



TOP TIPS FOR IELTS

Academic Reading



Top Tips for IELTS Academic Reading

Official Cambridge IELTS Preparation

We provide you with the tools and resources you need to learn and show your skills to the world. Whether you're studying in a classroom, or at home, you can rely on us to help you get ready for test day.

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Introduction

Top Tips for IELTS Academic Reading is an essential part of your revision for the IELTS test.

The tips are based on advice which IELTS materials writers have collected from many years' experience of involvement in the production of IELTS tests. Each section starts with a tip which is followed by an example taken from IELTS material and a clear explanation to help you understand exactly what it means.

How to use *Top Tips for IELTS Academic Reading*

Top Tips for IELTS Academic Reading is flexible. You can look at a different tip from a different section every day, or you can start at the beginning and work through until you get to the end of the tips. Whichever method you prefer, read the example and the explanation carefully to make sure that you understand each tip. When you have understood all the tips, try the test on page 31.

Guide to symbols



This symbol introduces the tip which is at the top of the page. Each tip is some useful advice to help you find the right answer for Reading.



This is an extra piece of advice which is important for this particular part of the test.

Guide to IELTS Academic Reading task types

Multiple choice You read a text and answer some questions. You usually choose one of four answers, A, B, C or D. In some multiple-choice tasks you have to choose several options from a longer list.

Identifying information You read a text and a series of statements and decide if the statement agrees with the information in the text ('true'), if the statement contradicts the information in the text ('false') or if there is no information in the text to support the statement ('not given').

Identifying writer's views/claims You read a text and a series of statements and say whether each statement agrees with the views/claims of the writer. For each statement, you answer 'yes' if the statement does, 'no' if the statement doesn't, or 'not given' if there is no view/claim in the text to support the statement.

Matching information You locate specific information in a paragraph or section of a text.

Matching headings You choose the correct headings for the paragraphs or sections of the text.

Matching features You match numbered items to a set of features (e.g. people or dates) from the text.

Matching sentence endings You are given the first half of a sentence based on a text and you choose the best way to complete it from a list of possible options.

Sentence, Summary, Note, Table, Flow-chart completion You read a text and fill in the missing information. Sometimes you complete the task by choosing words from a box rather than words in a Reading text. There is a limit to the number of words you can use, so pay careful attention to this when you are deciding what your answer should be.

Diagram label completion You complete labels on a diagram which relate to a description contained in the text. You must pay careful attention to the maximum number of words you can write for each answer.

Short-answer questions You read a text and write short answers to questions. You must pay careful attention to the maximum number of words you can write for each answer.

How to revise for IELTS Academic Reading

The more you read before the test, the better you will do. Reading is also a very good way of improving your vocabulary and grammar and it will also help your own writing.

In the Academic Reading test you will mainly have to read the kind of factual or discursive texts that have academic relevance. It is therefore sensible to revise by reading plenty of texts of this kind. Look for articles in quality newspapers, magazines and journals focusing on academic topics (e.g. science, humanities, economics, current affairs, sociology).

- Make sure you read from a wide range of sources, including something from each of the text types listed above – you can easily find examples of all of these on the internet as well as in printed form.
- It's important to read for pleasure, so regularly read something that you enjoy – novels, sports reports or magazine quizzes may not feature in IELTS but reading them will also help you develop your knowledge of the language in an effective way.
- Keep a reading diary – write a couple of sentences in English about what you have read. This should help you to learn some of the words and expressions you have read and will also help you with the IELTS Writing test.
- Don't look up every word that you are not sure about when you read. Just look up anything that stops you from understanding the text. When you have finished reading you can then, if you want, go back and check the meaning of less important vocabulary.

We hope these ideas will help you to make the most of your revision time. Above all, we hope that you enjoy your studies and wish you all the best for your exam.

Book your IELTS test at ielts.org/book-a-test



Top Tips for IELTS Academic Reading test

What's in the Academic Reading test?



Three reading texts (with a total of 2,150 to 2,750 words) and 40 questions.

- Texts come from magazines, journals, books, online resources and newspapers and have been written for a non-specialist audience.
- At least one text contains detailed logical argument.
- Texts may include diagrams, graphs or illustrations.



1 mark for each correct answer



1 hour


(including time to copy your answers onto the answer sheet)

The following question types are used in the Academic Reading test:

- 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

Any of these question types may appear in any section. Not all question types will appear in an individual Academic Reading test.

Multiple choice

 **TIP:** Use the key words in the question to help you find the right part of the text. Read the whole of that part, and consider all four options.

Example

Here is part of a text about poetry and one of the questions.

Poetry is notoriously difficult to define. It is often regarded as the most personal of literary forms, in which the poet pours out his or her soul in an effusion of feeling. Yet there are numerous examples of impassioned prose, both fiction and polemic. Until a century ago, most poetry – in English, at least – used rhythm and rhyme, and the listener – for poetry is usually intended to be heard – could instantly recognise it as poetry rather than prose. Twentieth century developments have put paid to the utility of this distinction when characterising poetry as a whole, and, incidentally, given several generations the mistaken belief that poetry is necessarily hard to understand. But what sets poetry apart, surely, is that it evokes and heightens joy, sorrow, fear or myriad other emotions, and provides catharsis, the release of emotional tension.

Q In the writer's opinion, the main difference between poetry and other literature lies in:

- A** the amount of effort it requires from the reader.
- B** its use of rhythm and rhyme.
- C** its effect on the reader. ✓
- D** the extent to which it reflects the writer's feelings.

Explanation: The underlined and highlighted parts of the text show that **C** is correct because this is the writer's opinion. Remember the question as you read each option. **D** refers to the sentence beginning 'It is often regarded as', but this is not the writer's opinion. **A** is incorrect because it says this is a 'mistaken belief' and **B** is incorrect because it says that poetry no longer necessarily uses rhythm and rhyme.



Pay attention to phrases like 'in the writer's opinion' in the questions as the text may include several different points of view.

Multiple choice



TIP: Read to the end of the relevant part of the text, because the options are not necessarily in the same order as they are in the text.

