

IELTS General Training Reading Task Type 1 (Multiple Choice)

Activity – teacher’s notes

Description

An activity to introduce multiple-choice type questions and a procedure for answering them. Skills developed are skimming, scanning, reading in detail and paraphrasing.

Time required: 30 minutes

Additional materials required: ■ none

Aims:

- To introduce multiple-choice type questions
- To practise a procedure for answering them: thinking of synonyms and paraphrasing language in the question stems; skimming and scanning for the relevant parts of the text; reading in detail and comparing the information in the text with the answer choices

Procedure

1. Hand out the four different task variants and ask students to discover the differences. In Example 1, there is one possible correct answer. In Example 2, there are multiple answers but for only one mark. In Example 3, there are multiple answers and one mark for each. Example 4 tests global multiple choice.
2. Hand out the reading text to each student. Ask students to look at the first few words of each paragraph in order to find out in general what the text is about. Give a time limit of 30 seconds for this. Students compare their ideas with their partner. Elicit a few ideas from the class.
3. Explain that to save time on the Reading paper, they must not read every word or try to understand all the text. Elicit what reading skills they should use (skimming and scanning to find the answers, then reading in detail). With multiple-choice questions, they must skim and scan for information relating to the question stem, not the answer choices as these are often distractors.
4. Hand out the sample task. Students skim-read all the question stems quickly. Ask students which question is different and why (question 6 as this requires an overview of the passage and there is no question stem).
5. Ask students to focus on question 1 and to cover up the answer choices. As a class, ask for suggestions about how else ‘global increase’ and ‘has been attributed to’ could be expressed (see key below), using different words.
6. Students now skim and scan the text until they find the part with the answer in it, then read that section carefully.

7. Students now uncover the options A–D. Remind students to read them all and choose which one they feel is the best fit. Emphasise that they must read carefully as there may be two options that are very similar but one is more accurate than the other. There may be just one word that distinguishes the two and makes one a better answer than the other.
8. Ask students to focus on the stems of the rest of the questions (2–5). Individually they try to paraphrase the question stems, then compare with their partner. (See key below for suggestions.)
9. Students now skim and scan the text, looking for the relevant section for each question stem. Once they have found and read the relevant section, they may read the answer choices. As the questions are in the correct order in the text, they should work on one question at a time and find the answer before moving on to the next question.
10. Encourage students to pause before answering question 6 and try to summarise the main point of the text in their heads before reading the answer choices.
11. Hold a whole-class check of answers, comparing paraphrasing where appropriate and referring students to the relevant places in the text as necessary.
12. Recap the stages involved in answering multiple-choice questions by eliciting what students should do and why (e.g. skim read the text to get an idea of content; read the question stems so you know which part of the text to read; think of paraphrasing so that you don't miss the information in the text; scan the text to find which bit to read in detail; read in detail to find which of the answer choices is best).

IELTS General Training Reading Task Type 1 (Multiple Choice) Activity – answer keys

Key to Procedure step 8:

1. The global increase in greenhouse gases has been attributed to
The worldwide rise in greenhouse gases might be due to ...
2. The proportion of all greenhouse gases created by coal is approximately
The amount/percentage of all greenhouse gases emitted from coal burning is ...
3. Current research aims to increase the energy-producing efficiency of coal by
Coal might be made more efficient by ...
4. Compared with ordinary coal, new 'clean' coals may generate power
New 'clean' coals may generate power more ... than ordinary coal
5. To control dust at mine sites, mining companies often use
Dust can be reduced/controlled at mines by ...

Key to Sample Task

1. D // trends in population and lifestyle
2. B // 18 per cent
3. B // developing new gasification techniques
4. A // more cleanly and more effectively
5. D // runoff water containing sediments
6. C // The coal industry and the environment

IELTS General Training Reading Task Type 1 (Multiple Choice) Activity – Student’s Worksheet

Examples of Task Type 1 – Multiple-choice Questions

Example 1

Question 27

Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.

Write your answer in box 27 on your answer sheet.

27 When do the ants in Ant World need to be fed?

- A** daily
- B** every three days
- C** weekly
- D** monthly

Example 2

Question 8

*Choose **TWO** letters, A-F.*

Write your answers in box 8 on your answer sheet.

8 Which **TWO** refreshments are served without charge on the airport coach?

- A** chocolates
- B** coffee
- C** crisps
- D** orange juice
- E** sandwiches
- F** tea

Example 3

Questions 5 – 7

Choose **THREE** letters, **A-F**.

Write the correct letters in boxes 5-7 on your answer sheet.

