

英国文化委员会授权独家出版发行

How to prepare for IELTS

—— 如何准备雅思考试 ——

新版

Ray de Witt 编著

雅思考试资深考官、雅思培训专家Ray de Witt编著

为雅思考试新题型而修订的最新版本

●● BRITISH
●● COUNCIL
英国文化委员会



北京语言大学出版社
BEIJING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE
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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

如何准备雅思考试: 光盘版/(英) 维特(Witt, R. d.)
编著. — 3版. — 北京: 北京语言大学出版社, 2008.8
ISBN 978-7-5619-2158-6

I. 如… II. 怀… III. 英语 — 高等教育 — 自学参考资料
IV. H310.41

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2008) 第 113157 号

本书由英国文化委员会授权北京语言大学出版社独家出版发行。
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部分。

书 名: 如何准备雅思考试: 光盘版
责任印制: 陈 辉

出版发行: **北京语言大学出版社**

社 址: 北京市海淀区学院路 15 号 邮政编码: 100083

网 址: www.blcup.com

电 话: 发行部 82303648 / 3591 / 3651

编辑部 82303223

读者服务部 82303653 / 3908

网上订购电话 82303668

客户服务信箱 service@blcup.net

印 刷: 北京画中画印刷有限公司

经 销: 全国新华书店

版 次: 2008 年 7 月第 3 版 2008 年 7 月第 1 次印刷

开 本: 880 毫米 × 1230 毫米 1/16 印张: 8.125

字 数: 205 千字 印数: 1—4000 册

书 号: ISBN 978-7-5619-2158-6/H·08147

定 价: 35.00 元(含 MP3 光盘一张)

凡有印装质量问题, 本社负责调换。电话: 82303590

About the author

Ray de Witt has taught English for specific purposes and English for academic purposes at the University of Westminster and Middlesex University. Since 1991 he has run an IELTS preparation course at the University of Westminster, where he had been an IELTS examiner since 1989. He has run successful IELTS teacher training seminars in Nicosia, Limassol, Belgrade and Skopje. He is the co-author of *Applied English, A teacher's manual on English for academic purposes*, published by the Open Learning Foundation. Ray de Witt is currently running Trinity Cert. TESOL teacher training courses in north London.

Author's acknowledgements

I should like to acknowledge the support and encouragement of John Hooton, Director of Short Courses at the former Polytechnic of Central London, in the setting up of my IELTS preparation course. This led directly to the production of materials which in turn have resulted in the publication of the first edition of this book. The exercises are mine, for which I accept full responsibility. Full credit must be given to the editor, Richard Law, for the book itself. He asks the impossible – and then makes quite sure he gets it!

I should like also to acknowledge the generosity of those students who gave their time in producing written work and in being interviewed. The format of these materials would, literally, not have been possible without their efforts. Thanks also to Rosa for trialling the first draft, to Eileen Lockwood for suggestions and support, and to Chiara Guida for help with manuscript preparation.

I would also like to thank Louisa Zavallis for her inspiration and determination in producing the section two practice materials for use in Cyprus.

I should also like to acknowledge the generosity of the copyright holders in giving permission to reproduce the extracts used for the reading passages.

Alison Martin had the deeply frustrating and largely thankless task of locating, contacting and chasing up copyright holders, which she undertook without ever once losing her smile. Thanks, Ali.

Last, but most important, thanks are due to the Design, Production and Publishing Department at the British Council for putting it all together.

All of the above would of course be irrelevant without IELTS and those who use it. If you are about to be an IELTS candidate, I hope the exercises will prove to be useful and I wish you well in the test itself.

