

Test section – Reading

Matching Headings

Activities

1. Surveying a text
2. Skimming a text
3. Identifying keywords in topic sentences and headings
4. Ordering – a strategy for Matching Headings questions
5. Test practice

Aims

- to review key reading skills: surveying and skimming
- to help students develop a strategy for dealing with Matching Headings questions

Learning outcomes

- Students will have reviewed and practised key reading skills.
- Students will have analysed a strategy for Matching Headings questions.
- Students will have practised Matching Headings questions.

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	45-60 minutes
Level	B1+
Class	Suitable for groups / large classes, F2F / Online
Interaction	Individual / pair work
Materials	Worksheet (attached)

Extra information



Matching Headings questions

Students are given a list of headings, usually identified with lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.). A heading will refer to the main idea of the paragraph or section of the text. They must match the heading to the correct paragraphs or sections, which are marked alphabetically. Students / test takers write the appropriate Roman numerals in the boxes on their answer sheets. There will always be more headings than there are paragraphs or sections, so that some headings will not be used. It is also possible that some paragraphs or sections may not be included in the task. One or more paragraphs or sections may already be matched with a heading as an example for test takers. This task type is used with texts that contain paragraphs or sections with clearly defined themes.

This question type tests the test takers' ability to recognise the main idea or theme in the paragraphs or sections of a text, and to distinguish main ideas from supporting ones.

NB The answers are NOT in the same order as the text.

Material: Worksheet

Time: 45-60 minutes

Procedure:

Exercise 1

- introduce the focus of the lesson – dealing with Matching Headings questions in the IELTS Reading Test.
- explain that these questions require test takers to recognise the main ideas of paragraphs or sections of a text.
- elicit how a reader can get a general idea of what they are about to read (Surveying by quickly looking at a text to establish extent, if there are titles, pictures, glossaries etc.).
- tell students they have 20 seconds to survey a text.
- hand out the worksheet, allowing only 20 seconds for students to survey the text.
- tell students to close or turn over their worksheets: Ask the following questions:

How long is the text? (about 2 pages)

Does it have a title? (Yes: Miles Davis)

Does it have any sub-titles/headings? (Yes, a sub-title Icon and Iconoclast)

Does it have any pictures or diagrams? (Yes – a trumpet)

Does it have a glossary? (Yes)

Exercise 2

- tell students to look at Exercise 2.
- students work in pairs and choose what they expect the text to be about based on the previous exercise.
- get class feedback and elicit predictions of what an autobiography is likely to contain (early life, career highlights, obstacles etc.).

Answer b

Exercise 3

- elicit from students what they remember / understand by skimming a text (reading first/topic sentences and final sentences to get an idea of gist and text organisation).
- tell students they have 60 seconds to skim the first 4 paragraphs (A-D) of the text by reading the first and final sentences of each one.

Exercise 4

- put into pairs to discuss Exercise 4 and note ideas in the margins.
- elicit which types of sentences tell you what a paragraph is about (topic sentences) and where to find these.
- clarify that while topic sentences are very often the first sentence of the paragraph they can be elsewhere in the paragraph and sometimes further reading is required. This is covered in this lesson and is important for the question type.

Exercise 5

- draw attention to the list of headings in Exercise 5.
- elicit what students notice about how they are organised (i.e. not in text order, use of roman numerals, and there are more headings than paragraphs).
- work through the first 2-3 headings together with your students, highlighting keywords on each one.
- allow time for students to complete this identification of keywords in the headings individually, check in pairs and then get class feedback. Clarify that the language

used in the headings may not be exactly the same as the language in the text and elicit any ideas of how the keywords may be rephrased in the text.

