

Test section – Reading

Dealing with completion questions

Activities

1. Introduction to the question type – Summary completion task
2. Jigsaw task – Notes, Table and Flow Chart completion
3. Identifying strategy and instructions

Aims

- To familiarise students with the various completion question types
- To introduce a similar strategy for all completion question types
- To consolidate reading skills

Learning outcomes

- Students will have identified Summary, Note, Table and Flow Chart completion questions.
- Students will have completed a strategy for completion questions.
- Students will have practised reading skills.

Information about this section of IELTS

In the Reading test there are 40 questions, designed to test a wide range of reading skills. These include reading for gist, reading for main ideas, reading for detail, skimming, understanding logical arguments and recognising writers' opinions, attitudes and purpose. The test takes 60 minutes.

The IELTS Academic Reading Test includes three long texts which range from the descriptive and factual to the discursive and analytical. These are taken from books, journals, magazines and newspapers. They have been selected for a non-specialist audience but are appropriate for people entering university courses or seeking professional registration.

The IELTS General Training Reading Test has three sections. Section 1 may contain two or three short texts or several shorter texts. Section 2 comprises two texts. In Section 3, there is one long text. These texts include extract from books, magazines, newspapers, notices, advertisements, company handbooks and guidelines. These are materials you are likely to encounter on a daily basis in an English-speaking environment.

Time	50-70 minutes
Level	B1+
Class	Suitable for groups / large classes, F2F / Online
Interaction	Individual / pair work
Materials	Worksheets x 3 (attached)

Extra information



Summary, Note, Table, Flow Chart completion

Test takers are given a summary of a section of the text, and are required to complete it with information from the text. The summary will usually be of only one part of the passage rather than the whole. The given information may be in the form of: several connected sentences (referred to as a summary), several notes (referred to as notes), a table with some of its cells empty or partially empty (referred to as a table), a series of boxes or steps linked by arrows to show a sequence of events, with some of the boxes or steps empty or partially empty (referred to as a flow chart). The answers tend to but do not always occur in the same order as in the text.

If test takers write more than the number of words asked for, they will lose the mark.

Numbers can be written using figures or words. Contracted words are not tested.

Material: Worksheet 1

Time: 10-15 minutes

Procedure:

- introduce the focus of the lesson – dealing with completion questions in the IELTS Reading Test.
- elicit the specific completion questions i.e. Sentence Completion, Summary, Note, Table, Flow Chart completion and Diagram Label completion.
- elicit where to find the information – in the text, and that students do not need any specialist knowledge to answer the questions, it's all about locating the right information in the text.
- before drawing attention to Worksheet 1, elicit what the first steps of reading should involve: Surveying, Skimming etc. (Please see previous lesson on Reading Skills).
- tell students that it is assumed that they have surveyed and skimmed the text before carrying out work on the questions.
- hand out Worksheet 1 and elicit what type of completion task this is: Summary Completion. Have students complete the heading of the worksheet **Summary Completion**. **NB** There are two variations of this task type. Test takers may be asked either to select words from the text or to select from a list of options.

- work through the questions open class by eliciting ideas from students.
- the answers for this task are taken from the ‘Extra information’ box. You may wish to copy this for class use or simply provide the answers. The purpose of the exercise is to draw attention to how test takers can use the questions to prepare to find answers.
- elicit how to check that answers fit (contextually, grammatically and adherence to instructions).

Answers for all completion tasks.

	a.	b.	c.	d.	e	Answers
Worksheet 1	Summary	NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER	Keywords around the gaps. Context of sentences.	Keywords or synonyms of these.	Accept any logical predictions	1. information 2. one / 1 3. empty 4. partially 5. same order
Worksheet 2a	Note	ONE WORD ONLY	Keywords around the gaps. Context of sentences.	Keywords or synonyms of these.	Accept any logical predictions	1. thorium 2. pitchblende 3. radium 4. soldiers 5. illness
Worksheet 2b	Table	NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS	Row/column headings Other examples in the same row/column	Type of information that matches the headings and other examples	Accept any logical predictions	1. temperate 2. early spring 3. two to five 4. sub-tropical 5. South African tunneling/tunnelling
Worksheet 2c	Flow Chart	NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS	Keywords around the gaps. Context of sentences. Section headings i.e. Theory 1, Theory 2	Keywords or synonyms of these. Type of information that matches the headings.	Accept any logical predictions	1. glucose 2. free radicals 3. preservation

Material: Worksheet 2 (a-c)

Time: 30-40 minutes

Procedure:

- set this up as a jigsaw task by splitting students into a, b, c pairs/groups.

