



## Improving Reading Skills to Crack IELTS Exam

Reading is supposed to be a very difficult module for many IELTS test takers which is true to some extent but it can be overcome by following some simple but effective methodology. It is important to understand what is required to improve the reading skills to score better in the exam. Let's see how it can be done:

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Skimming and Scanning are the two skills that are needed to solve the Reading test paper. You use both to find the answers. Skimming means reading something fast to just understand the overview of the written text, you do not need to read in detail but you should not skip anything while skimming. On the other hand Scanning means reading something in detail to understand the meaning well. Once you know which part has the answer, you need to scan or read that part in depth to understand the meaning. You need to scan only selected part of the text.

### **Time Management**

Managing time is crucial in the Reading test paper as you get only one hour to find the answers and write them on your answer sheet. It is a very big task to attempt all 40 questions of reading in one hour but it could be tackled. You need to divide the time between all the three sections; 15 min for first, 20 min for second and 25 min for third. Do not waste too much time on one question, if you are unable to locate the answer and you think it's taking more time, leave it and move to the next question. In the end you have go back to that question again and find its answer. In this way you do not waste your time.



## How to get Band 8 in IELTS Reading?

### Practice reading fast

Some people read very slow as they have read more during their school days and such people take more time to read the passage and are not able to complete the test in time. To improve the speed of reading, you should practice fast reading by using a timer. You can pick any random article and try to fast read or skim it in 2-3 minutes. Keep practicing till you reach this level.

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### No need to understand the whole passage in detail

Your purpose in Reading Test is not to gain detail knowledge of the topic of the passage but just to find the right answers, therefore you do not need to understand the whole passage in

detail. You should read only the selected part in detail to pick the correct answer (this is called scanning the selected text)

### **Writing the answers correctly**

Writing the answers in the manner is vital to not lose marks due to silly errors. It is important that you read the instructions carefully, understand them and then write the answer accordingly. For example if the instruction says that you need to write TRUE or FALSE and you write YES or NO in place of that thinking that it is the same thing then your correct answers will be marked incorrect as you have not followed the instructions. Similarly, if the instruction says that you need to write the answer in NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS, it means that you can write one word or two words or three words as per the demand of the question but you cannot write four or more words.

### **Keywords**

You must have heard that KEYWORDS are important to get the correct answer, let's understand what it is? Keyword means the important words present in the question or text which could help you understand the meaning well. It is important that you identify all the keywords and right keywords in the question so that you can understand the demand of the question. When you are able to do that it will be easy to locate the answer in the passage.

### **Grammar**

As IELTS is the test to assess English language skills and grammar is the base of any language, you cannot neglect it, not even in Reading. Especially in case of Fill-ups, it is important that you check the whether the sentence is correct or incorrect including your answer in the blank, if not then your answer will be considered incorrect even if it is correct as per the information. Also, if you focus on the words before and after the blank grammatically, you will be able to understand what kind of word will be suitable for the blank like a person or process or chemical etcetera.

### **Work on Vocabulary**

Having a decent range of vocabulary is imperative to comprehend the text written. To do this you can start with reading stories, articles or NEWS everyday which will help you learn new words, however, this is not enough, you need to start using these new words in speaking and writing as per the situation so that they become part of your language. To begin you can pick one or two words and paste it on your mirror so that every time you look at the mirror you read that word and remind yourself to use it. Alternatively, there are apps available to tell you word meaning, its synonyms and antonyms that can come useful, for example, THESAURUS which is an app from dictionary.com

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### **Practicing each question type**

Reading paper has different question types and there is strategy to solve each one of them. You should learn these strategies and practice each question type on regular basis so that you master the skill. In most of the cases the answers of fill-ups or true/false are in sequence, however, it is not always correct. For MCQ one must follow elimination technique, eliminating each option that does not make sense with the question asked. Understanding such things helps to save a lot of time which is important.

### **Practicing the Tests**

As it is said, "Practice makes a man perfect", it is required that you do a lot of practice of solving the reading test papers available online for free or in books published by Cambridge or other publications. The sole purpose of this is to understand different styles of writing information and asking questions as there is a lot of paraphrasing and rephrasing of text in the passages. If you practice extensively then there will be nothing that you would not have solved by the time you book your IELTS test.