PTE Academic

Reading

Part 2: Reading of PTE Academic tests your ability to understand written English in an academic environment.

Reading skills

The reading skills tested in PTE Academic include the following:

- identifying the topic, theme or main ideas
- identifying supporting points or examples
- identifying words and phrases appropriate to the context
- identifying a writer's purpose, style, tone, or attitude
- identifying the relationships between sentences and paragraphs
- understanding academic vocabulary
- understanding the difference between connotation and denotation
- inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words
- comprehending explicit and implicit information
- comprehending concrete and abstract information
- classifying and categorizing information
- following a logical or chronological sequence of events
- evaluating the quality and usefulness of texts
- reading a text under timed conditions
- evaluating and synthesizing information
- reading for information to infer meanings or find relationships
- reading for overall organization and connections between pieces of information

- identifying specific details, facts, opinions, definitions or sequences of events
- identifying the most accurate summary (in Part 3 Listening)
- matching written text to speech (in Part 3 Listening)

Overview

Reading item types require you to understand an authentic text from an academic source.

Five item types appear in the reading part of PTE Academic. The total time to complete the reading part of the test is approximately 32–41 minutes, depending on the combination of items in a given test. *Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks* is an integrated item type that assesses both reading and writing skills.

Part 2 (reading) total time: 32–41 minutes			
Item type	**Task**	**Skills assessed**	**Text length**
Multiple-choice, choose single answer	After reading a text, answer a multiple-choice question on the content or tone of the text by selecting one response.	reading	text up to 300 words
Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers	After reading a text, answer a multiple-choice question on the content or tone of the text by selecting more than one response.	reading	text up to 300 words
Re-order paragraphs	Several text boxes appear on screen in random order. Put the text boxes in the correct order.	reading	text up to 150 words
Reading: Fill in the blanks	A text appears on screen with several blanks. Drag words or phrases from the blue box to fill in the blanks.	reading	text up to 80 words
Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks	A text appears on screen with several blanks. Fill in the blanks by selecting words from several drop down lists of response options.	reading and writing	text up to 300 words

Authentic texts about academic subjects in the humanities, natural sciences or social sciences are presented. Although you may not be familiar with the topics presented, all the information you need to answer the items is contained in the texts.

You may take notes using the Erasable Noteboard Booklet and pen, and use these notes as a guide when answering the items.

Reading item types are not timed individually. You can refer to the timer in the upper right hand corner of the computer screen, "Time Remaining," which counts down the time remaining for the reading part.

Multiple-choice, choose single answer

Task

Multiple-choice, choose single answer is a multiple-choice reading item type with a single correct response. It tests your ability to analyze, interpret and evaluate a short reading text on an academic subject. It assesses reading skills. The image below shows the item type.

PTE Academic: Multiple-choice, choose single answer

Below are the features of *Multiple-choice, choose single answer.*

1 Instructions are presented at the top right side of the computer screen.

> *Read the text and answer the multiple-choice question by selecting the correct response. Only one response is correct.*

2 A reading text is presented on the left side.

> Every day millions of lights and computers are left on in deserted offices, apartments and houses. Environmental activists say that simply switching them off could cut Sydney's greenhouse gas emissions by five percent over the next year.
>
> Per capita, Australia is one of the world's largest producers of carbon dioxide and other gases that many scientists believe are helping to warm the Earth's atmosphere, causing climate upset.
>
> A long-standing drought and serious water shortages in Australia have focused much attention on climate change. Some experts warn higher temperatures could leave this nation of 20 million people at the mercy of more severe droughts and devastating tropical cyclones.

3 A prompt with three to five response options follows the instructions.

> One present indicator of climate change in Australia is _____.
>
> ○ environmental activists.
>
> ○ gas emissions.
>
> ○ carbon dioxide.
>
> ○ drought.

To select a response, click on the corresponding radio button or the response itself. Your response will be highlighted in yellow. To deselect your response, click on the radio button or the response again. To change your response, click on a different radio button or a different response.

4 Click on the "Next" button to go to the next item. The timer for the reading part will continue running.

The reading texts for this item type are up to 300 words in length. There are two to three *Multiple-choice, choose single answer* items in the reading part of PTE Academic, depending on the combination of items in a given test. They are presented together in a single block.

Scoring

Your response is scored as either correct or incorrect. No credit is given for no response or an incorrect response. This item type affects the scoring of the following:

Overall score		✔
Communicative skills		
Listening		Speaking
Reading	✔	Writing
Enabling skills		
Grammar		Spelling
Oral fluency		Vocabulary
Pronunciation		Written discourse

Reading skills

Multiple -choice, choose single answer tests your reading skills in an academic environment. Any of the following reading skills could be tested by this item type:

➤ **Main idea or gist**: Read for and identify the main idea or theme of the text. For example, "What is the central focus of the text?"

➤ **Detailed information**: Read for and identify specific details, facts, opinions, definitions or sequences of events. For example, "According to the text, which of the following contributed to young people joining the movement?"

➤ **Writer's purpose**: Read for and understand the function of what the writer says, or identify the reasons why the writer mentions specific pieces of information. For example, "What does the writer seek to achieve in the text?"

➤ **Organization**: Read for and identify the overall organization and connections between pieces of information. This evaluates your ability to link different parts of the text together. For example, "What do the first sentence and third paragraph have in common?"