Example

Here is part of a text about tourism and one of the questions. You have to choose two answers from the list of options (A–E) for this type of task.

Mass tourism was made possible by the introduction of cheap flights and a boom in hotel construction. Both had a major impact on the environment, with construction particularly affecting Europe's Mediterranean coast. Mass tourism was primarily motivated by the wish of many northern Europeans to escape stress by spending time on beaches or beside a hotel pool in virtually guaranteed sunshine – which meant travelling to a more southerly country, such as Spain or Greece. This market was dominated by families and groups of friends, such as parties of young men holidaying together before the wedding of one of them.

While such 'sun, sea and sand' destinations remain popular, a trend is apparent of giving greater importance to meeting individual needs rather than family needs. Holidays that include coaching by a golf professional or a cookery course, for instance, are attracting increasing numbers of participants.



Which TWO of the following reasons for going on holiday does the writer mention?

- A** a wish to learn about other cultures
- B** an interest in developing skills ✓
- C** concern about the environment
- D** an intention to visit friends and relations
- E** a desire to relax ✓

Explanation: The highlighted parts of the text show you where you can find the answers. Remember that the information you are looking for is not always in the same part of the text. Here, you need to read to the end of both paragraphs to find the information which gives you the answers **B** and **E**.

Identifying information



TIP: Remember that the statements will not be expressed in exactly the same way as in the text, so look for key words in the statements and find similar words or phrases in the text.

Example

Here is part of a text about the history of Greenland and some of the questions.

The ancestors of the Inuit people of Greenland are thought to have lived in Siberia – the vast eastern region of modern Russia – until 7,000 or 8,000 years ago. There is evidence that they then travelled by boat into Alaska, settling in the northerly part of North America. From there, some migrated to Greenland around 5,000 years ago, and evidence has been found of their existence around the northern tip of the island.

1

2

3



Do the following statements agree with the information given in the passage?

- 1** The Inuit people are probably descended from inhabitants of Siberia. *TRUE*
- 2** The Inuit people's ancestors migrated to North America about 5,000 years ago. *FALSE*
- 3** The north of Greenland was the most attractive area of the island for the earliest settlers. *NOT GIVEN*

Explanation: The key words in the questions are underlined, and so are words in the text that they refer to. **1** has the same meaning as the first highlighted section. **2** The text says that they are thought to have lived in Siberia until 7,000 or 8,000 years ago. 5,000 years ago is when some moved from North America to Greenland. **3** No reason is given for migrating to northern Greenland. There is nothing in the text that 'most attractive' refers to, so the statement may or may not be true.

Identifying writer's views/claims



TIP: Remember that 'No' means the statement contradicts the writer's opinion, so it *can't* be right. 'Not given' means that there is no information about the writer's opinion in the text, so the statement *may* or *may not* be true.

Example

Here is part of a text about an art installation (or sculpture).

At first glance, Cornelia Parker's 1991 installation *Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View* would seem to be the outcome of a destructive drive in the artist's personality. On the contrary, she is fascinated by the way that change, even change of a violent nature, is a new beginning, an opportunity for something very different to emerge. *Cold Dark Matter* consists of a garden shed which Parker filled with objects, then asked the army to blow up. She suspended the resulting fragments in a room and lit them with a single bulb, throwing sinister shadows on the walls. The title is central to understanding the work, alluding to the cold dark matter which, in one version of the 'big bang' theory, led to the creation of the universe.



Q Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer?

- 1** The impulse for the work is the artist's psychological need to destroy. *NO*
- 2** The way in which the shed was destroyed adds to the meaning of the work. *NOT GIVEN*

Explanation: The highlighted parts of the text show you where you can find the information which gives you the answers. **1** can't be the writer's view because it contradicts ('On the contrary'). **2** Although there is information about how the shed was destroyed, there is no information about how this adds to the meaning of the work, so Statement 2 may or may not be true.

Matching headings



TIP: More than one heading may seem to match a paragraph at first. After reading the paragraph, read each heading and decide which one best sums up the main point of the paragraph.

Example

Here is part of a text about the scientific system for naming species of animals and plants. You have to choose the correct heading for each paragraph.

List of headings

- i Examples of the system in use
- ii Reactions to Linnaeus's work
- iii The origin of the system
- iv Which animals are lions and tigers related to?

A The scientific conventions for naming living organisms were established by the 18th century Swedish botanist, physician and zoologist, Carl Linnaeus, who developed binomial nomenclature, a two-word system for naming every species of animal and plant. The first word identifies the genus, and the second word is the specific name.

B As an illustration, lions belong to the genus *Panthera*, and their specific name is *leo*. Hence the species is classified as *Panthera leo*. Their relation the tiger, on the other hand, is named *Panthera tigris*. The two-word names indicate the relationship in a way that both *lion* and *tiger* do not.

Explanation: Paragraph **A** explains how the system began, so the correct heading for **A** is Heading **iii**. Although the paragraph refers to Linnaeus's work, it isn't about *reactions* to it, so Heading **ii** is wrong.

In Paragraph **B**, two examples of animal names are given, using the system, so the correct answer is Heading **i**. Although the paragraph refers to lions and tigers, it doesn't refer to animals they are related to, so Heading **iv** is wrong.



You should read the headings before reading the text to focus your mind on the main ideas you need to look for.

Matching features



TIP: In the text, underline the names, dates, numbers, etc. from the questions or options, so that you can then locate them quickly.

Example

Here is part of a text about the development of fertilisers in the nineteenth century. In this example the questions follow the order of the text.

Food production was greatly improved in the nineteenth century, one reason being the development of effective fertilisers. The German chemist Justus von Liebig (1803–1873) added considerably to knowledge of plant nutrition, identifying the crucial importance of nitrogen, and the French scientist Jean - Baptiste Boussingault (1802–1887) discovered that different kinds of fertilisers required different amounts of nitrogen. However, a business venture by von Liebig failed: although the fertiliser he sold was much less expensive than the guano it was intended to replace, crops were unable to absorb it adequately. Von Liebig later developed a manufacturing process for making beef extract cubes, which are still used in kitchens around the world.

