

01. IELTS MASTERCLASS SERIES

IELTS General Training Reading Overview

Section Breakdown, Question Types & Time Management

PRESENTER & INSTITUTION

Kristof Abrath | IELTS Preparation

OFFICIAL WEBSITE

kristof.abrath.com

What is GT Reading?

CORE FORMAT

1 of 4 IELTS Sections

Taken alongside Listening, Writing, and Speaking. Specifically designed to assess everyday English comprehension.

01

FOCUS AREA

Everyday & Workplace Texts

Unlike Academic Reading, GT texts feature real-world materials like advertisements, manuals, and company notices.

02

TIMING

60 Minutes (No Extra Time)

Strict 60-minute total duration. All answers must be recorded directly onto the answer sheet within the hour.

03

SCORING

40 Questions Total

1 mark per correct answer with zero negative marking for wrong guesses.
Test sequence: Taken right after Listening.

04

Test Structure & Sections

Section	Text Type	Core Focus
Section 1	Social Survival (2–3 short texts)	Everyday practical information & notices
Section 2	Workplace Survival (2 texts)	Work-related instructions, rules & procedures
Section 3	General Reading (1 long text)	Complex arguments, opinions & detailed ideas

Key Structure Insight: Texts increase progressively in length and complexity. While Academic IELTS uses 3 long passages, GT Sections 1 and 2 feature multiple shorter texts drawn from daily life.

Section 1: Social Survival

FORMAT & SOURCES

2–3 Short Everyday Texts

- Drawn from everyday life in English-speaking environments.
- **Typical Sources:** Advertisements, timetables, public notices, event flyers, brochures, and accommodation listings.
- Designed to test basic functional literacy and rapid scanning.

OBJECTIVE & SKILL

Locating Practical Data

- Focuses on retrieving factual details quickly without over-analyzing.
- **Key Information Needed:** Names, prices, dates, exact times, locations, contact info, and opening hours.
- **Difficulty:** Generally the easiest section—aim for high speed and accuracy here.

Section 2: Workplace Survival

WORK CONTEXT

2 Work-Related Texts

- Focuses on staff welfare, operations, and workplace training.
- **Typical Sources:** Job descriptions, employee handbooks, health & safety policies, training guides, contract rules.
- Requires understanding workplace procedures and requirements.

CRITICAL SKILL

Watch Modal Verbs & Limits

Pay close attention to subtle shifts in obligation and permission words that alter meaning:

Must / Required Mandatory	Should / Advised Recommended
Allowed Permitted	Prohibited Forbidden

Section 3: General Reading

PASSAGE PROFILE

1 Long, Complex Text

- Similar in length and difficulty to an Academic IELTS passage.
- **Topics of General Interest:** History, science, social science, culture, psychology, or environmental issues.
- Written for a non-specialist audience but containing dense vocabulary and detailed structure.

CORE DEMANDS

Following Arguments & Logic

- Requires identifying the main arguments, writer's opinions, and line of reasoning.
- Distinguishing factual statements from writer attitudes and claims.
- **Strategy:** Most challenging section—demands careful reading, not just quick skimming.

True / False / Not Given

TRUE

Agrees with Text

The statement matches and confirms the exact information given in the passage.

T

FALSE

Contradicts Text

The statement explicitly contradicts or gives opposite information to the text.

F

NOT GIVEN

No Information

The passage does not contain sufficient evidence to decide True or False.

N

Golden Rule: Base your answers strictly on stated text facts—never on outside knowledge or assumptions. Don't mistake "I can't find it" for automatically False!

Matching Headings Strategy

TASK OBJECTIVE

Main Idea Matching

- Match a given list of headings to paragraphs or text sections.
- Common in Sections 2 & 3 where texts feature distinct thematic sections.
- A heading describes the **overall main idea** of a paragraph—not a single detail.

STRATEGIC RULES

Avoid the Word Trap

- **Classic Trap:** Never pick a heading just because a word in it matches a word in the paragraph.
- **Core Question:** Ask yourself: *"What is this paragraph mainly about as a whole?"*
- Read the first and last sentences carefully, then summarize in your own words.

Other Key Question Types

Yes / No / Not Given

Tests writer's opinions or claims (mainly Sec 3), rather than factual data.

Matching Information

Locate specific details, reasons, or features in paragraphs.

Multiple Choice

Choose the single best answer from options A, B, C, or D.

Completion Tasks (Sentence / Summary / Table / Flow-Chart)

Fill gaps using exact words from the text. Always strictly adhere to the stated word limit (e.g., "NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS").

Short-Answer

Answer factual questions using brief words/numbers from the text.

Paraphrasing: The Classic Trap

CORE PRINCIPLE

Meaning Over Vocabulary

IELTS rarely uses the exact same words in the question and text.
Searching only for identical words is the #1 reason students miss easy answers.

Strategy: Identify the core meaning of keywords in the question, then scan the text for synonyms and rephrased ideas.

COMMON IELTS SYNONYMS

Question Keyword	Text Synonyms
Increase	Rise / Grow / Soar
Cost	Price / Fee / Charge
Job	Position / Role / Vacancy
Required	Necessary / Mandatory
Start	Begin / Initiate / Launch

Skimming vs. Scanning

SKIMMING

The Big Picture

- Reading quickly to grasp general meaning, topic, purpose, and structure.
- Use this first to map out where information is located before answering questions.

SCANNING

Target Search

- Searching rapidly for specific facts: names, numbers, dates, prices, or key terms.
- Use this once you know roughly which paragraph contains the answer.

Rule of Thumb: You do NOT need to understand every word. Skim first for text layout, then scan to locate specific answers.

Time Management Strategy

Section	Target Time	Approach & Strategy
Section 1	~15 Minutes	Move quickly through short, factual texts to bank extra time.
Section 2	~20 Minutes	Maintain a steady, careful pace through workplace procedures.
Section 3	~25 Minutes	Allocate maximum focus time for the long, complex passage.

The 1-Minute Rule: If a question takes over 60–90 seconds, make your best educated guess and move on. Every question is worth 1 mark—don't lose time on single tricky items!

Scoring & Band Conversion

SCORE BOUNDARIES	
Correct Answers (/40)	Approx. Band Score
40	Band 9.0
37-38	Band 8.0
34-35	Band 7.0
27-29	Band 6.0
19-22	Band 5.0

SCORE PRINCIPLES

Key Scoring Rules

- Raw score is simply total correct answers out of 40.
- **No Negative Marking:** Never leave a question blank—always write a guess!
- *Note: Boundaries vary slightly between test versions depending on relative difficulty.*

Mistakes & Preparation Tips

COMMON PITFALLS

- Treating all 3 sections with identical pacing.
- Ignoring strict word limits in completion tasks.
- Confusing "Not Given" with "False".
- Relying on outside knowledge instead of text evidence.
- Leaving questions blank at the end.

BEST PREP PRACTICES

- Practice exclusively with official sample test papers.
- Read authentic workplace materials (notices, manuals, policies).
- Train skimming and scanning under strict timed conditions.
- Take 1 full timed practice test per week and review errors.

Key Takeaways & Next Steps

FORMAT

3 Sections & 60 Mins

3 sections, 40 questions total. No extra transfer time—record answers immediately.

STRATEGY

Recognize Paraphrasing

Focus on meaning, modal verbs, and question-specific scanning techniques.

ACTION STEP

Weekly Timed Practice

Practice 1 full timed test weekly and conduct a deep review of every missed answer.

"Mastering IELTS GT Reading is about smart strategy and disciplined time management."