To Fergus

Publisher's acknowledgements

The articles *How the brain reorganizes itself* and *Hidden history: the beetle's secret cycle of life* on pp. 13 and 10–11, together with figure 1, are reproduced from the *New Scientist*, volume 131, number 1776, 6 July 1991, pp. 15 and 43 respectively, with the permission of IPC. The article *Desktop publishing* on pp. 21–2 is reproduced from INFO, the official journal of the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain, volume 12, number 6, October 1990, with the permission of the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain. The articles *Recruitment trends across the Channel* and *Hi-tech connections* on pp. 28–9 and 18 are adapted from INFO, volume 14, number 2, March/April 1992, with the permission of the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain. The article *Perchance to dream* on pp. 19–20, together with figure 2, is adapted from *The mind machine* by Colin Blakemore published by BBC Books, with the permission of BBC Worldwide Ltd. The article *Social and cultural impacts of tourism in Cyprus* on pp. 15–16 was first published in *Tourism management*, volume 12, number 1, March 1991, and is reproduced here with the permission of Professor Stephen Witt and Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, UK. Many of the ideas in the article *Reading skills* on pp. 23–5 come from Tony Buzan *Use your head*, BBC, 1989. The article *Job satisfaction and personnel mobility* on pp. 63–4 is adapted from *The Sunday Times*, 1 August 1993, and is reproduced here with the permission of the author, Philip Schofield. The articles *The education gap*, *The urban revolution* and *Industrialization and development* on pp. 66–7, pp. 91–2 and pp. 97–8 respectively are adapted extracts from *WWF atlas of the environment*, Lean and Hinrichsen, Helicon, 1992. The articles *Developing environmental management strategies* and *Problems with contaminated land in the UK* on pp. 69–70 and pp. 103–4 respectively were first published in INFO, volume 14, number 6, October/November 1992, and are reproduced here with the permission of the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain. The article *Birth of a profession* on pp. 75–6 was first published in *CA Magazine*, October 1993. The article *Rethinking Europe: ICI and the Single European Market* on pp. 78–9 is adapted from the *Financial Times*, 1 February 1993. The articles *The Muddle of MBAs* and *Handling the high flyers* on pp. 81–2 and pp. 100–2 respectively, are adapted from *Management Today*, June and July 1993. The article *NVQs in retailing – the BHS experience* on pp. 85–7 was first published in the *NVQ Monitor*, June 1993, and is reproduced here with the permission of the author, Stephen Barber. The article *Harmful publications* on pp. 88–9 was first published in *Arts Education*, summer/autumn 1993.

Acknowledgement is given to the following for the use of statistical information: Antonis Andronicou, LL.B., Ph.D., formerly Director-General of the Cyprus Tourism Organization, table 1; Cyprus Ministry of Finance, tables 2 and 4 and figure 10; *The state of the world's children*, 1989 and 1991, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), figures 6 and 11; Brodies Solicitors, figure 7; *WWF atlas of the environment*, Lean and Hinrichsen, Helicon, 1992, figures 8, 9, 12, 13 and 14.

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Introduction

The IELTS examination

The International English Language Testing System examination (IELTS) is taken worldwide by students who intend to study or live in an English speaking country. There are nearly 150,000 candidates every year. IELTS is recognized by higher education institutions throughout the world as a measure of competence to study in the medium of English.

The tests

The IELTS examination assesses how well you can understand and use the kind of English you need to study in an English speaking country. There are four tests which all candidates have to take: listening, reading, writing and speaking. The tests are always taken in this order, and the first three tests are always taken in one day, with the speaking test taken on the same day or up to two days later. Each test focuses on a different skill:

- You will need to understand spoken English in both everyday life and much more formal situations, such as lectures and seminars. The **listening** component of IELTS assesses how well you can do this.
- When you study you will not have time to read all the books on the reading lists. So you must be able to find important information quickly and accurately from a number of sources. The **reading** component of IELTS assesses how well you can do this.
- When you have collected your information and your thoughts you will be asked to present your ideas as a formal essay or report. The **writing** component of IELTS assesses how well you can do this.
- You will also need to talk about yourself and to express your ideas on a variety of topics. The **speaking** component of IELTS assesses how well you can do this.
- While you are studying, researching or working you will constantly be under great time pressure to find information, think quickly and respond appropriately. Throughout, IELTS assesses how well you can do all of these.

The modules

The listening and speaking tests are the same for all candidates but the reading and writing sections of IELTS are available in two different modules: academic and general training. All candidates choose **one** of these modules depending on their reason for taking the test.

(For more detailed information see the *IELTS Handbook*, which should be available at your local IELTS centre.)

IELTS is not designed to assess your specialized knowledge and you are unlikely to get questions from your own particular field. You should not worry about this. What IELTS tests is your English.

Scores

You do not pass or fail with IELTS. You are given a band score which shows your ability in each of the four tests and an overall band. When you apply to a university or college, they may specify which band you must achieve to be accepted on the course. Refer to the *IELTS Handbook*, available from your local IELTS centre, for a description of the overall band scores.

How to apply

For information on where and how to apply for the examination refer to the *IELTS Handbook*.