➤ **Inference**: Read a text and infer meanings, form, generalizations, make predictions, find relationships or draw conclusions. For example, "What conclusion about the monarchy can be drawn from the arguments presented in the text?"

➤ **Textual value**: Read for and assess the quality and usefulness of the text. For example, "Which of the following statements leads you to question the reliability of the information presented by the writer?"

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Reading

➤ **Stylistics:** Read for and identify the writer's attitude, feelings or degree of certainty on an issue. For example, "In line five the writer uses the word 'guy.' What do you think is the reason for this?"

Your listening, speaking and writing skills are not tested by this item type.

Strategies

Before reading

- **Read the prompt carefully.** This will help you understand what to read for.
- **Skim the response options quickly.**

While reading

- **Read the whole text carefully.**
- **Identify the main idea and supporting points.**
- **Do not focus too much on unfamiliar words.** Try to infer the meaning of these words from the context.

After reading

- **Read the response options and select the correct one.**

  — First eliminate any response options which you feel sure are incorrect.
  — Then select one of the remaining response options. Do not try to simply match words or phrases with those in the text. Sometimes incorrect options contain the same words as the text.

- **Check your response** if you are not sure.

  — If the prompt relates to a detail, find the relevant part of the text to check the response option you have chosen.
  — If the prompt relates to a more general aspect of the text, quickly re-read the text to check the response option you have chosen.

- **Do not change your first response** unless you feel sure that it is incorrect.
- **Make a guess** if you are still not sure which is the correct response. It is better to attempt to answer the item rather than leave it unanswered.

Practice

Below is a *Multiple-choice, choose single answer* item for you to respond to.

Read the prompt and the text. Then select the correct response.

> The artists were not a rich man's frivolous addition to his entourage but an essential part of a scientific team in the age before photography. Their principal task was to draw the specimens that the scientists collected. Although the naturalists, such as Banks, intended to preserve some of their specimens and take them home to England, it would not be practical to do so with all of them. Banks also expected to dissect certain animals, and the artists would preserve a record of this work. In addition to their scientific drawings, Banks wanted the artists to sketch the people and places they visited.

Which of the following can be inferred from the text?

- ○ Photography eventually made scientific expeditions more productive.
- ○ Artists performed a variety of tasks in early scientific explorations.
- ○ Naturalists themselves were often talented artists.
- ○ Dissecting specimens was not as useful as taking them to England.

Remember, during PTE Academic you will give your response by clicking on a response at a test delivery workstation.

Answer key p.181 **Now check the Answer key.**

Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers

Task

Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers is a multiple-choice reading item type with more than one correct response. It tests your ability to analyze, interpret and evaluate a short reading text on an academic subject. It assesses reading skills. The image below shows the item type.

PTE Academic: Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers

Below are the features of *Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers*.

1 Instructions are presented at the top right side of the computer screen.

> *Read the text and answer the question by selecting all the correct responses. More than one response is correct.*

2 A reading text is presented on the left side.

> The Turks and Caicos Islands are a multi-island archipelago at the southern tip of the Bahamas chain, approximately 550 miles south-east of Florida. The islands are an overseas territory of the United Kingdom although they exercise a high degree of local political autonomy. The economy of the islands rests mainly on tourism, with some contribution from offshore banking and fishing.
>
> Primary schooling is divided into eight grades, with most pupils entering at the age of four years and leaving at twelve. After two kindergarten years, Grades 1–6 are covered by a graded curriculum in maths, language and science that increases in difficulty as pupils get older. There is little repetition and pupils are expected to progress through primary school in their age cohorts. At the end of primary schooling, pupils sit an examination that serves to stream them in the secondary school setting. Primary and secondary school enrolment is virtually universal.
>
> There are a total of ten government primary schools on the islands. Of these, seven are large enough to organize pupils into single-grade classrooms. Pupils in these schools are generally grouped by age into mixed ability classes. The remaining three schools, because of their small pupil numbers, operate with multigrade groupings. They serve communities with small populations whose children cannot travel to a neighboring larger primary school. Pupils in these classes span up to three grade and age groups.
>
> As far as classroom organization is concerned, the multigrade and monograde classrooms are similar in terms of the number of pupils and the general seating arrangements, with pupils in rows facing the blackboard. There is no evidence that the multigrade teachers operate in a particularly resource-poor environment in the Turks and Caicos Islands. This is in contrast to studies conducted in other developing country contexts.

3 A prompt with five to seven response options follows the instructions.

> According to the text, which of the following statements can be concluded about primary classes in the Turks and Caicos Islands?
>
> ☐ Multigrade classes are mainly found in smaller schools.
>
> ☐ Most primary pupils are in multigrade classes.
>
> ☐ Parents can choose to send their child to a multigrade school.
>
> ☐ Most primary pupils are in mixed ability classes.
>
> ☐ Multigrade classes are for the youngest three grades.

To select a response, click on the corresponding checkbox or the response itself. Your response will be highlighted in yellow. To deselect your response, click on the checkbox or the response again. To change your responses, click on a different checkbox or a different response.

4 Click on the "Next" button to go to the next item. The timer for the reading part will continue running.

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Reading

The reading texts for this item type are up to 300 words in length. There are two to three *Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers* items in the reading part of PTE Academic, depending on the combination of items in a given test. They are presented together in a single block.

