IELTS Reading Tips

Yes / No / Not Given - True / False / Not Given

Yes / No / Not Given statements deal with the opinions of the writer or people in the text.

True / False / Not Given questions deal with facts that are mentioned in the text.

True / Yes: There is information in the text that agrees exactly with the statement in the question. Note that you will almost certainly need to look for synonyms here and match meaning and not words.

False / No: There is information in the text that is directly opposite to or contradicts the statement in the question. Again note that you will also need to think about meaning here.

You should pay careful attention to “little” words that qualify or change meaning such as: some, all, often, occasionally

Not Given: This is the one that normally causes the most problems. Something is not given if there is no information about it in the text. Do not spend ages looking for Not Given answers because you will waste time.

NOTE: If you write YES instead of TRUE or NO instead of FALSE your answer will still be marked as correct.
An Example

*Macallan is one of the four top selling brands of malt whisky in the world. It is made in barrels made of Spanish oak that have previously been used for sherry because this adds sweetness to its flavour.*

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the text?

On your answer sheet you should write …

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information.
FALSE if the statement contradicts the information.
NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this.

1. Macallan is globally successful.

2. Macallan is made in metal containers.

3. Macallan is made in Spain.

**Answers**

1. **TRUE:** This is true because top selling brands of malt whisky in the world matches globally successful.

2. **FALSE:** This is false because the text says it us made in barrels of Spanish oak. Because oak is a wood this contradicts the words int he question metal containers. Note that you need to think about meaning.

3. **NOT GIVEN:** There is no information about where it is made. Be careful of the trap of seeing the words Spanish and made in the text. Usually with Not Given answers you will find some words in the text that match words int he question without matching the meaning of the whole question.

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TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN Strategy

Use these 7 steps as a guide when doing True / False / Not Given or Yes / No / Not Given questions. They are designed to help you answer these questions as quickly and as accurately as possible.

1. The questions follow the order of the text so you know that the answer to number two will be after number one and before number three.

2. Don’t read all of the statements first. Read statement 1, find it in the text and write your answer. Then read statement two.

3. Read the statement carefully and paraphrase it to make sure you fully understand what it means and then look for something with the same meaning.

4. Scan the text to find where the answer is using key words from the question but don’t just look for keywords, use synonyms and paraphrases.

5. When you find where the answer is, read the text carefully to identify if you think it is True, False or Not Given.

6. Look out for controlling words such as “only”, “all”, “never” etc. If the statement in the question says 'some' and the statement in the text says 'all', then it is False.

7. If you can’t find a statement or the opposite of the statement, then it is probably Not Given. Don’t waste time looking for something that is not there.
Top 9 Tips For Yes / No / Not Given & True / False / Not Given

1. Ignore anything you already know about the topic and don’t make assumptions. Base your answers on the text only.

2. Identify any words that qualify the statement, for example some, all, mainly, often, always and occasionally. These words are there to test if you have read the whole statement because they can change the meaning. For example, ‘Coca-Cola has always made its drinks in the U.S.A.’ has a different meaning from ‘Coca-Cola has mainly made its drinks in the U.S.A.’

3. Be careful when you see verbs that qualify statements, such as suggest, claim, believe and know. For example, ‘The man claimed he was a British citizen,’ and ‘The man is a British citizen’ mean two different things.

4. There will be at least one of all three answers. If you don’t have at least one ‘true’, ‘false’ or ‘not given’ you have at least one answer wrong.

5. Don’t skim and scan the text to find the final answer. You will have to read the appropriate part of the text very carefully in order to understand what the author means.

6. Don’t look for words that exactly match those in the statements. You should also look for synonyms. Remember that you are matching meaning, not words.

7. If you can’t find the information you are looking for, then it is probably ‘not given’. Don’t waste time looking for something that is not there.

8. If you have no idea what the answer is put ‘not given’. You probably have no idea because the answer is not there.

9. Answers are in the same order they appear in the text. Do not waste time going back. Keep on reading.

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