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Tests



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all Listening sections

Monica Sorrenson

McGraw-Hill Education

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**To access the online audio tracks that accompany the tests
in this book, go to:**

www.mheIELTS6practicetests.com

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this book.

The number of people around the world who now take the IELTS exam is astounding. By working through this book, you'll be closer to your IELTS goal and your post-IELTS dream.

McGraw-Hill Education 6 IELTS Practice Tests contains around 25 hours of material. Its six practice tests develop exam technique, and its advice focuses on the Listening and the Academic Reading tests. You'll do best in IELTS if you use this book together with other materials, like *McGraw-Hill Education IELTS*, or with classes that improve your vocabulary, grammar, spoken fluency, pronunciation, academic writing style, and knowledge of the world.

Like many things in life, attitude counts with IELTS. By that I don't mean preparing for a week, then imagining that if you try your best, think positive thoughts, or compliment your Speaking examiner, you'll receive a high score. I mean *realistically* assessing where you are now, in relation to where you need to be, and putting in the effort to get there.

For those of you yet to sit IELTS, the exam is not easy, and the tests in this book are *at the level* of real exams.

For those of you who've already sat IELTS, it takes months and even years to go up IELTS bands. Teachers, tutors, classmates, people who comment on websites, friends, parents, loved ones, and writers of books like this will all offer you advice, but the responsibility for your IELTS score lies with you and you alone.

There are three parts to this book: (1) **Introduction** (pp vii-21): This appraises your general knowledge of IELTS with a **Quiz** (pp 1-9). It includes information on the four individual tests and the nine band scores. It gives an overall impression of **what makes a strong candidate** in speaking and writing (pp 6-8). It describes the different **question types** (pp 11-15) you'll encounter, and has specific advice on the **Listening and Reading tests** (pp 18-21).

(2) **Tests 1 and 2** (pp 22-114): are mainly printed on right-hand pages, while tips, called 'How to get a Seven', are on the left. By following these tips, you'll be able to predict answers, find cues or signposts, listen or look for paraphrases, understand inference, avoid common errors, and, hopefully, get a Seven.

(3) **Tests 3 to 6** (pp 115-227): have no tips. Questions for Tests 3 and 4 are at the level of real IELTS exams, but those for Tests 5 and 6 are slightly higher. This is to help people who have already scored a Six aim for a Seven.

For easy access, answers to activities and tests appear throughout the book. Pay particular attention to the **highlighted** answers in the recording scripts and reading passages. Go through all the writing and speaking models carefully, so you understand what examiners really expect.



The IELTS Quiz

The Listening Test and the Academic Reading Test

What do you know about IELTS? For each question, circle the letter of your choice.

1	In total, how long is an IELTS exam?		
	a	2 hours 15 minutes	b 2 hours 45 minutes c 3 hours 15 minutes
2	How many questions are there in the Listening or Reading test?		
	a	40	b 50 c 100
3	How much is each question worth in the Listening or Reading test?		
	a	½ a mark	b 1 mark c It varies from test to test.
4	Which mark approximately represents a band Seven in Listening?		
	a	27/40	b 30/40 c 33/40
5	Is this the same for Reading?		
	a	No. Reading is lower.	b No. Reading is higher. c Yes
6	In Listening or Reading, if a candidate doesn't answer a question, or writes a wrong answer, what happens?		
	a	He or she gets zero for that question.	b He or she loses one mark. c He or she loses half a mark.
7	What is the maximum number of words (or words and numbers) candidates can write for a Listening or Reading answer?		
	a	There is no maximum.	b Five c Three
8	Must all answers for a Listening or Reading test come from the recordings or passages, or can candidates write down any answers they can think of that are correct?		
	a	As long as answers are right, it doesn't matter where they come from.	b Answers must come from the recordings or the passages, but candidates can change them slightly, for example, into plurals or participles. c Answers must come from the recordings or the passages, and they must not be changed in any way.
9	How important is spelling in the Listening or Reading test?		
	a	Extremely important. To get a mark in Listening, an answer must be correctly spelt, conforming to standard UK, US, or Australian spelling. In Reading, if a correct answer is <i>copied</i> wrongly, it is marked wrong.	b Very important. Usually, to get a mark in Listening, an answer must be correctly spelt, but if there's just one letter wrong, then the mark is still awarded. In Reading, if a word is copied wrongly, but is recognisable, the mark is given. c Not so important. As long as a person marking the Listening answer sheet can work out what the word is, incorrect spelling doesn't matter. In Reading, if a word is copied wrongly, but is recognisable, the mark is given.
10	When do candidates have an extra ten minutes to transfer their answers to answer sheets?		
	a	In Listening only	b In Reading only c In both Listening and Reading

