

Exercise 3

Read the information about the matching headings task in the IELTS Reading test. Then add the correct headings for the paragraphs. Use the headings in the box. There are two extra headings.

How being able to match headings can help in real life		
One of the biggest challenges in the IELTS test at the task	Skills you need to succeed	
What to watch out for	What you have to do	Why paraphrasing is important

1. _____

The task involves choosing the most suitable headings for the paragraphs in a text. There are usually between five and seven paragraphs, and there are also two extra headings that you don't need.

2. _____

Study the paragraphs before the headings. Don't try to find a paragraph for each heading, as two of the headings won't be used. As you do the task, keep track of which headings you've used, as you can only use a heading once. And as always, keep an eye on time, as you only have 20 minutes to answer all 13 or 14 questions on the whole text. And 20 minutes can go by very quickly!

3. _____

Remember that just because you see the same word in the heading and one of the paragraphs, this doesn't mean you've found the answer. It's more important to look for matching meanings in headings and paragraphs, not just matching words. These reading tasks check that you can understand ideas expressed in different words, which is one of the key skills you really need in this task.

4. _____

As well as identifying paraphrases, you need to be able to distinguish between headings, remembering that some of them might sound quite similar, so try to express them differently in your own words. When reading each paragraph, you also need to distinguish between the main idea of the paragraph and the extra detail. Bear in mind that the heading will probably relate to the main idea, rather than some minor detail. This central idea is often (but not always) referred to in the first and / or last sentence of the paragraph, so it's a good idea to check these.