In Britain, John Bennet Lawes (1814–1900) owned a farm where he experimented with crops and manures: at first he tested the effects of various manures on potted plants, and later worked on crops in the field. In 1842 he patented a successful superphosphate, which was the first artificial manure. Lawes made provision for the experimental farm to continue after his death, and it exists to this day.



- | List of Scientists | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| A | Boussingault |
| B | Lawes |
| C | von Liebig |
- 1** He showed that nitrogen is essential for plant nutrition. *von Liebig*
 - 2** He demonstrated the need to vary the quantity of nitrogen in fertilisers. *Boussingault*
 - 3** He introduced a fertiliser that saved money but was ineffective. *von Liebig*
 - 4** He invented a method of processing a food for human consumption. *von Liebig*
 - 5** He invented the first synthetic manure. *Lawes*
 - 6** He set up a research establishment that is still in operation. *Lawes*

Explanation: The highlighted parts of the text show you where you can find the answers to each question.



Names and dates may appear more than once, so make sure you read all the relevant parts of the text.

Summary completion, first type



TIP: Don't always expect words or phrases in the box to be the same as in the text. In fact, usually they are not. They may be words with similar meaning or the same word in a different form, so read both the text and the summary carefully.

Example

Here is part of a text about innovation in business.

Success, for many companies, depends on their ability to innovate, to create new products and services. Ask anyone which business sectors are the most creative, and the music industry will come fairly high up the list, but creativity is also the lifeblood of other, less obvious fields: the pharmaceutical industry, for instance, relies almost entirely on ideas and inventions that can be developed into new drugs. Just like land, buildings or machinery, ideas can be a valuable asset to a business, but while the former are tangible assets, with a physical existence, ideas are intangible, with no physical manifestation. Once an idea has been developed, whether into a new medical treatment or a new brand of clothing, it becomes intellectual property, and can be legally owned. It is then protected against competitors benefiting by imitating the new product without having had to fund its development.



Q Complete the summary using the words in the box below.

Innovation is **1** *essential* for businesses in many sectors, from the most obviously **2** *creative*, such as the music industry, to ones that are less self-evidently so, like the pharmaceutical industry. Like **3** *tangible* assets, new ideas may be very valuable, and so, like those, they need to be treated as **4** *belonging* to the business. They therefore require legal **5** *protection* to prevent competitors from benefiting from the company's **6** *investment*.

A intellectual

B belonging

C developing

D creative

E intangible

F essential

G protection

H tangible

I investment

Explanation: The highlighted words in the text show you where you can find the words which match the options. **1** 'is essential for' means the same as 'depends on'. **4** 'belonging to the business' means the same as 'property'. **6** 'investment' refers to 'to fund'.

Note completion



TIP: Only write the missing words, and make sure you don't repeat words from either side of the gap.

Example

Here is part of a text about the invention of cellophane. In this example answers should be no more than one word and/or a number.

Cellophane was invented by Jacques Edwin Brandenberger, a Swiss chemist. In 1900 he made a coating to be applied to cloth, to protect it from being stained. The cloth was too stiff, but when he saw that the coating easily peeled off it as a transparent film, he realised the coating could be of value as a material in its own right. He eventually perfected the material, mainly by adding glycerine to soften it, and constructed a machine to make it.



Complete the notes below.

Initial experiment:

- aim: to **1** *protect cloth* cloth from stains ✗
- problem: the cloth became **2** *stiff* ✓
- potential value: the coating of film was **3** *transparent* and could easily be separated from the cloth ✓

Development:

- used **4** *glycerine to* to change the texture of the film ✗

Explanation: **1** is wrong, because 'cloth' is repeated. The correct answer is 'protect'. **4** is wrong, because 'to' is repeated. The correct answer is 'glycerine'.

Sentence completion



TIP: Make sure you use words from the text exactly as they are written in the text, and that they fit the sentences grammatically.

Example

Here is part of a text about public relations. In this example, answers should be no more than one word and/or a number.

Not so long ago, public relations – or PR, as it is usually referred to – was the poor relation of many functions within an organisation. While Production, Finance and even Human Resources were usually represented at Board level, the PR function was much further down the hierarchy, simply expected to do its job of issuing press releases and gaining positive publicity for the organisation. This is now changing. In addition to these bread-and-butter tasks, PR specialists may now be involved in strategic planning, as senior managers realise how much PR can contribute as the ears and eyes of the organisation.



Q Complete the sentences below.

- 1** Some of an organisation's other *function* used to be considered more important than PR. ✗
- 2** In the past, an organisation's *Board* was unlikely to include anyone from PR. ✓
- 3** The role of PR includes trying to ensure that the organisation attracts favourable *positive publicity*. ✗
- 4** PR now sometimes helps to develop an organisation's *planning*. ✓

Explanation: Although 'function' and 'functions' both appear in the text, in **1** 'function' is wrong because it would make the sentence ungrammatical. The correct answer is 'functions'. In **3**, 'positive publicity' is wrong because it would make the sentence ungrammatical, and 'positive' means the same as 'favourable'. The correct answer is 'publicity'.

Table completion



TIP: Use the information in the table to help you predict the type of word you need to find in the text. The answers may not follow the order of the text, but are generally in the same part of the text.

Example

Here is part of a text about a company called Sharp Corporation. In this example, answers should be no more than two words and/or a number.

One of Japan's major companies is Sharp Corporation, started by 18-year-old Tokuji Hayakawa in 1912, in Tokyo. At first the company worked with metal, producing snap buckles for belts, then, from 1915, the 'Ever-Sharp Pencil' – a mechanical pencil that gave the company its present name. The Sharp Group is now a major manufacturer of electronic goods, from LCD TVs to solar cells. It has expanded into 25 countries or regions around the world, and has a total of over 50,000 employees worldwide, including 42,000 in its home country, where its head office has now moved to Osaka. The company entered the USA market in 1962, setting up Sharp Electronics Corporation (SEC), with its headquarters in New Jersey. SEC now employs 2,500 people.

Q Complete the table below.