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11	What is the best use of the ten-minute transfer time at the end of the Listening test?					
	a	Making sure most answers are correct, and guessing the others	b	Making sure all answers are correct, and leaving the others	c	Checking uncertain answers; checking spelling; guessing difficult questions
12	What is played twice in the Listening test?					
	a	Nothing	b	A single example at the beginning of Section 1	c	Each of the four sections
13	Do candidates hear the answers in the Listening test, or see them in the Reading test, in order, from #1 to #40?					
	a	Yes	b	Mostly	c	No. They are all mixed up.
14	Should candidates write anything down while a person or people are speaking during a Listening section, or should they wait until there is a pause?					
	a	Find correct answers as you go, and circle or write them down. Take notes throughout, but especially in Section 4. The pauses should be used to read the questions <i>ahead</i> . Use the transfer time to go back over uncertain answers.	b	Find correct answers as you go, and circle or write them down. <i>Making</i> notes is a better idea than <i>taking</i> notes. Then, check the answers during the pauses. After all, a narrator says, 'You now have 30 seconds to check your answers.'	c	Concentrating <i>without</i> writing anything down is a good idea. You'll be able to remember the answers, and do them in the pauses. There are so many pauses that you can relax during some of them.
15	In which section of the Listening test do candidates <i>below</i> IELTS Six guess most answers or leave them blank?					
	a	2	b	3	c	4
16	In which section of the Listening test does one person give a short talk about an everyday situation?					
	a	1	b	2	c	3
17	In which section of the Listening test could there be three people talking?					
	a	1	b	2	c	3
18	What kind of environment would those three be in?					
	a	A domestic one	b	An academic one	c	A work one
19	Which section of the Listening test has two people discussing a familiar transaction?					
	a	1	b	2	c	3
20	In which section of the Listening test is there <i>no</i> 30-second pause partway through?					
	a	2	b	3	c	4
21	When there are MCQs (Multi-Choice Questions: Options A, B, or C) in Listening, and there are twelve letters in total in a test's answers, what is the likely distribution of the letters?					
	a	It is entirely random.	b	The letters will usually be evenly distributed: 4 As, 4 Bs, 4 Cs.	c	The letters will usually be slightly unevenly distributed: 3 As, 4 Bs, 5 Cs; or 4 As, 5 Bs, 3 Cs etc.

22	Which factors make the Listening test difficult?		
	a It has nine sets of questions; it has around 20 word answers; the topic of Section 4 may be conceptually difficult.	b It has speakers with all kinds of accents; many of its word answers are hard to spell; Section 4 is very long.	c Although it doesn't have many word answers, its MCQs have a lot of words in their stems and options to read; Section 3 has three speakers; Section 4 is on a scientific topic.
23	<i>Excluding</i> the questions, about how many words are there to read in the three passages of the Reading test?		
	a 1700	b 2200	c 2700
24	Do the three Reading passages have a roughly equal number of words?		
	a Yes	b No. While Passage 3 almost always has the most, Passage 1 or 2 could have the second-most.	c No. Passage 3 has more than Passage 2; and, Passage 2 has more than Passage 1.
25	What level of difficulty are the Reading passages?		
	a They range from the level of an 18-19-year-old student in an English-speaking high school to a university graduate.*	b They are all the level of a first-year university student in an English-speaking country.	c They are all the level of an 18-19-year-old student in an English-speaking high school.
26	Why is Passage 3 usually harder than the other two?		
	a Because it is the longest	b Because the writer discusses his or her views	c Because it has the most questions
27	To what extent is this sound advice? Read all the questions (stems and options) before answering anything in the Reading test.		
	a It is a good idea.	b It is poor advice – there isn't time. Read the passages themselves first.	c It is advisable to read all the questions <i>before</i> starting the reading passages, but, for MCQs, <i>only</i> their stems not their options – there won't be time for these. Read the options as you answer later.
28	Is the Reading test more difficult for some nationalities?		
	a No. It doesn't matter what your background is, it is still hard.	b Yes. Reading is a transferrable skill, so if people in your culture rarely read much that is long or complex in any language, you're going to struggle to get a Seven.	c Yes. The Reading test is designed to trick certain nationalities.

*If you're interested in reading levels, look up 'Readability' or 'Flesch-Kincaid'.

29	What strategies should candidates adopt in the Reading test?					
	a	Read the questions first so you can identify where to skim or scan in a passage, or where to read slowly and carefully; look for inference as well as detail answers.	b	Read every single word as fast as you can; the questions are all about detail, so finding where items are in a passage is really important – most answers rely on synonyms.	c	Do Passage 3 first because it is the hardest; read everything as fast as you can; guess often because you can still get a Seven by guessing.
30	How can candidates dramatically improve their Reading scores?					
	a	By reading academic texts in English for about 30 minutes a day.	b	By reading in English as well as in their own language for a total of 60 minutes a day.	c	By doing as many IELTS practice tests as possible.

