# **PTE** ACADEMIC<sup>™</sup>

# Test Tips

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# **Important Test Tips**



### Do

- **Use correct punctuation** for writing tasks: full stops, capital letters, commas, etc.
- **Answer the question.** If the question asks you to write or speak about sport, write or speak about 'sport' NOT 'science'.
- **Keep** strictly **within the word limit** given for writing tasks.
- Respond quickly and keep speaking during speaking tasks. The microphone will close after 3 seconds of silence and stop recording.

### Don't

- Write ENTIRELY in capital letters. Only use capitals when needed: at the beginning of sentences, names, etc.
- Click Next (N) before you have completed the task and are ready to move on.





# **Introduction to Test Tips**

This resource provides a wealth of test tips for anyone preparing for PTE Academic. You can use the information to help develop useful strategies to answer the 20 item types in PTE Academic.

Two tips are included for most item types and they are presented in the order in which they appear in the test as follows:

	- Read aloud
Speaking	- Repeat sentence
	- Describe image
	- Re-tell lecture
	- Answer short question
Muitin a	- Summarize written text
Writing	- Write essay
	- Multiple choice, choose single answer
	- Multiple choice, choose multiple answers
Reading	- Re-order paragraphs
	- Reading: Fill in the blanks
	- Reading & writing: Fill in the blanks
	- Summarize spoken text
	- Multiple choice, choose multiple answers
	- Fill in the blanks
Listoping	- Highlight correct summary
Listening	- Multiple choice, choose single answer
	- Select missing word
	- Highlight incorrect words
	- Write from dictation





## **SPEAKING: Read aloud**



### Use punctuation to help you decide where to pause when you read

You have 30-40 seconds to look at the text before the microphone opens, so use this time to **break the text up into meaningful chunks, using the punctuation** as a guide. This will show you the places where you can **make a tiny pause and alter your intonation** – going up when you begin reading a chunk and falling a little when you end a chunk.

Using appropriate pausing helps you to read more fluently and give the full meaning of the text. This will improve your score. Look at where the pauses / are indicated in the example:

Photography's gaze widened during the early years of the twentieth century / and, / as the snapshot camera became increasingly popular, / the making of photographs became increasingly available / to a wide cross-section of the public. / The British people grew accustomed to, / and were hungry for, / the photographic image.

### Stress the words that carry important information

When you read the text, **stress the words** that help to convey meaning, by reading them in a slightly louder voice and adding emphasis to key syllables, e.g., de<u>ve</u>lopment. Also **use rising and falling intonation patterns** to show how the ideas are linked or are coming to an end. Look at the patterns in this text; the stressed words are **underlined**, and the rising and falling intonation is marked by up  $\uparrow$  and down  $\checkmark$  arrows:





### **SPEAKING: Repeat sentence**

### Listen to the phrasing of the sentence as it is read aloud

You will be scored on the correct word sequences that you produce for this item type, so **the more phrases you understand**, **the better your reproduction of the sentence will be**. For example, there are three phrases in this sentence, separated by /, and each one carries a separate message that has its own meaning:

Next week's tutorial / on Tuesday / has been cancelled.

If you listen for meaningful phrases in the sentence, you will have a better chance of repeating what you hear accurately.

#### Copy the stress and intonation patterns of the sentence you hear

Make a mental note of the way the speaker uses stress and intonation on the recording. These patterns help to convey the meaning. Speak calmly and clearly, copying this stress and intonation. For example, look at the pattern in the example: the stressed words or syllables are <u>underlined</u>, and the falling intonation is marked by down  $\psi$  arrows:

I'm going to attend the briefing  $\psi$  for students  $\psi$ .

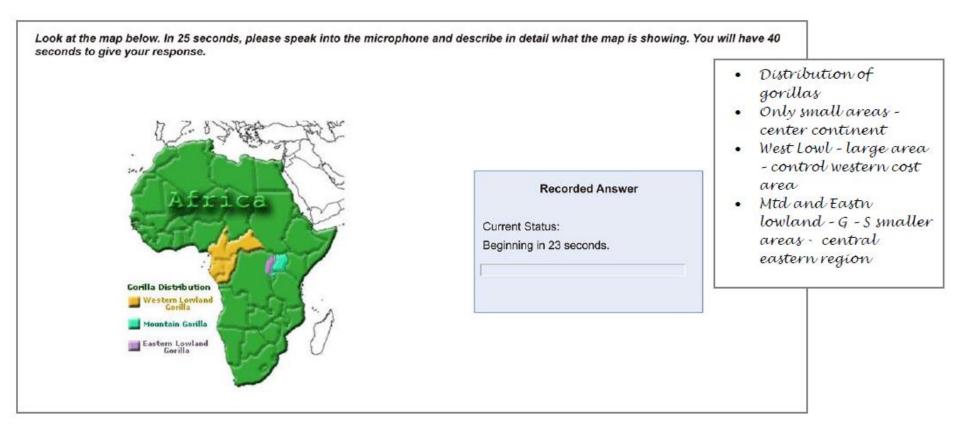


# **SPEAKING: Describe image**

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### Focus on the main information in the image

When you look at the image ask yourself "What is the main idea being shown by the image?" and "What are the details relating to the main ideas?". Use your erasable noteboard booklet to **note down key ideas and phrases that relate to the main information and the explanatory details**. These can be put into sentences when you start to speak:



# **SPEAKING: Describe image**

### Organize your description of the image

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If you organize what you say, you will get a better score. This is because a well-organized answer is more likely to cover the main information as well as the additional details, and also talk about implications or conclusions based on the information. Look at how this sample description is organized:



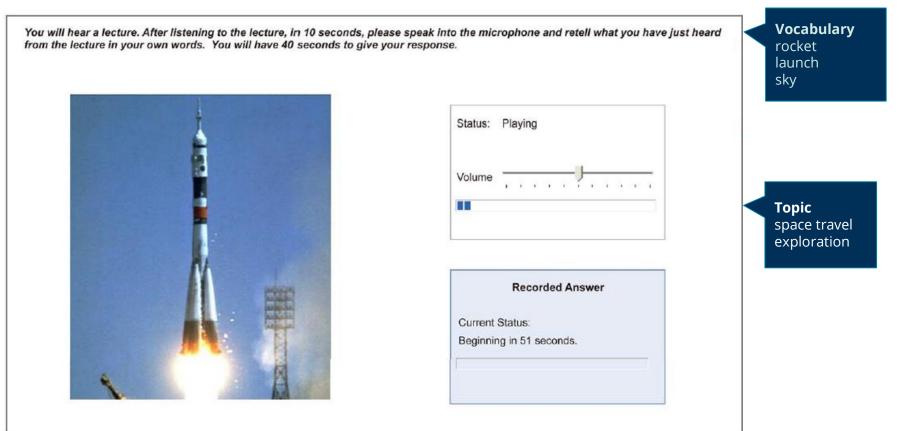


## **SPEAKING: Re-tell lecture**

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### Make good use of the image to predict the topic of the lecture

You have 3 seconds before you listen to the recording to quickly look at the image on the screen. Use this time **to think about the vocabulary you might hear.** This will give you an idea of the topic of the lecture and **help you predict what you will hear** when the recording begins:





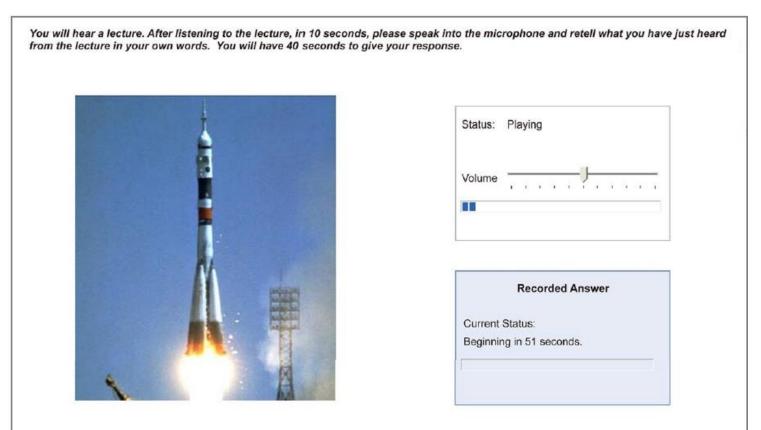
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## **SPEAKING: Re-tell lecture**

### Make good use of the 40 seconds speaking time



You only have 40 seconds to speak and make sure that you **include all the main points** of the lecture. If you repeat ideas, correct yourself or hesitate, you will use up valuable time and lose score points. So **keep talking and ignore any mistakes that you make**.





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# **SPEAKING:** Answer short question

### Do not pause for too long when you answer the question

You hear a short question and then the recording status box will change to recording.

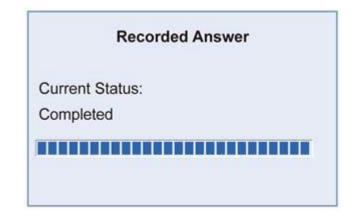
Start your answer as soon as this happens. If you wait for more than 3 seconds, recording will stop and the item status will change to 'completed', which means that you have lost your chance to give your answer.

### When you have started talking, don't stop for more than a second or two until you have finished. If you stop for 3 seconds whilst speaking, the recording status will change to 'completed' even if you haven't finished, and you won't be able to continue answering.

If the status changes to 'completed', you have to click 'Next' to move on to the next item. This also applies to speaking item types Read aloud, Repeat sentence, Describe image and Re-tell lecture.

	Recorded Answer
Current	Status:
Recordi	ıg
Recordi	lg

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# **SPEAKING: Answer short question**



#### Do not try to give a long answer

The instructions for this item type tell you how to answer the question:

