



# IELTS™

English for International Opportunity



# IELTS READING

## What's in the IELTS Academic Reading test?

There are three reading texts with a variety of question types.

Texts come from books, journals, magazines, newspapers and online resources, written for a non-specialist audience. All the **topics are of general interest to students at undergraduate or postgraduate level**. The texts may be written in different styles, for example, narrative, descriptive or discursive/argumentative. At least one text contains detailed logical argument. Texts may also contain diagrams, graphs or illustrations. If texts use technical vocabulary, then a simple dictionary definition is provided.

You will need to transfer your answers to an answer sheet. You must transfer your answers during the hour you are given for the Reading test.

Unlike the Listening test, no extra transfer time is given. You should **be careful when writing your answers on the answer sheet** because you will lose marks for incorrect spelling and grammar.

## Summary

**Time allowed:** 60 minutes (including transfer time)

**Number of sections:** 3; the total text length is 2,150–2,750 words

**Number of questions:** 40

**Marking:** Each correct answer receives 1 mark.

Your final score is given as a band score from 1–9 in whole or half bands, e.g. 4, 6.5.

## Types of question

### Question Type I – Multiple choice

**What's involved?** This type of question may be a question with four possible answers or the first half of a sentence with four possible sentence endings. You have to choose one correct answer (A, B, C or D), then write the correct answer on the answer sheet.

Sometimes you are given a longer list of possible answers and you have to choose more than one answer. You should read the question carefully to check how many answers you need to choose.

The questions are in the same order as the information in the text: that is, the answer to the first question will be before the answer to the second question, and so on.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests many different reading skills including: detailed understanding of specific points or general understanding of the main points of the text.

**How many questions are there?** Variable

## Question Type 2 – Identifying information (True/False/Not given)

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you are given a number of statements and are asked: 'Do the following statements agree with the information in the text?' You have to write 'True', 'False' or 'Not given' in the boxes on your answer sheet. It is important to understand the difference between 'False' and 'Not given'. 'False' means that the statement contradicts the information in the text. 'Not given' means that the statement neither agrees with nor contradicts the information in the text. You must be careful not to use any information you already know about the topic of the text when choosing your answer.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to recognise specific information given in the text.

**How many questions are there?** Variable

## Question Type 3 – Identifying writer’s views/claims (Yes/No/Not given)

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you are given a number of statements and asked: ‘Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer?’ or ‘Do the following statements agree with the claims of the writer?’ You have to write ‘Yes’, ‘No’ or ‘Not given’ in the boxes on your answer sheet. It is important to understand the difference between ‘no’ and ‘not given’. ‘No’ means that the statement contradicts the writer’s view or claim. ‘Not given’ means that the statement neither agrees with nor contradicts the writer’s view or claim. You must be careful not to use any information you already know about the topic of the text when choosing your answer.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to recognise opinions or ideas.

**How many questions are there?** Variable.

## Question Type 4 – Matching information

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you have to find specific information in the paragraphs (or sections) of a text. The paragraphs (or sections) are identified by letters (A, B, C, etc.). You will need to write the letters of the correct paragraphs (or sections) in the boxes on your answer sheet. Not every paragraph (or section) may be used and some paragraphs (or sections) may be used more than once. When the paragraphs (or sections) may be used more than once, the instructions will say: 'You may use any letter more than once'.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question assesses your ability to scan a text in order to find specific information. Unlike Task Type 5 (Matching headings), it focuses on specific information rather than the main idea. You may have to find: specific details, an example, reason, description, comparison, summary or explanation.

**How many questions are there?** Variable

## Question Type 5 – Matching headings

**What's involved?** In this type of question, there is a list of headings which are identified by Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.). A heading summarises the main idea of a paragraph or section of the text. You must match the heading to the correct paragraph or section. The paragraphs (or sections) are identified by letters (A, B, C, etc.). You will need to write the correct Roman numerals in the boxes on your answer sheet. There will always be more headings than paragraphs or sections, so some headings will not be used. It is also possible that some paragraphs or sections may not be included in the task. One or more paragraphs or sections may already be matched with a heading as an example on the question paper. No heading may be used more than once.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to identify the general topic of a paragraph (or section) and to recognise the difference between the main idea and a supporting idea.

**How many questions are there?**

Variable.