Answers: 1. b; 2. a; 3. b; 4. b; 5. c; 6. a; 7. c; 8. c; 9. a; 10. a; 11. c; 12. b; 13. b; 14. a; 15. c; 16. b; 17. c; 18. b; 19. a; 20. c; 21. c; 22. a; 23. c; 24. b; 25. a; 26. b; 27. c; 28. b; 29. a; 30. b

The Academic Writing Test and the Speaking Test

1	How many words must candidates write in the Writing test?			
	a	150 in Task 1; 250 in Task 2	b	250 in both tasks
2	What happens if candidates do not write enough words?			
	a	Nothing happens. Examiners are more interested in quality than quantity.	b	They lose marks.
3	What is each task worth?			
	a	Both tasks are worth the same.	b	Task 2 is worth twice as much as Task 1.
4	In Task 1, which is more difficult: charts and tables; or, maps, plans, and diagrams?			
	a	Maps, plans, and diagrams are more difficult.	b	Candidates may believe maps, plans, and diagrams are more difficult, but they are as difficult as charts and tables.
5	How can candidates score a Six in Task 1 if the task is a chart or a table?			
	a	By including an overall statement; by describing the main features (not all); and, by including key data.	b	By noting all the features, and all the data associated with them.
6	How can candidates score a Six in Task 1 if it is a diagram?			
	a	By outlining the process from start to finish in one sentence (similar to the overall statement above); describing the key steps; and, using the passive voice.	b	By describing all the steps in the process from start to finish; by using the active voice and personal pronouns, like 'you'.
7	How can candidates score a Six in Task 1 if it is two plans or two maps?			
	a	By stating the major differences in one sentence (similar to the overall statement above), then describing the key similarities and differences. It is not necessary to describe them all.	b	By listing all the similarities and all the differences.
8	Aside from lacking the vocabulary or grammar, why do many candidates not score a Six in Task 2?			
	a	Their essay is long enough but simplistic.	b	Their essay is interesting but a little short.

9	Which better describes a Task 2 essay that is awarded a Seven?			
	a	A piece of writing that is highly academic in style. It may not be so pleasurable for an examiner to read.	b	A piece of writing that is academic in style and pleasurable for an examiner to read.
10	What criteria are used to mark the Writing test?			
	a	The criteria are: Task Achievement; Coherence and Cohesion; Vocabulary Range and Accuracy; Grammatical Range and Accuracy.	b	The criteria vary from country to country and IELTS centre to centre. The most important things are that the essay is long enough, and the grammar is perfect.
11	Do some nationalities do poorly in the Writing test?			
	a	No. It's equally difficult for everyone.	b	Yes. In some countries, the high-school and university education systems do not encourage students to write at length, and what is written follows formulas. Moreover, if these students do not read widely in their own language or in English, they lack sophisticated ideas necessary to get a Seven. You can go to www.ielts.org for a list of countries and languages to see how different ones score.
12	How long is a Speaking test?			
	a	Between 11-14 minutes	b	It must be 14 minutes.
13	What criteria are used to mark the Speaking test?			
	a	Criteria vary from country to country and IELTS centre to centre. The most important things are that candidates speak at length, and their grammar and pronunciation are very good.	b	Criteria are: Fluency and Coherence; Vocabulary Range and Accuracy; Grammatical Range and Accuracy; Pronunciation.
14	What is the basic difference in the Speaking test between Parts 1-2 and Part 3?			
	a	Parts 1-2 deal with familiar situations – things in and around a candidate's own life. Part 3 deals with abstract ideas – things beyond a candidate's own life.	b	Parts 1-2 require short answers, whereas in Part 3, a candidate needs to speak at length. More complex vocabulary is usually needed for Part 3.
15	Is it important for candidates to speak for the entire two minutes in Part 2? How many words should a candidate say?			
	a	Yes. These days, they have to speak for two minutes, which is around 350 words.	b	It doesn't really matter if candidates don't reach the two-minute mark. Quality is more important than quantity. The number of words could be between 150-250.

16	Do some nationalities do better in the Speaking test?	
a	No. It is equally difficult for everyone.	b
		Yes. In Part 3, some people lack sophisticated ideas, and can only talk about their own experience rather than the world beyond. There are other people for whom English pronunciation is very difficult, and these people may need private tuition or to live in an English-speaking country to improve.

Here are the answers for pp 4-6: **1. a; 2. b; 3. b; 4. b; 5. a; 6. a; 7. a; 8. a; 9. b; 10. a; 11. b; 12. a; 13. b; 14. a; 15. a; 16. b**

What Do Strong Academic Writing and Speaking Candidates Do?

Here are some adjectives to describe candidates or the answers they give in the Writing and Speaking tests.

In the Writing test, what do examiners like?

Tick the positive attributes, and cross the negative ones as in the examples.

Examiners like candidates' scripts that are:							
x	x	✓	✓				
biased	bogus	edited	elegant	exemplified	facile	formal	formulaic
grammatically complex		grammatically inaccurate		legible	lexically narrow		
logical	persuasive	pertinent	rambling	succinct	tangential	tempered	under-length

*What do the adjectives above mean?**

Complete each sentence on the left about a candidate with the best item on the right.

1 His writing is clear, logical, and well-supported. He uses less common items of vocabulary, and his cohesion is unobtrusive. His writing is	A persuasive.
2 Her writing has appropriate vocabulary, much sourced from Latin. She avoids slang, personal pronouns, 'get', phrasal verbs, or texting. Her language is	B grammatically complex.
3 His sentences are varied, and include subordination. His word choices for number, tense, aspect, and voice are sophisticated. His writing is	C succinct.
4 Her arguments are convincing or believable. Her writing is	D tempered.
5 His examples are completely relevant or	E elegant.
6 Although she uses complex grammar, she does not include unnecessary words. Her vocabulary is so precise that she can use one word where a lesser writer would use four or five. Her writing is	F edited.