Scoring

If all response options are correct, you receive the maximum score points for this item type. If one or more response options are incorrect, partial credit scoring applies. This is the first of three item types where you can lose points if you choose any incorrect options. For any wrong options chosen 1 point is deducted, whilst correct options are given 1 point. Make sure you are confident in your choices. This item type affects the scoring of the following:

Overall score			✔
Communicative skills			
Listening		Speaking	
Reading	✔	Writing	
Enabling skills			
Grammar		Spelling	
Oral fluency		Vocabulary	
Pronunciation		Written discourse	

Reading skills

Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers tests your reading skills in an academic environment. Any of the following reading skills could be tested by this item type:

➤ **Main idea or gist:** Read for and identify the main idea or theme of the text. For example, "What are the main ideas in the text?"

➤ **Detailed information:** Read for and identify specific details, facts, opinions, definitions or sequences of events. For example, "According to the text, which of the following indicate sleep deprivation?"

➤ **Writer's purpose:** Read for and understand the function of what the writer says, or identify the reasons why the writer mentions specific pieces of information. For example, "What does the writer seek to achieve in the text?"

➤ **Organization:** Read for and identify the overall organization and connections between pieces of information. This evaluates your ability to link different parts of the text together. For example, "What are the relationships between the second and third paragraphs?"

➤ **Inference:** Read a text and infer meanings, form generalizations, make predictions, find relationships or draw conclusions. For example, "What conclusions about organic produce can be drawn from the arguments presented in the text?"

➤ **Textual value:** Read for and assess the quality and usefulness of the text. For example, "Which of the following statements leads you to question the reliability of the information presented by the writer?"

➤ **Stylistics:** Read for and identify the writer's attitude, feelings or degree of certainty on an issue. For example, "In line three the writer uses the phrase 'happy as a clam.' What do think are the reasons for this?"

Your listening, speaking and writing skills are not tested by this item type.

Strategies

Before reading

- **Read the prompt carefully.** This will help you understand what to read for.
- **Skim the response options quickly.**

While reading

- **Read the whole text carefully.**
- **Identify the main idea and supporting points.**
- **Do not focus too much on unfamiliar words.** Try to infer the meaning of these words from the context.

After reading

- **Read the response options and select the correct ones.**
  - First eliminate any response options which you feel sure are incorrect.
  - Then select all the correct responses from the remaining response options. Do not try to simply match words or phrases with those in the text. Sometimes incorrect options contain the same words as the text.
- **Check your responses** if you are not sure.
  - If the prompt relates to a detail, find the relevant parts of the text to check the response options you have chosen.
  - If the prompt relates to a more general aspect of the text, quickly re-read the text to check the response options you have chosen.
- **Do not change your first responses** unless you feel sure that they are incorrect.

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Reading

Practice

Below is a *Multiple-choice, choose multiple answers* item for you to respond to.

Pearson Test of English Academic - Katherine Marie Garcia

Time Remaining 35:02
Item 3 of 18

There is a part of Spain's sun-baked Andalucía that is extraordinary not only because of its unspoiled terrain and authentic Spanish traditions but also because of its caves. These are not dark, damp holes, with dripping water and evil smells. They are residences, ancient Bronze Age dwellings now being refurbished for hundreds of 21st century Spaniards. In Galera, the region's most important village, it's estimated that there are at least 1,000 such habitations carved into its hillsides. "We take old caves, renovate them, then sell them on," says Rob Oakley, office manager of leading developer Galera Enterprises. "Our company was set up by someone who discovered the area of Galera when it was just a tourist attraction 15 years ago and saw its potential." The ancient abodes are transformed from rough caves into relatively luxurious homes, equipped out with amenities like electricity and sewage, phone lines, running hot water, even Internet connections.

Read the text and answer the question by selecting all the correct responses. *You will need to select more than one response.*

Which of the following words have the same meaning in the passage as "residences"?

☐ abodes

☐ amenities

☐ connections

☐ dwellings

☐ habitations

☐ hillsides

☐ terrain

Next

Read the prompt and the text. Then select all the correct responses.

There is a part of Spain's sun-baked Andalucía that is extraordinary not only because of its unspoiled terrain and authentic Spanish traditions but also because of its caves. These are not dark, damp holes, with dripping water and evil smells. They are residences, ancient Bronze Age dwellings now being refurbished for hundreds of 21st century Spaniards. In Galera, the region's most important village, it's estimated that there are at least 1,000 such habitations carved into its hillsides. "We take old caves, renovate them, then sell them on," says Rob Oakley, office manager of leading developer Galera Enterprises. "Our company was set up by someone who discovered the area of Galera when it was just a tourist attraction 15 years ago and saw its potential." The ancient abodes are transformed from rough caves into relatively luxurious homes, equipped out with amenities like electricity and sewage, phone lines, running hot water, even Internet connections.

Which of the following words have the same meaning in the passage as "residences"?

☐ abodes

☐ amenities

☐ connections

☐ dwellings

☐ habitations

☐ hillsides

☐ terrain

> Remember, during PTE Academic you will give your response by clicking on responses at a test delivery workstation.

Answer key p.182 **Now check the Answer key.**

Re-order paragraphs

Task

Re-order paragraphs is a reading item type with a single correct order for the text boxes in a reading text. It tests your ability to understand the organization and cohesion of an academic text. It assesses reading skills. The image below shows the item type.