- distribute the worksheets a-c to the appropriate groups and give them time to quickly survey and skim the texts individually before setting up the group task.
- tell students they are responsible for one type of completion question and must identify the type to complete the title; work through the rest of the questions in Exercise 1; read the text to find the answers.
- monitor closely.
- allow time for learners to complete Exercises 2 and 3 in their groups.
- when completed, set up the 'peer-teach' stage by regrouping students into abc groups.
- each member of the group takes it in turn to feedback on the strategy used with their question type.
- monitor closely.

Material: Worksheet 3

Time: 10-15 minutes

Procedure:

- get class feedback on the previous task to arrive at the common thread running through all completion questions i.e. using the information that is there to help you find what's missing.
- elicit ideas for strategy and draw attention to Exercise 1 on Worksheet 3.
- elicit possible answers to complete the strategy before confirming.
 - 1 Familiarise
Quickly read the question set to get an overall idea. Pay attention to **question** order.
 - 2 Check **instructions**
How many words can be written?
 - 3 Find **clues**
Read around the blanks more carefully. Think of parts of speech/possible answers.
 - 4 Identify **keywords** in the question and match with the text
You might be looking for the SAME word, a different form of the word, or a synonym in the text.
 - 5 Locate the right part of the **text**
Read around the right part and choose the answer.
 - 6 Cross-check and write the **answer**
Make sure it fits grammatically and is the right number of words.
- elicit why the final stage of the strategy is important – if test takers write more than the number of words asked for, they will lose the mark.
- draw attention to Exercise 2, an 'odd-one-out' activity to identify which response does not match the instruction and would not gain the mark.

Answers

1 C, 2 A, 3 D, 4 D

Reading Completion Question Types

Worksheet 1

_____ Completion

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the text for each answer.

Test takers are given a summary of a section of the text, and are required to complete it with (1) _____ from the text. The summary will usually be of only (2) _____ part of the passage rather than the whole. The given information may be in the form of: several connected sentences (referred to as a summary), several notes (referred to as notes), a table with some of its cells (3) _____ or partially empty (referred to as a table), a series of boxes or steps linked by arrows to show a sequence of events, with some of the boxes or steps empty or (4) _____ empty (referred to as a flow-chart). The answers tend to but do not always occur in the (5) _____ as in the text.

- a) What type of completion question is this?
- b) What guidance is provided by the instructions?
- c) What clues / key words are there to help you identify what's missing?
- d) What would you look for in the text?
- e) Predict possible answers for questions 1-5.

_____ Completion

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer

Marie Curie's research on radioactivity

- When uranium was discovered to be radioactive, Marie Curie found that the element called **1** had the same property.
- Marie and Pierre Curie's research into the radioactivity of the mineral known as **2**..... led to the discovery of two new elements.
- In 1911, Marie Curie received recognition for her work on the element **3**
- Marie and Irène Curie developed X-radiography which was used as a medical technique for **4**
- Marie Curie saw the importance of collecting radioactive material both for research and for cases of **5**

1 *Answer the following questions BEFORE reading the text.*

- a) What type of completion question is this?
- b) What guidance is provided by the instructions?
- c) What clues / key words are there to help you identify what's missing?
- d) What would you look for in the text?
- e) Predict possible answers for questions 1-5.

2 *Answer questions 1-5 using words from the following passage.*

[Note: This is an extract from a Section 1 text about the scientist Marie Curie.] Adapted with permission from Encyclopaedia Britannica, © 2007 by Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

The life and work of Marie Curie

The marriage of Pierre and Marie Curie in 1895 marked the start of a partnership that was soon to achieve results of world significance. Following Henri Becquerel's discovery in 1896 of a new phenomenon, which Marie later called 'radioactivity', Marie Curie decided to find out if the radioactivity discovered in uranium was to be found in other elements. She discovered that this was true for thorium.

Turning her attention to minerals, she found her interest drawn to pitchblende, a mineral whose radioactivity, superior to that of pure uranium, could be explained only by the presence in the ore of small quantities of an unknown substance of very high activity. Pierre Curie joined her in the work that she had undertaken to resolve this problem, and that led to the discovery of the new elements, polonium and radium. While Pierre Curie devoted himself chiefly to the physical study of the new radiations, Marie Curie struggled to obtain pure radium in the metallic state. This was achieved with the help of the chemist André-Louis Debierne, one of Pierre Curie's pupils. Based on the results of this research, Marie Curie received her Doctorate of Science, and in 1903 Marie and Pierre shared with Becquerel the Nobel Prize for Physics for the discovery of radioactivity.