How to use this book

This book (and the tape that goes with it) provides advice and practice in the skills you need to do your best in IELTS. Like the examination, it is divided into four sections: reading, writing, listening and speaking. In each section you will:

- practise what you need to know
- learn what to expect
- get advice on exactly what you need to do in the test
- become familiar with the type of questions you will get.

The main part of each section is called 'practice' and consists of exercises which are designed to give you practice in **what you need to know** for each test: the major skills you need. By practising these you will at the same time be practising a number of useful subsidiary skills. Most of the exercises are based on the sort of questions you will get in IELTS. This is so you know **what to expect**. It is very important:

- to follow instructions carefully
- to keep to the time limit
- not to consult the answer key until you are told to do so.

Again, the instructions for questions are similar to those in IELTS. This is part of what you are practising. To build up as much practice as possible in the type of questions and instructions you will find in IELTS, and the processes you will go through in finding the answers, we have put the reading and writing sections before the listening.

Timing is also important, particularly since you will not always be told how much time to spend on individual questions in IELTS. Answers to the reading and listening exercises, as well as some of the writing exercises, and a transcript of the listening exercises, are in the back of the book. At the end of most exercises there is a discussion section, where you can look back on your answers and see how you can improve. Information about **what you need to do in the test** is covered in this section and is highlighted. This is also where you will find guidance on the **type of questions** you can expect.

This book is not an English course. You can and should continue to work on your grammar and vocabulary in whichever way suits you. At the end of each practice section there is advice on what sort of further work will help you in IELTS and there is a bibliography which lists useful books.

At the end of each section there is a summary of the main points in the section.

The book is aimed at candidates for the academic module. But it uses a variety of materials and reading passages which will allow you to practise the skills required in whichever module you are taking.

You can work through the book on your own, with other students or with the help of a teacher. The exercises in the speaking section are designed for two people working together. There is no space in the book for you to write answers so you will need to prepare your own answer sheets. You will need paper and you will need to number your answers.

引言

雅思考试

参加国际英语水平测试系统考试(雅思)的考生来自世界各地,他们准备在英语国家学习或生活,每年有近 15 万考生。世界各地的高等教育机构都认为雅思是衡量用英语从事学习的能力的测试工具。

考试

雅思测试考生在英语国家学习时理解并使用英语的能力。考生需参加四项测试:听力、阅读、写作和口语。这四项考试的顺序总是前三项考试安排在一天里,口语考试或者安排在同一天,或者安排在前三项考试的一两天之后。每项考试重点测试不同的技能:

- 你需要理解日常生活中的口语和在非常正式场合的口语,比如在讲座、研讨时使用的口语,雅思的听力部分测试你在这方面做得如何;
- 在学习中你会没有时间阅读书单上的所有书,因此你必须能够从许多信息来源中快速、准确地找到重要信息,雅思的阅读部分测试你在这方面做得如何;
- 在你收集和组织信息之后,你会被要求以文章或报告的形式来表述你的想法,雅思的写作部分测试你在这方面做得如何;
- 你还需要谈论你自己的情况,表达你对各种问题的看法,雅思的口语部分测试你在这些方面做得如何;
- 你在学习、研究或工作时,会经常需要在时间非常紧迫的情况下寻找信息、快速思维,并恰当地做出反应。雅思的所有考试都测试你在这方面做得如何。

考试类型

雅思听力和口语考试对于所有考生都是一样的,但雅思的阅读和写作这两部分有两个不同的类型:学术类和普通类。所有考生都要根据自己参加考试的目的选择一种考试类型。

(详情见《雅思手册》,该手册可在你当地的雅思考试中心索取)

雅思不是为了测试你的专业知识,你不大可能碰到有关你的领域的问题,你不必为此担心。雅思测验的是你的英语语言能力。

考试分数

雅思考试无及格、不及格之分。你会得到表明你能力的四项考试的单项成绩和总平均分。如向大学或学院提出入学申请,他们会告诉你必须达到的录取分数段。关于各分数段的评分标准,请参看《雅思手册》,该手册可在你当地的雅思考试中心索取。

如何报名

关于在何地、怎样报名参加雅思考试,请参看《雅思手册》。

如何使用本书

本书(以及配套录音带)为你能在雅思考试中取得最好的成绩提供指导和训练。和雅思考试一样,本书分为四部分:阅读、写作、听力和口语。在每个部分中你将:

- 训练需要掌握的内容;
- 了解考试中会遇到的问题;
- 得到具体的应试指导;
- 熟悉考试题型。

“训练”是每个部分的重点内容,我们在这部分里设计了练习,以便训练你掌握考试中需要的主要技能;同时,也有一些十分有用的次要技能的训练。大多数练习题都是根据你在考试中会遇到的题型而设计的,以便你了解在考试中会遇到什么样的题目。以下几点非常重要:

- 认真按照要求去做;
- 遵守时间限制;
- 没让看答案前不要看答案。

本书中的题目要求和雅思考试中的要求十分近似,这也是你要训练的一部分内容。为了使你能更多地练习雅思考试的题型,更多地了解雅思考试的要求,更多地体验寻找答案的过程,我们把阅读和写作部分放在了听力部分的前面。

控制答题速度也十分重要,特别是因为在雅思考试中不会总有人提醒你每道题要用的时间。阅读和听力练习答案以及一些写作练习答案,还有听力练习录音文本都附在书的后面。大多数练习结束时都有“讨论”这样一个部分,这部分使你能够回过头来看看你的答案,明确你可以怎样提高。有关你在考试中应如何去做的信息就在此处,我们使用了蓝色来强调、突出这些信息。这部分就你在考试中会遇到的题型提供了指导。

本书不是一本英语课程教材。你可以并应该采用适合你的方法学习语法和词汇。每一部分训练结束时都向你提出建议,告诉你如何做能帮助你提高雅思考试成绩。本书还提供了一份十分有用的参考书目。

每个部分的结尾都对该部分的重点进行了小结。

本书主要是为参加学术类考试的考生而设计,但不管你参加哪一类雅思考试,本书中提供的丰富材料和阅读篇章都能用于训练雅思考试所需要的技能。

你可以自学本书,也可以和别的学生一起学习,或在教师的帮助下学习。口语部分的练习是为两个一起学习的考生设计的。书中没有提供你写答案的地方,所以你需要自己准备答题纸,为你的答案编号。

Section one: practice

Reading

The IELTS reading test lasts for sixty minutes and assesses how well you can understand the type of texts you will find in the course of your studies.

The question booklet contains three reading passages (sometimes illustrated with graphs, tables or diagrams), and each passage has accompanying questions. The texts, which tend to increase in difficulty throughout the paper, vary in length, and so does the number of questions on each passage. The passages are usually from 700 to 1,000 words long for the academic module and somewhat shorter in the general training module. There is a total of about forty questions. Sometimes these come before the reading passage, sometimes after.

There is a wide range of different **question types**. You may be asked to:

- fill in gaps, for example in a passage of written text or in a table
- match headings to written text or to diagrams or charts
- complete sentences
- give short answers to open questions
- answer multiple-choice questions.

Sometimes you will need to give one word, sometimes a short phrase and sometimes simply a letter, a number or symbol.

It is important that you control the time on each reading passage. If you spend too long on one, you may not leave yourself time to complete the others. This is also true of individual questions. You will have to work very quickly; if you cannot do a question, leave it and go on to the next. When sixty minutes have finished, you will have to stop writing immediately.

Practice

In IELTS you are not reading for pleasure. You must identify what the question requires, find the information quickly and answer accurately. **You will not have time to read every word of every passage slowly and carefully.** You should not attempt to do this.

This means that you must develop ways to read quickly and efficiently. The first thing to do when you look at a reading passage is to survey the passage to find out what it is about in very general terms. If you understand the general subject it will help you later when you look for detailed information. You will know what to look for and where to look for it.

Survey the text

Look at: the title
section headings and **special print**
illustrations, graphs and tables.

Build up an idea of what the text as a whole is about.

Then look at each paragraph. There is often one sentence which will summarize what the paragraph is about. This sentence is often the first or last sentence in the paragraph.

Do not take more than 2 minutes.

Exercise 1

Survey the following passage and answer the questions which follow:

Time: 2 minutes

Hidden history: the beetle's secret cycle of life

The deathwatch beetle is thought of as the devil's pest in churches and old houses, but in natural habitats it infests a wide range of decaying hardwoods. It has been found in hornbeam, sweet chestnut, hawthorn, beech, ash, blackpoplar, elm, larch, spruce and yew, but the two most commonly infested species in Britain are oak and willow. In buildings, oak timbers are usually the focus of attack by the beetle, but alder, walnut, elm, larch and Scots pine can be affected too. Deathwatch beetles attack wood that has been decayed by fungi, so it is the damp-prone parts of timbers, at the ends and near leaking gutters and enclosed spaces, that are normally attacked first.