PTE Academic: Re-order paragraphs
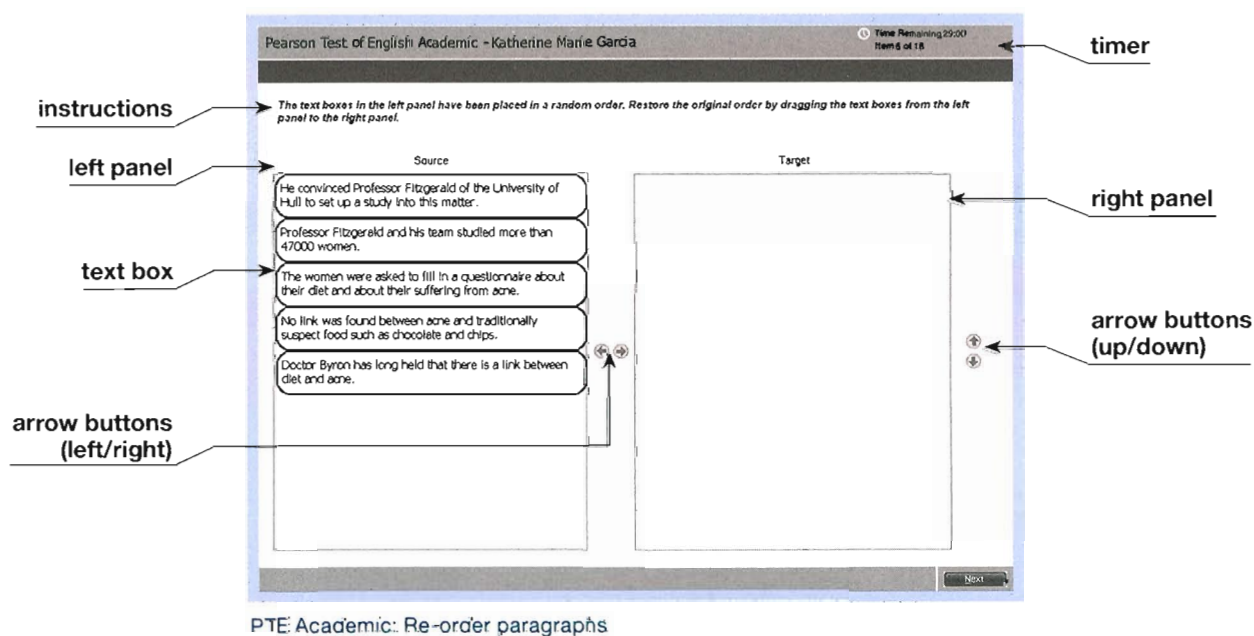
Below are the features of *Re-order paragraphs*.

1 Instructions are presented at the top of the computer screen.

> *The text boxes in the left panel have been placed in a random order. Restore the original order by dragging the text boxes from the left panel to the right panel.*

2 The left panel, "Source," contains four or five text boxes.

Source
He convinced Professor Fitzgerald of the University of Hull to set up a study into this matter.
Professor Fitzgerald and his team studied more than 47000 women.
The women were asked to fill in a questionnaire about their diet and about their suffering from acne.
No link was found between acne and traditionally suspect food such as chocolate and chips.
Doctor Byron has long held that there is a link between diet and acne.

3 The right panel, "Target," is empty.

Target

To select a text box, click on the text box. The text box will be highlighted in blue. To deselect a text box, click on another text box.

There are three ways to move a selected text box.

- Hold the left button of the mouse down and drag the text box between the panels. You can also drag text boxes within a panel.
- Click on the left/right arrow buttons to move the text box between panels. You can also use the up/down arrow buttons to re-order the text boxes in the right panel.
- Double click on a selected text box. It will move to the bottom of the opposite panel.

4 Click on the "Next" button to go to the next item. The timer for the reading part will continue running.

The reading texts for this item type are up to 150 words in length. There are two to three *Re-order paragraphs* items in PTE Academic, depending on the combination of items in a given test. They are presented together in a single block.

Scoring

If all text boxes are in the correct order, you receive the maximum score points for this item type. If one or more text boxes are in the wrong order, partial credit scoring applies. This item type affects the scoring of the following:

Overall score			✔
Communicative skills			
Listening		Speaking	
Reading	✔	Writing	
Enabling skills			
Grammar		Spelling	
Oral fluency		Vocabulary	
Pronunciation		Written discourse	

Reading skills

Re-order paragraphs tests your reading skills in an academic environment. Below are the key skills tested:

- identifying the topic, theme or main ideas
- identifying supporting points or examples
- identifying the relationships between sentences and paragraphs
- understanding academic vocabulary
- understanding the difference between connotation and denotation
- inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words
- comprehending explicit and implicit information
- comprehending concrete and abstract information

- classifying and categorizing information
- following a logical or chronological sequence of events

Your listening, speaking and writing skills are not tested by this item type.

Strategies

Before reading

- Skim all the sentences in the text boxes quickly. This will help you understand the topic of the text.

While reading

- Read all the sentences in the text boxes carefully.
- Look for the topic/main sentence. This is probably a general statement about the topic. It will not start with words such as "however" and "nevertheless," nor is it likely to contain pronouns that refer to anything in another sentence.
- Think about the possible relationships between the sentences.