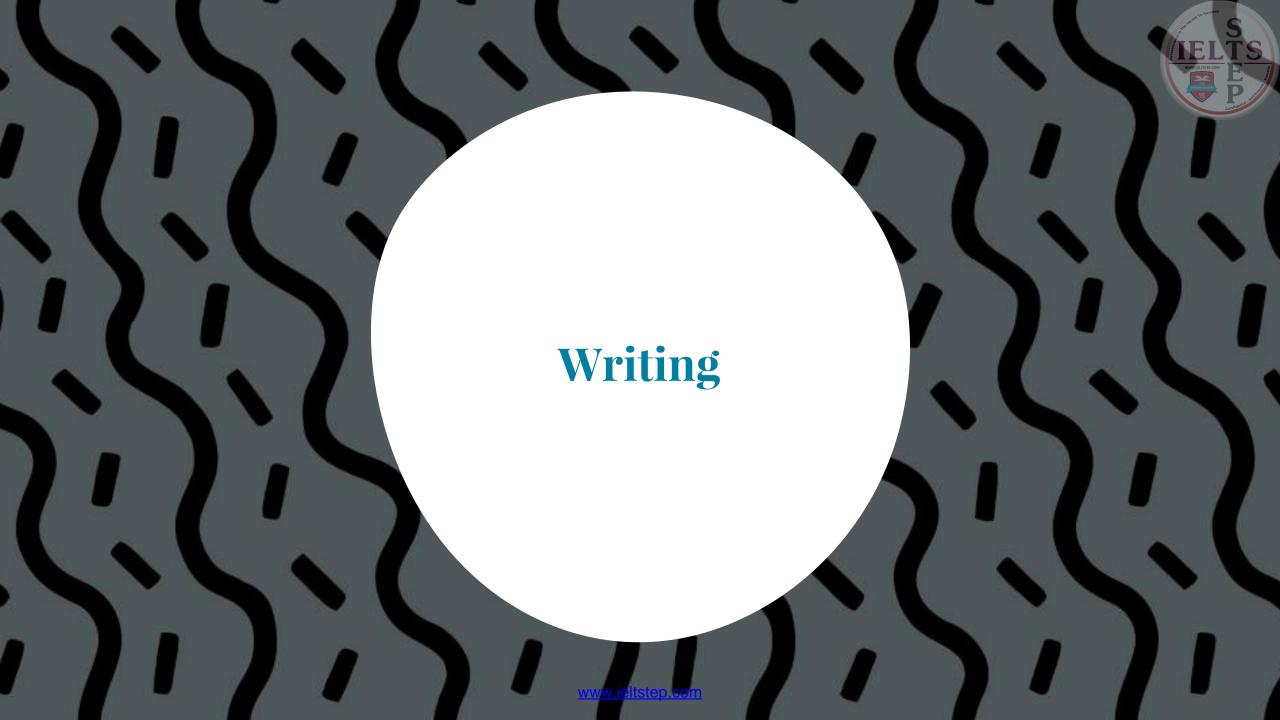
You will hear a question. Please give a simple and short answer. Often just one or a few words is enough.

There is no point in saying more than you need to say. **Marks are awarded for a short, accurate answer.** There are no extra marks for additional words.

For example, for this question: 'What type of periodical is published on a daily basis?', both these answers would score the same marks:

newspapers It's newspapers that are published every day.





# WRITING: Summarize written text

### Make sure your response is in the correct form

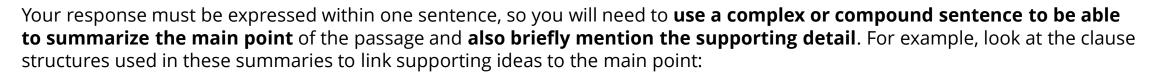
When you have written your response, check to make sure that it is **only one sentence**, with a capital letter at the beginning and only one full stop at the end.

**Your response must be between 5 and 75 words so check the word count** using the 'Total Word Count' counter below the response box. If you write fewer than five words or more than 75 words, your response will not be scored:

		~
Cut	Сору	Paste
Total Word Count: 0		
<b>Check the word count</b> after you have typed in your response		

# **WRITING: Summarize written text**

### Practice using compound and complex sentences



Legal rights and safeguards lead to long-lived investments by individuals, which have a far higher impact on raising living standards of countries than these countries' natural resources.

Just-in-time production relates goods produced to demand for goods and reduces the amount of wasted time, costs and materials.

> **Conjunction** 'and' joins two simple sentences together to produce a compound

**Pronoun** 'which' Introduces a relative clause, creating a complex sentence

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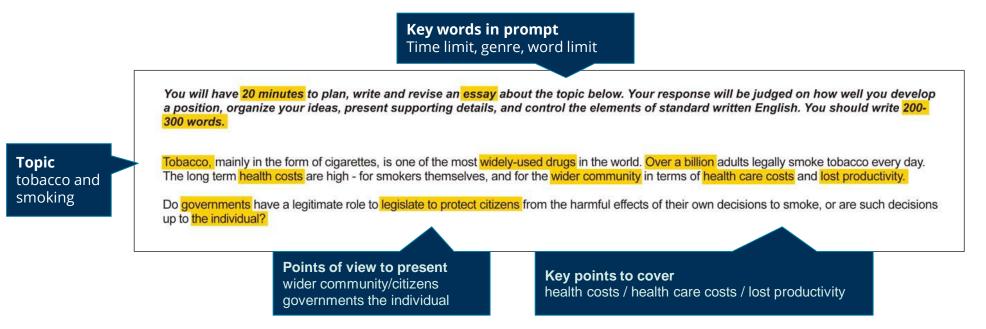


### **WRITING: Write essay**

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### Start by analyzing the task

Before you write anything, **note key words** in the prompt. **Find out the topic, what key points you should focus on** to answer the question **and any points of view to present** and discuss:



Analyzing these four areas will help you to approach the task, structure your essay and decide on your main ideas.

The content of your answer is very important. **If you do not write about the topic in the prompt, you will receive no score points** at all for this item type.



## **WRITING: Write essay**



#### Analyze the essay prompt so you know how to answer

Essay prompts can be written in a number of ways. For example, you may need to discuss whether you agree or disagree with a statement:

"Education is a critical element of the prosperity of any nation. The more educated the people in a country are, the more successful their nation becomes." Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with this statement. Support your point of view with reasons and/or examples from your own experience or observations.

You may have to consider how different groups of people might feel about a particular situation:

Tobacco, mainly in the form of cigarettes, is one of the most widely-used drugs in the world. Over a billion adults legally smoke tobacco every day. The long term health costs are high - for smokers themselves, and for the wider community in terms of health care costs and lost productivity.