## Question Type 6 – Matching features

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you have to match a set of statements or pieces of information to a list of options. The options are a group of features from the text, and letters (A, B, C, etc.) are used to identify them. Write the correct letter on the answer sheet. You may, for example, have to match descriptions of inventions to the people who invented them. It is possible that some options will not be used, and that others may be used more than once. When it is possible to use any option more than once, the instructions will say: 'You may use any option more than once'.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to recognise relationships and connections between facts in the text and your ability to recognise opinions and theories. You need to be able to skim and scan the text to find the information quickly so that you can then read that part more carefully for detail.

**How many questions are there?** Variable

## Question Type 7 – Matching sentence endings

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you are given the first half of a sentence based on information in the text and you have to choose the best way to complete the sentence by choosing from a list of possible endings. The endings are identified by letters (A, B, C, etc.). There will be more sentence endings than beginnings, so you will not use all of them. You must write the letter you choose on the answer sheet. The sentence beginnings are in the same order as the information in the text.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to understand the main ideas in the text.

**How many questions are there?** Variable

## Question Type 8 – Sentence completion

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you have to fill in a gap in each sentence by choosing words from the text. You must write the words you choose on the answer sheet.

You should read the instructions very carefully as the number of words or numbers you may use to fill the gaps can change. A word limit is given, for example, 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER'. You will lose the mark for writing more than the word limit. Contracted words such as 'they're' will not be tested. Hyphenated words such as 'check-in' count as single words. The questions are in the same order as the information in the text.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to find detail/specific information in a text.

**How many questions are there?** Variable.

## Question Type 9 – Summary/note/table/flow chart completion

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you are given a summary of a part of the text, and have to complete it using words taken from the text. Note that the summary is not normally of the whole text. The summary may be in the form of:

- a continuous text (called 'a summary' in the instructions)
- several notes (called 'notes' in the instructions)
- a table with some parts of it left empty or partially empty (called 'a table' in the instructions)
- a series of boxes or steps linked by arrows to show the order of events, with some of the boxes or steps empty or partially empty (called 'a flow chart' in the instructions).

The answers may not come in the same order as in the text. However, they will usually come from one part of the text rather than the whole text.

There are two variations of this task type. In the first variation, you need to select words from the text which fit into gaps on the question paper. You must write the words you choose on the answer sheet.

You should read the instructions very carefully as the number of words or numbers you may use to fill the gaps can change. A word limit is given, for example, 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER'. You will lose the mark for writing more than the word limit. Contracted words such as 'they're' will not be tested. Hyphenated words such as 'check-in' count as single words. In the second variation, you have to choose from a list of words to fill the gaps. The words are identified by letters (A, B, C, etc.). You must write the letter you choose on the answer sheet.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to understand details and/or the main ideas of a part of the text. When completing this type of question, you will need to think about the type of word(s) that will fit into a gap (for example, whether a noun is needed, or a verb, etc.).

**How many questions are there?** Variable

## Question Type 10 – Diagram label completion

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you have to complete the labels on a diagram. The diagram is based on a description given in the text. The diagram may be a type of machine, part of a building or of other information in the text that can be shown through pictures. Write the words that fit into the gap on the answer sheet.

You should read the instructions very carefully as the number of words or numbers you may use to fill the gaps can change. A word limit is given, for example, 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER'. You will lose the mark for writing more than the word limit. Contracted words such as 'they're' will not be tested. Hyphenated words such as 'check-in' count as single words.

The answers may not come in the same order as in the text. However, they will usually come from one part of the text rather than the whole text.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to understand a detailed description in the text, and then relate that description to information given in a diagram.

**How many questions are there?** Variable.

## Question Type 11 – Short-answer questions

**What's involved?** In this type of question, you have to answer questions about factual details in the text. You must write your answers in words or numbers on the answer sheet.

Answers must be taken from words in the text. A word limit is given, for example, 'NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER'. You will lose the mark for writing more than the word limit. Numbers can be written using figures (1, 2, etc.) or words (one, two, etc.). Contracted words such as 'they're' will not be tested. Hyphenated words such as 'check-in' count as single words. The answers come in the same order as the information in the text.

**What skills are tested?** This type of question tests your ability to find and understand specific information in the text.

**How many questions are there?** Variable