Answers

- i A legacy is established
- ii Formal education unhelpful
- iii An education in two parts
- iv Branching out in new directions
- v Childhood and family life
- vi Change necessary to stay creative
- vii Conflicted opinions over Davis' earlier work
- viii Davis' unique style of trumpet playing
- ix Personal and professional struggles

Exercise 6

- draw attention to Exercise 6.
- elicit how students might make a match between topic sentences and the headings (i.e. keywords or synonyms of these).
- allow time for students to match the topic sentences to the headings and work through the questions in Exercise 6 with a partner.
- get class feedback.
- before confirming answers, elicit how sure learners are about their answers. Use this possible lack of certainty to illustrate that sometimes, they will have to read more of the paragraph to find the answer / to confirm their answer. Allow time for further reading, particularly of paragraphs A and D.
- during the feedback stage, elicit any examples of rephrasing or synonyms found in the text.

Answers

A viii

This paragraph is an example of when further reading is required. The first sentence establishes the situation but is **not** the topic sentence, this is in the second sentence of the paragraph. The final sentence contains the referent '**this...**' which refers back to the '**signature sound**' and helps to confirm the answer.

B iii

The topic sentence is the first sentence of the paragraph which contains the key phrase 'musical education both in the clubs and in the classroom'.

D ix

This paragraph is an example of when further reading is required. Although it's possible to match some individual words '**personal turmoil**', this addresses only one aspect of

the heading and by scanning the rest of the paragraph, the reader can find reference to professional struggles.

Exercise 7

- in pairs, students put the steps of the strategy into the correct order.
- get class feedback

Answers

b) d) e) h) c) g) i) j) a) f)

Exercise 8

- allow another 5 minutes for students to complete the rest of the passage (paragraphs C, E and F) using the strategy.
- in checking answers, elicit the keywords that students were able to match and the use of any synonyms.
- also elicit where the topic sentences were found and when further reading was required.

Answers

14. Paragraph A viii
15. Paragraph B iii
16. Paragraph **C i**
17. Paragraph D ix
18. Paragraph **E iv**
19. Paragraph **F vi**

A At the age of thirteen, Miles Davis was given his first trumpet, lessons were arranged with a local trumpet player, and a musical odyssey began. **These early lessons, paid for and supported by his father, had a profound effect on shaping Davis' signature sound.** Whereas most trumpeters of the era favoured the use of vibrato (a wobbly quiver in pitch inflected in the instrument's tone), Davis was taught to play with a long, straight tone, a preference his instructor reportedly drilled into the young trumpeter with a rap on the knuckles every time Davis began using vibrato. **This clear, distinctive style never left Davis. He continued playing with it for the rest of his career,** once remarking, 'If I can't get that sound, I can't play anything.'

B Having graduated from high school in 1944, Davis moved to New York City, where **he continued his musical education both in the clubs and in the classroom.** His enrolment in the prestigious Julliard School of Music was short-lived, however – he soon dropped out, criticising what he perceived as an over-emphasis on the classical European

repertoire and a neglect of jazz. Davis did later acknowledge, however, that this time at the school was invaluable in terms of developing his trumpet-playing technique and giving him a solid grounding in music theory. Much of his early training took place in the form of jam sessions

C In the late 1940s, Davis collaborated with nine other instrumentalists, including a French horn and a tuba player, to produce *The Birth of Cool*, an album now renowned for the inchoate sounds of what would later become known as ‘cool’ jazz. In contrast to popular jazz styles of the day, which featured rapid, rollicking beats, shrieking vocals, and short, sharp horn blasts, Davis’ album was the forerunner of a different kind of sound – thin, light horn-playing, hushed drums and a more restrained, formal arrangement. Although it received little acclaim at the time (the liner notes to one of Davis’ later recordings call it a ‘spectacular failure’), in hindsight *The Birth of Cool* has become recognised as a pivotal moment in jazz history, **cementing – alongside his 1958 recording, *Kind of Blue* – Davis’ legacy as one of the most innovative musicians of his era.**

D Though Davis’ trumpet playing may have sounded effortless and breezy, **this ease rarely carried over into the rest of his life. The early 1950s, in particular, were a time of great personal turmoil.** After returning from a stint in Paris, Davis suffered from prolonged depression, which he attributed to the unravelling of a number of relationships, including his romance with a French actress and some musical partnerships that ruptured as a result of creative disputes. **Davis was also frustrated by his perception that he had been overlooked by the music critics,** who were hailing the success of his collaborators and descendants in the ‘cool’ tradition, such as Gerry Mulligan and Dave Brubeck, but who afforded him little credit for introducing the cool sound in the first place.