Do governments have a legitimate role to legislate to protect citizens from the harmful effects of their own decisions to smoke, or are such decisions up to the individual?

You may need to **argue for and against** an opinion or **discuss advantages and disadvantages** of a situation. If there is a statement followed by a question, read the question very carefully and note key words. Make sure you know what to do.



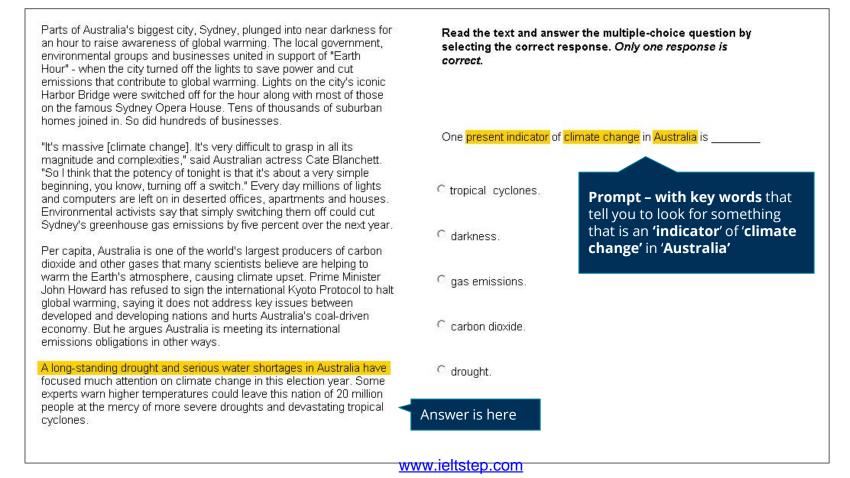


# **READING: Multiple choice, choose single answer**



### Note the key words in the prompt before you read the text

The prompt for this item type may be a question or a sentence that you have to complete. Whatever type of prompt you get, read it carefully because it will tell you what information you need to find in the text. If you focus on the key words in the prompt, you will find the answer more quickly and spend less time reading the text.

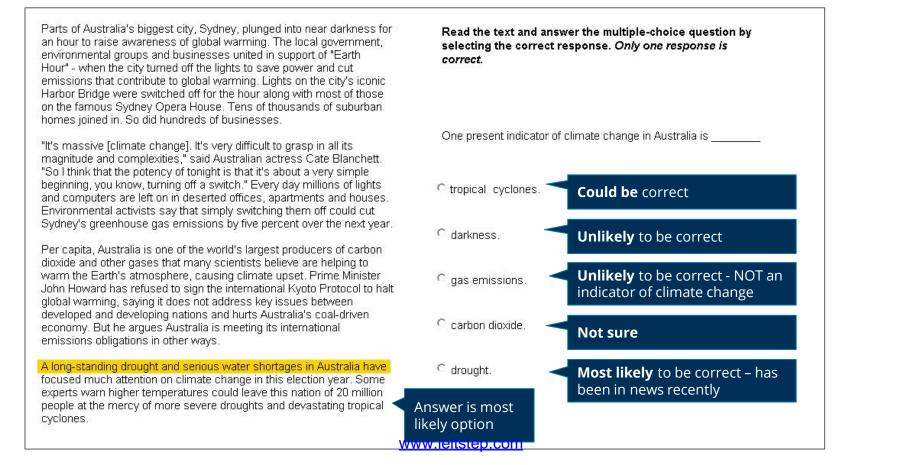


#### Reading 20

# **READING: Multiple choice, choose single answer**

#### **Evaluate the response options**

The response options may be words, phrases or sentences. Use your own knowledge to **decide whether any of them are unlikely to be correct, or likely to be correct.** You can do this before you read the text. If you read the text but cannot answer the question, **choose the option that you think is most likely to be correct.** This strategy also applies to multiple-choice questions with more than one answer.



# **READING: Multiple choice, choose multiple answers**

#### Make sure you know how the task is scored

Read the instructions carefully. Remember that **more than one option is correct** in this type of multiple choice item. You will score marks for any correct options but **you will lose score points for any incorrect options**. These include: options that you have clicked on as correct but which are wrong. If you click on all the options, because you do not know the answer, you will lose score points. This applies to *Multiple choice, choose multiple answers* item types for reading and listening.

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

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.

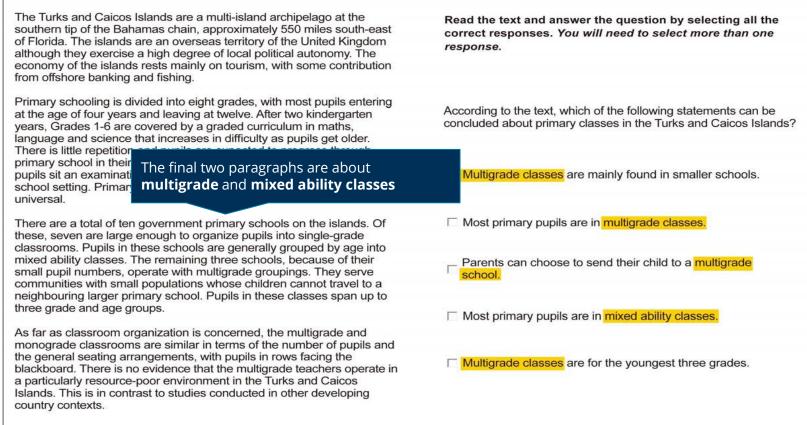


# **READING: Multiple choice, choose multiple answers**

#### Note any repeated words in the options

Quickly read through the response options and **note any words that are repeated**, particularly adjectives (e.g., 'multigrade') or nouns (e.g., 'classes'). If the same noun phrase occurs in a lot of the options, the answer is probably related to this phrase.

