

The importance of the past

UNIT AIMS

READING SKILLS

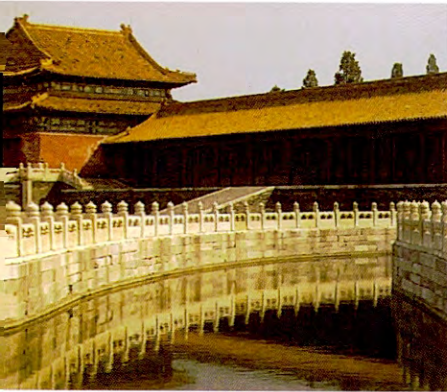
Skimming
Answering True/False/Not Given statements
Completing sentences (matching endings)

EXAM PRACTICE

Completing sentences (matching endings)
Matching names
Completing multiple-choice questions

Skimming

1 Look at the photos and answer questions a–d below.



- Where are the places shown in the photos? Can you think of other famous historical monuments around the world?
- Are places like these relevant in any way to the modern world? How?
- Do you think knowing the past helps us to define the future? Or do you think studying history is not important?
- Is there a historical place in your home country which is special to you?

2 Which alternative (a–d) below best explains how to skim?

- You extract the meaning or topic of a text without looking at all of the words.
- You read every word as fast as you can.
- You look for one word or phrase only.
- You look at a text in detail.

3 Read the lists of words 1–5 and answer questions a–d.

- architect building skyscraper construct design
- train travel passenger ticket luggage
- nostalgia past memories read former times history
- airport luggage air steward fly aeroplane boarding pass
- in the up to the of a of the enormous and that we with the in

- Which list is connected with the topic of air travel?
- Which list refers to no clear topic?
- What do you think is the topic of each of the other three?
- What types of words are in lists 1–4? How is 5 different?

Technique

Learn to skim reading passages quickly. In the exam you should skim the reading passage in two minutes or less and then skim the questions. Remember in the IELTS exam you are not meant to study all the text in detail, but to understand and extract information quickly, so you need to learn to skim quickly.

- 4 Read the title of the passage below. Underline the words in the box which you would expect to see in the passage. How do the words relate to the title?

football ■ construction ■ bridges ■ hairdressing ■ engineers ■ dictionary ■ industrial ■ projects ■ railway

The greatest of Victorian engineers

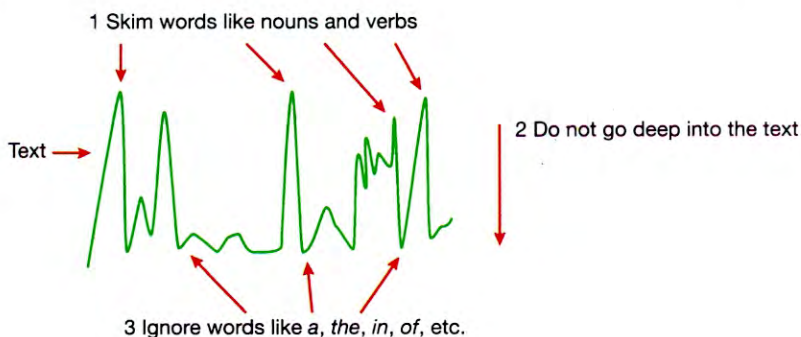
A In the hundred years up to 1860, the work of a small group of construction engineers carried forward the enormous social and economic change that we associate with the Industrial Revolution in Britain. The most important of these engineers was Isambard Kingdom Brunel, whose work in shipping, bridge-building and railway construction, to name just three fields, both challenged and motivated his colleagues. He was the driving force behind a number of hugely ambitious projects, some of which resulted in works which are still in use today.

B The son of an engineer, Brunel apprenticed with his father at an early age on the building of the Thames Tunnel. At the age of just twenty, he became the engineer in charge of the project. This impressive plan to bore under the Thames twice suffered major disasters when the river broke through into the tunnel. When the second breach occurred in 1827, Brunel was seriously injured during rescue operations and further work was halted.

C While recovering from his injuries, Brunel entered a design competition for a new bridge over the Avon Gorge near Clifton, Bristol. The original judge of the competition was Thomas Telford, a leading civil engineer of his day, who rejected all entries to the competition in favour of his own design. After considerable scandal, a second contest was held and Brunel's design was accepted. For reasons of funding, however, exacerbated by social unrest in Bristol, the project was abandoned in 1843 with only the towers completed. After Brunel's death, it was decided to begin work on it again, partly so that the bridge could form a fitting memorial to the great engineer. Work was finally completed in 1864. Today, the well known Clifton Suspension Bridge is a symbol of Bristol, just as the Opera House is of Sydney. Originally intended only for horse-drawn traffic, the bridge now bears over four million motor vehicles a year.



