

Developing vocabulary and paraphrasing skills through IELTS reading tasks.

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Session outline



- Learner difficulties with IELTS reading tasks.
- Outline of the approach.
- The approach with a gap-fill question type.
- Summary and discussion.



Learner difficulties with IELTS reading tasks.



Group discussion

Discuss with the people on your table:

1. What difficulties do your students have with IELTS reading tasks? (Add to the mentimeter.)
2. How do you overcome these difficulties?





Some difficulties learners have with IELTS reading tasks

- Vocabulary – paraphrasing and synonyms.
- Knowledge of the different question types.
- Locating answers.
- Time restrictions.
- Topic knowledge.





Outline of the approach



Pre-task

- Learners need to know how to paraphrase and have had some practice with it.
- Learners should have had some practice with the question type and understand a general approach.
- The task is adapted according to the level of the learners (e.g. use level appropriate texts, paraphrase half of the question in advance...).
- The topic should be introduced to the learners.





Outline of the approach

- The class is divided into two groups (As and Bs).
- Each group works with one half of the text.
- Learners create or complete question items for their half of the text.
- Creating question items helps students with:
 - Vocabulary – paraphrasing and synonyms.
 - Knowledge of the different question types.
 - Locating answers.



The approach with gap-fill question types

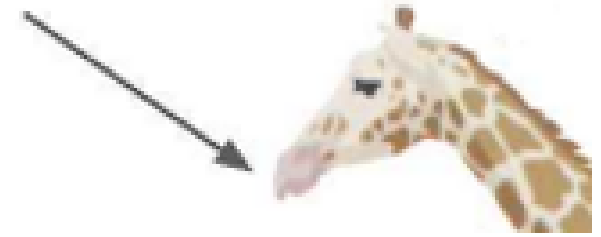


Gap-fill question types in the IELTS test

- Sentence completion.
 - Diagram labelling.
 - Note / Table / Form / Flow chart completion.
-
- We will use **diagram labelling** for the example and write the first label together.



Reading – Diagram labeling



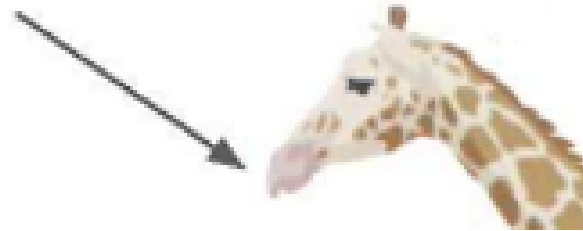
- You will all have the first paragraph of the reading.
- The **highlighted text** is what you need to paraphrase.
- The circled word is the answer.
- In your groups, write a sentence (8-15 words) that paraphrases the highlighted text and includes the circled word (tongue).



Reading – Diagram labeling

- Write your labels on the small whiteboard.
- Compare to the original label from the reading.

The animal's 1..... can extend to almost 50cm.



- What synonyms and paraphrasing do they use in the original?



Reading – Diagram labeling

1. The animal's tongue can extend to almost 50cm.
 - Synonyms and paraphrasing:
 - The animal's → Its
 - Can stretch → can extend
 - To almost 50cm → To as far as forty-six centimetres.





Your turn!

- Paraphrase the **highlighted** text to write short sentences (no more than 15 words) for your 3 labels.
- Include the **circled** word(s) in the sentence as the answer.
- Write a draft for each label first before writing the label on the diagram.
- **DON'T** write the answer on your final label! Leave a gap.
- Compare your labels to the originals when finished.





Follow-up options

- After learners have compared their sentences to the originals, they can either:
 - Swap the diagrams for the other group to find the gaps, **OR**
 - Read out their labels for the other group to race to find the gaps (higher levels).





Summary and discussion



Summary

- This approach has learners writing their own question items for an IELTS reading.
- They complete an example as a class first before dividing the class into As and Bs.
- They write the items in pairs by paraphrasing language from the reading.
- They then swap questions (A with B) and complete each others' labels or read them out (as a quiz).





Summary

- This approach focuses on achievable class outcomes and helps students develop their:
 - Vocabulary range.
 - Paraphrasing skills.
 - Knowledge of the different question types.
 - Locating answers in a text.





Discussion

- Could you use this approach with your students?
Why/Why not?
- What (if any) other changes would you make?
- How could you adapt it for other IELTS reading question types?
- What difficulties might you have?



Thank you

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