Scan the text for the repeated words. Then read around them to find the answer more quickly:



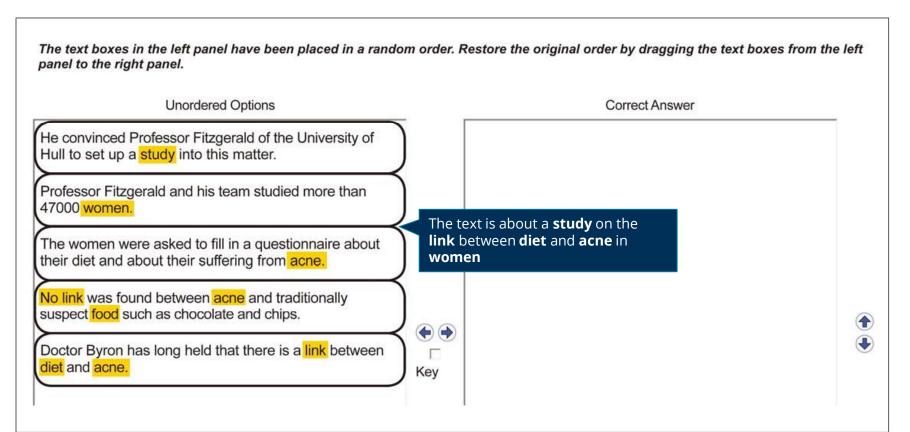
# **READING: Re-order paragraphs**



### Read all the text boxes quickly before you start re-ordering them

Read the text boxes in order to **understand the main idea** of each one. You can do this **by noting the key words**.

Next, **use the key words to form an overall idea of what the original text is about.** This will help you find the logical order for the ideas in the text boxes:





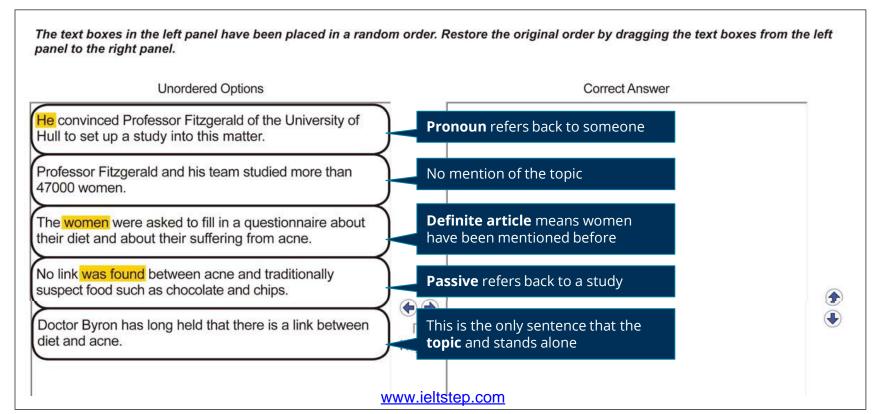
# **READING: Re-order paragraphs**

### Find the topic sentence first

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Every well-written paragraph has a topic sentence. It is usually a clear statement about the topic, and all the other sentences are related in some way to this sentence.

The topic sentence can stand alone; it does not begin with a linker or a pronoun that refers back to something or someone (e.g., 'he' or 'this'), nor does it does refer back to information or actions previously mentioned through the use of things like passive verb tenses ('*No link was found*'):



## **READING: Fill in the blanks**

### Think about words that you often see or hear together

Remember that some words often go together to form a familiar phrase. This is called 'collocation'. **Using collocation can help you recognize the correct word for each blank.** For example, the phrase 'the general public' is a common collocation, so you can quickly see that 'public' might be a good choice for the first blank in the sentence below:

Second, they connect scientists to the general

public	formal	look	view	world
cite	prescribed	serving		

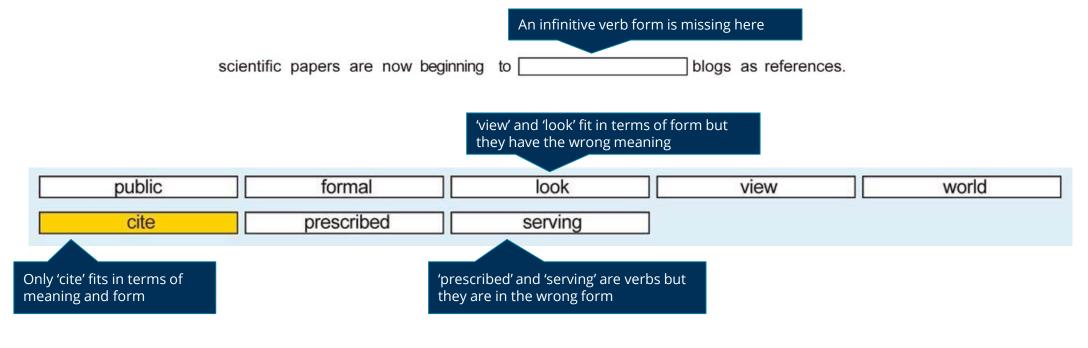


## **READING: Fill in the blanks**

### Use your knowledge of grammar to help you select the correct word

Read around the blank in the text and **decide what part of speech the missing word is**. In the example below, 'beginning to' tells you that an infinitive verb form is missing 'to + verb'. Next look at the answer options provided and **rule out any words that are not the right part of speech**, e.g., 'world' is a noun and 'formal' is an adjective. Also rule out any verbs that are not in the infinitive form.