Company name	Date founded	Original products	Location of head office	Number of employees
Sharp Corporation	1 1912	2 metal goods	3 Osaka, Japan	4 42,000 in Japan
SEC	5 1962	electronic goods	6 New Jersey, USA	7 2,500

Explanation: The highlighted words in the text show you where you can find the answers. It is helpful to read the headings carefully, then read each line of the table across, from left to right. For example, 1 and 5 must be dates, 2 must describe some kind of product, and so on.



Use words from the text without changing them or using more than the maximum number stated.

Short-answer questions



TIP: Make sure you copy the words correctly and you spell them as they are spelled in the text.

Example

Here is part of a text about a vessel that is used to explore the depths of the ocean. Each answer should be no more than two words and/or a number.

A great deal of research into the depths of the ocean has been carried out using the submersible Alvin, a craft that can carry three people down to a depth of 4,500 metres. Constructed in 1964 and given a revamp in 2014, it is operated by the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) in the USA.

Alvin is manufactured from syntactic foam, a material which is strong enough to withstand the enormous water pressure that the submersible encounters. It is equipped with lights, two robotic arms to manipulate instruments, and a basket for tools and for samples picked up from the ocean floor.



Answer the questions below.

- 1 In which year was Alvin built? (in) 1964 ✓
- 2 What material is Alvin made of? syntactic faom ✗
- 3 What equipment on Alvin can operate instruments? robotic arm ✗
- 4 What equipment on Alvin is used as a container? (a) basket ✓

Explanation: In **2** one word, 'foam', has been copied wrongly, so the answer won't get a mark. In **3** one of the two words, 'arms', has been copied wrongly, so this answer will be marked wrong.



The questions and answers follow the order of the text.

Flow-chart completion



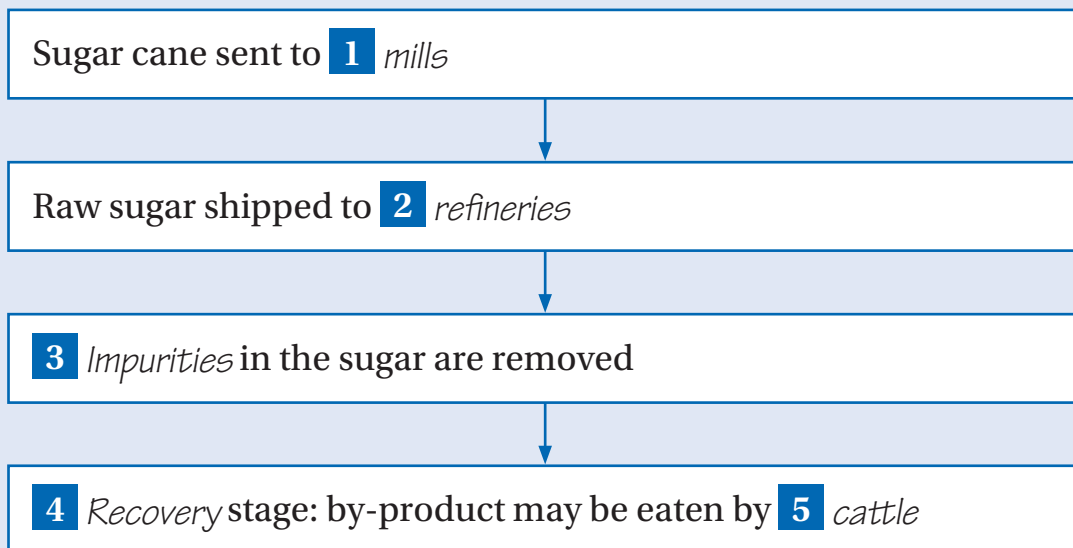
TIP: To work out the order in which activities happen, try to identify particular words in the text that show this.

Example

Here is part of a text about the process of producing sugar. In this example, answers should be no more than one word and/or a number.

Raw sugar comes from sugar cane. When the cane is harvested, it first goes to mills, usually in the same region, and raw sugar is extracted from it. This is then sent in bulk to refineries, which are often located in heavy sugar-consuming countries. There are several stages in the refining process, starting with affination, which includes the removal of various impurities by using a centrifuge. Eventually the recovery stage is reached, which leaves white sugar and a sweet by-product which is often used as cattle feed.

Q Complete the flow chart below.



Explanation: The underlined words in the text show the order in which activities happen.

Summary completion, second type



TIP: The summary may be based on a part of the text. If the summary has a title, use this to help you locate the area of the text in which the answers may be located.

Example

Here is part of a text about a research method called ‘participant observation’. Answers should be no more than two words and/or a number.

Participant observation

Cultural anthropologists often adopt a research method known as ‘participant observation’ to become familiar with a community’s customs and behaviour, and to gain understanding of them. Users of the method immerse themselves in the life and culture of the people they are studying, with whom they interact in the community’s natural environment. Their involvement often extends over a considerable period – some researchers have lived in the community they are studying for a matter of years. They may use a variety of methods, including informal interviews, group discussions and the study of personal documents, as well as observation. Through their involvement in the life of the community they expect to gain the perspective of an insider on the customs and behaviour of the group, while at the same time taking the role of an objective observer.



Complete the summary below.

‘Participant observation’ is a research method sometimes used by **1** *cultural anthropologists* and other researchers to study a community in its **2** *natural environment*.

The research may require a commitment lasting several **3** *years*. The researcher’s goal is to acquire some **4** *understanding* of the community’s customs and behaviour by viewing them from the community’s own viewpoint as an **5** *insider*, while simultaneously remaining a detached **6** *observer*.

Explanation: The title appears at the start of this section of the text. It is therefore a good place to start looking for the missing words, which have been highlighted in the text for you.



The answers may not come in the same order as the information in the text.

