LECTURE NOTES

Employability Skills (303193353)

IELTS Reading

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, students should be able to:

1. Understand the structure and format of both IELTS Academic and General Training Reading sections.
2. Identify different question types commonly asked in the IELTS Reading test.
3. Apply effective reading strategies such as skimming and scanning to locate information efficiently.
4. Interpret and analyze passages to answer comprehension questions accurately.
5. Demonstrate understanding of band score conversion and marking criteria.
6. Develop vocabulary-building skills relevant to both academic and general reading contexts.
7. Manage time effectively during the 60-minute IELTS Reading test to maximize performance.

Topics to be covered:

➢ Duration of IELTS Reading Exam
➢ IELTS Academic Reading Description
➢ Format for IELTS Academic Reading
➢ IELTS General training Reading Description
➢ Format for IELTS General Reading

Introduction

- IELTS Reading is a crucial component of the IELTS test assessing reading comprehension skills.
- It evaluates a candidate's ability to read and understand written English in both academic and general contexts.
- The module is designed to test how well students can identify key ideas, locate specific information, recognize writers' opinions, and understand logical arguments.

Duration and Structure

- Total Time: 60 minutes
- Total Questions: 40
- Sections:

Academic Reading: 3 long texts from books, journals, magazines, or newspapers (suitable for higher education).

General Training Reading: Texts from notices, advertisements, company handbooks, and everyday materials.

- Each correct answer earns 1 mark, which is later converted to the IELTS 9-band scale.

IELTS Reading – Academic Module
- Purpose: For students applying to universities or professional registration.
- Content:
  o Three long passages of increasing difficulty.
  o Texts are factual, descriptive, or analytical.
  o May include diagrams, graphs, or illustrations.
- Skills Tested:
  o Understanding gist and main ideas
  o Recognizing detail, inference, and writer's views
  o Following logical argument

IELTS Reading – General Training Module
- Purpose: For those applying for secondary education, work experience, or migration.
- Content:
  o Texts from advertisements, official documents, or workplace handbooks.
  o Includes practical information and general interest topics.
- Assessment:
  o Marked by trained examiners under strict Cambridge Assessment English guidelines.
  o Scores are converted from raw marks (0–40) to band scores (1–9).

Band Score Conversion

- Band scores are based on the total number of correct answers.
- Results are reported in whole or half bands.
- Example:
  o 30/40 ≈ Band 7
  o 35/40 ≈ Band 8

Each version of the test has its own band conversion table to ensure fairness.

Key Reading Strategies

1. Skimming:
   o Quickly read to get the general idea of the passage.
   o Focus on titles, headings, and topic sentences.
2. Scanning:

- o Look for specific information such as numbers, dates, or names.
- o Useful for locating answers quickly.
3. Contextual Understanding:
4. Guess meaning from context when you encounter unfamiliar words.
5. Paraphrasing:
- o Understand that IELTS questions often rephrase the original text.
6. Time Management:
- o Allocate about 20 minutes per passage.
- o Do not spend too much time on one question.

Common Question Types

- Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)
- Short Answer Questions
- Matching Headings or Information
- True/False/Not Given
- Sentence Completion
- Summary Completion
- Diagram/Flowchart Completion

Top 5 Tips for IELTS Reading

1. Read instructions carefully before answering.
2. Skim for the overall idea before scanning for details.
3. Don't panic if you see difficult vocabulary—use context clues.
4. Practice time-bound reading to improve speed.
5. Regularly expand your vocabulary through newspapers and journals.

Classroom Activity

- Read the assigned passage and answer comprehension questions using the above strategies.
- Discuss answers in pairs or small groups to reinforce reading techniques.

Passage – Democracy

The term **Democracy** comes from the Greek words *dêmos* (people) and *Kratos* (power). In its literal meaning, democracy means the "rule of the people". In fact, it is a form of government in which all eligible people have an equal say in the decisions that

affect their lives. Democracy as a political system existed in some Greek states, notably Athens following a popular uprising in 508 BC. Equality and freedom have both been identified as important characteristics of democracy since ancient times. These principles are reflected in all citizens being equal before the law and having equal access to legislative processes. For example, in a representative democracy, every vote has equal weight, no unreasonable restrictions can apply to anyone seeking to become a representative, and the freedom of its citizens is secured by legitimized rights and liberties which are generally protected by a constitution. There are several varieties of democracy, some of which provide better representation and more freedom for their citizens than others. However, if any democracy is not structured so as to prohibit the government from excluding the people from the legislative process, or any branch of government from altering the *separation of powers* in its own favour, then a branch of the system can accumulate too much power and destroy the democracy. *Separation of powers* is a model of governance under which the state is divided into branches, each with separate and independent powers and areas of responsibility so that no one branch has more power than the other branches. The normal division of branches is into an executive, a legislature, and a judiciary.

Questions

1–3. Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.

1. The word "Democracy" is derived from:
   - A. Latin words meaning "government of men"
   - B. Greek word meaning "rule of the people"
   - C. Roman words meaning "power of the state"
   - D. Old English words meaning "freedom for all"
2. Which of the following is NOT a feature of democracy?
   - A. Equality before the law
   - B. Freedom protected by constitution
   - C. Unequal voting rights
   - D. Equal access to the legislative process
3. According to the passage, what may destroy democracy?
   - A. A lack of voting rights
   - B. Too much freedom
   - C. Accumulation of power in one branch of government
   - D. Absence of judiciary

4–6. Complete the sentences below.
Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage.

4. Democracy first existed in some _____ city-states.
5. The division of powers into branches is known as the _____ of powers.
6. The three branches of government are the executive, legislature, and _____.

7–9. True, False, or Not Given

7. Democracy originated in Rome.
8. Equality and freedom are central values of democracy.
9. The constitution guarantees the rights and liberties of citizens.

Answers

1. **B** – Greek word meaning "rule of the people"
2. **C** – Unequal voting rights
3. **C** – Accumulation of power in one branch of government
4. **Greek**
5. **Separation**
6. **Judiciary**
7. **False** – It originated in Greece.
8. **True**
9. **True**

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between Academic and General Training reading formats.
- Apply skimming, scanning, and contextual strategies to understand texts.
- Answer various question types accurately and efficiently.
- Manage time effectively and build confidence for the IELTS Reading section.

Conclusion

- The IELTS Reading module develops essential comprehension, analytical, and vocabulary skills needed for academic and professional success.

- By mastering reading strategies and understanding test formats, students can approach the exam confidently and aim for higher band scores.

- A clear understanding of test formats, marking schemes and vocabulary development empowers students to succeed in global academic or professional pursuits.