Finally, **choose from the words that are left, the one that has the correct meaning**: 'view' and 'look' mean 'see', but we 'quote' or 'cite' references, so only 'cite' fits the blank:





# **READING & WRITING: Fill in the blanks**

### Skim for overall meaning to help you choose the correct word

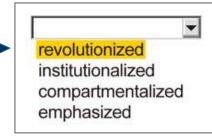
Understanding the meaning of the whole text helps you choose the correct word for each blank. For example, if you **skim the passage** below, you will **find key ideas and words which point to a main topic** of 'change'.

When you click on the drop down arrows, you may **find options that are also related to the main topic**. You can then check grammar and overall meaning to see whether the words fit the blanks:

A number of global forces have gradually, sometimes almost clandestinely, altered the world as we know it. The most visible to			
most of us has been the increasing	y life by cell phones, personal computers, e-mail. BlackBerries,		
and the Internet. The exploration after World War II of the electronic	of silicon led to the development of the		
microprocessor, and when fiber optics combined with lasers and s	atellites communication capacities,		
people from Pekin, Illinois, to Peking, China, saw their lives <mark>change</mark>	A large percentage of the world's population gained		



'revolutionized' is a past participle that means improved though 'complete change'





# **READING & WRITING: Fill in the blanks**

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### Read before and after the blank to help you identify the correct word

The choices in the drop-down menus may look quite similar but will have different meanings and usage. **Looking at the surrounding context will help you choose the appropriate word**. In the example below, only 'access' fits in the phrase 'gained ...... to technologies'; **pick words that match the meaning** (gain access) **and grammar** ('access <u>to</u>'). Reading either side of the blank will help you narrow down the choices you have to make:

people from Pekin, Illinois, to Peking, China, saw their lives change. A large percentage of the world's population gained to technologies that I, in setting out on my long career in 1948, could not have imagined, except in the context of science fiction.

access	-
excess	
recess	
access	
egress	
5	





# **LISTENING: Summarize spoken text**



### Make sure you summarize the main point and include the supporting points

When you take notes using an erasable noteboard booklet, whilst you listen to the recording, make sure you note down the supporting points as well as the main idea. From your notes, you can then **summarize the main point and refer briefly to the essential supporting points**, which will gain you good marks for content.

You will hear a short lecture. Write a summary for a fellow student who was not present at the lecture. You should write 50-70 words.

You have 10 minutes to finish this task. Your response will be judged on the quality of your writing and on how well your response presents the key points presented in the lecture.

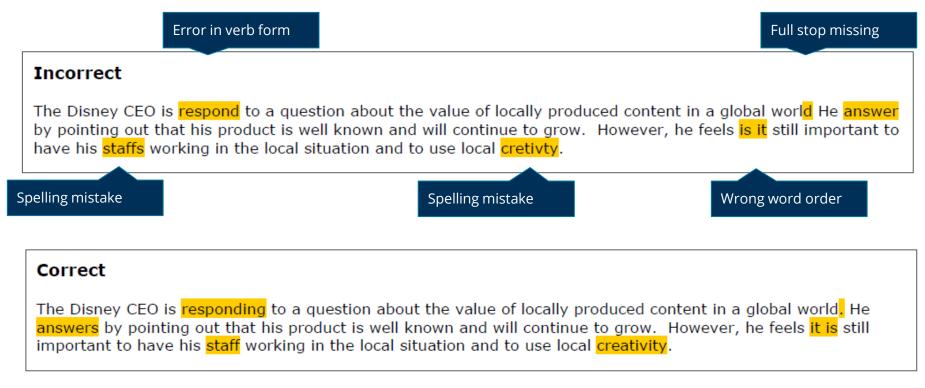


# **LISTENING: Summarize spoken text**

### Remember to check grammar, spelling and punctuation

In your 50-70 word summary, you will be scored on the enabling skills of grammar, spelling and vocabulary. So leave yourself 1-2 minutes after you have written your summary to **check your sentences for things like subject/verb agreement, tenses and word order**.

Use grammatical structures that you can use confidently, and words that you are sure you have spelled correctly. Finally, **check your punctuation**: check full stops and commas, and make sure you have begun each sentence with a capital letter:





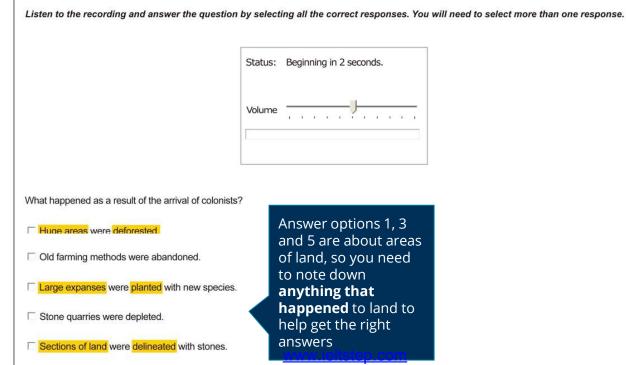
# **LISTENING: Multiple choice, choose multiple answers**



### Take notes of the main points and supporting details

In the 7 seconds before the recording begins, read the question and get ready to **take notes to help you answer**. Taking notes is likely to be more helpful than trying to select options while you listen because you may not hear the information in exactly the same order as the options.