E In the latter decades of his career, **Davis broke out of exclusive jazz settings and began to diversify his output across a range of musical styles.** In the 1960s, he was influenced by early funk performers such as Sly and the Family Stone, which then expanded into the jazz-rock fusion genre – of which he was a frontrunner – in the 1970s. Electronic recording effects and electric instruments were incorporated into his sound. By the 1980s, Davis was pushing the boundaries further, covering pop anthems such as Cyndi Lauper’s *Time After Time* and Michael Jackson’s *Human Nature*, dabbling in hip hop, and even appearing in some movies.

F Not everyone was supportive of Davis’ change of tune. Compared to the recordings of his early career, universally applauded as linchpins of the jazz *oeuvre*, trumpeter Wynston Marsalis derided his fusion work as being ‘not true jazz’, and pianist Bill Evans denounced the ‘corrupting influence’ of record companies, noting that rock and pop ‘draw wider audiences’. In the face of this criticism Davis remained defiant, commenting that his earlier recordings were part of a moment in time that he had no ‘feel’ for any more. He firmly believed that remaining stylistically inert would have hampered his ability to develop new ways of producing music. From this perspective, **Davis’ continual revamping of genre was not merely a rebellion, but an evolution, a necessary path that allowed him to release his full musical potential.**

<https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/take-ielts/prepare/free-ielts-english-practice-tests/reading-academic-2/section-2>

Surveying the text

1 Survey the following reading passage. (20 seconds)

MILES DAVIS

Icon and iconoclast¹



A At the age of thirteen, Miles Davis was given his first trumpet, lessons were arranged with a local trumpet player, and a musical odyssey began. These early lessons, paid for and supported by his father, had a profound effect on shaping Davis' signature sound. Whereas most trumpeters of the era favoured the use of vibrato (a wobbly quiver in pitch inflected in the instrument's tone), Davis was taught to play with a long, straight tone, a preference his instructor reportedly drilled into the young trumpeter with a rap on the knuckles every time Davis began using vibrato. This clear, distinctive style never left Davis. He continued playing with it for the rest of his career, once remarking, 'If I can't get that sound, I can't play anything.'

B Having graduated from high school in 1944, Davis moved to New York City, where he continued his musical education both in the clubs and in the classroom. His enrolment in the prestigious Julliard School of Music was short-lived, however – he soon dropped out, criticising what he perceived as an over-emphasis on the classical European repertoire and a neglect of jazz. Davis did later acknowledge, however, that this time at the school was invaluable in terms of developing his trumpet-playing technique and giving him a solid grounding in music theory. Much of his early training took place in the form of jam sessions and performances in the clubs of 52nd Street, where he played alongside both up-and-coming and established members of the jazz pantheon such as Coleman Hawkins, Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis, and Thelonious Monk.

C In the late 1940s, Davis collaborated with nine other instrumentalists, including a French horn and a tuba player, to produce *The Birth of Cool*, an album now renowned for the inchoate sounds of what would later become known as 'cool' jazz. In contrast to popular jazz styles of the day, which featured rapid, rollicking beats, shrieking vocals, and short, sharp horn blasts, Davis' album was the forerunner of a different kind of sound – thin, light horn-playing, hushed drums and a more restrained, formal arrangement.

