

IELTS

ACADEMIC

Understanding Reading

MINI



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Contents

Introduction	1
Worksheet for Academic Reading test	2
Worksheet answers	9
IELTS Academic Reading test	11
Academic Reading: Extended answers	24
Sample answer sheet	28
Acknowledgements	29

Introduction

The IELTS Academic Reading test lasts **60 minutes** and consists of **3 sections** with **40 questions**. Let's look at this in more detail.

What is the format of Academic Reading?

The IELTS Academic Reading test consists of three sections, each with texts which are taken from journals, books, magazines and newspapers. The texts are on topics of general interest. At least one text contains a detailed logical argument.

A variety of question types is used, including: multiple choice, identifying information (True / False / Not Given), identifying the writer's views / claims (Yes / No / Not Given), matching information, headings, features, and completion of sentences, summaries, notes, tables, flow-charts and diagrams as well as short-answer questions.

Find out more about IELTS General Training Reading in *IELTS General Training mini Reading with Extended Answers*.

How is IELTS Academic Reading marked?

Each question in the Reading test is worth one mark.

- Answers may be written in upper or lower case.
- If you are asked to write an answer using a certain number of words and/or (a) number(s), you will be penalised if you write more than this.
- In questions where you are expected to fill a gap, you should only transfer the necessary missing word(s) onto the answer sheet.
- All answers require correct spelling (including words in brackets).
- Both US and UK spelling are acceptable.
- All standard alternatives for numbers, dates and currencies are acceptable.
- Other standard abbreviations are usually acceptable.

How do I use this mini IELTS Academic Reading practice test?

To make the most of this mini IELTS Academic Reading practice test follow these simple steps:

- 1 Do the activities on the worksheet on pages 2–8.
- 2 Read through the answers to the worksheet and review your own answers. This will help you understand where you can improve in your next Reading test.
- 3 Complete the IELTS Academic Reading test on pages 11–23 using the skills you have just learnt, and transfer your answers to the sample answer sheet on page 28.
- 4 Check the extended answers to the test on pages 24–27 and review your own answers.

More information on the IELTS Academic Reading test is available on the IELTS website, ielts.org

WORKSHEET FOR ACADEMIC READING TEST

The aim of this worksheet is to help you to:

- understand the different reading skills you will need to do well in the IELTS Academic Reading test;
- practise those skills through a series of exercises;
- focus on the areas of language that you will need for the IELTS Academic Reading test.

Skimming – Reading the text quickly

The first thing you should do with any reading passage in a test is to read it through quite quickly. This is to see what the text is generally about, and to understand the main areas or ideas it covers.

- 1 *Read quickly through the following text about silk and write down next to each paragraph, in a short sentence or phrase, what it is about. Take no more than two and a half minutes.*

SILK

A Silk is a fine, smooth material produced from the cocoons – soft protective shells – that are made by mulberry silkworms (insect larvae). Legend has it that it was Lei Tzu, wife of the Yellow Emperor, ruler of China in about 3000 BC, who discovered silkworms. One account of the story goes that as she was taking a walk in her husband's gardens, she discovered that silkworms were responsible for the destruction of several mulberry trees. She collected a number of cocoons and sat down to have a rest. It just so happened that while she was sipping some tea, one of the cocoons that she had collected landed in the hot tea and started to unravel into a fine thread. Lei Tzu found that she could wind this thread around her fingers. Subsequently, she persuaded her husband to allow her to rear silkworms on a grove of mulberry trees. She also devised a special reel to draw the fibres from the cocoon into

a single thread so that they would be strong enough to be woven into fabric. While it is unknown just how much of this is true, it is certainly known that silk cultivation has existed in China for several millennia.

B Originally, silkworm farming was solely restricted to women, and it was they who were responsible for the growing, harvesting and weaving. Silk quickly grew into a symbol of status, and originally, only royalty were entitled to have clothes made of silk. The rules were gradually relaxed over the years until finally during the Qing Dynasty (AD 1644–1911), even peasants, the lowest caste, were also entitled to wear silk. Sometime during the Han Dynasty (AD 206 BC–220), silk was so prized that it was also used as a unit of currency. Government officials were paid their salary in silk, and farmers paid their taxes in grain and silk. Silk was also used as diplomatic gifts by the emperor. Fishing lines, bowstrings,