General tips for Reading

- 1** Read the instructions for each task carefully, and make sure you follow them, especially instructions regarding the maximum number of words.
- 2** Make sure you give the text a quick read through so that you are familiar with the topic and how it is developed in the text, but don't worry if you don't understand every word.
- 3** You can write on the question paper, but you must copy your answers onto the answer sheet within the 60 minutes, so allow time to do that.
- 4** Remember that every question is worth one mark.
- 5** Don't spend too long on any one question. Move on to the next question and go back if you have time.
- 6** If a text contains specialist or technical terms then a simple glossary is provided below the text. It is important to read this too.

The IELTS Reading test answer sheet explained

If you are going to do the real IELTS Academic Reading test as a computer-based test you will do everything in front of a computer with the questions presented on the screen in an official IELTS test centre. If you are going to do the real IELTS Academic Reading test as a paper-based test you will receive a question paper and an answer sheet.







You can write on the question paper while you decide what the correct answer is. However, when you have made a decision, you **must** transfer your final answers onto the answer sheet which the supervisor will give you.

In the Academic Reading test candidates are required to write their answers on the answer sheet during the time allowed for the test. **No extra time is allowed for transfer of the Reading answers.**

How to complete the Reading answer sheet

You can see an example of what the answer sheet looks like on the next page and you can use that for the Academic Reading test. There are instructions on the answer sheet to tell you how you should fill it in, but here are the main things you need to know:

- It is very important that you use a pencil to write your answers on the answer sheet.
- If you have to write a word or phrase for your answer, please write clearly. If the markers can't read your writing, they won't know if your answer is correct or not.
- If you change your mind about an answer, it is important that you use an eraser to rub out the answer you don't want.

				
IELTS Reading Answer Sheet				
Candidate Name		<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>		
Candidate No.		Centre No.		
Test Module <input type="checkbox"/> Academic <input type="checkbox"/> General Training		Test Date Day <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Month <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Year <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		
Reading Reading Reading Reading Reading Reading Reading				
1	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<small>Marker use only</small> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<small>Marker use only</small> 21 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="text"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	22 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="text"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	23 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="text"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	24 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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7	<input type="text"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	27 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
8	<input type="text"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	28 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1–13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

Research using twins

To biomedical researchers all over the world, twins offer a precious opportunity to untangle the influence of genes and the environment – of nature and nurture. Because identical twins come from a single fertilized egg that splits into two, they share virtually the same genetic code. Any differences between them – one twin having younger looking skin, for example – must be due to environmental factors such as less time spent in the sun.

Alternatively, by comparing the experiences of identical twins with those of fraternal twins, who come from separate eggs and share on average half their DNA, researchers can quantify the extent to which our genes affect our lives. If identical twins are more similar to each other with respect to an ailment than fraternal twins are, then vulnerability to the disease must be rooted at least in part in heredity.

These two lines of research – studying the differences between identical twins to pinpoint the influence of environment, and comparing identical twins with fraternal ones to measure the role of inheritance – have been crucial to understanding the interplay of nature and nurture in determining our personalities, behavior, and vulnerability to disease.

The idea of using twins to measure the influence of heredity dates back to 1875, when the English scientist Francis Galton first suggested the approach (and coined the phrase ‘nature and nurture’). But twin studies took a surprising twist in the 1980s, with the arrival of studies into identical twins who had been separated at birth and reunited as adults. Over two decades 137 sets of twins eventually visited Thomas Bouchard’s lab in what became known as the Minnesota Study of Twins Reared Apart. Numerous tests were carried out on the twins, and they were each asked more than 15,000 questions.

Bouchard and his colleagues used this mountain of data to identify how far twins were affected by their genetic makeup. The key to their approach was a statistical concept called heritability. In broad terms, the heritability of a trait measures the extent to which differences among members of a population can be explained by differences in their genetics. And wherever Bouchard and other scientists looked, it seemed, they found the invisible hand of genetic influence helping to shape our lives.

Lately, however, twin studies have helped lead scientists to a radical

new conclusion: that nature and nurture are not the only elemental forces at work. According to a recent field called epigenetics, there is a third factor also in play, one that in some cases serves as a bridge between the environment and our genes, and in others operates on its own to shape who we are.

Epigenetic processes are chemical reactions tied to neither nature nor nurture but representing what researchers have called a 'third component'. These reactions influence how our genetic code is expressed: how each gene is strengthened or weakened, even turned on or off, to build our bones, brains and all the other parts of our bodies.

If you think of our DNA as an immense piano keyboard and our genes as the keys – each key symbolizing a segment of DNA responsible for a particular note, or trait, and all the keys combining to make us who we are – then epigenetic processes determine when and how each key can be struck, changing the tune being played.

One way the study of epigenetics is revolutionizing our understanding of biology is by revealing a mechanism by which the environment directly impacts on genes. Studies of animals, for example, have shown that when a rat experiences stress during pregnancy, it can cause epigenetic changes in a fetus that lead to behavioral problems as the rodent grows up. Other epigenetic processes appear to occur randomly,

while others are normal, such as those that guide embryonic cells as they become heart, brain, or liver cells, for example.

Geneticist Danielle Reed has worked with many twins over the years and thought deeply about what twin studies have taught us. 'It's very clear when you look at twins that much of what they share is hardwired,' she says. 'Many things about them are absolutely the same and unalterable. But it's also clear, when you get to know them, that other things about them are different. Epigenetics is the origin of a lot of those differences, in my view.'

Reed credits Thomas Bouchard's work for today's surge in twin studies. 'He was the trailblazer,' she says. 'We forget that 50 years ago things like heart disease were thought to be caused entirely by lifestyle. Schizophrenia was thought to be due to poor mothering. Twin studies have allowed us to be more reflective about what people are actually born with and what's caused by experience.'

Having said that, Reed adds, the latest work in epigenetics promises to take our understanding even further. 'What I like to say is that nature writes some things in pencil and some things in pen,' she says. 'Things written in pen you can't change. That's DNA. But things written in pencil can. That's epigenetics. Now that we're actually able to look at the DNA and see where the pencil writings are, it's sort of a whole new world.'

Questions 1–4

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1–4 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

- 1 There may be genetic causes for the differences in how young the skin of identical twins looks.
- 2 Twins are at greater risk of developing certain illnesses than non-twins.
- 3 Bouchard advertised in newspapers for twins who had been separated at birth.
- 4 Epigenetic processes are different from both genetic and environmental processes.

