The Book that Guarantees Your Success in IELTS

SHARP IELTS READING

by
- **Seyyed Hassan Seyyedrezaie**
- **Mahbube Rezaeian**

International English Language Testing System

Preface:

The fundamental aim of "**SHARP IELTS Reading**" is to familiarize all of the candidates of IELTS with reading strategies, test passages, kinds of questions and to enhance their ability to improve reading speed; moreover, this collection is planned to provide the unique opportunity to practice some of the most frequent reading texts that all of them come from the past released actual passages of IELTS reading.

This collection consists of 3 chapters. In chapter 1 piles of fruitful information apropos to IELTS, the different kinds …for both teachers and candidates have been provided

In chapter 2 we did our best to draw your attention on main strategies to succeed in Reading via using various types of questions and samples.

Last but not least in chapter 3 the emphasis has been put on plenty of samples that you need in IELTS, meanwhile, answer keys are designed to accelerate your learning. As a matter of fact, the objective of "**SHARP IELTS Reading**" is to enable all English teachers both to improve their classroom measures and to make sound assessment of standard tests.

Lastly, it is hoped that readers of this book will get a higher score in Actual IELTS to improve their knowledge in this field. There is no claim that this book is flawless and the dear teachers`, students` and candidates` comments are highly appreciated.
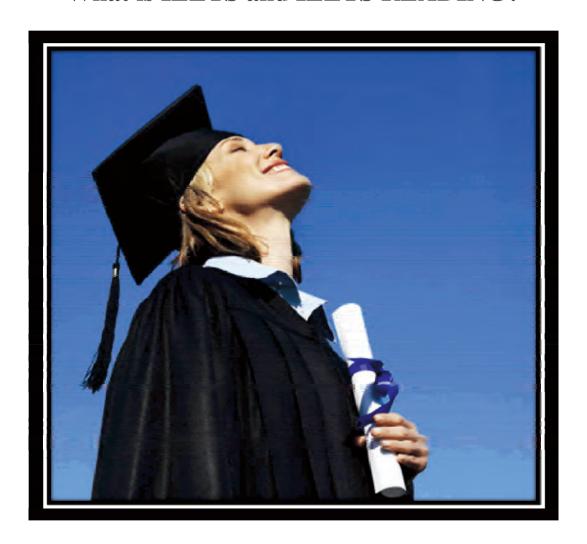
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Chapter one:

What is IELTS and IELTS READING?

Focus of chapter:

1.1. Introduction

The short answer: International English Language Testing System.

IELTS is one of many international English language exams. It is managed jointly by the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, IDP Education Australia and the British Council.

What is the IELTS Test like?

The IELTS Test is quite different from other English language tests available. The testing philosophy behind a number of English tests is to show what people know about English rather than show what they can do in English. The assumption is, for instance, that if people know a lot about grammar and have a good vocabulary, they must be able to use English well. Of course, this is not necessarily the case. Many students are extremely good at grammar and have a good range of vocabulary, but they are not very good at communication in the language.

Unlike many tests, the IELTS Test does not have grammar questions or questions specifically on vocabulary. Instead, the IELTS Test has a number of 'tasks' with specific objectives. In the test, your goal is to achieve the objective. This means that you answer questions about a dialogue or a monologue that you listen to. You have to read a number of texts and answer questions based on the text. You will have to write essays and you will have to speak to a native English speaker. As you can see, the IELTS Test is very much a test of what you can do in English, rather than what you know.

What does IELTS measure?

IELTS measures all four language skills – listening, reading, writing and speaking.

Band scores are used for each language sub-skill ranging from 1 (non-user) to 9 (expert user). For example, a native speaker of English with one year of university experience should score near, or at, 9.

IELTS characteristics

The IELTS incorporates the following features:

- A variety of **accents** and writing styles presented in text materials in order to minimize linguistic bias.

- IELTS tests the ability to **listen, read, write** and **speak** in English.

- Band scores used for each language sub-skill (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking). The Band Scale ranges from 0 ("Did not attempt the test") to 9 ("Expert User").

