Reading: Worked Classroom Practice

Original worked Reading practice on the preserved notes; not official ETS items, rated forms or a complete adaptive test.

The clock: about 30 minutes, about 50 items

Task kind	What it asks
Complete the Words	Supply missing letters or words in a short text
Read in Daily Life	Emails, notices, timetables, advertisements
Read an Academic Passage	A first-year-university-style passage

Use the evidence

The section is adaptive; the passages you see depend on how you are doing. You cannot go back once a section is left.

No penalty means never leave an item empty

> An item left blank scores exactly what a wrong answer scores: nothing. Never leave an item empty.

- There is no **penalty** for a wrong answer.
- A guess has positive expected value; a blank never does.

Complete the Words: what word belongs here?

- A test of grammar and **vocabulary**, not of finding information.
- The **word class** is usually decided before the meaning: after "the" a noun, after "very" an adjective, after "to" a base verb.
- Spelling counts: a word with a letter missing is a wrong word.
- Read the completed sentence back to yourself. If it does not sound like English, it is not.

Your turn: what follows ”very”?

Your turn

After ”very”, the missing word is almost always which class?

A. A noun
B. An adjective
C. A base verb
D. An article

Read in Daily Life: what should the reader DO?

- The question is almost always what the reader should do, what has changed, or what is not allowed.
- Key information hides in small places: a date, a room number, a word like except, unless, only, from Monday.
- Those words carry the answer far more often than the long sentences around them.

Register: polite wording, real instructions

Indirect instructions in a tutor email

"You may wish to consider" means do this.

"It would be helpful if you could" is an instruction, not a comment.

Read an Academic Passage: skim, then scan

- **Skim** first, thirty seconds, for the shape: what is this about, how many parts, where does the argument turn?
- Then answer, and **scan** back for each fact.
- The **topic sentence**, usually a paragraph's first sentence, tells you what that paragraph is for.
- A which-paragraph question is matched against topic sentences, not by rereading everything.

Words, parts, and pointable inferences

- A word question asks what it means in this passage, not in general; answer from the sentence.
- Guess unknown words from parts: prefixes like un-, re-, over- and suffixes like -tion, -able, -ly narrow meaning and fix **word class**.
- An **inference** question asks what the passage lets you conclude.
- The right answer is always supported by a line you could point at.

The four habits that cost marks

Habit	Its cost
Translating while reading	Two to three times as long; no room for it at this pace
Subvocalising	Caps speed at speaking speed, about 150 words a minute, when double is needed
Hunting the question's word	The test uses synonyms on purpose; a **synonym** is the normal case
Perfectionism on one item	Two minutes rescuing one hard item costs three easy ones later

Training habits that pay

- Practise with a timer from the first day; reading well and reading fast are different skills.
- Read one academic page and one practical text every day.
- Learn Academic Word List words in sentences, not flashcards alone.
- After every practice set, write down why each wrong answer was wrong.

Reading joins details and conditions

> Reading means joining details and conditions, not recognising a familiar word.

- A **notice** plus a receipt together decide the deadline.
- Meeting the deadline is not the same as using the information.

Worked text A: comparing two campus paths

With ten gaps: measured, time, exposed, showed, cooler, could, conclude, control, planned, repeat

Students mea_____ the temperature of two campus paths at the same ti___; one lay under trees, the other expo____ to direct sunlight.

The shaded path was coo____ at every reading; however, they cou___ not con_____ that shade was the only cause, since wind speed and surface were not con_____.

They pla_____ to repe___ the measurements with these differences checked.

Worked text B: a study collection

1. **The context** A library's digital collection of local photographs, searchable by street or year.
2. **The gaps** des_____ for the written text with each image; uncer_____ dates; evi_____ before suggesting a change; staff cor_____ the result.
3. **The connections** Description, uncertain, evidence, correct — the sentence logic links them, not the dictionary alone.
4. **The discipline** Do not select each word as if it appeared alone on a **vocabulary** card.

Decision

Uncertain dates need evidence before correction; the words complete each other's meaning.

Your turn: the missing comparative

Your turn

"The shaded path was coo____ at every reading." What completes the gap?

