms by looking over the text
- do not read every word
- numbers and words beginning with capital letters are the easiest to scan for

## Section 2

---

To complete Section 2 of the Reading test successfully you should follow a three-step strategy similar to the one practised in Section 1.

- |            |                                                                                                             |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Step One   | Survey the text                                                                                             |
| Step Two   | Read the questions                                                                                          |
| Step Three | Answer the questions by<br>scanning for specific<br>information<br>or<br>Identifying main ideas by skimming |

In this section you will learn the skill of *skimming*. Scanning and skimming are used by native speakers to get information from texts more quickly.

A common cause of failure in the IELTS Reading test is bad time management, resulting in candidates not finishing all the questions. Unless you are a very fast reader, **you will not have time to read the texts in Sections 2 and 3 carefully from beginning to end.** It is, however, not necessary to do so. You only need to read enough to find the answers to the questions.

So, for the following demonstration, do not read the demonstration text and questions first. Go directly to the *How to Answer* section on page 20, and refer back to the reading text as instructed.

### ***Demonstration—Text and Questions***

---

#### **THINGS TO EXPECT IN AUSTRALIA**

- A **Australia is a relatively safe place**, something which surveys of overseas students have shown that they value greatly. As in most of the industrialised countries, Australia has experienced a serious economic recession making many people unemployed. This has caused a small increase in the amount of petty crime, but in comparison with the USA, UK, Europe or almost anywhere else in the Western world the problem remains limited.
- B **The opportunity to work while studying** in order to help cover expenses is one which overseas students welcome. Australia is comparatively generous in this regard, especially since changes to government policy in February 1991. All overseas students, irrespective of which country they come from and what they intend to study, may work for up to 20 hours per week during semesters and full-time during vacations and other

course breaks. Part-time study is not permitted on a student visa.

- C Finding work in a different country can be trying,** and if it is essential for survival the pressure that it creates can be a worry. Most campuses maintain a part-time work agency, but the number of jobs available from place to place varies. Generally, it is not easy to find work at the moment because Australia is experiencing an economic recession. More than half of Australia's visiting students say that they take advantage of the right to work, but it is hard to know for certain how much they do or what they earn.
- D Multiculturalism is official government policy** despite the strong British heritage stemming from Australia's colonial origins. There are now more than 100 different ethnic groups represented in Australia, and much of the increase in diversity occurred during the last generation or two. Just after the Second World War, Australia had a population of only 7.1 million. Now there are more than 17 million people; new immigrants and their children account for about half of that growth. One authority has written recently: 'On the whole the interaction of old and new Australians has been achieved with a minimum of conflict—migration has worked.'
- E The friendliness of the Australian people** is something which surveys of tourists show to be one of the main and most favourable impressions of visitors. Overseas students back that up, as student survey results show. In 1984 more than 1000 overseas students were asked their opinion of Australians, and were also asked to describe the attitudes of Australians towards them. The results of the survey appear in Figure 1.

*Figure 1*

**Attitudes of overseas students towards Australians**

Positive	
like them a lot	20 %
tend to like them	56
Indifferent	21
Negative	
tend to dislike them	2
dislike them a lot	-



### Attitudes of Australians to overseas students

#### Positive

very accepting 16%

fairly friendly 62

Indifferent 13

#### Negative

a bit unfriendly 8

very unfriendly 1

Source: Committee for Review of Overseas Student Policy, pp 292–3

Surveys have found that between 80 and 90 per cent of overseas students who have studied in Australia would recommend that friends and other family members should study there. Similar proportions say that if they were to migrate permanently they would choose Australia.

#### Questions 1–4

*The passage has five paragraphs labelled A to E. Choose the most suitable heading for each paragraph from the list by writing the appropriate number (i–viii).*

*Note: There are more headings than paragraphs so you will not use all of them. You may use any of the headings more than once.*

#### List of headings

- i Jobs are Hard to Find
- ii Security
- iii Racial Prejudice
- iv Work Regulations for Overseas Students
- v Part-time Students
- vi Cultural Diversity
- vii Positive Impressions of Overseas Students Towards Australians
- viii The Australian Personality

<i>Example</i>	<i>Answer</i>
paragraph A	ii

- |   |             |   |             |
|---|-------------|---|-------------|
| 1 | paragraph B | 2 | paragraph C |
| 3 | paragraph D | 4 | paragraph E |

### Questions 5–8

Using information from the reading passage, complete the following sentences in **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS**.

- 5 Australia's economic recession has led to an increase in  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 In February 1991, the Australian Government passed a law  
permitting overseas students  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 7 A holder of a student visa is not allowed to  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8 Seventy-eight per cent of Australians had positive  
feelings about  
\_\_\_\_\_

## How to Answer

### BEFORE YOU TRY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS

#### Step 1—Survey the text

The title, 'Things to expect in Australia', tells you that the text contains information for visitors to Australia.