- 5 Read the title again and skim paragraph A. Look only at the words that are connected with the word *engineer*. Ignore the other words as in the diagram. Which words would you skim?



Technique

Skim a reading passage using only words like nouns, noun phrases and verbs. These are the words that give you meaning. They give you the gist of the passage. You can look at the other function words like *a, the, in, of*, etc. when you read a passage more closely. Remember skimming is a stage in the reading process. Close reading comes later.

- 6 Skim the whole text in exercise 4 and match each title below with a paragraph. Which words in the text help you match the title?

- 1 The contest for and construction of a suspension bridge
- 2 An inspiring engineer
- 3 The construction of a tunnel under a river

Answering True/False/Not Given statements

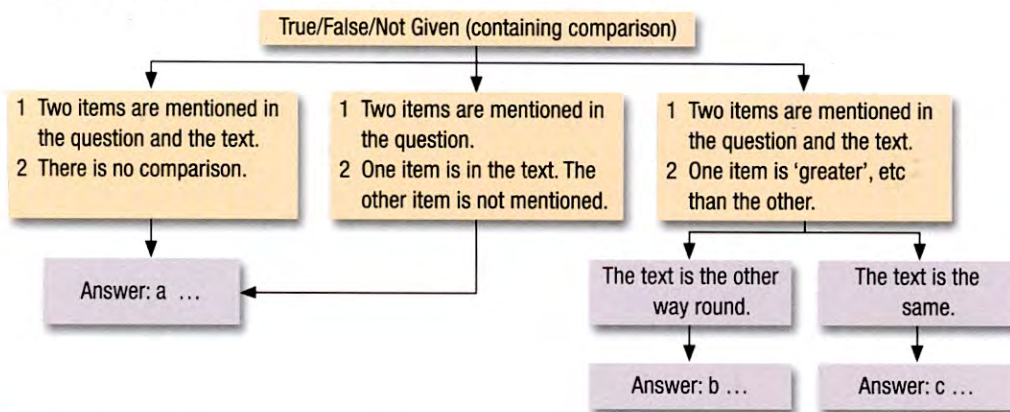
- 1 Statements 1–7 are taken from a True/False/Not Given task. These often contain comparison structures. Read the statements and underline phrases which contain a comparison.

- 1 Brunel was less important than the other construction engineers in Britain during the Industrial Revolution.
- 2 Brunel was less involved in railway construction than other engineering fields.
- 3 Brunel worked only on shipping, bridge-building and railway construction.
- 4 Brunel's work was largely ignored by his colleagues.
- 5 All projects Brunel contributed to are still used today.
- 6 Brunel became an apprentice with his father at the same age as other engineers.
- 7 The Thames Tunnel Project was more difficult than any previous construction venture undertaken in Britain.

Technique

Keep in mind that True/False/Not Given statements check factual information in the reading passage.

- 2 Decide whether the statements in exercise 1 are False or Not Given.
- 3 Make simple changes to statements 1–3 in exercise 1 to make them True.
- 4 The flow chart below shows how to decide between True, False and Not Given in comparison statements. Complete the flow chart by inserting *True*, *False* or *Not Given* into the appropriate gaps a–c.



- 5 Look at the reading passage on page 15 and decide whether the statements below are False or Not Given. Use the flow chart in exercise 4 to help you.

- 1 More change took place during the Industrial Revolution than has happened since.
- 2 Brunel was involved in more engineering fields than his colleagues.
- 3 Brunel was less influential than his colleagues in some of the works that survive today.

Technique

Use the diagram to think about sentences containing cause and effect True/False/Not Given statements. Draw a similar diagram to show how to decide for cause and effect statements.

Completing sentences (matching endings)

- 1 Read the sentence beginnings 1–7. Which two beginnings are most likely to be followed by an effect?

- 1 Thomas Telford
- 2 Scandal about the result of the first competition
- 3 Brunel's design for the bridge
- 4 Funding problems
- 5 The towers
- 6 Work on the bridge
- 7 The Clifton Suspension Bridge

Technique

Learn to notice and record the range of functions and grammar structures used in all types of reading questions, not just sentence completion tasks.

- 2 Read the sentence endings A–H. Decide which endings indicate an effect. Then make questions by adding a question word to each ending.

Example

A Which were the only parts of the bridge completed during Brunel's lifetime?