- The speaking module - a key component of IELTS. This is conducted in the form of a one-to-one interview with an examiner. The examiner assesses the candidate as he or she is speaking, but the speaking session is also recorded for monitoring as well as re-marking in case of an appeal against the banding given.

- IELTS is developed with input from item writers from around the world. Teams are located in the USA, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other English speaking nations.

1.2. Two types of IELTS:

The IELTS test has two forms: the **Academic** test (or module) and the **General** Training test (or module). The module that you take depends on the reason that you are taking it for. Generally speaking, the Academic Module is for those people who are trying to gain entry onto undergraduate or postgraduate education courses or for professional reasons. The General Training Module is for those people who wish to join some kinds of vocational or training courses, secondary schools or for immigration purposes.
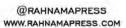
Both Academic and General Training modules try and reflect real life situations to test whether a candidate would survive in English speaking social and academic environments. For example, the Part 2 section of the speaking asks candidates to talk, after 1 minute's preparation, for 1 to 2 minutes on a given general topic. This would test General Training candidates to see if they could give a "work related presentation" to fellow work colleagues and would test Academic candidates if they can give a "university style presentation" to fellow students. It tests whether candidates have the English language capability to perform these tasks under some kind of pressure.

The IELTS test (both Academic and General Training modules) is divided into four parts: **reading, writing, listening and speaking**. The listening and speaking tests are exactly the same for the Academic and General Training modules but the reading and writing tests are different. Thus the test appears like this (in the order that you will take the different parts):

	ACADEMIC	**GENERAL TRAINING**
Listening	4 sections; 40 questions. 30 minutes	4 sections; 40 questions. 30 minutes
Reading	3 sections; 40 questions 3 long texts 1 hour	3 sections; 40 questions 3 long texts 1 hour
Writing	2 tasks: essay(40 min) and graph(20 min) Total: 1 hour	2 tasks: essay (40 min) and letter (20 min) Total:1 hour
Speaking	3 sections 11 - 14 minutes	3 sections 11 - 14 minutes

1.3. How is IELTS scored?

The results IELTS candidates are graded/banded using a *9 BAND* scale. The candidate will be given a Test Report Form on which they will find a full or half band for each part of the test and a final full or half band along with details of the candidate's nationality, first language and

date of birth. The 9 bands correspond to a series of descriptions that relates to the candidate's English ability at that level. These band descriptors for the IELTS results are as follows:

BAND 9 Expert User has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.

BAND 8 Very Good User has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriateness. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles detailed argumentation well.

BAND 7 Good User has operational command of the language, though occasional inaccuracies, inappropriateness and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.

BAND 6 Competent User has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriateness and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.

BAND 5 Modest User has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.

BAND 4 Limited User Basic competence is limited to familiar situations, has frequent problems in understanding and expression and is not able to use complex language.

BAND 3 Extremely Limited User Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.

BAND 2 Intermittent User No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.

BAND 1 Non User Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.

BAND 0 Did not attempt the test. - No assessable information

1.4. Reading academic and General

IELTS Academic Reading Description

Paper Format:	Three reading passages with a variety of questions using a number of task types.

Timing:	60 minutes

No of Questions: 40

Task Types: A variety of questions are used, chosen from the following types; *multiple choice, identifying information, identifying writer's views/claims, matching information, matching headings, matching features, matching sentence endings, sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, flow-chart completion, diagram label completion, short-answer questions.*

Sources: Texts are taken from *books, journals, magazines and newspapers* and have been written for a non-specialist audience. All the topics are of general interest. They deal with issues which are interesting, recognizably appropriate and accessible to candidates entering undergraduate or postgraduate courses or seeking professional registration. At least one text contains detailed logical argument. Texts may contain non-verbal materials such as diagrams, graphs or illustrations. If texts contain technical terms then a simple glossary is provided.

Answering: Candidates are required to transfer their answers to an answer sheet. Candidates must transfer their answers during the time allowed for the test. No extra time is allowed for transfer. Care should be taken when writing answers on the answer sheet as poor spelling and grammar are penalized.