The words in **bold** type at the beginning of each paragraph give you a good idea of what kind of information is given in that paragraph.

	Topic
<b>Australia is a relatively safe place...</b>	safety, security
<b>The opportunity to work while studying...</b>	students working
<b>Finding work in a different country can be trying...</b>	finding a job overseas
<b>Multiculturalism is official government policy...</b>	many cultures in Australia
<b>The friendliness of the Australian people...</b>	Australians

Figure 1 is part of the last paragraph. It gives information about what overseas students think about Australians and what Australians think about overseas students.

### QUESTION 1

#### Step 2—Read the instructions and the question

For questions 1–4, you must match the **headings** with the **paragraphs**. The purpose of the heading is to indicate the main idea or topic of the paragraph.

To answer the question you must write only a number (i,ii,iii etc.), **not** the complete heading. Look at the example:

Example paragraph A	Answer ii
------------------------	--------------

#### Step 3—Look for the answer

1 Look at the first sentence of a paragraph. (Since paragraph A has been done in the example go directly to paragraph B.)

You already know from the survey that the topic of paragraph B is *students working*. The rest of the first sentence:

**The opportunity to work while studying** in order to help cover expenses is one which overseas students welcome.

gives the additional information that the writer is referring to *overseas students working* (to get extra money for living expenses).

2 With this idea in mind, look quickly through the rest of the paragraph. This confirms that the topic of the paragraph is *students and work* and the main idea is Australian government policy and regulations on this topic.

3 Consider the list of headings. Heading i—Jobs are Hard to Find—is relevant to the topic *work*, but the idea of work being hard to find does not match the main idea of the paragraph. Heading iv—Work Regulations for Overseas Students—is an accurate description of the topic and main idea of paragraph B and is therefore the correct answer.

### QUESTION 2

#### Step 2—Read the question

#### Step 3—Look for the answer

1 The first sentence in paragraph C is:

**Finding work in a different country can be trying**, and if it is essential for survival the pressure that creates can be a worry.

We can guess that the main topic of this paragraph is *the pressure (or the problems) of finding work*.

2 Keeping this main topic in mind, look quickly through the rest of the paragraph. This confirms that the topic is still *the difficulty of finding work*.

3 Look through the *remaining* headings (not headings ii and iv since they have already been used). Jobs are Hard to Find (**i**) is the correct answer.

### QUESTION 3

Step 2—Read the question

Step 3—Look for the answer

1 The first sentence of paragraph D:

**Multiculturalism is official government policy** despite the strong British heritage stemming from Australia's colonial origins.

tells us the paragraph probably talks about there being *many cultures* and *government policy* in relation to those cultures.

2 With this main idea in mind, look quickly through the rest of the paragraph. This confirms that the topic is still the *mixture of migrant groups*.

3 Look through the remaining headings. The headings Part-time Students (v), Positive Impressions of Overseas Students Towards Australians (vii) and The Australian Personality (viii) can be rejected immediately because they are in no way related to the topic of the paragraph.

Heading iii, Racial Prejudice, is related to the topic of the paragraph, but prejudice is a negative idea, and in the paragraph the writer uses positive words and phrases, 'interaction', 'achieved', 'migration has worked'. Heading vi, Cultural Diversity, is also related to the topic. If you do not know what 'diversity' means (it means variety) then the word 'culture' is enough to give you a match here. So the correct answer is vi.

### QUESTION 4

Step 2—Read the question

Step 3—Look for the answer

1 The first sentence says that tourists have *favourable* (positive) *impressions* (opinions) about Australians being friendly.

**The friendliness of the Australian people** is something which surveys of tourists show to be one of the main and most favourable impressions of visitors.

2 Look at the rest of the paragraph and the figure. The use of the results of surveys and students' opinions supports the main idea that visitors like Australia and its people.

3 Of the remaining headings: heading iii, Racial Prejudice, is negative so cannot be correct and heading viii, The Australian Personality, is possible if you look only at the first sentence of the paragraph. However, the rest of the paragraph, including Figure 1, is about the positive impressions of overseas students. Heading vii, Positive Impressions of Overseas Students Towards Australians, is the correct answer.

### QUESTION 5

Step 2—Read the instructions and the question

The instructions tell you to complete the given sentence in *no more than three words*. Your answer should be grammatically correct. Since you are looking for specific information from the text you have to scan the text for the answer.

The key words in question 5 are underlined:

Australia's economic recession has led to an increase in ...

You are looking for a consequence or result of economic recession, in particular something which has increased.