- A were the only parts of the bridge completed during Brunel's lifetime.
- B was an important civil engineer.
- C meant the completion of the bridge was delayed.
- D is a symbol of Bristol.
- E was recommenced as a suitable memorial to Brunel.
- F was chosen in the second competition.
- G led to a second contest to design the bridge.
- H symbolizes Sydney.

- 3 Based on your answers in exercise 2, predict which sentence beginnings and endings can possibly match up. Then skim paragraph C in the passage and match each sentence beginning 1–7 with the correct ending A–H.
- 4 Read the following statements from a Sentence completion task which a student matched. Decide which statements are correct and which are wrong and recombine the sentences. Give reasons for the changes you make.
- a Many historical sites worldwide are often rewritten by historians.
 - b Many old films are rarely conducted for a long period of time.
 - c Archaeological digs were known for their breadth of knowledge.
 - d Samuel Johnson and Leonardo da Vinci are being destroyed by visitors.
 - e Past events are being restored and digitally mastered.
 - f Past events are inaccessible to us, even more so than a distant place.

Improve your IELTS word skills

1 Match each precise date below with the more general period.

1952 ■ 1798 ■ 1891 ■ 1803 ■ 2001 ■ 1921 ■ 1854

- a in the early decades of the twentieth century
- b in the late nineteenth century
- c just after the turn of the nineteenth century
- d in the 1850s
- e in the mid twentieth century
- f close to the millennium
- g in the late eighteenth century

2 Scan the text on pages 19 and 20 to find four examples of general time phrases.

3 Complete each sentence a–g with the most suitable ending 1–7.

- a The committee will make every
 - b On the whole, the government achieved
 - c Unfortunately, he did not fulfil
 - d The campaigners worked
 - e The local authority drew up
 - f The directors set
 - g The king declared that he had no
- 1 his ambition to become a historian.
 - 2 a scheme to restore the old mill to working order.
 - 3 endeavour to help those most in need.
 - 4 very high sales targets for the final quarter.
 - 5 its main aim of redistributing wealth.
 - 6 towards their goal for many years.
 - 7 intention of giving up his authority.

Technique

- 1 Look at the beginnings a–g and think of possible collocations for the verbs.
- 2 Skim the endings 1–7 and match them with the beginnings.

4 In which sentences in Exercise 3 is it possible to say whether the intentions, schemes, etc were successful or not?

5 Decide whether the following words and phrases introduce an action: which came before the one in the previous section of text (B); and which introduce an action which came after (A)?

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Following this, <u>A</u> | 6 Some months later, _____ |
| 2 Previously, _____ | 7 This had been caused by _____ |
| 3 Some years earlier _____ | 8 The result of this was _____ |
| 4 Subsequently, _____ | 9 The response was to _____ |
| 5 Prior to this, _____ | 10 By this time, _____ |

Reading Passage 2

1 You should spend 20 minutes on questions 1–14 which are based on Reading Passage 2.

Technique

Survey the title, the reading passage and the questions within about 8–10 seconds to understand what your task is. Read the title and skim the text then the questions. Decide what type of passage it is: mainly historical, problem and solution or argumentative?

Chartism: a people's petition to Parliament

The early decades of the 1800s are well known as a period of discontent and social unrest. The Industrial Revolution meant the decline of traditional rural communities and the growth of a working-class urban population, particularly in the new industrial towns of the North such as Manchester. Living and working conditions for the urban factory worker were frequently
5 appalling and gave rise to a number of movements aimed at bettering working-class conditions. One such movement was Chartism, which aimed to present a people's charter, or petition for reform, to parliament. It had a number of aims, but first and foremost among them was the granting of universal suffrage, or the vote for all men over the age of 21.

There had been several previous attempts in the early 1800s to build a solid working-class
10 movement, most notably the attempt to establish a universal trade union known as the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union or GNCTU. In 1834, however, this trade union collapsed. The subsequent disillusionment led to a growth of interest in other possible ways of giving voice to the desires and grievances of the workers. In 1836, the London Working Men's Association was founded, led by William Lovett. Its aim was to reform parliament, and in 1838 it issued a charter
15 demanding six political reforms, including universal suffrage. Most of these demands were to be taken up by the Chartist petitioners.

