



Speed reading

The problems of reading slowly:

- You might not finish all the texts.
- You create extra pressure for yourself.
- You probably waste lots of time on sections of the texts that are not relevant to the answers you need.
- Slow reading does not necessarily make you a more accurate reader.
- You will probably read less in preparation for the test.

Being able to read quickly and accurately gives you many advantages:

- You get the gist of the texts faster, so can orient yourself more quickly.
- You will be more confident that you can read all the texts.
- You will be more confident of having enough time to answer all the questions.
- You have more time to check your answers.
- When preparing for the exam, you can get more practice with a wide variety of texts on different topics.

1 Read this text, paying attention to the 'chunks' or groups of words between the / marks.

One useful technique / to increase your reading speed is this: / when you read a line of text, / which is typically 12–14 words, / don't let your eyes rest on each word. / This is a very inefficient way of reading. / Your brain should have no problem / coping with chunks of language, / four or five words at a time. / This means you will move your eyes / three times per line, not 14. / It does take practice, / but it is a skill you should develop / if you want to get a good result / in the IELTS test. / This type of reading is / much easier when you know collocations and phrases / because in essence you 'chunk' the text / into groups of words that go together.

Another technique you can use to improve your reading speed is to focus your eyes more or less down the middle of the paragraph you are reading. Your brain can actually notice and make sense of the words around your focus. At first, this can seem strange and might not be easy to do, but it gets easier with practice.

2 Try to read the text on the next page about the history of Manchester in no more than one minute by focusing on the words in bold. Then decide whether each of these statements is true (T) or false (F).

- 1 The text is about the geography of Manchester.
- 2 The text is factual rather than opinion-based.
- 3 Manchester was already an important population centre when the Romans arrived.
- 4 The population only started to grow with the Industrial Revolution.
- 5 Without cotton, the history of the city would have been different.
- 6 The only work available in Manchester was in the cotton mills.
- 7 Transport was an important element of the Industrial Revolution.
- 8 The attraction of the work available was it was well paid.
- 9 Families in Ireland sent their children to work in Manchester.
- 10 The city briefly changed its name as a result of its rapid growth.

The History of Manchester

Although the history of **Manchester stretches back** to Roman times, when a small settlement grew up around the **Roman fort known as Mamuciam**, it was not until the later years of the eighteenth century that it became a **population centre** of any great magnitude. Records indicate the population grew from **10,000 to approaching 80,000** in just a few decades, increasing to around 150,000 by **the Industrial Revolution**, which saw its transformation into the country's and the world's **leading industrial metropolis**.

The engine for this change was **cotton, which began to be imported** via the port of Liverpool and which was delivered **by canal to Manchester** in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The rapid and profitable **boom in textile manufacture** saw the streets of Manchester and surrounding towns become **home to huge numbers** of cotton mills, textile print works and engineering workshops. The **expansion of transport links** facilitated this development. In 1824, one of the world's **first public omnibus services** began in Manchester, quickly followed in 1830 by the **opening of the first steam passenger** railway linking Liverpool and Manchester.

Often overlooked, however, was the **'human fuel'** that made all this possible. The promise of work, however poor the pay, however **bad the conditions**, resulted in wave after wave of immigration from the surrounding **countryside and abroad**, the villages and towns of Ireland in particular, where terrible **poverty and the threat of famine** drove whole families to leave everything they knew for a life in **'Cottonopolis'**, as the city was dubbed.

Paraphrase practice

3 Decide if these expressions from the text above are similar in meaning to the expressions in italics or not.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 of any great magnitude | <i>of some size and importance</i> |
| 2 metropolis | <i>capital city</i> |
| 3 the engine for this change | <i>what was mainly responsible for this development</i> |
| 4 rapid ... boom in | <i>quick change in</i> |
| 5 facilitated this | <i>made this possible</i> |
| 6 often overlooked | <i>with a view over a particular place</i> |

Identifying text types

We read different sorts of texts in different ways and for different purposes. For example, we don't read a telephone directory for pleasure, or try to learn facts from an advertisement. Being able to identify what sort of text you are reading helps you in many ways. Understanding the purpose of the text and knowing how the author expects you to react gives you control over how to read it more effectively.

4 Work in pairs. Discuss the differences between the types of text below.

Think about:

- format and layout
 - fact and opinion
 - register and language
 - grammar and vocabulary
 - headings and illustrations
 - length.
- 1 an advertisement / a history book
 - 2 a legal document / a newspaper article
 - 3 a personal story / a book review
 - 4 an information leaflet / an encyclopaedia

Skimming for style

5 Read these extracts (A–H) from different types of text about immigration and match them to the text types in Exercise 4.

A

Immigration derives from the Latin word *migratio* and means the act of a foreigner entering a country in the aim of obtaining the right of permanent residence. Immigration may have economic or political motivation, or be a matter of family reunification or caused by natural disaster. In many cases, immigrants simply desire to improve their circumstances by relocating.

B

Timofey Pnin is surely one of the most memorable of Nabokov's characters. We meet a bald and middle-aged teacher of Russian, and discover that he's completely lost. Much that he encounters in the world around him is a source of confusion, including timetables, the use of articles in English and also – comically – the habits of the Americans who are his neighbours. These are all things that many if not all fellow immigrants are likely to have in common with him. Yet Pnin is a unique character, both in life and in literature.

C

THE PRECISE date of the first human occupation of Australia is likely to remain unknown, but evidence has been uncovered to suggest human presence on the continent for at least 40,000 years. Migration from Europe dates from 1788, when the first transports bearing convicted criminals made the long journey south. This was quickly followed in the early 1790s by the first wave of voluntary – and hence free – immigrants.

D

Immigration control concerns both how and why people from countries outside the UK are allowed to enter the country and how long they are permitted to remain. Furthermore, it governs what they may and may not do while during their stay in the UK; for example, whether they have the right to obtain paid employment, whether relatives may join them here, and whether they have access to the National Health Service and similar state benefits. The paragraphs that follow give advice about all aspects of immigration control.

E

Syed Ahmed, 22, a bright and hard-working young man, is studying at a leading British university to become an accountant. When his application to renew his visa so he could stay here on completion of his three-year degree course was approved, the final decision was not based on the contribution he could make to this country. Instead, the fact he'd taken up playing cricket for a local club since his arrival from Bangladesh turned out to be the basis of the judge's decision.

F

With over 25 years' experience of providing a comprehensive range of immigration and legal services, we offer our clients a friendly and professional service for all immigration needs. Our extensive experience enables us to advise you on the prospects of success and problems to be aware of when submitting an application. Working together, we will use our experience to find a solution that matches your needs wherever possible. As specialists in business immigration, we have developed a range of strategies that can assist organizations in obtaining work permits, visas and rights to remain.

G

I came to this country at the age of 12. When I started high school, I could hardly understand the language. That seems an age ago. Now I'm married, studying at college and would like to become a teacher. Unfortunately, that can't happen as a result of my status as an illegal immigrant. The future now seems so uncertain. But we are good people, we don't have a criminal record, we pay taxes, we go to school, we work hard, and we love living here. I just want a chance to get the job I feel I deserve, and to normalize our situation. Ultimately, we aim to use the years we've been here as justification to become naturalized, so we can be treated as citizens of the country.