After reading

- Move the topic sentence to the right panel. Do not worry at this stage if you feel unsure. You can re-order sentences later if you change your mind.
- Select a sentence that follows logically from the topic sentence. Repeat this process until you have reconstructed the whole text. Use language clues as well as the meaning of the sentences to do this:

  — Pay attention to grammatical relationships. For example, nouns are often replaced by pronouns in subsequent sentences, and an indefinite article frequently precedes a definite article before the same noun.
  — Look for words and phrases that signal a transition between ideas, for example, "and," "but" or "finally."
  — Pay attention to the sequence of information, such as the chronological order of a narrative or the order of a process.

- Re-read the text after re-ordering the text boxes to check that it makes sense.
- Attempt the item if you are not sure about the correct order. It is better to attempt it than to leave any text boxes unordered.

Practice

Below is a *Re-order paragraphs* item for you to respond to.

Read the text boxes. Then restore the original order by drawing a line from the text box on the left to the space provided on the right.

Source	Target
Such a willingness, though not easy, could transform those involved.	
But the key was a desire to really feel what the other person or party wanted and felt.	
The climate of openness and transparency he created in his sessions, if replicated within the family, the corporation, or in politics, would result in less angst and more constructive outcomes.	
Rogers felt that psychologists had the most important job in the world, because ultimately, it was not the physical sciences that would save us, but better interactions between human beings.	

Remember, during PTE Academic you will give your response by dragging text boxes to the right panel at a test delivery workstation.

Now check the Answer key.

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Reading

Reading: Fill in the blanks

Task

Reading: Fill in the blanks is a reading item type with a single correct answer for each blank. It tests your ability to use context and grammatical cues to identify words that complete a reading text. It assesses reading skills. The image below shows the item type.
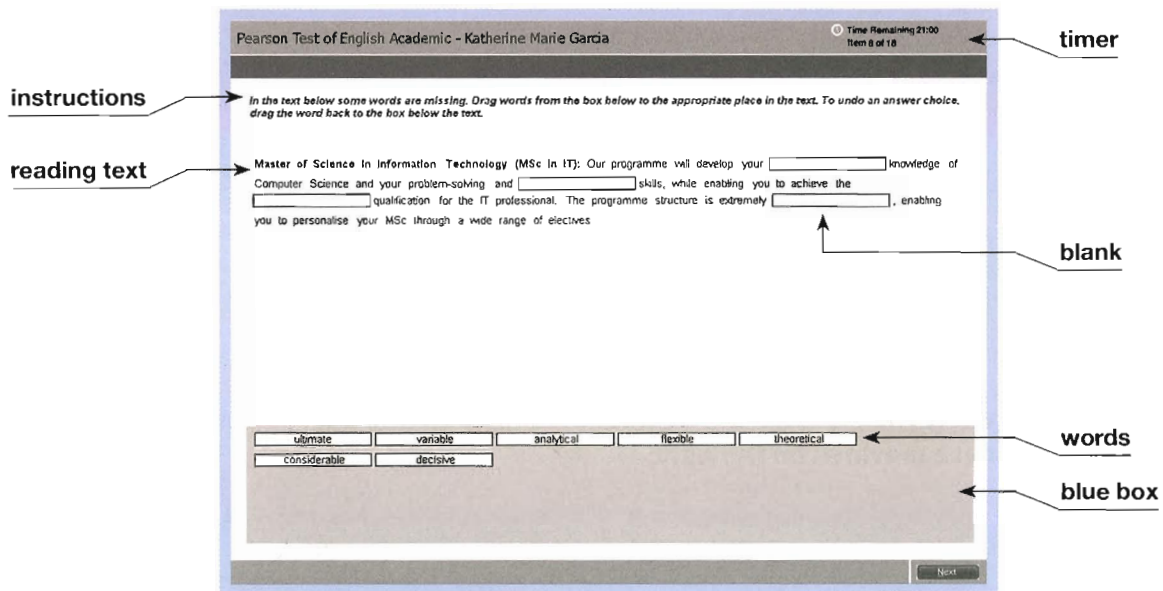
PTE Academic: Reading: Fill in the blanks

Below are the features of *Reading: Fill in the blanks.*

1 Instructions are presented at the top of the computer screen.

> *In the text below some words are missing. Drag words from the box below to the appropriate place in the text. To undo an answer choice, drag the word back to the box below the text.*

2 A reading text with three to five blanks follows.

Master of Science in Information Technology (MSc in IT). Our programme will develop your

[   ] knowledge of Computer Science and your problem-solving and

[   ] skills, while enabling you to achieve the [   ]

qualification for the IT professional. The programme structure is extremely [   ],

enabling you to personalise your MSc through a wide range of electives.

3 A blue box with six to eight words follows.

ultimate	variable	analytical	flexible	theoretical
considerable	decisive			

In the box, there are three more words than the number of blanks in the text, so you will not use all the words provided.

To fill a blank, click on a word to select it. Hold the left button of the mouse down and drag the word to the blank where you want to place it. You can also drag words between blanks. If you want to remove a word from a blank, drag the word back to the blue box.

4 Click on the "Next" button to go to the next item. The timer for the reading part will continue running.

The reading texts for this item type are up to 80 words in length. There are four to five *Reading: Fill in the blanks* items in the reading part of PTE Academic, depending on the combination of items in a given test. They are presented together in a single block.

