



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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Text

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Contents

Introduction	4
Guide to IELTS Academic Reading task types	5
How to revise for IELTS Academic Reading	6
Top Tips for IELTS Academic Reading test	7
The IELTS Reading test answer sheet explained	28
Sample answer sheet	29
IELTS Academic Reading test	30
Reading test answer key	43
What to do on the day	44

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.



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.