Adult beetles emerge from holes in the timber in spring, or occasionally in autumn. They breed once and a week or two later the females lay eggs, usually about fifty, in small cracks on the surface of the wood. Adults depend on stored reserves; they do not feed, so the adult lifespan is largely determined by body size and metabolic demands. Emergent females rarely live for more than ten weeks, and males eight or nine weeks, at a temperature of about 20° C.

The eggs hatch after two to five weeks and the larvae then wander across the wood to find suitable entry points through which to bore into the timber. Then they take between two and ten years to complete their development. The larvae pupate in late summer to

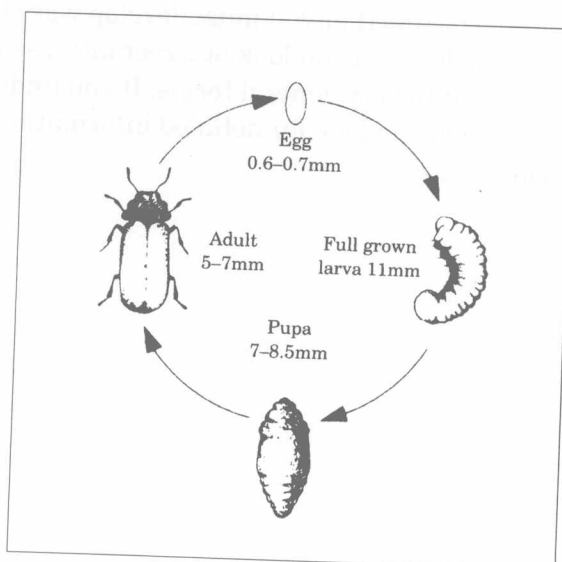


Figure 1

early autumn, each individual having constructed a pupal cell just below the surface of the wood. After two or three weeks, the immature beetle emerges from the pupal skin, but then remains torpid inside the chamber until the following spring or early summer. The mature beetle then cuts a perfectly round hole, three to five millimetres in diameter, and emerges covered in a fine layer of wood powder.

Questions 1–4

- 1 What is the subject of the passage as a whole?
- 2 Which paragraph contains information about the larvae?
- 3 Which paragraph contains information about the adult beetles?
- 4 Which paragraph contains information about where the beetles live?

Now look at the answer key and go on to the discussion section below.

Discussion

Notice how with only the title and the illustration you have most of the information in the passage. There may be many words you do not know in this passage but the title told you the topic was the life cycle of something. Figure 1 shows you what it is and gives you much of the key information.

Looking at the first sentence of each paragraph gives you enough information to answer questions 2–4 above.

You did not need to *read* every word and you did not need to *know* every word. This exercise practised surveying the text – which is something you should do with **every** text no matter what the questions are. This is a major reading skill. Some IELTS questions ask you to **find the main ideas** in a text. For this you go through the process of looking at the title etc., as you do when you survey the text. You have to recognize that this is what the question requires. In general you cannot answer a question properly unless you know what sort of answer is needed and how to find it. This takes us to the next main process you go through after surveying the text:

Analyse the questions

Ask yourself ‘What is the purpose of this question?’ If you can recognize that the question is asking about the general theme of the passage, then you already know how to find the answer quickly. If the question is asking for specific information, make sure you are clear what that information is (is it a number? a period of time? an activity? etc.).

Analysing the question has another meaning too. It means **read it carefully** to see what form your answer should be in (one word? three words? a number?).

Exercise 1 consists of the simplest kind of question type: **open questions**. You must answer in a specified number of words – usually no more than three. Often, however, only one or two are needed. Questions 2–4 can all have one-word answers, or simply a number.

Now you have surveyed the text you are better prepared to look for more detailed information. Go on to the next exercise.

Exercise 2

Answer the following questions on the passage *Hidden history: the beetle's secret cycle of life*.

Time: 5 minutes

Questions 5–10

Complete the summary below by choosing **a maximum of three words** from the passage to fill the spaces 5–10. Write your answers on the answer sheet.

Summary

The deathwatch beetle is found most often in ... **5** ... and ... **6** ... They infest damp-prone timber which has been affected ... **7** ... Adults do not feed, so they survive on ... **8** ... and live for only two or three months. The larvae, on the other hand, live for up to ... **9** ..., feeding on the timbers during that time. They pupate in ... **10** ... but the adult does not emerge until the following spring.