Scoring

If all blanks are filled correctly, you receive the maximum score points for this item type. If one or more blanks are filled incorrectly, partial credit scoring applies. This item type affects the scoring of the following:

Overall score			✔
Communicative skills			
Listening		Speaking	
Reading	✔	Writing	
Enabling skills			
Grammar		Spelling	
Oral fluency		Vocabulary	
Pronunciation		Written discourse	

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Reading

Reading skills

Reading: Fill in the blanks tests your reading skills in an academic environment. Below are the key skills tested:

- identifying the topic, theme or main ideas
- identifying words and phrases appropriate to the context
- understanding academic vocabulary
- understanding the difference between connotation and denotation
- inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words
- comprehending explicit and implicit information
- comprehending concrete and abstract information
- following a logical or chronological sequence of events

Your listening, speaking and writing skills are not tested by this item type.

Strategies

Before reading

- **Skim the entire text quickly,** ignoring the blanks. This will help you understand the topic.

While reading

- **Fill in the blanks one by one.** If you feel unsure about any particular blank, skip it. The more blanks you fill in, the easier the remaining ones will be.
- **Use language clues as well as word knowledge** to fill in the blanks:
  - Pay attention to the grammar of the sentence. For example, if the blank should contain a plural noun, choose a plural noun from the blue box.
  - Pay attention to the pronouns and logical connectors in the text, and choose words that maintain the right relationships.
  - Pay attention to conventional phrasing. Choose words that normally appear before or after the particular words on either side of the blanks.

After reading

- **Re-read the text** to check that it makes sense.
- **Make changes** if necessary and re-read the text.
- **Attempt the item** if you are not sure about certain blanks. It is better to attempt the item than to leave empty blanks.

Practice

Below is a *Reading: Fill in the blanks* item for you to respond to.

Time Remaining 21:00
Item 8 of 18

In the text below some words are missing. Drag words from the box below to the appropriate place in the text. To undo an answer choice, drag the word back to the box below the text.

Science blogs serve a dual purpose. First, they connect scientists to each other, [   ] as modern day intellectual salons. Even [   ] scientific papers are now beginning to [   ] blogs as references. Second, they connect scientists to the general [   ], offering a behind-the-scenes [   ] at how science progresses.

| public | formal | look | view | world |
| cite | prescribed | serving | | |

Previous   Next

Fill in the blanks by writing the words in the spaces.

Science blogs serve a dual purpose. First, they connect scientists to each other, [   ] as modern day intellectual salons. Even [   ] scientific papers are now beginning to [   ] blogs as references. Second, they connect scientists to the general [   ], offering a behind-the-scenes [   ] at how science progresses.

> Remember, during PTE Academic you will give your response by dragging words to blanks in the text at a test delivery workstation.

| public | formal | look | view | world |
| cite | prescribed | serving | | |

Now check the Answer key.

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Reading

Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks

Task

Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks is a multiple choice reading item type with a single correct answer for each blank. It tests your ability to use contextual and grammatical cues to identify words that complete a reading text. It assesses both reading and writing skills. The image below shows the item type.

PTE Academic: Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks

Below are the features of *Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks.*

1 Instructions are presented at the top of the computer screen.

> *Below is a text with blanks. Click on each blank, a list of choices will appear. Select the appropriate answer choice for each blank.*

2 A reading text with up to six blanks follows. Each blank has up to five answer choices.

> The impact of a product recall can be wide-reaching, and will almost certainly extend beyond the purely financial [_____▼] of taking products off shelves. David Palmer, director of product risk management for Aon Limited, points out, "It takes companies many years to establish a strong brand name and [_____▼] and it only takes one product recall to bring it crashing down." Despite heightened awareness around product recalls, and significant investment in product control, some businesses are still falling [_____▼] when it comes to implementing strategies to deal with a crisis.

To fill a blank, click on the drop down arrow. This displays a drop down list. To select an answer choice, click on one of the answer choices from the drop down list. To change your choice, click on a different answer.

3 Click on the "Next" button to go to the next item. The timer for the reading part will continue running.

The reading texts for this item type are up to 300 words in length. There are five to six *Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks* items in the reading part of PTE Academic, depending on the combination of items in a given test. They are presented together in a single block.

Scoring

If all blanks are filled correctly, you receive the maximum score points for this item type. If one or more blanks are filled incorrectly, partial credit scoring applies. This item type affects the scoring of the following:

Overall score	✔		
Communicative skills			
Listening		Speaking	
Reading	✔	Writing	✔
Enabling skills			
Grammar		Spelling	
Oral fluency		Vocabulary	
Pronunciation		Written discourse	

Reading and writing skills

Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks is an integrated skills item type that tests both your reading and writing skills in an academic environment. Below are the key skills tested:

Reading

- identifying the topic, theme or main ideas
- identifying words and phrases appropriate to the context
- understanding academic vocabulary
- understanding the difference between connotation and denotation
- inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words
- comprehending explicit and implicit information
- comprehending concrete and abstract information
- following a logical or chronological sequence of events

Writing

- using words and phrases appropriate to the context
- using correct grammar

Your listening and speaking skills are not tested by this item type.

Strategies

Before reading

- Skim the entire text quickly, ignoring the blanks. This will help you understand the topic.

While reading

- Fill in the blanks one by one. If you feel unsure about any particular blank, skip it. The more blanks you fill in, the easier the remaining ones will be.
- Use language clues as well as word knowledge to fill in the blanks:
  - Pay attention to the grammar of the sentence. For example, if the blank should contain a plural noun, choose a plural noun from the drop down list.
  - Pay attention to the pronouns and logical connectors in the text, and choose words that maintain the right relationships.
  - Pay attention to conventional phrasing. Choose words that normally appear before or after the particular words on either side of the blanks.