*An IELTS Seven knows many of these words; a Six knows five or six; and, a Five knows just two or three.

7	His arguments and examples are never extreme. They are moderate or	G formal.
8	On her test paper, some words have been crossed out and replaced; others have had minor changes made for spelling. Her writing is	H pertinent.

In the Speaking test, what do examiners like? Tick or cross again.

Examiners like candidates or their answers that are:						
amenable	articulate	boastful	coherent	contemplative	courteous	decontracted
expansive	hesitant	idiomatic	insincere	memorised	natural	obsequious
opinionated	over-confident	scruffy	self-correcting	shallow	unruffled	

What do the adjectives above mean?

Complete each sentence on the left about a candidate with the best item on the right.

1	She speaks clearly with fluent, sophisticated ideas. She's	A coherent.
2	He organises his ideas logically. He's	B idiomatic.
3	She gives thoughtful, considered answers. She's	C unruffled.
4	He's friendly, or he gives extended answers. He's	D self-correcting.
5	She uses phrasal verbs and less common items of vocabulary in everyday speech. Her language is	E expansive.
6	He's relaxed, and he freely gives his genuine opinions. He's	F contemplative.
7	Although the questions become a little difficult, she doesn't show any anxiety, and she answers as well as she can. She's	G natural.
8	Aware of his mistakes, he reformulates his answers. He's	H articulate.

What Are Some Differences Between the IELTS Bands?

Many examiners can judge a writer or a speaker in one or two sentences.

Read the items, below, from Writing tests, and rank them from most to least competent: A-E. There is an example.

	The popularity of the fast food may be attributed to it's cost and convenience.
	In a nutshell, peoples nowadays love fast food because it is cheep and convinient.
	In a nuts hell, pepol now a day liking the fast food. Is chip and convient.
C	It is well known around the world that fast food is getting more popular due to prize and convenient.
	Fast food is gaining popularity since it is cost-efficient and convenient.

An A from above would probably score an Eight; a B a Seven; a C a Six; a D a Five; and, an E a Four. (*The order is: ADECB.*) There isn't space here to explain why these bands would be awarded, but you might like to compare the items, and discuss them with another candidate or a teacher.

Read the utterances below from Speaking tests, and rank them from most to least competent (8-4), bearing in mind that you can't hear the candidates' pronunciation although some words are written as they've been said. There is an example.

6	Yes, I would love to lorn more about photo-graphy. However, I will have to wait until my children are at school. Furthermore, I think taking a course is a good ide-ea.
	I'd like to learn more about photography, but, um, I'd have to wait till my kids were in the school, and I'd need to take a course.
	I'd like to learn more about taking photos, but I would have to wait until my children are at school. And I think it is necessary for me to take the course.
	Yes. I like to lorn to... to teck photo. But... but no time. Children at the home.
	Yes, I love to learn new stuff. Why not the photography? But, um, my son, he's, like, at home. When he's gonna school, then I learn the stuff.

Here are the answers for pp 6-8.

Adjectives to describe strong writing candidates: edited, elegant, exemplified, formal, grammatically complex, legible, logical, persuasive, pertinent, succinct, tempered. **Weak ones:** biased, bogus, facile, formulaic, grammatically inaccurate, lexically narrow, rambling, tangential, under-length.

Sentence completion: Writing: 1. E; 2. G; 3. B; 4. A; 5. H; 6. C; 7. D; 8. F.

Adjectives to describe strong speaking candidates: amenable, articulate, coherent, contemplative, courteous, expansive, idiomatic, natural, self-correcting, unruffled. **Weak ones:** boastful, decontracted (*Eg: 'I am' instead of 'I'm'; 'it is' or 'it has' instead of 'it's'; 'they will' instead of 'they'll' etc*), hesitant, insincere, memorised, obsequious, opinionated, overconfident, scruffy, shallow.

Sentence completion: Speaking: 1. H; 2. A; 3. F; 4. E; 5. B; 6. G; 7. C. 8. D.
Speaking utterances: 68745.

Description of the IELTS Bands

There are ten IELTS bands, and the creators of the IELTS exam describe them thus:

Band 9	<i>Expert user</i>	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	<i>Very good user</i>	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7	<i>Good user</i>	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.

6	<i>Competent user</i>	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5	<i>Modest user</i>	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.
4	<i>Limited user</i>	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3	<i>Extremely limited user</i>	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2	<i>Intermittent user</i>	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.
1	<i>Non user</i>	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
0	<i>Did not attempt the test</i>	No assessable information provided.*

Go to www.ielts.org for more information on the bands, and on the public-access criteria examiners use to mark the Writing and Speaking tests.

Raw-Score Conversion Table for the Listening and Academic Reading Tests

Here is a table of *approximate* marks out of 40 needed to achieve certain bands. Bear in mind that the makers of the IELTS exam do not release this information, and that from time to time, marks needed may be one higher or one lower, depending on the ease or difficulty of a real IELTS Listening or Reading test.

