

IELTS Reading (General Training): Strategies & Skills

This lesson introduces the General Training Reading test format, teaches strategies for reading questions first and matching information across multiple short texts, covers everyday vocabulary found in GT texts, and gives students practice with a Section 1-style matching and short-answer task.

Target Band:	5.0-7.0	Duration:	60 minutes
Test Module:	General Training	Format:	Instructor-led with slides

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- * Understand the General Training Reading test format and the three section types
- * Apply a questions-first strategy to find answers efficiently in short texts
- * Match information across multiple texts in Section 1
- * Recognise everyday and workplace vocabulary commonly used in GT texts

Materials

- * Slide deck (IELTS_Reading_GT_Strategies_and_Skills.pptx)
- * Two short texts (ads, notices, or announcements) with 4-5 matching/short-answer questions
- * Timer
- * Whiteboard / shared screen

Lesson Procedure

Phase 1: Warm-Up & Test Overview

Time: 0:00-0:10 | **Duration:** 10 min | **Slides:** 1-3

- * Display title slide. Ask: *"Where do you read English in daily life? Signs? Menus? Emails?"*
 - * Show Slide 2 (Learning Objectives). Frame: *"GT Reading tests your ability to understand real-world English -- the kind you'll encounter every day in an English-speaking country."*
 - * Show Slide 3 (Test at a Glance). Walk through the three sections: everyday factual texts, work-related texts, longer general interest text.
 - * Emphasise the difference from Academic: *"You'll read ads, notices, job descriptions, and handbooks -- not journal articles."*
 - * Key facts: 60 minutes, 40 questions, no transfer time.
- > *Students often underestimate GT Reading because the texts seem simpler. The challenge is speed and detail, not complexity.*
- > *If students are preparing for both Academic and GT, clarify that the Reading module is the main difference between the two tests.*

Phase 2: Strategy 1: Read the Questions First

Time: 0:10-0:18 | **Duration:** 8 min | **Slides:** 4

- * Show Slide 4. Explain: *"In GT, texts are short. If you read the questions first, you know exactly what to look for."*
 - * Walk through the three steps: read questions, underline keywords, scan the text for those keywords.
 - * Demo: Write a sample question on the board. Then show a short text. Ask students to find the answer by scanning for the keyword.
 - * **Pair drill (3 minutes):** Give each pair a different question and a short text. They find the answer using the questions-first approach.
 - * Key message: *"Questions first saves time. Don't read the whole text and then go to the questions."*
- > *This strategy is especially effective for GT Section 1, where texts are very short (notices, ads).*
- > *For Academic Reading students in the same class, note that this strategy works less well for longer passages where skimming is more important.*

Phase 3: Strategy 2: Matching Information to Text

Time: 0:18-0:26 | **Duration:** 8 min | **Slides:** 5

- * Show Slide 5. Explain the GT Section 1 challenge: multiple short texts, questions that could apply to any of them.
- * Teach the approach: label each text (A, B, C), then read each question and check which text contains the answer.
- * **Quick exercise (4 minutes):** Project three short texts (a library notice, a gym ad, a restaurant menu). Ask 3 matching questions. Students identify which text contains the answer.
- * Key message: *"Don't read all three texts first. Read the question, then scan each text in order until you find the match."*
- > Section 1 matching is where many GT students lose time by reading everything instead of scanning strategically.
- > Keep the practice texts very short (3-5 lines each) to build confidence with the technique.

Phase 4: Common Question Types

Time: 0:26-0:33 | **Duration:** 7 min | **Slides:** 6

- * Show Slide 6. Walk through the five GT question types with tips.
- * Emphasise that T/F/NG works the same way as in Academic: only use the text.
- * For Matching Information: *"Read the question, then check each text. Don't guess based on the topic."*
- * For Short Answer: *"Check the word limit. If it says 'no more than three words,' four words = zero marks."*
- * Ask: *"Which of these have you seen before?"*
- > GT shares many question types with Academic. Students who have practised Academic Reading will recognise these.

Phase 5: Everyday Vocabulary

Time: 0:33-0:40 | **Duration:** 7 min | **Slides:** 7

- * Show Slide 7 (two columns: Notices/Ads and Workplace Texts). Walk through each term.
- * For each term, give a brief example in context: *"'Valid until' -- a coupon might say 'valid until 30 June.' After that date, you can't use it."*
- * **Matching drill (3 minutes):** Write 5 terms on one side of the board and 5 definitions on the other. Students match them.
- * Key message: *"GT texts use practical English. If you know these phrases, you'll understand the texts much faster."*
- > This vocabulary is often overlooked in IELTS prep but is critical for GT Reading.
- > Vietnamese students may be unfamiliar with workplace terms like 'probationary period' or 'grievance procedure.' Spend extra time on these.

Phase 6: Before & After

Time: 0:40-0:43 | **Duration:** 3 min | **Slides:** 8

- * Show Slide 8. Read the BEFORE scenario: student misreads an ad's conditions and gets the answer wrong.
- * Read the AFTER scenario: student reads the small print carefully and answers correctly.
- * Key message: *"GT texts often have conditions, exceptions, and fine print. Always check for words like 'except,' 'excludes,' 'only,' and 'unless.'"*
- > Quick visual reinforcement before the practice activity.

Phase 7: Practice Activity

Time: 0:43-0:55 | **Duration:** 12 min | **Slides:** 9

- * Show Slide 9. Read the instructions.
- * **Step 1 -- Read questions (2 minutes):** Students read the 4 questions and underline keywords.
- * **Step 2 -- Read texts and answer (7 minutes):** Students read the two notices and answer the questions. Remind them to use the questions-first approach.
- * **Step 3 -- Compare (3 minutes):** Students compare answers with a partner. They must point to the specific sentence that contains each answer.
- * Class debrief: Go through correct answers. For any errors, ask: *"What keyword should you have scanned for?"*
- > Prepare two short notices (e.g., a library notice and a community pool announcement) with 4 short-answer or matching questions.
- > Include at least one question that requires reading a condition carefully (e.g., 'members only' or 'except holidays').

Phase 8: Wrap-Up & Key Takeaways

Time: 0:55-1:00 | **Duration:** 5 min | **Slides:** 10

- * Show Slide 10. Read each takeaway.
- * *"What do we do first?"* -> Read the questions. *"How do we handle multiple texts?"* -> Label them and scan each one. *"What tricky words do we watch for?"* -> Except, excludes, only, unless.
- * Close: *"GT Reading is about finding practical information quickly. These strategies work in real life too -- every time you read a sign, a menu, or a contract."*
- > Keep this tight.

Differentiation Notes

For students targeting Band 6.5-7.0: Add a Section 3 reading task -- a 500-word general interest passage with 3 T/F/NG questions. This mirrors the harder end of the GT test and requires the same analytical skills as Academic Reading.

For students at Band 5.0-5.5: Pre-teach the everyday vocabulary from Slide 7 before the practice activity. Provide a glossary handout with definitions. During the practice, allow students to work in pairs from the start rather than individually. Focus assessment on whether they can locate information in the correct text, not on answer phrasing.

Assessment

Formative assessment throughout. Evaluate against:

- * **Questions-first approach:** Does the student read questions before the text and underline keywords?
- * **Text matching:** Can the student identify which of multiple short texts contains the answer to a specific question?
- * **Detail reading:** Does the student notice conditions, exceptions, and fine print in notices and advertisements?
- * **Vocabulary recognition:** Can the student understand everyday and workplace vocabulary commonly found in GT texts?