Questions 5–9

Look at the following statements (Questions 5–9) and the list of researchers below.

Match each statement with the correct researcher, **A**, **B** or **C**.

Write the correct letter, **A**, **B** or **C**, in boxes 5–9 on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

List of Researchers	
A	Francis Galton
B	Thomas Bouchard
C	Danielle Reed

- 5 invented a term used to distinguish two factors affecting human characteristics
- 6 expressed the view that the study of epigenetics will increase our knowledge
- 7 developed a mathematical method of measuring genetic influences
- 8 pioneered research into genetics using twins
- 9 carried out research into twins who had lived apart

Questions 10–13

Complete the summary using the list of words, **A–F**, below.

Write the correct letter, **A–F**, in boxes 10–13 on your answer sheet.

Epigenetic processes

In epigenetic processes, **10** influence the activity of our genes for example, in creating our internal **11** The study of epigenetic processes is uncovering a way in which our genes can be affected by our **12** One example is that if a pregnant rat suffers stress, the new born rat may later show problems in its **13**

A nurture

B organs

C code

D chemicals

E environment

F behaviour/behavior

READING PASSAGE 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 14–26**, which are based on Reading Passage 2 below.

An Introduction to Film Sound

Though we might think of film as an essentially visual experience, we really cannot afford to underestimate the importance of film sound. A meaningful sound track is often as complicated as the image on the screen, and is ultimately just as much the responsibility of the director. The entire sound track consists of three essential ingredients: the human voice, sound effects and music. These three tracks must be mixed and balanced so as to produce the necessary emphases which in turn create desired effects. Topics which essentially refer to the three previously mentioned tracks are discussed below. They include dialogue, synchronous and asynchronous sound effects, and music.

Let us start with dialogue. As is the case with stage drama, dialogue serves to tell the story and expresses feelings and motivations of characters as well. Often with film characterization the audience perceives little or no difference between the character and the actor. Thus, for example, the actor Humphrey Bogart is the character Sam Spade; film personality and life personality seem to merge. Perhaps this is because the very texture of a performer's voice supplies an element of character.

When voice textures fit the performer's physiognomy and gestures, a whole and very realistic persona emerges. The viewer sees not an actor working at his craft, but another human being struggling with life. It is interesting to note that how dialogue is used and the very amount of dialogue used varies widely among films. For example, in the highly successful science-fiction film *2001*, little dialogue was evident, and most of it was banal and of little intrinsic interest. In this way the film-maker was able to portray what Thomas Sobochack and Vivian Sobochack call, in *An Introduction to Film*, the 'inadequacy of human responses when compared with the magnificent technology created by man and the visual beauties of the universe'.

The comedy *Bringing Up Baby*, on the other hand, presents practically non-stop dialogue delivered at breakneck speed. This use of dialogue underscores not only the dizzy quality of the character played by Katherine Hepburn, but also the absurdity of the film itself and thus its humor. The audience is bounced from gag to gag and conversation to conversation; there is no time for audience reflection. The audience is caught up in a whirlwind of

activity in simply managing to follow the plot. This film presents pure escapism – largely due to its frenetic dialogue.

Synchronous sound effects are those sounds which are synchronized or matched with what is viewed. For example, if the film portrays a character playing the piano, the sounds of the piano are projected. Synchronous sounds contribute to the realism of film and also help to create a particular atmosphere. For example, the ‘click’ of a door being opened may simply serve to convince the audience that the image portrayed is real, and the audience may only subconsciously note the expected sound. However, if the ‘click’ of an opening door is part of an ominous action such as a burglary, the sound mixer may call attention to the ‘click’ with an increase in volume; this helps to engage the audience in a moment of suspense.

Asynchronous sound effects, on the other hand, are not matched with a visible source of the sound on screen. Such sounds are included so as to provide an appropriate emotional nuance, and they may also add to the realism of the film. For example, a film-maker might opt to include the background sound of an ambulance’s siren while the foreground sound and image portrays an arguing couple. The asynchronous ambulance siren underscores the psychic injury incurred in the argument; at the same time the noise of the siren

adds to the realism of the film by acknowledging the film’s city setting.

We are probably all familiar with background music in films, which has become so ubiquitous as to be noticeable in its absence. We are aware that it is used to add emotion and rhythm. Usually not meant to be noticeable, it often provides a tone or an emotional attitude toward the story and/or the characters depicted. In addition, background music often foreshadows a change in mood. For example, dissonant music may be used in film to indicate an approaching (but not yet visible) menace or disaster.

Background music may aid viewer understanding by linking scenes. For example, a particular musical theme associated with an individual character or situation may be repeated at various points in a film in order to remind the audience of salient motifs or ideas.

Film sound comprises conventions and innovations. We have come to expect an acceleration of music during car chases and creaky doors in horror films. Yet, it is important to note as well that sound is often brilliantly conceived. The effects of sound are often largely subtle and often are noted by only our subconscious minds. We need to foster an awareness of film sound as well as film space so as to truly appreciate an art form that sprang to life during the twentieth century – the modern film.

Questions 14–18

Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

Write the correct letter in boxes 14–18 on your answer sheet.

- 14** In the first paragraph, the writer makes a point that
- A** the director should plan the sound track at an early stage in filming.
 - B** it would be wrong to overlook the contribution of sound to the artistry of films.
 - C** the music industry can have a beneficial influence on sound in film.
 - D** it is important for those working on the sound in a film to have sole responsibility for it.
- 15** One reason that the writer refers to Humphrey Bogart is to exemplify
- A** the importance of the actor and the character appearing to have similar personalities.
 - B** the audience's wish that actors are visually appropriate for their roles.
 - C** the value of the actor having had similar feelings to the character.
 - D** the audience's preference for dialogue to be as authentic as possible.
- 16** In the third paragraph, the writer suggests that
- A** audiences are likely to be critical of film dialogue that does not reflect their own experience.
 - B** film dialogue that appears to be dull may have a specific purpose.
 - C** filmmakers vary considerably in the skill with which they handle dialogue.
 - D** the most successful films are those with dialogue of a high quality.
- 17** What does the writer suggest about *Bringing Up Baby*?
- A** The plot suffers from the filmmaker's wish to focus on humorous dialogue.
 - B** The dialogue helps to make it one of the best comedy films ever produced.
 - C** There is a mismatch between the speed of the dialogue and the speed of actions.
 - D** The nature of the dialogue emphasises key elements of the film.
- 18** The writer refers to the 'click' of a door to make the point that realistic sounds
- A** are often used to give the audience a false impression of events in the film.
 - B** may be interpreted in different ways by different members of the audience.
 - C** may be modified in order to manipulate the audience's response to the film.
 - D** tend to be more significant in films presenting realistic situations.