**Note down details** (e.g., times, places, things that happened) **as well as the main points**, because you will need to select more than one option:





# **LISTENING: Multiple choice, choose multiple answers**



### Select for meaning, not just to match the words you hear

**Select the options that best match the meaning of what you have heard**. Don't just choose an option because it has the same words or phrases as the recording. Several options may use words from the recording but may not match the meaning of what you have heard.

Which of the following most closely represent the ideas expressed by the speaker?

Even if consciousness could be explained, scientists are unlikely to ever be able to build an artificial entity with consciousness.

- Consciousness can already be clearly explained in scientific terms.
- For the most part humans do not think about the fact that they are conscious beings.
- Thinking about the "conflict" between the part of the self which is acting and the part of the self which is conscious raises intriguing questions.
- U We should never take it for granted that we are seeing what we are seeing.
- The structure of the human nervous system is unusual.



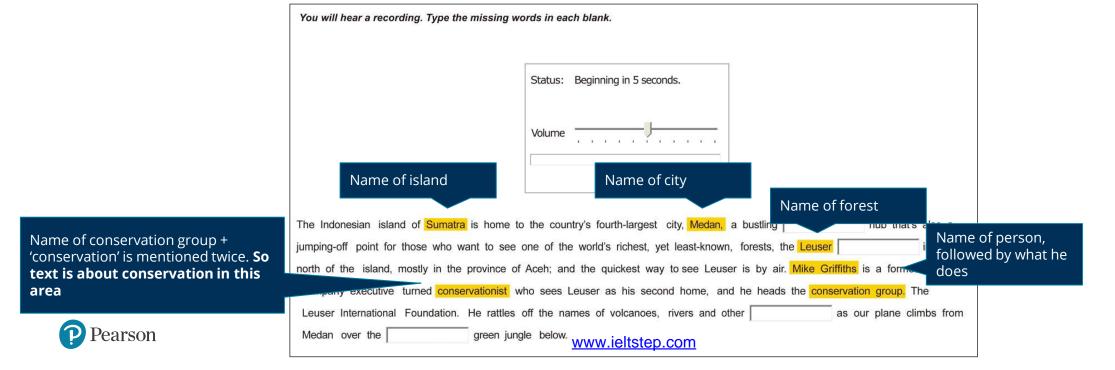
# **LISTENING: Fill in the blanks**

### Skim the text before the recording begins

In the 7 seconds before the recording begins, you only have time to skim the text. As you do this, ignore the gaps and try to get an overall idea of what the text is about. This will help you recognize the words that fit the gaps, as you hear them.

### Some of the things you can look for:

- **Proper nouns** (that begin with a capital letter). They can give you information about people and what they do (e.g., 'Mike Griffiths ... conservationist'), places (e.g., 'Indonesian island of Sumatra') and organizations (e.g., 'conservation group The Leuser International Foundation'). (Don't worry if you don't know where or who they are).
- Nouns that are repeated in the text. They may help you decide on the topic.





## **LISTENING: Fill in the blanks**



### As you listen, write the words you hear for the blanks on your 'erasable noteboard booklet'

The recording is at normal speed and is only played once. When you are listening, you do not have time to think about how to spell the missing words. Use your erasable noteboard booklet to **write down what you think you hear**:

After the recording has finished, you can read through the text, and **use your notes to decide on the words that are missing** and how they are spelled. Then type them into the gaps:

Remember, the next item does not start until you click Next (N) at the bottom of the screen, so you have a little time to think about your answers.



# **LISTENING: Highlight correct summary**

#### Take notes and match them to the correct summary

Don't read the options before or while you are listening to the recording as there is too much to read, and this will distract you. Instead, **note down the key ideas** on your erasable noteboard booklet as you listen (e.g., key words and phrases, numbers, names and dates and any information that is highlighted by the speaker through stress and intonation). Then read the options and **match the option that is closest in detail to your notes**:

You will hear a recording. Click on the paragraph that best relates to the recording.		nor	models of motivation normal people two models	
	Status: Playing	ma	ún focus - meostatic one	
	Volume			
There have been previous lectures in this series covering aspects of abnormal behaviour. This lecture covers the models of motivation • applied to normal people. Although there are numerous models of human motivation, two models will be described and compared: the homeostatic model and Maslow's model, with the main focus on the homeostatic model.				
	rmal people and will look at many different models of motivation motivation of normal people. Students need to have attended pro- cople.			
The lecture will pay equal attention to two well-known models of motivation: Maslow's model and the homeostatic model. These models or are very similar both starting with basic needs like the need for food. The lecture will emphasise the importance of how the question Why?' is at the heart of all studies of motivation.				
	d scientifically describe the hunger drive. In particular, the home by this model is based on our perception of ourselves as individu motivation.			
	www.jolteton.com		-	



# LISTENING: Multiple choice, choose single answer

### Focus on the kind of information you need

For listening multiple-choice questions, **the main part of the question tells you what to listen for**. Being aware of the focus of the question will help guide your listening.

For example, it will tell you whether you are listening for **the main idea**: What was the main cause of the company's collapse?

Or listening for some **supporting information or details**: What aspect of past transport policy does the speaker mention?

Or listening for an **inference** drawn by the speaker: What does the speaker suggest that the factory may have to do?

Or listening for **the speaker's purpose**: Why does the speaker talk about the fall in car ownership?