Now look at the answer key and go on to the discussion section below.

Discussion

Most of the questions in the reading test ask you to **find specific information**. The best way to prepare yourself for this is by going through the first two processes properly:

- survey the text
- analyse the question.

For example, because you have surveyed the text you should know exactly which paragraphs to look at for the answers to each question. This saves a lot of time. Also from analysing the questions you can often see what sort of information to look for. It is clear, for example, that the answer to question 9 must be a period of time.

So the first two processes are very important: you survey the text and you analyse the questions. Then:

Go back to the text to find the answers to the questions

Do not read every word and do not worry if you do not understand everything. Remember you are reading for a purpose. Be clear about what information you need to find and just look for that information. You will need to do this quickly.

Exercise 2 is an example of a typical **gap-filling exercise**. There are several important points to note:

- the passage in the exercise is a summary of the reading passage, so you will find many changes from the original
- even if you find specialized words in the reading passage (e.g. 'pupate') you will be able to answer the questions (e.g. question 10); as stated in the introduction, IELTS is a test of your understanding and use of English, not your specialized knowledge
- the question states that you must use a maximum of three words – therefore you have to reduce the text to answer Q10. You should keep only the important words
- the question states the words must come from the passage – you cannot use your own words.

The last two points show how important it is to **read the instructions carefully** and to check that you have done so. This brings us to the final process in doing the reading test:

Check your answers

Allow a short period of time for checking.

Look at any answers you are not sure of.

Read all the instructions again and make sure you have followed them exactly.

These are all the major skills you need to know and the things you need to do for the reading test. In the following exercises you will practise these skills and processes on other reading passages, and you will also meet some other types of question.

Exercise 3

Read the passage below and answer questions 11–15 which follow.

Time: 5 minutes

How the brain reorganizes itself

Paragraph 1

The work that Tim Pons and his colleagues published last week is basic research into the portion of the brain, the cortex, that one scientist says is 'responsible for all the interesting things we do'. The cortex is a layer between two and five millimetres thick that covers the brain and each area of the cortex has a different function. The area Pons and his colleagues are interested in receives 'somatic' sensation, in other words, information about touch, position, heat, cold and pain. The somatic sensory cortex can be represented as a topographic map, sub-divided into specific regions that receive nerve signals from specific areas of the body.

Paragraph 2

About twelve years before Pons and his colleagues carried out their experiments, the Macaque monkeys being studied had the nerves cut which carried signals from the fingers, palm, upper limb, neck and the back of the head. The regions bordering this part of the somatic sensory cortex receive signals from the face and trunk.¹

Paragraph 3

Under anaesthetic, Pons and his colleagues inserted electrodes into the region of the cortex where the nerves had been cut and recorded the neuronal² response. They found to their surprise that the whole region, covering an area of between ten and fourteen square millimetres, now responded to stimulation of the lower face. Previously, scientists had thought that the cortex of adult animals could not reorganize itself over an area greater than one or two millimetres.

¹ trunk = the main part of the body

² neuronal = areas of the nerves

Questions 11–13

Match one of the headings from the box to each of the paragraphs in the reading passage. Write the corresponding letter (A–F) in spaces 11–13 on your answer sheet. Note that there are more headings than paragraphs so you will not use all of them.

Headings

- A Macaque monkeys
- C Electrical stimulation
- E Cortex reorganization

- B Method of research
- D The effects of heat
- F The area of research

- 11 Paragraph 1
- 12 Paragraph 2
- 13 Paragraph 3

Questions 14–15

- 14 According to the passage, which four of the senses listed below are ‘somatic’ sensations?

- | | | |
|---------|------------|---------------|
| A taste | B touch | C temperature |
| D pain | E position | F emotion |
| G smell | H sound | I vision |

Write the four appropriate letters (from A–I) on your answer sheet.

- 15 Which part of the brain receives signals from different parts of the body?

Write **no more than three words** from the passage.

Now look at the answer key and go on to the discussion section below.

Discussion

Did you:

- survey the text
- analyse the questions to see exactly what they are asking for
- read the instructions carefully
- notice which questions were about general themes and which were asking for specific information
- know where to look for specific information and what sort of information was required
- go back to the text looking quickly for the information you need
- remember not to try and read every word