After reading

- Re-read the text to check that it makes sense.
- Make changes if necessary and re-read the text.
- Attempt an item if you are not sure about certain blanks. It is better to attempt it than to leave empty blanks.

Practice

Below is a *Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks* item for you to respond to.

Below is a text with blanks. Click on each blank. a list of choices will appear. Select the appropriate answer choice for each blank.

A Civil War reenactment is in part a memorial service. It is partly, too, a leisure activity. Furthermore most reenactors assert an educational import to the performance, and to develop their roles many pursue archival _____ with a rare dedication. On the other hand Civil War reenactments are increasingly commercial _____ , with as many as fifty thousand North Americans routinely gathering at (or near) historical Civil War battlefields to stage performances that purport to recreate the conflict, while hundreds of thousands more spectate. I will show how theoretical issues of _____ arise as practical problems in the Civil War reenactment community by presenting my own observations from the 2006 Gettysburg reenactment and by _____ on a number of texts produced by participant-observers. In particular I will refer to Robert Lee Hodge, who was made famous by Tony Horwitz's 1996 book, *Confederates in the Attic*, and who served as a kind of Virgil to the author on his journey through a Confederate Valhalla. From these sources I will _____ that 'Living History' performances require an interpretive apparatus that takes genuine history as its authority, while remaining external to both participants and tourists, who may well be unaware of how closely their own involvement approximates genuine historical events.

[Next]

Circle the appropriate answer choice for each blank.

A Civil War reenactment is in part a memorial service. It is partly, too, a leisure activity. Furthermore most reenactors assert an educational import to the performance, and to develop their roles many pursue archival

(1) _____ with a rare dedication. On the other hand Civil War reenactments are increasingly commercial **(2)** _____ , with as many as fifty thousand Americans routinely gathering at (or near) historical Civil War battlefields to stage performances that purport to recreate the conflict, while hundreds of thousands more spectate.

I will show how theoretical issues of **(3)** _____ arise as practical problems in the Civil War reenactment community by presenting my own observations from the 2006 Gettysburg reenactment and by **(4)** _____ on a number of texts produced by participant-observers. In particular I will refer to Robert Lee Hodge, who was made famous by Tony Horwitz's 1996 book, Confederates in the Attic, and who served as a kind of Virgil to the author on his journey through a Confederate

(1)
- filing
- research
- searching
- documentation

(2)
- illustrations
- expeditions
- spectacles
- outings

(3)
- authenticity
- pretence
- imitation
- realism

(4)
- leaning
- resting
- counting
- relying

Valhalla. From these sources I will (5) [▼] that 'Living

History' performances require an interpretive apparatus that takes genuine

history as its authority, while remaining external to both participants and

tourists, who may well be unaware of how closely their own involvement

approximates genuine historical events.

(5)	▼
write	
argue	
disprove	
interpret	

Remember, during PTE Academic you will give your
response by clicking on choices at a test delivery
workstation.

Answer key p.184 **Now check the Answer key.**

Improving general reading skills

Effective reading

Effective reading, in both everyday and test situations, requires attention to the five areas listed below. Although not all of these areas will be tested in PTE Academic, improving your skills in each area will help your general language proficiency and improve your overall performance in the test.

➤ Text type
- **Recognize the text type from the context.** For example, the presence of an abstract suggests an academic text. The use of formatting identifies genres such as letters, memos or reports. Scene-setting description or dialogue may introduce a story.
- **Match your reading style to your purpose for reading and the text type.** For example, to understand the key ideas in a news article, you might read the article quickly for the main points. Focus on the title, introduction, opening sentences in paragraphs and the closing sentences at the end. To understand a text in more detail, you may read slowly to identify supporting details. Reading for pleasure can involve reading quickly to follow a storyline without understanding the meaning of every word.

➤ Topic and gist
- **Focus on the title** as it often provides clues about the topic or content of the text. For example, the title "The Hope and Practice of Teaching" indicates that the article is about education.
- **Focus on the topic sentences in the paragraphs of a text** as they usually provide the main ideas.

➤ Purpose
- **Refer to the topic and text type** to understand the purpose of the text. Text type and topic indicate what the writer intends to do. For example, tell a story, describe an experiment, discuss a problem, or present a lecture.

➤ Structure and content
- **Pay attention to section headings and sub-headings, paragraphing or main titles** to understand the structure of the text.
- **Identify basic components in different types of writing** to understand the content of the text. For example, in an explanatory text, identify the main ideas, supporting information and conclusions. In a narrative text, recognize the storyline and character-building descriptions.
- **Guess the meanings of unfamiliar words and expressions from the context,** without constantly referring to a dictionary during the reading process.
- **Understand the words and expressions which refer to information elsewhere in the text,** such as "this," "in this way," "his," "her." Locate the information in the text. For example, in "Many children were found to have drunk bottled milk when they were infants. This is common behavior in young children," "This" refers to the act of drinking bottled milk.

➤ **Writer's point of view**

- Understand the writer's point of view by referring to the title, the topic sentences, organization of the argument, and concluding statements at the end.
- Identify words and expressions signaling the writer's points of view, feelings or attitudes. For example, "I am uncomfortable with that argument" indicates that the writer has concerns about the argument and probably has a different point of view.