¹ An iconoclast is somebody who challenges traditional beliefs or customs

Although it received little acclaim at the time (the liner notes to one of Davis' later recordings call it a 'spectacular failure'), in hindsight *The Birth of Cool* has become recognised as a pivotal moment in jazz history, cementing – alongside his 1958 recording, *Kind of Blue* – Davis' legacy as one of the most innovative musicians of his era.

D Though Davis' trumpet playing may have sounded effortless and breezy, this ease rarely carried over into the rest of his life. The early 1950s, in particular, were a time of great personal turmoil. After returning from a stint in Paris, Davis suffered from prolonged depression, which he attributed to the unravelling of a number of relationships, including his romance with a French actress and some musical partnerships that ruptured as a result of creative disputes. Davis was also frustrated by his perception that he had been overlooked by the music critics, who were hailing the success of his collaborators and descendants in the 'cool' tradition, such as Gerry Mulligan and Dave Brubeck, but who afforded him little credit for introducing the cool sound in the first place.

E In the latter decades of his career, Davis broke out of exclusive jazz settings and began to diversify his output across a range of musical styles. In the 1960s, he was influenced by early funk performers such as Sly and the Family Stone, which then expanded into the jazz-rock fusion genre – of which he was a frontrunner – in the 1970s. Electronic recording effects and electric instruments were incorporated into his sound. By the 1980s, Davis was pushing the boundaries further, covering pop anthems such as Cyndi Lauper's *Time After Time* and Michael Jackson's *Human Nature*, dabbling in hip hop, and even appearing in some movies.

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<https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/take-ielts/prepare/free-ielts-english-practice-tests/reading-academic-2/section-2>

2 *What do you expect the text to be about?*

- a. *Instructions on how to play a musical instrument*
- b. *An autobiography of a famous musician*
- c. *A description of a journey*

Strategy for dealing with Matching Headings questions

- 3 *Skim read the first 4 paragraphs.*
- 4 *With a partner, discuss what you think each paragraph is generally about. You can write your ideas in the margin next to paragraphs A-D.*
- 5 *Read the headings below, underline any keywords.*

List of Headings

- i A legacy is established
- ii Formal education unhelpful
- iii An education in two parts
- iv Branching out in new directions
- v Childhood and family life
- vi Change necessary to stay creative
- vii Conflicted opinions over Davis' earlier work
- viii Davis' unique style of trumpet playing
- ix Personal and professional struggles

- 6 *Work in pairs. Try to match the topic sentences from A,B and D to the headings. Discuss the questions below.*

A These early lessons, paid for and supported by his father, had a profound effect on shaping Davis' signature sound.

B Having graduated from high school in 1944, Davis moved to New York City, where he continued his musical education both in the clubs and in the classroom.

D Though Davis' trumpet playing may have sounded effortless and breezy, this ease rarely carried over into the rest of his life.

- *Discuss how you made your match – which keywords helped you?*
- *Which ones were you sure of?*
- *Which ones were you less sure of and need to read more?*
- *Were all of the topic sentences taken from the first line of the paragraphs?*

7 *Put the following into a possible order to give you a strategy for dealing with Matching Headings questions.*

- a) Make final choices as you read more of the text.
- b) Survey the passage, titles, and diagrams.
- c) Try to match the keywords of the headings with the first/topic sentences.
- d) Skim the paragraphs, quickly reading first/topic sentences and final sentences to get an idea of what each paragraph is about.
- e) Read the headings, underlining keywords.
- f) Be careful when transferring answers, use the Roman numerals if provided (i-x).
- g) If you can't find a match, read the final sentence of the paragraph.
- h) Eliminate any headings used as an example.
- i) If you still can't find a match, read the whole paragraph.
- j) Repeat for each paragraph or section.

b)

.....

8 *Write your answers to A, B and D.
Use the strategy to answer the rest of the questions.*

- 14. Paragraph **A**
- 15. Paragraph **B**
- 16. Paragraph **C**
- 17. Paragraph **D**
- 18. Paragraph **E**
- 19. Paragraph **F**