Use this table to work out which bands you would score for the tests in this book.

Band	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5	8	8.5
Marks out of 40	9-11	12-15	16-18	19-22	23-26	27-29	30-32	33-34	35-36	37-38

My scores from this book	Listening /40	Reading /40	My band
Test 1			
Test 2			
Test 3			
Test 4			
Test 5			
Test 6			

LISTENING AND READING QUESTION TYPES

Question Types Used in the Listening Test Only

Multi-Choice Question (MCQ):

Choosing one answer from **three** options

Eg: What is the purpose of the lecture?

- A To get students to recycle smartphones
- B To let students know more about e-waste
- C To encourage students to develop an app

Eg: The lecturer talks about her family's behaviour because it is

- A typical.
- B exceptional.
- C ideal.

In the first example, the stem is a question; in the second, the stem is the first part of a sentence, which one option will complete, so the options end with full stops (periods).

Question Types Used in Both the Listening and Reading Tests

THOSE WITH ANSWERS THAT ARE LETTERS: A-L

MCQ

Choosing two answers from five options

Eg: Choose **TWO** letters, **A-E**.

Which **TWO** of the following happen at Zoe's day care?

- A Parents must provide diapers and food for their children.
- B Children's birthdays are celebrated with songs and games.
- C Children are divided by age into rooms named after animals.
- D Parents who collect their children fifteen minutes late are fined.
- E The centre reserves the right to send home children who are ill.

Multi-Matching

Remember, in the Listening test, the information (**11** and **12** below) goes in order of the recording, but the options (in a box or a list) are almost always out of order.

Eg: Choose **FOUR** answers from the box, below, and write the correct letter, **A-F**, next to questions 11-14 below.

A	Eliezer Montefiore
B	Grace Cossington-Smith
C	Paul Cézanne
D	Arthur Boyd
E	Wendy McEwen
F	A voluntary guide

- 11** He / She trains guides.
- 12** He / She was the gallery's first director.

In the Reading test, where there is a list (mostly of people), it almost always goes in order of the information in the passage, but the questions are out of order. Be careful.

In questions where the answers are out of the recording or passage order, you'll notice in the answers, after the correct letters, the phrase '*in any order*' is written.

Labelling

There are three possible items to label – a diagram, a plan, or a map – by choosing an option (A-?) from a list. See questions 26-28 in Test 6 Listening for an example. Labelling a plan or a map is similar. See questions 17-20 in Test 5 Listening, or 17-20 in Test 3.

THOSE WITH ANSWERS THAT ARE WORDS OR NUMBERS**Gap-fill**

There are several types of these, described in many books as: Sentence completion, Table completion, Note completion, or Flowchart completion.

Essentially all types are the same. You must fill a gap, and write the word, words, number, or word and number on your answer sheet. The maximum number of words to write is three.

Note: if you're asked: *Write UP TO THREE WORDS* for an answer, then make sure in that group of answers, there's at least one three-word answer. Likewise, if you're asked: *Write ONE WORD AND / OR NUMBER*, then one answer will be a word + a number. Where you have to fill gaps in a table, note the direction of the answers: across or down. Mostly, they're across.

Table completion

Eg: Complete the table below.

Write **ONE WORD OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

Teacher	Class	Days	Location	Other information
Sally Burton	Working with (5)		In her studio	Number of students per class: (6)

Form completion

There's no difference between table and form completion, except the forms are similar to ones from real life, so this type of question usually appears in Listening Section 1.

Note completion

There's no difference between table and note completion other than layout: notes tend to be in one box, whereas tables have cells and columns within a box.

Sentence completion

Eg: Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

- 16 Since living in Mozambique, Charlotte has not used a fridge or a..... .
- 17 Charlotte believes children who live in small houses tend to..... more.

Short-answer

Eg: Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

- 15 What is the process of giving the same information about the same artworks?
.....
- 16 How long is each guided tour?
.....

Question Types Used in the Reading Test Only

THOSE WITH ANSWERS THAT ARE LETTERS: A-L

MCQ

Choosing one answer from four options

Eg: According to the writer, how much night lighting should there be in relation to what there is now?

- A Much more
- B A little more
- C A little less
- D Much less

MCQ

Choosing **two** answers from five options **for a single mark**

Eg: **13** The list below includes associations Russians make with the colour red. Which **TWO** are mentioned by the writer of the passage?

- A danger
- B wealth
- C intelligence
- D faith
- E energy

Classification

Usually, there are three items (A, B, or C) in classification, but occasionally, four.

Eg: Classify the following things that relate to:

- A Report 1.
- B Report 2.
- C Report 3.
- D Report 4.

Write the correct letter, **A, B, C, or D**, in boxes 21-27 on your answer sheet.

- 21** This is unique because it contains interviews with both parents.
- 22** This looks at how children might be at risk.

Summary completion

These questions test grammar and vocabulary as well as comprehension of the passage. Typically, there are answers you can predict before reading the passage.

Eg: Complete the summary using the dates or words, **A-L**, below.

Write the correct letter, **A-L**, in boxes 8-13 on your answer sheet.