A. cool
B. cooler
C. coolest
D. cooling

Shortcuts checked against real sentences

The shortcut says

After "the", a noun.

After "to", a base verb.

Real sentences show

"The quiet room", "the carefully prepared report" — adjectives and adverbs sit between.

"They plan to repeat the study" but "They walked to the library" and "look forward to reading".

Worked email: the Wednesday workshop

From Mina, workshop organiser

The workshop still starts at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, but has moved from Room 18 to Room 21 (projector repair).

Bring a printed draft unless you uploaded your final draft before noon on Tuesday; if you uploaded after noon, bring a printed copy too.

A notebook is optional — "you may wish to bring" offers a choice.

Worked questions: Jia and the notebook

1. **Question 18 — Jia uploaded at 1 p.m. Tuesday** One p.m. is after noon, so the exception does not apply: Jia brings a printed draft.
2. **Why the distractors fail** Only-a-notebook and nothing ignore the condition; a replacement projector adds a job the email never gives.
3. **Question 19 — the notebook** The email explicitly says optional: a useful choice, not a requirement.
4. **The register lesson** "You may wish to" does not always mean "you must"; the message's own words state the strength.

Decision

Polite wording can introduce a request, a suggestion or an option — read which.

Worked notice: the study-support desk

Period	Service	Location
09:00-12:00	Booked meetings	Room 4
12:15-12:45	Walk-in questions	Library **annex**
14:00-16:00	Booked meetings	Library annex

Use the evidence

From 6 October, afternoons move to the library annex; mornings stay in Room 4; bring your confirmation.

Worked questions: three boundary checks

1. **Question 20 — a 10 a.m. booked meeting** Ten a.m. is the morning booked period, which stays in Room 4.
2. **Question 21 — service at 12:30 without booking** 12:30 falls inside the walk-in window: a student with a walk-in question.
3. **Question 22 — what is unchanged** "Stay" signals the morning location has not changed.
4. **The common failure** Applying the afternoon move to every meeting, or inventing eligibility rules.

Decision

A 10 a.m. meeting is morning; the **annex** is the afternoon change, not a blanket rule.

The passage: collecting seeds in a city

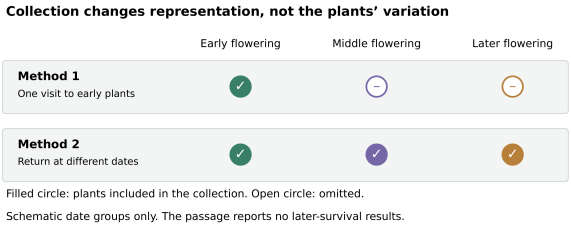
Aim, methods, limits

A town planting group compared two collection methods: pick from the earliest plants to flower, or return several times and collect across flowering dates.

The first was convenient, one visit; however, it risked leaving out later-flowering plants. The second sampled a wider range.

Neither method creates new variation; collection determines which existing plants are represented. The trial recorded dates, not later survival — a separate growing trial was planned.

Worked answers: evidence you can point at



- Q25: "it" = the **first collection method**; "however" introduces its drawback
- Q26: "breadth" = the **range of plants** included, contrasted with survival
- Q27 (**inference**): only-earliest picking represents flowering dates less widely
- Q28: the growing trial is a **future** survival test, not the completed comparison

Your turn: the referent

Your turn

In "The first method was convenient because volunteers could finish in one visit. However, it risked leaving out plants", what is "it"?

A. The growing trial
B. The first collection method
C. New variation
D. A late-flowering plant

Accuracy first, then the clock

- Use your own error record; different learners need different support.
- Classroom clocks for this supplement: four minutes for text A, three for B; four for the email and **notice**; five for the passage.
- During review, write a short evidence phrase beside each answer.
- Scored Reading items have a maximum of one raw point; a classroom total is not a reported-band conversion.

Check yourself

Your turn

Which pair of answers is correct? (1) Does "the" always require a next-word noun? (2) Can polite wording make an explicitly optional notebook compulsory?

A. Yes to both
B. No to both
C. (1) yes, (2) no
D. (1) no, (2) yes