IELTS reading

Reading tips

- **Beat the fear – read as much as possible** If you read enough "native English" before the exam, you will become more and more confident in looking at texts where you don't understand every word.

- **Time management – experiment to see what works.**

Strategy :

- how long you look at the text before answering questions

- how long you spend on each question

- how long you spend on each group of questions

- how long you spend on each text

- do you leave time at the end to go back at look at

Skimming and scanning

- Skimming - a technique used in previewing or for getting an overview of a text; the eyes 'skim' rapidly over the page, just picking out the main ideas and topics.

- Scanning also involves rapid movement through a text, but looking for specific key information rather than the gist.

Reading tips

- **Learn the exam – know the different types of questions**

- **Train yourself, don't test yourself**

- **The questions or the text – which do you read first**

Reading skills

- A passage on the IELTS is given to you; you did not choose to read it.

- There are few clues.
  (make some predictions about the passage).
  What is the passage about?
  What is the main idea?
  Who are the characters?
  When are things taking place?
  Where is it happening?
  Why is it important?

Reading skills – dealing with unknown words

- **Does it start with a capital letter or is it in *italics*?**

- a capital letter – (probably) a proper name.

- (In this case, you should waste no time in trying to understand what the word means)

- in *italics* - almost certainly a scientific/technical term that you do not need to understand.

- The tulip was introduced to Europe in the mid-16th century from the Ottoman Empire, and became very popular in the United Provinces which are now the Netherlands. Tulip cultivation in the United Provinces is generally thought to have started in earnest around 1593 after the Flemish botanist Charles de l'Écluse had taken up a post at theUniversity of Leiden and established the *hortus academicus*.

Is the word explained in the text?

- This lobotomy, an extremely dangerous medical procedure, ultimately cost him his life.

Can you deduce the meaning from other words?

- look at other words which relate to that word and work out what it must mean. These words may be either synonyms (words with a similar meaning) or opposites.
  "The fossils were originally dug up in Kazakhstan by a group of German archaeologists who were looking for evidence of prehistoric culture. Some time later the bone fragments were taken to Belgium to be exhibited in a museum specializing in natural history."

Can you guess the meaning from the general context?

- think about the general meaning of the sentence and make a guess at the probable meaning of that word. (the more you guess meanings, the more correct you are).

  "Skin cancer is a common disease. According to Cancer Research UK, around 100,000 cases of non-melanoma were diagnosed in the UK in 2008, and just under 12,000 cases of the more dangerous malignant melanoma were also registered of which 25% proved fatal".

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Can you recognise a part of the word?

- What you do here is recognise parts of words and relate them to other words you do know. Again, this will mean you are "guessing" and sometimes you may make mistakes, but you should be correct more often than not.
  "The archaeologists unearthed the bones in Kazakhstan, while looking for evidence of prehistoric civilisations".

Do you know what type of word it is?

- This is the weakest skill in that it gives you the least amount of information about the word. However, it can sometimes help to know whether you are looking at a verb, noun, adverb or adjective.
  "In five years time the skills for conducting fundamental science in the UK will not be here, because everyone will be chasing money to work on the widget the EPSRC thinks will solve societal problems".

- an unusual word "widget" - the word must be a noun as it follows "the" and this helps you understand that it must be a thing of some sort. In fact, all "widget" means is "thing".

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Questions?

Why ironing shirts is better than working out?