A	accept	B	adapting	C	adopting
D	believes	E	fantasy	F	non-linear
G	novel	H	rational	I	supernatural
J	Use	K	1925	L	1927

The genre of Márquez's fiction is known as Magical Realism, a term first applied to painting in **(8)**..... . Magical Realism is often described in negative terms, as not being Realism, Surrealism, Science Fiction, or **(9)**..... .

Which paragraph / section contains the following information?

You can usually skim these questions, although close reading is sometimes required.

The list of statements includes functions, eg: description, example, explanation, prediction, theory etc.

Eg: *Reading Passage 2* has seven sections, **A-F**.

Which section contains the following information?

Write the correct letter, A-F, in boxes 14-18 on your answer sheet.

- 14** a comparison of football clubs
- 15** a hope for the future
- 16** a brief history of Egyptian football
- 17** a description of the manipulation of football for political ends
- 18** hypotheses on the allure of football for spectators

Sentence completion

This is not a gap-fill question as in the Listening test. It requires matching the beginning and ending of each statement. It tests grammar as well as comprehension.

Eg: *Complete each sentence with the correct ending, A-G, below.*

Write the correct letter, A-G, in boxes 36-40 on your answer sheet.

- 36** The Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage is designed to
- 37** The World Heritage Committee worries about
- 38** The US refused to sign the 2003 convention due to concerns about

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A changes to or disappearance of traditions. B price rises due to world-heritage listing. C over-regulation connected to world-heritage listing. D protect traditions. E protect built environments. |
|---|

THOSE WITH ANSWERS THAT ARE ROMAN NUMERALS: I-X**Matching headings**

These questions require skimming. Don't spend long on them. If there are two headings that seem possible, choose the one that the paragraph or section contains more information about. Measure this amount with your finger.

Always cross out the answers you've chosen as well as distractors as you go. If you have time at the end, check you've got the right numerals on your answer sheet as it's easy to write down the wrong one accidentally.

See questions 15-19 in Test 2 Reading.

FACT OR CLAIM QUESTIONS

True/False/Not Given

These concern **facts** mentioned in the passage.

A false answer is one that is the opposite of what is true or only partially true.

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

In boxes 5-10 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.*

5 Stainless steel does not stain.

6 Carbon steel rusts as its surface molecules are smaller than those of iron oxide.

Some candidates think the most difficult questions in IELTS are choosing between False and Not Given, or between No (below) and Not Given. In general, without specific evidence *in* the passage, an answer is Not Given.

Note: the answers for these kinds of questions are evenly distributed in IELTS, so if there are three T/F/NG questions in a group, it's likely there's one of each. Likewise, if there are six questions in a group, it's likely there are two of each.

Yes/No/Not Given

These concern **the claims or views of the writer** or of other people mentioned. They are laid out like T/F/NG questions. See questions 25-27 in Test 3 Reading.

You can write the letters T/Y, F/N, or NG as your answers.

THOSE WITH ANSWERS THAT ARE WORDS OR NUMBERS

Gap-Fill

Flowchart completion

See questions 32-35 in Test 2 Reading.

Labelling a diagram

Choosing letters from a box of options is one way to label a diagram; another way is to fill in the gaps.

Note: there are usually three labels to fill in, and the information for these almost always occurs close together in a single paragraph. See questions 12-14 in Test 2 Reading.

GLOSSARY

Familiarise yourself with the items below used in 'How to get a Seven' for Tests 1 and 2.

Cue = Information that *prepares* a listener for an answer. (Called a **signpost** word, in reading, and usually an adverb or adverbial phrase.)

Eg: Let's imagine the question is: 'When was the woman in the UK?'

In the recording, a woman says: 'I was in London in 2012.' The cues are: 'London', the capital, and the preposition 'in', which comes before a year.

Eg: Let's imagine the question is: 'How many children does Ben have?'

In the recording, a woman asks: 'You've got kids, haven't you, Ben?' Ben replies: 'Actually, I don't have any.' 'Actually' means some information is about to be contradicted, and what follows is correct, so 'actually' is the cue.

Identifying cues is the best way to guarantee correct answers in IELTS. It means you must concentrate hard throughout each recording because if you miss a cue, you may also miss an answer.

Distractor = An answer that has some common elements with the correct answer, but is wrong. A distractor may be a false or a partial answer, or it may be information that relates to someone or something else.

Eg: Let's imagine the question is: 'What does the woman want?'

The options are: **A** A holiday; **B** A new vehicle; **C** A promotion.

In the recording, a man says: 'I'd like to go to Bali.' Later, a woman says, 'It's time to replace my car.' **A** is a distractor as someone else does mention it.

False answer = An answer that is not true.

Eg: 'blue shirt' instead of 'red pants'

Eg: 'Japanese teacher' instead of 'Chinese teacher'

Partial answer = An answer that does not have all the correct information.

Eg: 'Mondays' instead of 'Mondays and Fridays'

Inference = Reaching a conclusion. Putting two or more pieces of information together to find an answer.

Eg: In the recording in Test 1 Listening, a receptionist tells a teacher: 'You'll start the term with 15 students, but end up with five' + 'The high dropout rate is no reflection on your teaching.'

The question: 'What do many students do?'