Marks: All questions carry 1 mark.

IELTS General Training Reading Description

Paper Format: Three sections of increasing difficulty. Section 1 may contain two or three short texts or several shorter texts. Section 2 comprises two texts. In Section 3 there is one long text

Timing 60 minutes

No of Questions: 40

Task Types:	A variety of questions are used, chosen from the following types; *multiple choice, identifying information, identifying writer's views/claims, matching information, matching headings, matching features, matching sentence endings, sentence completion, summary completion, note completion, table completion, flow-chart completion, diagram label completion, short-answer questions*.
Sources:	The first section, *'social survival'*, contains texts relevant to basic linguistic survival in English with tasks mainly about retrieving and providing general factual information. *'Workplace survival'*, the second section, focuses on the workplace context, for example applying for jobs, company policies, pay and conditions, workplace facilities, staff development and training. The third section, *'general reading',* involves reading more extended prose with a more complex structure but with the emphasis on descriptive and instructive rather than argumentative texts, in a general context relevant to the wide range of candidates involved
Answering:	Candidates are required to transfer their answers to an answer sheet. Candidates must transfer their answers during the time allowed for the test. No extra time is allowed for transfer. Care should be taken when writing answers on the answer sheet as poor spelling and grammar are penalized.
Marks:	All questions carry 1 mark.

> **Note**: The purpose of the IELTS Reading Module is to test your ability to understand a written text and find general and specific information in a text. This includes finding details about the 'purpose' of a text

✦ Reading Module in a glance

✦   **lasts 60 minutes**
✦   **3 reading passages**
✦   **total 2,000 – 2,750 words**
✦   **40 questions**
✦   **Texts and questions appear on Question Paper.**
✦   **Magazines, journals, books and newspapers**
✦   **Topics of non-specialist, general interest**
✦   **At least one text contains detailed logical argument**
✦   **One text may contain non-verbal materials – diagrams, graphs, illustrations**
✦   **Texts with technical terms will have a glossary**
✦   **Answers entered on Answer Sheet**

1.5. The main strategies to succeed in Reading

Reading Techniques - Skimming and Scanning

Skimming and scanning are the two main techniques that people use to read and answer IELTS reading tests. It's not a question of using one or the other but you will need both methods in doing the test. Let's have a look at the two techniques in turn.

Skimming:

Your first task when you begin reading is to answer the question 'What is the topic of the selection?' This can best be answered by quickly skimming the passage for the general idea, stopping to read only the first sentence of each paragraph. A paragraph's first sentence is usually the main topic sentence, and it gives you a summary of the content of the paragraph.

Once you've skimmed the passage, stopping to read only the first sentences, you will have a general idea about what it is about, as well as what is the expected topic in each paragraph.

Each question will contain clues as to where to find the answer in the passage. Do not just randomly search through the passage for the correct answer to each question. Search scientifically. Find key word(s) or ideas in the question that are going to either contain or be near the correct answer. These are typically nouns, verbs, numbers, or phrases in the question that will probably be duplicated in the passage. Once you have identified those key word(s) or idea, skim the passage quickly to find where those key word(s) or idea appears. The correct answer choice will be nearby.

> **Example 1: What caused Martin to suddenly return to Paris?**

The key word is **Paris.** Skim the passage quickly to find where this word appears. The answer will be close by that word.

However, sometimes key words in the question are not repeated in the passage.
In those cases, search for the general idea of the question.

> **Example2: Which of the following was the psychological impact of the author's childhood upon the remainder of his life?**

Key words are **'childhood' or 'psychology'**. While searching for those words, be alert for other words or phrases that have similar meaning, such as **'emotional effect'** or **'mentally'** which could be used in the passage, rather than the exact word **'psychology'.**

Numbers or years can be particularly good key words to skim for, as they stand out from the rest of the text.

> **Example3: Which of the following best describes the influence of Monet's work in the 20th century?**

20th contains numbers and will easily stand out from the rest of the text. use 20th as a key word to skim the passage.

