Reading Test 1 – Scanning and Paraphrase

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IELTS Reading Practice – All Levels

⏱️ **Time:** 10 minutes • 📝 **Questions:** 10 • 🎯 **Skills:** finding information, recognising paraphrase, reading for detail

This test practises the skills you need to **find information quickly**: scanning for names and numbers, and recognising when a question uses different words from the text.

How to use this test: set a timer for 10 minutes, read the passage and answer all the questions. Then check your score with the Answer Key and read the explanations to see **why** each answer is correct.

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⏱️ **Try It Again**



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📖 Reading Passage

Welcome to El Salvador: We've Been Expecting You

A When travellers think of El Salvador, pristine beaches, luxury hotels and centuries-old cobblestone streets are not usually the first things that come to mind. Most people think of tropical rainforest, the Mayan civilisation, or the country's later colonisation by the Spanish. But this small yet beautiful country in Central America, roughly the size of Wales, has done much to reinvent itself and is now set to become the next popular destination for travel.

B Famous for its Pacific Ocean beaches, surfing, green landscapes and unspoilt natural habitats, El Salvador is a paradise for eco-travellers. It is also known as the Land of Volcanoes, with more than twenty active volcanoes rising sharply against the blue sky. The country has over 300 rivers, the most important being the Río Lempa – the only river that boats can travel along – which crosses the northern mountains before flowing into the Pacific Ocean. Many of its lakes lie inside volcanic craters; the largest, Lake Güija, covers 44 square kilometres.

C From one of the many natural viewpoints in the mountains, visitors can watch huge waves crashing onto soft, black sand beaches, which are popular with surfers. If the warm water is not for you, there are plenty of other attractions, from memorials and museums that celebrate the country's history to archaeological sites and large coffee plantations. To help visitors explore this fascinating destination, the national tourism board has created a range of routes to help them plan their trip.

D If you like to ride the waves, El Salvador has ideal surfing conditions along its southern beaches. Here, travellers can find surf schools with bilingual instructors and shops that rent out surfboards. La Libertad is one of the most popular areas, with Punta Roca at the centre of the surf scene. The waves suit all levels, from beginner to professional, and the water stays warm all year at around 27°C, so it is no surprise that the country hosts many international competitions.

E History lovers can wander through colonial cities and explore grand buildings, such as the cathedral and national theatre in the main square of Santa Ana, or take a quiet walk past the pastel-coloured houses of the mountain town of Suchitoto. For those who want to dig into the country's heritage – both literally and figuratively – guides offer tours to important archaeological sites of the Mayan world, such as Joya de Cerén, which has a museum and walking trails and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993.

F Another popular option is a tour of a coffee plantation. Visitors who want to see where their morning coffee comes from can learn about the whole process from plant to cup: how the beans are grown, harvested, sorted, dried and roasted. Many are surprised to learn that a coffee bean is actually the seed of a fruit, and that it goes through a long and careful process before it can be made into a drink.

G Creative visitors can explore small towns that specialise in crafts made from wood, clay, natural fibres and recycled materials. Historically, however, the most important product in the region was indigo – a plant used to make a deep blue dye. Indigo was the main driver of the economy until a synthetic dye was developed. Today, visitors can still learn the traditional way of using indigo to colour clothes, and even try making a garment themselves.

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🔎 Questions 1–5 – Matching Information

Which paragraph, **A–G**, contains the following information?

Write the correct letter. You may use any letter more than once.

1. a natural feature that gives the country another name
2. an activity suitable for people with very different levels of skill
3. an industry in which visitors can learn about several stages of production
4. a product that was once central to the country's economy
5. something that has been created to help tourists organise their journeys

🎯 Questions 6–8 – Multiple Choice

Choose the correct letter, **A, B, C** or **D**.

6. What does paragraph A suggest about El Salvador?
   A. Most tourists already know about its beaches.
   B. Its image as a tourist destination is changing.
   C. Tourism has damaged its traditional culture.
   D. It mainly attracts visitors who are interested in history.
   Answer:

7. What is special about the Río Lempa?
   A. It is the longest river in Central America.
   B. It is the only river in the country that boats can use.
   C. It flows into Lake Güija.
   D. It forms the border with a neighbouring country.
   Answer:

8. What can visitors do at Joya de Cerén?
   A. learn about Mayan heritage
   B. visit a coffee plantation
   C. see how indigo is used to make dye
   D. take part in a surfing competition
   Answer:

✍️ Questions 9–10 – Short Answers

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

9. What colour is the sand on the beaches described in paragraph C?
   Answer:

10. What was developed that ended indigo's importance to the economy?
    Answer:

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✅ Answer Key

Q	Answer
1	B
2	D
3	F
4	G
5	C
6	B
7	B
8	A
9	black
10	synthetic dye / a synthetic dye

Your Score

Score	What it means
9–10	Excellent. Try the next test, or repeat this one in 8 minutes.
7–8	Good. Read the explanations for the questions you missed.
5–6	A solid start. Use **What Should You Practise Next?** to choose a skill to work on.
0–4	Read the explanations carefully, then try the test again tomorrow without a time limit.

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🔄 Answers Explained

Read the passage again, without the time limit. For each question, notice how the words in the question **paraphrase** the words in the text.

Questions 1–5: Matching Information

1. B

Question: *another name* → **Text:** *also known as the Land of Volcanoes*. Look for the idea of a second name, not the exact words.

2. D

Question: *very different levels of skill* → **Text:** *all levels, from beginner to professional*.

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3. F

Question: *several stages of production* → **Text:** *grown, harvested, sorted, dried and roasted*. The word *production* is not in the text – look for a process with stages.

4. G

Question: *central to the economy* → **Text:** *the main driver of the economy*.

5. C

Question: *help tourists organise their journeys* → **Text:** *routes to help them plan their trip*.

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Questions 6–8: Multiple Choice

6. B

The paragraph contrasts what people *usually* think of El Salvador with how it *has done much to reinvent itself*. A is the opposite of the text; C and D are not mentioned.

7. B

Question: *the only river that boats can use* → **Text:** *the only river that boats can travel along*. C is a trap: Lake Güija is mentioned in the same paragraph, but not as the end of the river.

8. A

Joya de Cerén is one of the *archaeological sites of the Mayan world*. The name is easy to scan for – once you find it, read the words around it carefully.

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Questions 9–10: Short Answers

9. black

Paragraph C: *soft, black sand beaches*. The question asks only for the colour, so one word is enough.

10. synthetic dye

Paragraph G: indigo was the main driver of the economy *until a synthetic dye was developed*. Two words – within the limit.

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🧭 What Should You Practise Next?

Look at the questions you got wrong. They show you which skill to practise.

If you missed…	Practise this	Start IELTS lesson
Questions 1–5	scanning for ideas and recognising paraphrase	Reading: Scanning
Questions 6–8	reading the located sentence carefully; spotting distractors	Reading: Intensive Reading
Questions 9–10	finding specific details and keeping to the word limit	Reading: Scanning
Any word you did not know	guessing meaning from context	Reading: Unknown Words

Remember: the question will rarely use the same words as the text. Look for the same **idea** expressed differently.

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⏱️ Try It Again

Now practise scanning. Give yourself **90 seconds**.

Without looking at the questions, scan the passage and find: **a number • a sport • a town in the mountains • a date • a colour**.

Do not read every sentence. Move your eyes quickly and look only for the information you need. When you find each answer, notice which words helped you.

Next: Reading Test 2: True, False or Not Given – practise reading for detail and identifying the writer's views.

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