The answer is: 'Not finish the course'

With inference, the focus might change between the recording and the question (here, from the teacher to the students), and few or no words in the recording are the same as those in the question or answer.

Most answers in IELTS Listening or Reading tests involve detail (a transfer of a single piece of direct information). However, there are inference questions in each test. One difference between an IELTS Six and a Seven is that a Seven answers most inference questions correctly.

Paraphrase = Words that convey the same meaning as others. Often, a paraphrase is an easier way of saying something complex or formal.

Eg: Original: 'Goods are produced locally and inexpensively.'

Paraphrase: 'Nearby, people make things cheaply.'

Eg: Original: 'Simultaneously, lighting is dimmed.'

Paraphrase: 'At the same time, the lights are turned down.'

Many questions and answers in IELTS Listening or Reading tests contain paraphrases of information in the recordings or passages.

Parts of speech = Within a word family, there are different parts of speech.

Eg: noun, verb, adjective, adverb, gerund (-ing form). The 'Beauty' family contains: the nouns = 'beauty' and 'beautification'; the verb = 'beautify'; the adjective = 'beautiful'; the adverb = 'beautifully'; and, the gerund = 'beautifying'.

An IELTS Listening or Reading question often uses one part of speech (eg, an adjective), while in the recording or passage there is another (eg, a noun).

Eg: The question has 'voluntary (adj) guides', while the woman in the recording talks about 'volunteers (plural noun)'.

Pronunciation: Intonation = The rise or fall of the voice to convey meaning. A rising voice may mean a speaker has a question or a doubt.

Pitch = A high or low voice. High pitch may show enthusiasm.

Sentence stress = A word or words said more strongly or loudly in a sentence to convey meaning. Sentence stress may show a contrast between one idea and another, or let the listener know something is important.

Eg: 'I'll have a **black** coffee' (*not* coffee with milk).

Eg: 'Won't it be **noisy**, so close to the **motorway**?'

In IELTS Listening one speaker may contradict another or clarify a point, so you'll hear sentence stress. Often answers are stressed.

Word stress = One syllable is said more strongly or loudly than the others.

Eg: 'fourTEEN' but 'FORty'.

Stem and Option = In IELTS Listening or Reading tests, a stem is the question line, which may be a question or the first part of a sentence. An option is a possible answer to the stem. (There may also be a box of options. Eg: A-H.)

Eg: What does the woman teach? (The stem = a question)

- A Arabic (option)
- B Spanish (option)
- C Korean (option)

Eg: The woman would like to study (The stem = the first part of a sentence)

- A History. (option)
- B Development. (option)
- C Tourism. (option)

Synonym = A word that means almost the same as another.

Eg: 'expensive' = 'costly'.

Antonym = A word that means almost the opposite of another.

Eg: 'expensive' = 'affordable'.

ADVICE FOR THE LISTENING TEST

Read through the advice below that uses vocabulary from the glossary. These items are used again in 'How to get a Seven' for Test 1 and Test 2.

You need to do all these things to answer IELTS Listening questions correctly. Many of them also apply to the Reading test.

In general:

- Familiarise yourself with all the question types.
- **Take notes throughout**, but *especially* in Section 4; if you have to guess, you'll have words to choose from. By the time the 10-minute transfer comes, you'll probably have forgotten details from Sections 1-2.
- **Use the pauses to read *ahead*** rather than back over your answers, as is recommended in the recording.
- Think logically. Use your general knowledge.
- Predict before you listen. Confirm your prediction.
- Notice the titles for the four sections.
- Listen for cues in the recording (before, but sometimes after the answer you write).
- Don't rush to answer. Wait for clarification.
- Know your numbers. Know your dates. Write numerals not words.
- Know your alphabet.
- Spell correctly, especially plurals.
- Know your grammar.
- Listen carefully for any answers that are close together.
- Where there are two possible answers, choose the one that's easier to spell.
- Remember, most answers follow in order, but a list of options (five or more) is not usually in the same order as in the recording.
- Don't worry if an answer seems easy – lots of them are.
- Answer every question, even if it means guessing.

Specifically:**Listen for detail**

- Listen for the same word (in the question / stem / option as in the recording).
- Listen for a different part of speech.
- Listen for a synonym, or occasionally an antonym with a negative question.
- Listen for a paraphrase.
- Match an example in the question / stem / option with a concept in the recording.
- Match a concept in the question / stem / option with an example in the recording.
- Match a definition in the question / stem / option with a word in the recording.

Understand inference

- Put two or more pieces of information together for the answer.
- Identify a function: apology, clarification, digression, example, or explanation.

Listen for pronunciation

- Listen for intonation, pitch, sentence or word stress.

Beware of distractors

- Ignore false or a partial information.
- Ignore information that relates to someone else.
- Ignore a number that refers to something else.
- Ignore an option that isn't mentioned at all.
- Avoid answering from your own beliefs. Ignore anything you think is true, but which a speaker doesn't say.

ADVICE FOR THE ACADEMIC READING TEST

Read the advice for the Listening test on the previous pages as most of it pertains to the Reading test.