Which **THREE** of these animals can be seen at Rushton Zoo?

- A tigers
- B baboons
- C leopards
- D raccoons
- E gibbons
- F cheetahs

Example 4

Question 40

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C, or D**.

Write your answer in box 40 on your answer sheet.

Which of the following is the most suitable title for the text on pages 8 and 9?

- A The life cycle of an ant
- B Caring for your Ant World
- C Ant species
- D Insects and their prey

IELTS General Training Reading Task Type 1 (Multiple Choice) Activity – Sample Task

Sample task

Questions 1 – 5

Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.

Write your answers in boxes 1-5 on your answer sheet.

- 1 The global increase in greenhouse gases has been attributed to
- A industrial pollution in developing countries.
 - B coal mining and electricity generation.
 - C reduced rainfall in many parts of the world.
 - D trends in population and lifestyle.
- 2 The proportion of all greenhouse gases created by coal is approximately
- A 14 per cent.
 - B 18 per cent.
 - C 27 per cent.
 - D 90 per cent.
- 3 Current research aims to increase the energy-producing efficiency of coal by
- A burning it at a lower temperature.
 - B developing new gasification techniques.
 - C extracting CO₂ from it.
 - D recycling greenhouse gases.
- 4 Compared with ordinary coal, new, 'clean' coals may generate power
- A more cleanly and more efficiently.
 - B more cleanly but less efficiently.
 - C more cleanly but at higher cost.
 - D more cleanly but much more slowly.
- 5 To control dust at mine sites, mining companies often use
- A chemicals which may be toxic.
 - B topsoil taken from the site before mining.
 - C fresh water from nearby dams.
 - D runoff water containing sediments.

Question 6

Choose the most suitable title for the text from the list below.

Write the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**, in box 6 on your answer sheet.

- A** Pollution control in coal mining
- B** The greenhouse effect
- C** The coal industry and the environment
- D** Sustainable population growth

[Note: This is an extract from a General Training Reading Section 3 text on the subject of coal. The text preceding this extract catalogued the general belief that extracting and using coal is bad for the environment.]

Greenhouse gases arise from a wide range of sources and their increasing concentration is largely related to the compound effects of increased population, improved living standards and changes in lifestyle. From a current base of 5 billion, the United Nations predicts that the global population may stabilise in the twenty-first century between 8 and 14 billion, with more than 90 per cent of the projected increase taking place in the world's developing nations. The associated activities to support that growth, particularly to produce the required energy and food, will cause further increases in greenhouse gas emissions. The challenge, therefore, is to attain a sustainable balance between population, economic growth and the environment.

The major greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane and nitrous oxide. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are the only major contributor to the greenhouse effect that does not occur naturally, coming from such sources as refrigeration, plastics and manufacture. Coal's total contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is thought to be about 18 per cent, with about half of this coming from electricity generation.

The world-wide coal industry allocates extensive resources to researching and developing new technologies and ways of capturing greenhouse gases. Efficiencies are likely to be improved dramatically, and hence CO₂ emissions reduced, through combustion and gasification techniques which are now at pilot and demonstration stages.

Clean coal is another avenue for improving fuel conversion efficiency. Investigations are under way into *superclean* coal (3-5 per cent ash) and *ultraclean* coal (less than 1 per cent ash). Superclean coal has the potential to enhance the combustion efficiency of conventional pulverised fuel power plants. Ultraclean coal will enable coal to be used in advanced power systems such as coal-fired gas turbines which, when operated in combined cycle, have the potential to achieve much greater efficiencies.

Defendants of mining point out that, environmentally, coal mining has two important factors in its favour. It makes only temporary use of the land and produces no toxic chemical wastes. By carefully pre-planning projects, implementing pollution control measures, monitoring the effects of mining and rehabilitating mined areas, the coal industry minimises the impact on the neighbouring community, the immediate environment and long-term land capability.

Dust levels are controlled by spraying roads and stockpiles, and water pollution is controlled by carefully separating clean water runoff from runoff which contains sediments or salt from mine workings. The latter is treated and re-used for dust suppression. Noise is controlled by modifying equipment and by using insulation and sound enclosures around machinery.

Since mining activities represent only a temporary use of the land, extensive rehabilitation measures are adopted to ensure that land capability after mining meets agreed and appropriate standards which, in some cases, are superior to the land's pre-mining condition. Where the mining is underground, the surface area can be simultaneously used for forests, cattle grazing and crop raising, or even reservoirs and urban development, with little or no disruption to the existing land use. In all cases, mining is subject to stringent controls and approvals processes.