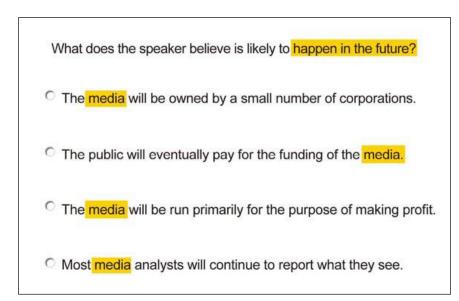


# LISTENING: Multiple choice, choose single answer

### Skim the question and answer options before you listen to understand the topic

### In the 5 seconds before the recording begins, **quickly read the question and answer options to make sure you understand the topic**.

For example, in the sample, the question shows that the speaker will talk about the future, and the options show you they all include the word 'media'. So you are listening to hear what the speaker thinks will happen to the media in the future.



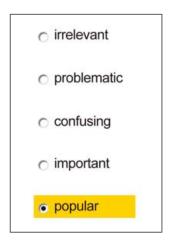


# **LISTENING: Select missing word**

### Know what to do if you change your mind about the answer

For each item in this task, there are three to five response options but only ONE option is correct. At the end of the recording, click on the option you think is correct.

The next recording does not begin playing until you click 'Next'. So you have a little time to think about your answer. **If you want** to change your answer, click on it again to 'de-select' it. Then click on the option you think is correct.





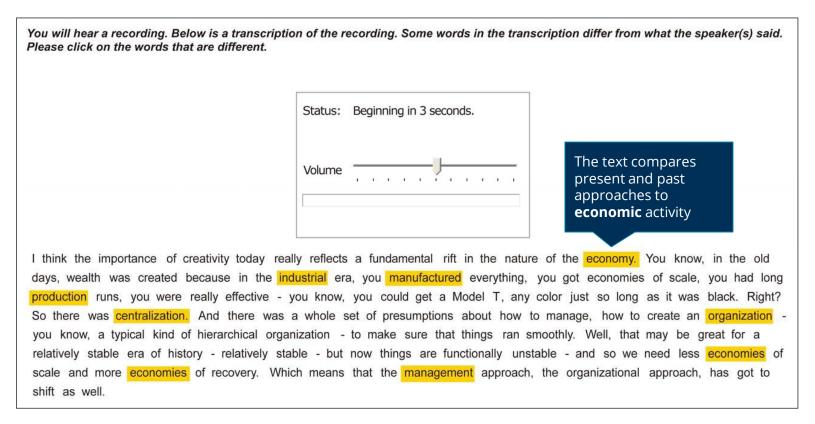
# **LISTENING: Highlight incorrect words**



### Quickly read the transcription before you listen to focus on key words

In the 10 seconds before the recording begins, you cannot read word-for-word, but you can **skim the transcription**.

Focus on the words that give you information: e.g., nouns ('economy'), adjectives ('industrial') and verbs ('manufactured'). **Decide** what the general topic is. This will help you pick out words that do not fit this topic area, as you read and listen:





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# **LISTENING: Highlight incorrect words**



### Follow the text with the cursor as you listen

In this item type, you have to **select the wrong words as the text is read**. Don't try to make notes as you listen.

Move the cursor along the screen as the words are spoken, and click on any words that sound different from the words on the screen:

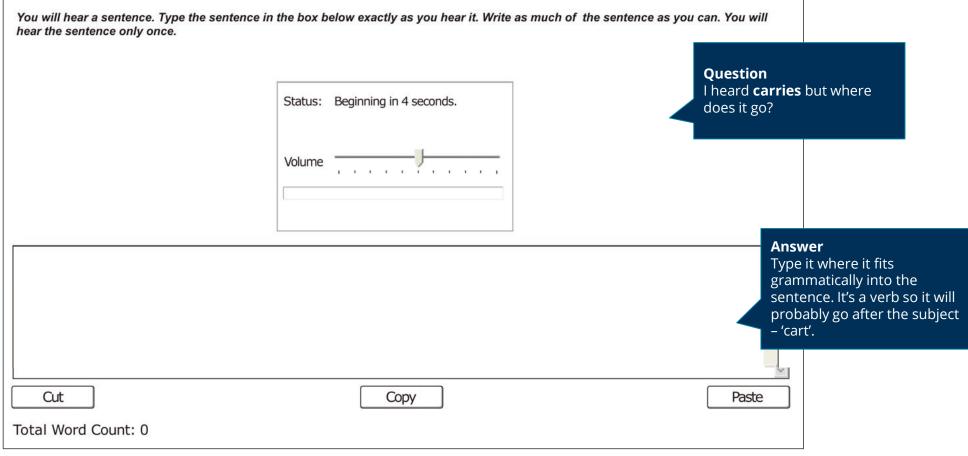
You will hear a recording. Below is a transcrip Please click on the words that are different.	tion of the recording. Some words in the transc	ription differ from what the speaker(s) said.
	Status: Playing	
	Volume	When explorer Roald Amundsen set out to find the Northwest <b>Passage</b> , his official mission was scientific – a search for the magnetic <b>north</b> pole.
magnetic <mark>south</mark> pole. But as historian Rolar to colonize the unknown. "One of the reas	find the Northwest <mark>Pasture,</mark> his official mission and Huntford describes, the real drive behind ons that Amundsen would have been challer ical goals accomplished. What you have to	the expedition came from a deep desire nged by the Northwest Passage is simply



# **LISTENING: Write from dictation**

### Type as many correct words as you can remember into the response box in the correct order

You will score points for every correct word that you write in the response box. If you can remember a word but you are not sure where it goes in the sentence, **use your knowledge of English grammar to help you decide**:







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