Understanding your strengths and weaknesses

Improving your reading skills starts with an understanding of your own strengths and weaknesses. This will allow you to concentrate on the areas which need to be improved in general, or specifically as preparation for taking PTE Academic. Use the checklist below to assess your current reading skills and to decide on priority areas for improvement.

Effective reading	My current proficiency level			Priority for improvement
	High	Medium	Low	
Text type				
I can recognize text types quickly by scanning a text.				
I can match my reading style to my purpose for reading and the text type to read effectively.				
Topic and gist				
I can use the title to guess the content of the text.				
I can use the topic sentences to understand the main ideas of the text.				
Purpose				
I can understand the purpose of the text by referring to the topic and text type.				
Structure and content				
I can understand the structure of the text by paying attention to section headings and sub-headings, paragraphing or main titles.				
I can understand the content of the text by identifying basic components in different types of writing.				
I can guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context without checking a dictionary.				
I can locate and understand the words or expressions that refer to other information in the text.				

Effective reading	My current proficiency level			Priority for improvement
	High	Medium	Low	
Writer's point of view				
I can understand the writer's point of view by referring to the title, the topic sentences, organization of the argument, and concluding statements at the end.				
I can identify words and expressions signaling the writer's point of view, feelings or attitude.				

Developing your reading skills

Follow the suggestions below to improve your general reading skills:

➤ **Read more. Take every opportunity to read.**
- **Read for pleasure.** Choose topics that you enjoy and materials that are not too difficult.
- **Develop a habit of reading in English every day.**

➤ **Practice reading.**
- **Read tables of content, chapter headings or summaries** to get an overall idea of the book or text. Select chapters or parts of chapters for intensive reading for meaning.
- **Read lecture notes or presentation materials** to understand the main points and identify linking expressions such as "However, the most important factor" or "The next section elaborates …."
- **Try to answer comprehension questions for reading passages** in online English language courses and textbooks. Use the answer keys provided to check your answers.
- **Take an online or classroom-based reading course.** This will allow you to get reading practice that is tailored to your proficiency level and needs.

➤ **Build your vocabulary.**
- **Note words or expressions that you find useful** during the reading process, and look up their meanings in a dictionary when necessary.
- **Develop a habit of noting definitions of words from the dictionary,** including different parts of speech when necessary. For example, make a note of the difference between "diverge" and "divergence," or "critic" and "critical."
- **Use a thesaurus to find synonyms** for familiar or unfamiliar words that you read. This will increase your range of expression. Check synonyms in a dictionary to understand their exact meanings.
- **Expand and consolidate your knowledge of the words used frequently in academic texts.** You may refer to *Longman Exams Dictionary* for a list of academic words as well as lists of the most frequent words categorized by topic.

5

Reading

Reading strategies

➤ **Read for pleasure.**

- **Do not interrupt your reading** to look up words in a dictionary. Note unfamiliar words if you wish to check them later. Guess the meanings of words from the context, or simply carry on reading. Remember that even native speakers of English do not understand every word they read.
- **Do not continue any reading material you are not enjoying.** Change what you are reading.
- **Build your reading fluency.** Read fast so that you can follow the reading material in general. A general guideline for fast reading is to move your eyes over the text so quickly that you cannot comfortably pronounce the words as you read.

➤ **Read for information.**

- **Read the text quickly** to determine the type of text and to find the title, section headings, table of contents or abstract. These provide clues to the content and structure of the text.
- **Read through the first two or three paragraphs** to get a better idea of the topic and to discover the writer's point of view.
- **Read for main points and items of interest.** Note the way in which the discussion or argument is developed. For example, is there a main point followed by examples? Are there arguments for or against a proposal? Does the writer use a past, present, or future time frame?

➤ **Respond to comprehension questions.**

- **Read the text quickly first,** as described above in "Read for information."
- **Read the questions quickly** to get an idea of what you are required to look for. Some questions may ask for specific information, identification of the gist, or attitudes and points of view. Some questions may ask for understanding of what a word or expression refers to elsewhere in the text. For example, "What does 'this' in line 12 refer to?" Some questions may ask for the meanings of words and expressions in the text.
- **Read each question again carefully** to ensure that you understand what is being asked. Then skim the text to find the answer.

Sources of reading material

- **The Internet** includes examples of a wide variety of reading material.
- **News articles, essays and reports** provide good examples of organization. They often put the main point at the beginning, use topic sentences to start paragraphs and develop an argument or discussion in a logical way. As these genres generally cover a range of topics, they are good sources of vocabulary and expressions in specific subject areas. They can also provide useful examples of logical argument and the use of linking words and phrases to express relationships between ideas.
- **Online English courses and textbooks** provide material on topics related to different fields of study or personal interests.

- **Academic journals** in different fields of study contain articles with abstracts which summarize purpose, content and conclusions.
- **Novels and short stories** are useful to enhance the pleasure of reading, and to build understanding of the expression of ideas and feelings.

Preparing for PTE Academic

To prepare for PTE Academic, you should practice the reading skills that you will be assessed on in the test.

- Read Chapter 5 of the *Official Guide* to obtain information on all aspects of the reading item types in the test and practice responding to the example items.
- Use the CD-ROM included with the *Official Guide* to gain further practice in responding to reading items.
- Use the PTE Academic Tutorial available at www.pearsonpte.com to learn how to respond to these items in the actual test.
- Take a practice test available at www.pearsonpte.com.

Refer to the section "Resources" in Chapter 2 of the *Official Guide* for further information.