

What is Skimming in IELTS Reading?

Worksheet

Skimming is reading quickly for general meaning by focusing on titles, headings, first sentences, and keyword phrases. It helps you locate main topics and decide where detailed information might appear before scanning for specific facts.

Questions

1. What is the primary purpose of skimming?

- A) To find and memorize every fact
- B) To understand the overall topic and structure quickly
- C) To answer all questions without re-reading
- D) To read every word as fast as possible

2. What do you focus on when skimming?

- A) Every adjective and adverb
- B) Titles, headings, opening sentences, and keywords
- C) Only paragraphs 2 and 3
- D) Numbers and statistics exclusively

3. How fast should you skim?

- A) Same speed as normal reading
- B) Very slowly to catch all details
- C) 600+ words per minute
- D) One word per second

4. After skimming a passage, what should you do next?

- A) Answer all questions from memory
- B) Scan for specific information related to questions
- C) Read the entire passage word-by-word
- D) Guess answers

5. You have 20 minutes to read a 2000-word article on 'Ocean Acidification.' What do you skim first?

6. A passage begins: 'Introduction: The Industrial Revolution marked a turning point...' What does skimming reveal?

7. You see bold keywords: 'photosynthesis,' 'chlorophyll,' 'glucose.' What does this skimming hint tell you?

8. Define: What is skimming?

9. Define: What should you focus on when skimming?

10. Define: How is skimming different from careful reading?

Answer Key

1. B) To understand the overall topic and structure quickly — Skimming gives you a quick overview; you scan later for specific information.
2. B) Titles, headings, opening sentences, and keywords — Structural elements and key terms reveal topic and organization.
3. C) 600+ words per minute — Skimming speed is typically 800–1000 wpm, much faster than careful reading (200–300 wpm).
4. B) Scan for specific information related to questions — Skimming sets the stage; then you scan for detailed information needed to answer specific questions.
5. Look at the title: 'Ocean Acidification' tells you the main topic. Scan the headings/subheadings: maybe 'Causes', 'Effects', 'Solutions'. Read the first sentence of each paragraph quickly. You now know the passage structure and can scan for specific details later. Skimming took ~2 minutes; reading full text would take 10+.
6. The title and heading show the passage is about the Industrial Revolution. The first sentence establishes it was a significant historical period. You don't need to read every detail word-for-word yet. If a question asks 'When did the Industrial Revolution begin?', you now know where to scan. Skimming saved reading time while orienting you to content.
7. Bold terms signal important vocabulary and key concepts. Skimming these terms suggests the passage is about plant biology. When you scan for 'How plants produce energy?', you'll know to focus on these terms. Skimming keyword density helps predict passage focus.
8. Reading quickly to get the overall meaning, focusing on titles, headings, and first sentences.
9. Titles, headings, first sentences of paragraphs, and bold keywords.
10. Skimming is fast (800+ wpm) and gets main ideas; careful reading is slower and captures details.

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