The births of Marie's two daughters, Irène and Eve, in 1897 and 1904 failed to interrupt her scientific work. She was appointed lecturer in physics at the École Normale Supérieure for girls in Sèvres, France (1900), and introduced a method of teaching based on experimental demonstrations. In December 1904 she was appointed chief assistant in the laboratory directed by Pierre Curie.

The sudden death of her husband in 1906 was a bitter blow to Marie Curie, but was also a turning point in her career: henceforth she was to devote all her energy to completing alone the scientific work that they had undertaken. On May 13, 1906, she was appointed to the professorship that had been left vacant on her husband's death, becoming the first woman to teach at the Sorbonne. In 1911 she was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry for the isolation of a pure form of radium.

During World War I, Marie Curie, with the help of her daughter Irène, devoted herself to the development of the use of X-radiography, including the mobile units which came to be known as ‘Little Curies’, used for the treatment of wounded soldiers. In 1918 the Radium Institute, whose staff Irène had joined, began to operate in earnest, and became a centre for nuclear physics and chemistry. Marie Curie, now at the highest point of her fame and, from 1922, a member of the Academy of Medicine, researched the chemistry of radioactive substances and their medical applications.

In 1921, accompanied by her two daughters, Marie Curie made a triumphant journey to the United States to raise funds for research on radium. Women there presented her with a gram of radium for her campaign. Marie also gave lectures in Belgium, Brazil, Spain and Czechoslovakia and, in addition, had the satisfaction of seeing the development of the Curie Foundation in Paris, and the inauguration in 1932 in Warsaw of the Radium Institute, where her sister Bronia became director.

One of Marie Curie’s outstanding achievements was to have understood the need to accumulate intense radioactive sources, not only to treat illness but also to maintain an abundant supply for research. The existence in Paris at the Radium Institute of a stock of 1.5 grams of radium made a decisive contribution to the success of the experiments undertaken in the years around 1930. This work prepared the way for the discovery of the neutron by Sir James Chadwick and, above all, for the discovery in 1934 by Irène and Frédéric Joliot-Curie of artificial radioactivity. A few months after this discovery, Marie Curie died as a result of leukaemia caused by exposure to radiation. She had often carried test tubes containing radioactive isotopes in her pocket, remarking on the pretty blue-green light they gave off.

Her contribution to physics had been immense, not only in her own work, the importance of which had been demonstrated by her two Nobel Prizes, but because of her influence on subsequent generations of nuclear physicists and chemists.

<https://www.ielts.org/-/media/pdfs/pb-sample-test-materials/pb-sample-academic-reading-note-completion-task-and-key.ashx>

3 *In your group, discuss the questions below.*

Where in the text did you find your answer?

How could you check to see if your answer fits?

Reading Completion Question Types

Worksheet 2b

_____ Completion

Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 9-13 on your answer sheet.

Species	Size	Preferred climate	Complementary species	Start of active period	Number of generations per year
French	2.5 cm	cool	Spanish	late spring	one to two
Spanish	1.25 cm	1		2	3
South African ball roller		4	5.....		

1 Answer the following questions *BEFORE* reading the text.

- What type of completion question is this?
- What guidance is provided by the instructions?
- What clues / key words are there to help you identify what's missing?
- What would you look for in the text?
- Predict possible answers for questions 1-5.

2 *Answer questions 1-5 using words from the following passage.*

[Note: This is an extract from an Academic Reading passage on the subject of dung beetles. The text preceding this extract gave some background facts about dung beetles and went on to describe a decision to introduce non-native varieties to Australia.]

Dung beetles work from the inside of the pat so they are sheltered from predators such as birds and foxes. Most species burrow into the soil and bury dung in tunnels directly underneath the pats, which are hollowed out from within. Some large species originating from France excavate tunnels to a depth of approximately 30 cm below the dung pat. These beetles make sausage-shaped brood chambers along the tunnels. The shallowest tunnels belong to a much smaller Spanish species that buries dung in chambers that hang like fruit from the branches of a pear tree. South African beetles dig narrow tunnels of approximately 20 cm below the surface of the pat. Some surface-dwelling beetles, including a South African species, cut perfectly-shaped balls from the pat, which are rolled away and attached to the bases of plants.

For maximum dung burial in spring, summer and autumn, farmers require a variety of species with overlapping periods of activity. In the cooler environments of the state of Victoria, the large French species (2.5 cms long), is matched with smaller (half this size), temperate-climate Spanish species. The former are slow to recover from the winter cold and produce only one or two generations of offspring from late spring until autumn. The latter, which multiply rapidly in early spring, produce two to five generations annually. The South African ball-rolling species, being a sub-tropical beetle, prefers the climate of northern and coastal New South Wales where it commonly works with the South African tunneling species. In warmer climates, many species are active for longer periods of the year.