### Step 3—Look for the answer

If you know approximately where to begin scanning in the relevant paragraph, you will be able to find the key words you are looking for much more efficiently and quickly. In this instance there are two ways to find the answer.

You might remember seeing the words 'economic recession' in paragraph C, and if so you can go directly to this paragraph and begin scanning for the key words or their synonyms. Even if you did not see the words in the text, you might still be able to guess that the subject of economic recession is relevant to the paragraph which talks about the problems of finding work in Australia (paragraph C).

In paragraph C, the relevant sentence says that 'it is not easy to find work at the moment' because of the economic recession. If jobs are hard to find, this means that unemployment has increased—the answer would be **unemployment**.

If you have no idea where to start scanning, you should start at the beginning of the text. If you begin scanning from the beginning of the text you see that the word 'recession' is also mentioned in paragraph A. Here it says that the recession has made 'many people unemployed'. You should write only the word 'unemployment' on your answer sheet.

## QUESTION 6

### Step 2—Read the question

The key words in the question are:

In February 1991, the Australian Government passed a law permitting overseas students' ...

### Step 3—Find the answer

Scanning for the date (**numbers** are much easier to find in a text than key words), we find it in paragraph B. In the sentence with the date, and the sentence before it, we see that the government made it easier for overseas students to work. The correct answer is therefore **to work**.

## QUESTION 7

### Step 2—Read the question

The key words in the question are:

A holder of a student visa is not allowed to ...

### Step 3—Find the answer

You may remember seeing the words 'student visa' in the paragraph about working while studying (paragraph B). Even if you did not see these words in the text, you might still be able to guess that the subject of student visas is relevant to this paragraph. If this, too, is not clear, then you should start at the beginning of the text and scan for the key words above, or their synonyms.



The words 'student visa' are at the end of paragraph B. Here you will also see the words 'not permitted', which are a synonym of other key words in the question, 'not allowed'. The last sentence, 'Part-time study is not permitted on a student visa', says that you cannot study part-time on a student visa. The correct answer is therefore **study part-time**.

### QUESTION 8

#### Step 2—Read the question

The key words are:

Seventy-eight per cent of Australians had positive feelings about ...

#### Step 3—Find the answer

From what you already know about the text, you can guess that the answer to this question will be in the last paragraph. You should scan this paragraph for the figure 78.

Actually, the number is not mentioned in the last paragraph. The final part of the last paragraph mentions 'between 80 and 90 per cent of overseas students' but this does not help. The only other place that percentages are mentioned is in the table. The answer is in the second half of the table, which has details about the attitude of Australians toward overseas students. If you add together the percentages in the *positive* section, you get 78%. The answer is therefore **overseas students**.

## Analysis and Practice

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Section 2 of the Reading test usually has two reading texts. Each text usually has only one type of question. (The previous Demonstration text had two question types for convenience.) The kinds of questions most common in Section 2 are:

#### Questions about specific information

- completing sentences (see questions 5–8 in the Section 2 Demonstration)
- True/False/Not Given (see Section 1)
- matching pieces of specific information (there will be some examples of this in Section 3)
- other question types as in Section 1

#### Questions about main ideas

- matching headings with paragraphs (see questions 1–4 in the Section 2 Demonstration)
- identifying where to find information (these will be discussed later in this section)

The most efficient strategies for answering *specific information* questions are different from the strategies for *main idea* questions. Therefore, when you start Section 2 of the reading test, you should look briefly at the questions to see what type of questions they are. Then you can apply the most suitable strategies.

Also, the first part of the instructions which tell you how to answer the questions will often mention the *subject* or the *source* of the text. For an example, look at the text 'Careers Information Program' on page 36. This information can help you to understand the text more quickly.

We will now look at how to answer each of the question types mentioned opposite.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT SPECIFIC INFORMATION

As in Section 1, for these questions you should:

- survey the text
- read the question
- scan for the answer.

#### Step 1—Survey the text

Look at:

- the title
- section headings or subheadings
- any words in special print (**bold**, *italics*, CAPITALS or underlined)
- any diagrams, tables or pictures in the text
- any unusual features in the text (e.g. layout or boxes).

The texts in Section 2 are usually longer than the texts in Section 1. It is therefore also useful, while surveying, to get an idea of the **organisation** of the text, namely, what topics are discussed and in what order. (Note that you are trying to identify *topics* only.) This will help you know where (in which paragraph or section) to scan later for the answer to a question.

If the text has a lot of **subheadings**, it is much easier to identify text organisation.



### ACTIVITY 9

Only the title and the section headings remain of the following text. Survey the text by looking at this information and then answer the questions.

Time target: 1 minute

	HOW TO REVISE FOR EXAMS	
a.	Your attitude	
b.	Stress and self-confidence	
c.	Reviewing study material	
d.	How to revise	