So began the Chartist movement. Other centres of this movement were located in Birmingham, and in the north of England. In Birmingham, the movement was championed by Thomas Attwood, a banker who was interested in leading the movement for parliamentary reform in
20 the Midlands, and Joseph Sturge, a wealthy corn merchant. The key figure in the north of England was Fergus O'Connor, at that time the editor of the newspaper *The Northern Star*. In 1839, a Chartist National Convention assembled in London. The delegates talked of proclaiming a 'sacred month' or general strike, and collected signatures for a great petition. This petition was presented to parliament but it was rejected in the Commons by 235 votes to 46. Thereupon the
25 National Convention proclaimed a general strike, but a week later cancelled the proclamation and ignominiously dismissed itself. The government meanwhile had taken action and additional troops had been sent to those areas where Chartism was strongest. Disturbances in Birmingham were crushed, and William Lovett was arrested. The only other Chartist rising occurred in Monmouthshire where a group of miners marched in Newport. Again, this Newport Rising was
30 quickly crushed and its leaders transported for life.

In 1842, a second petition was presented to parliament but was again rejected by 287 votes to 49. A series of riots and strikes followed, most notably the Lancashire Plug Plot, where strikers went round the mills removing the plugs from boilers. Again, government troops moved in to crush all such disturbances and many Chartists were arrested. William Lovett subsequently abandoned the
35 cause, and Fergus O'Connor rose to prominence as the main Chartist leader.

30 In 1848, under the leadership of O'Connor, a third Chartist petition was drawn up known as the
 'Monster Petition'. It was intended to be taken to parliament in a large procession, but the government
 took elaborate military precautions, and the procession was forbidden to cross the Thames. It was
 therefore taken to parliament in three cabs instead. O'Connor had claimed that the petition contained
 35 five million signatures, but in the event it was found to contain less than two million, and a great many
 of these were false. Parliament refused to discuss it, and the Chartist movement was discredited.

Despite the fiasco of the third petition, the Chartist movement gave expression to a number
 of proposals which were later adopted to produce a reformed parliamentary system. Universal
 manhood suffrage, the abolition of the property qualification and a secret ballot all featured
 among the Chartists' demands and all of them were eventually granted, but the process of reform
 40 was slow and was not fully achieved until the early 20th century. In essence, the demands of the
 Chartists were too far ahead of the times, and consequently the government took very resolute
 action to control and suppress their actions. Doubtless the essayist Thomas Carlyle, writing in
 the mid 19th century, expressed the fear of many MPs when he wrote, 'These chartisms are our
 French Revolution. God grant that we, with our better methods, may be able to transact it by
 45 argument alone.'

Questions 1–7

Complete each sentence with the correct ending **A–H**.

- 1 The GNCTU
 - 2 The London Working Men's Association
 - 3 The Chartist National Convention
 - 4 The first Chartist petition
 - 5 The Newport Rising
 - 6 The Lancashire Plug Plot
 - 7 The third Chartist petition
- A was not debated in parliament.
 - B was a response to the government's rejection of the 1842 Chartist petition.
 - C was a failed attempt to establish a universal workers' movement.
 - D was an example of the unrest following the rejection of the 1839 petition.
 - E was a response to the transportation of a number of Chartist leaders.
 - F made an empty threat of industrial action.
 - G was rejected in parliament by a large majority.
 - H anticipated many of the demands of later Chartist petitions.

Technique

Sentence completion (matching endings)

- 1 Look at the beginnings. Put a box around any scanning words such as names or places.
- 2 Skim the endings. Look for relationships like examples, or cause and effect.
- 3 Predict the answers by deciding what is likely to go together.
- 4 Eliminate endings which cannot match. Think about collocations and meaning.
- 5 Use the scan words to find the right part of the text and check your answers.

Questions 8–11

Look at the following statements (Questions 8–11) and the list of people in the box below.

Match each statement with the correct person A–C.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

- 8 He led the Chartist movement in the North of England.
- 9 He was head of the London Working Men's Association.
- 10 He campaigned for parliamentary reform in the Midlands.
- 11 He was the movement's figurehead when the third 'Monster' petition was compiled.

List of people

- A William Lovett
- B Thomas Attwood
- C Fergus O'Connor

Questions 12–14

Do the following statements agree with the information in the reading passage?

Write

- TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE if the statement contradicts the information
NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

- 12 The 1848 Chartist procession was halted due to government intervention.
- 13 The third Chartist petition contained more signatures than the 1842 petition.
- 14 All of the Chartists' demands had been granted by 1900.

- 2 Make a checklist of the skills that you have learnt in Units 1 and 2. Put them into a table and keep your own notes and examples for reference.

Reading Skills Checklist

Reading Skills	Notes: comments and examples
1 Surveying a reading passage	Looking at the heading, reading passage and the questions very quickly before skimming for gist