Glossary

1. dung: the droppings or excreta of animals
2. cow pats: droppings of cows

3 *In your group, discuss the questions below.*

Where in the text did you find your answer?

How could you check to see if your answer fits?

https://www.ielts.org/-/media/pdfs/115018_academic_reading_sample_task_-_table_completion_2_.ashx

Reading Completion Question Types

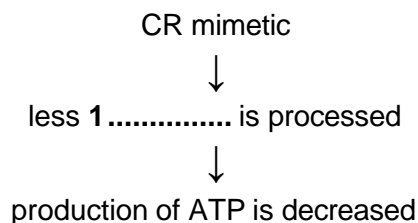
Worksheet 2c

Completion

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 1-3 on your answer sheet.

How a caloric-restriction mimetic works



Theory 1:

cells less damaged by disease because
fewer 2 are emitted

Theory 2:

cells focus on 3 because
food is in short supply

1 Answer the following questions **BEFORE** reading the text.

- What type of completion question is this?
- What guidance is provided by the instructions?
- What clues / key words are there to help you identify what's missing?
- What would you look for in the text?
- Predict possible answers for questions 1-3.

2 *Answer questions 1-3 using words from the following passage*

[Note: This is an extract from a Part 3 text about the effect of a low-calorie diet on the ageing process.] Adapted from 'The Serious Search for an Anti-Aging Pill'. Copyright © 2006 Scientific American, a division of Nature America, Inc. All rights reserved.

No treatment on the market today has been proved to slow human aging. But one intervention, consumption of a low-calorie* yet nutritionally balanced diet, works incredibly well in a broad range of animals, increasing longevity and prolonging good health. Those findings suggest that caloric restriction could delay aging and increase longevity in humans, too. But what if someone could create a pill that mimicked the physiological effects of eating less without actually forcing people to eat less, a 'caloric restriction mimetic'?

The best-studied candidate for a caloric-restriction mimetic, 2DG (2-deoxy-D-glucose), works by interfering with the way cells process glucose. It has proved toxic at some doses in animals and so cannot be used in humans. But it has demonstrated that chemicals can replicate the effects of caloric restriction; the trick is finding the right one.

Cells use the glucose from food to generate ATP (adenosine triphosphate), the molecule that powers many activities in the body. By limiting food intake, caloric restriction minimizes the amount of glucose entering cells and decreases ATP generation. When 2DG is administered to animals that eat normally, glucose reaches cells in abundance but the drug prevents most of it from being processed and thus reduces ATP synthesis. Researchers have proposed several explanations for why interruption of glucose processing and ATP production might retard aging. One possibility relates to the ATP making machinery's emission of free radicals, which are thought to contribute to aging and to such age-related diseases as cancer by damaging cells. Reduced operation of the machinery should limit their production and thereby constrain the damage. Another hypothesis suggests that decreased processing of glucose could indicate to cells that food is scarce (even if it isn't) and induce them to shift into an anti-aging mode that emphasizes preservation of the organism over such 'luxuries' as growth and reproduction.

3 *In your group, discuss the questions below.*

Where in the text did you find your answer?

How could you check to see if your answer fits?

<https://www.ielts.org/-/media/pdfs/pb-sample-test-materials/academic-reading-sample-task-flowchart-completion-selecting-words-from-the-text.ashx>

Reading Completion Question Types

Worksheet 3

Strategy and instructions in completion questions

1 *Complete the strategy to deal with completion questions.*

Step 1: Familiarize

Quickly read the question set to get an overall idea. Pay attention to _____ order

Step 2: Check _____

How many words can be written?

Step 3: Find _____

Read around the blanks more carefully. Think of parts of speech/possible answers.

Step 4: Identify _____ in the question and match with the text

You might be looking for the SAME word, a different form of the word, or a synonym in the text.

Step 5: Locate the right part of the _____

Read around the right part and choose the answer.

Step 6: Cross-check and write the _____

Make sure it fits grammatically and is right number of words.

2 *Choose the odd one out which does **not** follow the instructions.*

1. Choose ONE WORD ONLY from the text for each answer.	a. summer b. summertime c. in summer
2. Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.	a. in the summer b. summer c. summertime d. in summer
3. Choose NO MORE THAN THREE words from the passage for each answer.	a. fifty b. fifty years c. for fifty years d. for fifty years following
4. Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER from the text for each answer.	a. fifty b. 50 c. 50 years d. for fifty years e. for 50 years