For many people, the Academic Reading test is difficult because it has more question types than the Listening test, and the questions themselves contain more words. Since readers can reread material, the test is much longer – at least 3700 words (instructions + questions + passages). Its language and concepts are also more sophisticated than those in the Listening test.

Usually, an IELTS Six finishes the Reading test in around 58 minutes, and has two minutes to check. He or she will guess about seven questions. A Seven or an Eight has seven minutes left to check, with only two or three guesses.

Topics in the Academic Reading test are mostly scientific. While much information is factual, at least one passage (usually Passage 3) contains the views of the writer or of other people.

The majority of Reading answers require a transfer of detail, but there are always inference questions too. Just as there are cues to listen for in the Listening test, there are signposts to look for in the Reading (usually adverbs like 'however' or 'unfortunately'). Skimming, scanning, and reading closely are all tested. Despite what some people believe, there are no tricks in IELTS – no questions aimed deliberately at tripping you up. Once you understand the system, you will see that everything is straightforward.

It may seem unlikely, but the reading passages in real IELTS exams are both interesting and pleasurable to read.

Familiarise yourself with all the question types: those that apply to both Listening and Reading (pp 10-12) and those for Reading alone (pp 12-15).

Before reading a passage, skim the questions for that passage, but don't read any stems.

- Circle any key words.
- Predict any answers.

When reading a passage:

- **Use the titles** (set in grey in this book) to activate your knowledge of the topic.
- **Read with your eyes**, not your finger, but *do* circle key words or underline evidence. (If you can't underline evidence, an answer is probably Not Given.)
- As there won't be time to read an entire test slowly and carefully, **choose when to skim** (read quickly), **to scan** (look mainly for names or dates), **or to read closely** (slowly and carefully). All gap-fill questions need close reading.
- **Keep an eye on the time.** If you have trouble finding an answer, move on. Return to it at the very end, or guess it.
- Stick to the advice about spending 20 minutes per passage, or spend less time on Passage 1 and more on Passage 3.

When answering:

- **Confirm your predictions.**
- **Think logically.**
- **Look for synonyms or paraphrases.**
- **Check reference.** Reference means one word refers back (or sometimes forward) to a longer idea. Most of these words, called **referents**, are pronouns.

Here are two sentences containing two referents: 'Most people believe spending time with family is important. It strengthens bonds, and helps them relax.'

'It' refers back to 'spending time with family'; 'them' refers to 'most people'.

- **Understand connotation** – whether a concept or a writer's opinion is positive or negative.
- **Understand inference.**
- **Note a shift in focus.** Often a question focuses on one idea first with another second, while the information in the passage puts the second idea first.
- **Beware of exaggeration.** If there is the word 'always' or 'never' in a question (particularly T/F/NG), make 100% sure you can find evidence for it in the passage, and *vice versa*.
- **Beware of distractors.**
- Follow all the rest of the advice for the Listening test on page 18-19.
- **Don't panic.**

When writing on your answer sheet:

- **Copy all answers correctly** from the passages.
- **Answer every question**, even if you have to guess.

Before You Do Test 1

- Prepare some snacks and drinks.
- Find a reliable stopwatch or clock.
- Use an electronic device to access the audio at www.mheIELTS6practicetests.com.
- Find a place you can work with no interruptions for two to seven hours.
- You'll need two hours if you read 'How to get a Seven', do Test 1, and go through the **highlighted** answers in the recording scripts.
- You'll need four hours if you go through the Reading answers too.
- You'll need seven hours if you also do Writing Test 1, listen to Speaking Test 1, and read through the model answers and scripts.

HOW TO GET A SEVEN

<p>Section 1 Question 1</p>	<p>Listen for the same word in the recording as in the question, here: 'retiring'.</p> <p>Listen for a cue (the words that let you know when the answer is coming). Here, the cue is: 'at the end of the term'.</p> <p>Don't rush to answer. Amal <i>does</i> ask if the principal has 'found another job', but the receptionist says: 'No, he's <i>retiring</i>'. There are contradictions and clarifications in IELTS Listening.</p>
<p>Q2</p>	<p>Don't rush to answer. The principal gives feedback by observing new teachers' lessons, but 'student feedback', mentioned next, 'is taken more seriously'.</p> <p>Listen for a cue, here: 'actually', before 'student feedback'. ('Actually' means 'the previous information was wrong; what comes next is important'.)</p>
<p>Q3</p>	<p>Understand inference. This answer is <i>not</i> stated directly; you have to work it out from two separate pieces of information. These are: 'You'll start the term with 15 students, but end up with 5' + 'The high dropout rate...'. Avoid answering from your own belief. Here, some options are true in life, but are not mentioned by any speaker.</p>
<p>Q4</p>	<p>Listen for a paraphrase of the question in the recording. The receptionist says: 'take one class' which means 'enroll in'.</p> <p>Listen for the same words, here: '10%'.</p> <p>Beware of a distractor. Option A (100%) is true for 'a few courses, like Life Drawing [and] Cooking with Seafood', but 'a few courses' is not 'most'.</p> <p>Note: '10%', is said twice. Sometimes, numbers or dates are said twice in IELTS Listening.</p>