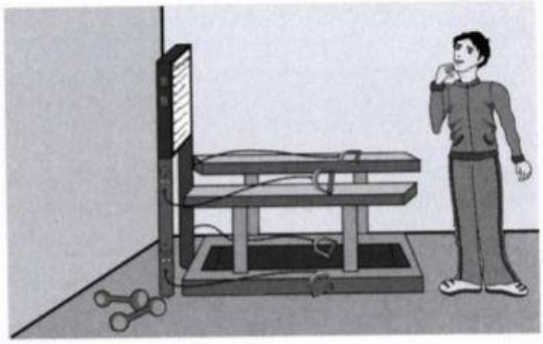
Part 2: Skills development

Exam information | Short-answer questions

In the exam, you may have to look for facts in a passage and give short answers to questions. You will be told how many words you are allowed to use in the answers. A number can be written either as a word, e.g. *four*, or as a number, e.g. *4*, and counts as one word. A word with a hyphen in it, e.g. *mother-in-law*, counts as one word. You will not be required to use contractions.

1 **How many words are there in these sentences?**

1. She keeps fit by running after her two five-year-olds.
2. To use the gym equipment safely, follow the step-by-step instructions.
3. The Internet is helping the over-sixties to find up-to-date health information.
4. They are offering exercise classes 3 mornings a week for the part-time workers.



Exam tip

To keep to the maximum number of words, it can help to change a word form. Use a noun as an adjective *the documents about the house* → *the house documents*, or to omit a verb *there is a variety of reasons* → *various reasons*.

2 **The following instructions were given in an IELTS reading exam: 'Using NO MORE THAN FOUR WORDS for each, answer the following questions'.**

Look at the students' answers in the table below and make them shorter if necessary.

Question	Students' answers	Short answer
1 What were his parents afraid of?	there was a possibility that he would have problems with his health (12 words)	his possible health problems (4 words)
2 When did they first find out there was a problem?	when doctors did a medical examination during the mother's pregnancy	
3 How does his illness affect him?	at the moment he is not affected by it at all but he needs to take medication	
4 What will happen in the future?	nobody knows that yet	

LIVEWORKSHEETS