Don’t spend more than 20 minutes on each article.

Time management is vital in the reading test, so don’t spend too long on any one question, skip it and go back later if you have time.

It is vital you read quickly. So read the questions and be clear what exactly you are looking for - is it a name, a number, or an opinion?

Start by getting a general overview of the article. VERY QUICKLY, highlight topic sentences or headings so you know what each paragraph is generally about. Do not read in detail at this stage.

Don’t read by running your finger or a pen along the words - this is a sign you are reading too slowly. Use the relevant reading skills - depending on whatever it is you need to find to answer the question.

To improve your reading, read as much as you can. Anything you read in English is good practice.

Tips to prepare

Intensive reading

You will find useful and interesting articles with both text and audio, along with associated tasks and questions at:

For more information:

Look out for other British Council videos and downloads on IELTS Speaking, Writing, and Listening.