Once you've quickly found the correct section of the passage to find the answer, focus upon the answer choices. Sometimes a choice will repeat word for word a portion of the passage near the answer. However, beware of such duplication – it may be a trap! More than likely,

the correct choice will paraphrase or summarize the related portion of the passage, rather than being exactly the same wording.

For the answers that you think are correct, read them carefully and make sure that they answer the question. An answer can be factually correct, but it MUST answer the question asked. Additionally, two answers can both be seemingly correct, so be sure to read all of the answer choices, and make sure that you get the one that BEST answers the question.

Some questions will not have a key word.

> **Example 4: Which of the following would the author of this passage likely agree with?**

In these cases, look for key words in the answer choices. Then skim the passage to find where the answer choice occurs. By skimming to find where to look, you can minimize the time required.

Sometimes it may be difficult to identify a good key word in the question to skim for in the passage. In those cases, look for a key word in one of the answer choices to skim for. Often the answer choices can all be found in the same paragraph, which can quickly narrow your search.

Scanning

This is another very important technique for the IELTS Reading Tests. This is the technique that you use when you are reading a telephone book or a dictionary. You are not starting at the top and reading every line back and forth as you would read a novel.

You are moving your eyes around the text, back and across and up and down. You are searching for some **specific information**: **a word or name.** This is an important technique in IELTS reading as you are often searching for some specific information. You read the question and then you search for key words or ideas associated with the question.

This is a bit more difficult to practice than skimming. You get long texts (from newspapers, magazines or other sources) and get a friend to read it and then ask you to find key ideas or words as quickly as possible.

Again, if you do this frequently, your speed will quickly improve.

Paragraph Focus

Focus upon the first sentence of each paragraph, which is the most important. The main topic of the paragraph is usually there.

Once you've read the first sentence in the paragraph, you have a general idea about what each paragraph will be about. As you read the questions, try to determine which paragraph will have the answer. Paragraphs have a concise topic. The answer should be either obviously there or obviously not. It will save time if you can jump straight to the paragraph, so try to remember what you learned from the first sentences.

> **Example: The first paragraph is about poets; the second is about poetry. If a question asks about poetry, where will the answer be? The second paragraph.**

The main idea of a passage is typically spread across all or most of its paragraphs. Whereas the main idea of a paragraph may be completely different than the main idea of the very next paragraph, a main idea for a passage affects all of the paragraphs in one form or another. Example: What is the main idea of the passage?

For each answer choice, try to see how many paragraphs are related. It can help to count how many sentences are affected by each choice, but it is best to see how many paragraphs are affected by the choice. Typically the answer choices will include incorrect choices that are main ideas of individual paragraphs, but not the entire passage. That is why it is crucial to choose ideas that are supported by the most paragraphs possible.

Eliminate Choices

Some choices can quickly be eliminated. 'Andy Warhol lived there.' Is Andy Warhol even mentioned in the article? If not, quickly eliminate it.

When trying to answer a question such as 'the passage indicates all of the following EXCEPT' quickly skim the paragraph searching for references to each choice. If the reference exists, scratch it off as a choice. Similar choices may be crossed off simultaneously if they are close enough.

In choices that ask you to choose 'which answer choice does NOT describe? or 'all of the following answer choices have identifiable characteristics, EXCEPT which?' look for answers that are similarly worded. Since only one answer can be correct, if there are two answers that appear to mean the same thing, they must BOTH be incorrect, and can be eliminated.

> **Example:**
> **A.) changing values and attitudes**
> **B.) A large population of mobile or uprooted people These answer choices are similar; they both describe a fluid culture. Because of their similarity, they can be linked together. Since the answer can have only one choice, they can also be eliminated together.**

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A Complete Guide with Samples

The following features are included in this book to guarantee your success in IELTS

1. Reading Strategies with Practical Samples

2. Different Types of READING Questions and Practical ways to Say How to Deal with Them

3. Ample IELTS Reading Samples with Answers

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