Questions 19–23

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 2?

In boxes 19–23 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE *if the statement agrees with the information*
FALSE *if the statement contradicts the information*
NOT GIVEN *if there is no information on this*

- 19 Audiences are likely to be surprised if a film lacks background music.
- 20 Background music may anticipate a development in a film.
- 21 Background music has more effect on some people than on others.
- 22 Background music may help the audience to make certain connections within the film.
- 23 Audiences tend to be aware of how the background music is affecting them.

Questions 24–26

Complete each sentence with the correct ending, **A–E**, below.

Write the correct letter, **A–E**, in boxes 24–26 on your answer sheet.

- 24** The audience's response to different parts of a film can be controlled
25 The feelings and motivations of characters become clear
26 A character seems to be a real person rather than an actor

- A** when the audience listens to the dialogue.
B if the film reflects the audience's own concerns.
C if voice, sound and music are combined appropriately.
D when the director is aware of how the audience will respond.
E when the actor's appearance, voice and moves are consistent with each other.

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 27–40**, which are based on Reading Passage 3 on the following pages.

Questions 27–32

Reading Passage 3 has six paragraphs, **A–F**.

Choose the correct heading for paragraphs **A–F** from the list of headings below.

Write the correct number, **i–vii**, in boxes 27–32 on your answer sheet.

List of Headings

- i** Differences between languages highlight their impressiveness
- ii** The way in which a few sounds are organised to convey a huge range of meaning
- iii** Why the sounds used in different languages are not identical
- iv** Apparently incompatible characteristics of language
- v** Even silence can be meaningful
- vi** Why language is the most important invention of all
- vii** The universal ability to use language

27 Paragraph **A**

28 Paragraph **B**

29 Paragraph **C**

30 Paragraph **D**

31 Paragraph **E**

32 Paragraph **F**

'This Marvellous Invention'

- A** Of all mankind's manifold creations, language must take pride of place. Other inventions – the wheel, agriculture, sliced bread – may have transformed our material existence, but the advent of language is what made us human. Compared to language, all other inventions pale in significance, since everything we have ever achieved depends on language and originates from it. Without language, we could never have embarked on our ascent to unparalleled power over all other animals, and even over nature itself.
- B** But language is foremost not just because it came first. In its own right it is a tool of extraordinary sophistication, yet based on an idea of ingenious simplicity: 'this marvellous invention of composing out of twenty-five or thirty sounds that infinite variety of expressions which, whilst having in themselves no likeness to what is in our mind, allow us to disclose to others its whole secret, and to make known to those who cannot penetrate it all that we imagine, and all the various stirrings of our soul'. This was how, in 1660, the renowned French grammarians of the Port-Royal abbey near Versailles distilled the essence of language, and no one since has celebrated more eloquently the magnitude of its achievement. Even so, there is just one flaw in all these hymns of praise, for the homage to language's unique accomplishment conceals a simple yet critical incongruity. Language is mankind's greatest invention – except, of course, that it was never invented. This apparent paradox is at the core of our fascination with language, and it holds many of its secrets.
- C** Language often seems so skillfully drafted that one can hardly imagine it as anything other than the perfected handiwork of a master craftsman. How else could this instrument make so much out of barely three dozen measly morsels of sound? In themselves, these configurations of mouth – *p, f, b, v, t, d, k, g, sh, a, e* and so on – amount to nothing more than a few haphazard spits and splutters, random noises with no meaning, no ability to express, no power to explain. But run them through the cogs and wheels of the language machine, let it arrange them in some very special orders, and there is nothing that these meaningless streams of air cannot do: from sighing the interminable boredom of existence to unravelling the fundamental order of the universe.
- D** The most extraordinary thing about language, however, is that one doesn't have to be a genius to set its wheels in motion. The language machine allows just about everybody – from pre-modern foragers in the subtropical savannah to post-modern philosophers in the suburban sprawl – to tie these meaningless sounds together into an infinite variety of subtle senses, and all apparently without the slightest exertion. Yet it is precisely this deceptive ease which makes language a victim of its own success, since

in everyday life its triumphs are usually taken for granted. The wheels of language run so smoothly that one rarely bothers to stop and think about all the resourcefulness and expertise that must have gone into making it tick. Language conceals art.

- E** Often, it is only the estrangement of foreign tongues, with their many exotic and outlandish features, that brings home the wonder of language's design. One of the showiest stunts that some languages can pull off is an ability to build up words of breath-breaking length, and thus express in one word what English takes a whole sentence to say. The Turkish word *şehirliliştiremediklerimizdensiniz*, to take one example, means nothing less than 'you are one of those whom we can't turn into a town-dweller'. (In case you were wondering, this monstrosity really is one word, not merely many different words squashed together – most of its components cannot even stand up on their own.)
- F** And if that sounds like some one-off freak, then consider Sumerian, the language spoken on the banks of the Euphrates some 5,000 years ago by the people who invented writing and thus enabled the documentation of history. A Sumerian word like *munintuma'a* ('when he had made it suitable for her') might seem rather trim compared to the Turkish colossus above. What is so impressive about it, however, is not its lengthiness but rather the reverse – the thrifty compactness of its construction. The word is made up of different slots, each corresponding to a particular portion of meaning. This sleek design allows single sounds to convey useful information, and in fact even the absence of a sound has been enlisted to express something specific. If you were to ask which bit in the Sumerian word corresponds to the pronoun 'it' in the English translation 'when he had made it suitable for her', then the answer would have to be nothing. Mind you, a very particular kind of nothing: the nothing that stands in the empty slot in the middle. The technology is so fine-tuned then that even a non-sound, when carefully placed in a particular position, has been invested with a specific function. Who could possibly have come up with such a nifty contraption?

Questions 33–36

Complete the summary using the list of words, **A–G**, below.

Write the correct letter, **A–G**, in boxes 33–36 on your answer sheet.

The importance of language

The wheel is one invention that has had a major impact on **33** aspects of life, but no impact has been as **34** as that of language. Language is very **35**, yet composed of just a small number of sounds.

Language appears to be **36** to use. However, its sophistication is often overlooked.

A difficult	B complex	C original
D admired	E material	F easy
G fundamental		

Questions 37–40

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in Reading Passage 3?

In boxes 37–40 on your answer sheet, write

YES if the statement agrees with the views of the writer
NO if the statement contradicts the views of the writer
NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

- 37** Human beings might have achieved their present position without language.
- 38** The Port-Royal grammarians did justice to the nature of language.
- 39** A complex idea can be explained more clearly in a sentence than in a single word.
- 40** The Sumerians were responsible for starting the recording of events.

READING TEST ANSWER KEY

Reading Passage 1, Questions 1–13

- 1 FALSE
- 2 NOT GIVEN
- 3 NOT GIVEN
- 4 TRUE
- 5 A
- 6 C
- 7 B
- 8 A
- 9 B
- 10 D
- 11 B
- 12 E
- 13 F

Reading Passage 2, Questions 14–26

- 14 B
- 15 A
- 16 B
- 17 D
- 18 C
- 19 TRUE

- 20 TRUE
- 21 NOT GIVEN
- 22 TRUE
- 23 FALSE
- 24 C
- 25 A
- 26 E

Reading Passage 3, Questions 27–40

- 27 vi
- 28 iv
- 29 ii
- 30 vii
- 31 i
- 32 v
- 33 E
- 34 G
- 35 B
- 36 F
- 37 NO
- 38 YES
- 39 NOT GIVEN
- 40 YES

If you score ...

0–12	13–25	26–40
you are unlikely to get an acceptable score under examination conditions and we recommend that you spend a lot of time improving your English before you take IELTS.	you may get an acceptable score under examination conditions but we recommend that you think about having more practice or lessons before you take IELTS.	you are likely to get an acceptable score under examination conditions but remember that different institutions will find different scores acceptable.

What to do on the day

Very few people like taking exams, but you can make the day of the exam easier if you make sure you know what to expect and what you will have to do before you go to the IELTS test centre.

Rules and regulations

For any exam you take, there are some rules and regulations about what you **must** do and what you **mustn't** do during the exam. Read through the rules and regulations below and if there is anything you don't understand, ask your teacher or the administrator at the test centre.

You must ...

- provide proof of your identity (passport or National Identity Card) at registration. Contact the test centre to confirm which type of identity document is accepted. Test takers taking the test outside their own country must use a passport.
- inform the test centre of any changes to your identity document before the test date, bring the same identity document on the test day as the one recorded in your application, arrive at the test centre before the scheduled test start time. If you do not do any of the above you will not be allowed to take the test and you will not be eligible for a refund or transfer.
- consent for your identity to be verified both at test registration and on test day.
- only have on your desk your identification, a pen/pencil, a clear water bottle and an eraser.
- switch off your mobile phone, pager and any other electronic devices and put them with your personal belongings outside the test room.
- tell the test invigilator immediately if the conditions on the day of the test in any way impede your performance.

You must not ...

- impersonate another person or have another person impersonate you.
- attempt to cheat, copy the work of another candidate or disrupt the test.
- use, or attempt to use, a dictionary, pager, spell-checker, electronic recorder or mobile phone for the duration of the test. Any candidate doing so will be disqualified.

- talk to or disturb other candidates once the examination has started.
- use, or attempt to use, a dictionary.
- reproduce any part of the test in any format/medium. Any candidate doing so will have their test results disqualified and be liable to prosecution.
- remove any materials used during the examination. This includes, but is not limited to, examination papers, Speaking task cards, answer sheets and working paper.

Make sure you attend on time

- Know the date, time and place of your examination and arrive before the scheduled start time.
- If you arrive late for any of the components, report to the supervisor or invigilator. You may not be allowed to take the examination.

Provide what you need

- Take into the examination room only a pen, pencil, an eraser, a water bottle and your ID.
- You must not use correction fluid or highlighters.
- Leave anything which you do not need, or which is not allowed, outside the examination room.
- You may not lend anything to, or borrow anything from, another candidate during the examination.
- Do not bring valuables as the test centre cannot be responsible for these.

Examination instructions

- Listen to the supervisor and do what you are asked to do.
- Tell the supervisor or invigilator at once:
 - if you think you have the wrong question paper.
 - if the question paper is incomplete or illegible.
- Read carefully and follow the instructions printed on the question paper and on the answer sheet.
- Fill in the details required on the front of your question paper and on your answer sheet before the start of the examination.

Advice and assistance during the examination

- If you are not sure about what to do, raise your hand to attract attention. An invigilator will come to help you.
- You must not ask for, and will not be given, any explanation of the questions.
- If you do not feel well on the day of the examination or think that your work may be affected for any other reason, tell the supervisor or invigilator.

Leaving the examination room

- You may not leave the examination room without the permission of the supervisor or invigilator.
- You cannot leave your seat until all papers have been collected and you have been told you can leave.
- When you leave the examination room you must leave behind any paper used for rough work, clearly crossed through, and any other materials provided for the examination.
- Do not make any noise near the examination room.

Results

- Results are issued by test centres, usually 13 days after the paper-based test.
- Results may be delayed or withheld where any of the rules and regulations have been breached.
- In exceptional circumstances, results may be delayed and you may be required to retake one or more modules where the pattern of module results is highly unusual.