



Finding the right words from the passage

Short answer questions test your ability to find specific details in a passage. As we go through we will follow the 7 steps that I highlighted in the blog post.

Step 1: Read the instructions carefully - these tell you how many words and/or numbers you can use. Underline or highlight the information so that you don't forget! In this example it would be possible to offer three word answers to question 2 and 4 accidentally!

Step 2: Read through all the questions, so you have an idea of what information you need to find in the text.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage for each answer.

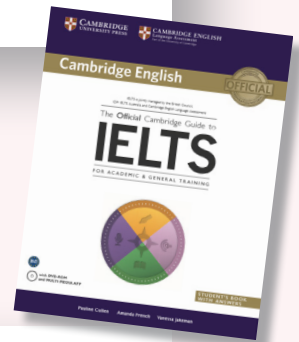
1. When was the material Henshilwood found originally made?
2. What two common materials did ancient humans use to obtain their ochre?
3. What did the ancient people use to keep their ochre mixture in?
4. Nowadays, who makes use of ochre?

Adapted from pages 49-50
The Official Cambridge Guide to IELTS.

Step 3: Predict what kind of word or words you will be looking for e.g. a date, an adjective, a name etc. for each question/space.

1. A year?
2. 2 x nouns
3. Some kind of bag/box? A noun
4. A person or group of people

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Emma Cosgrave

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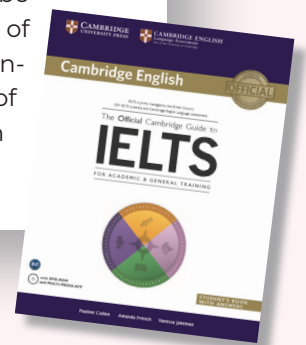
Step 4: Use keywords to help you skim the text quickly to find the information. Expect to find synonyms being used in the text so think about what other words might be used. (I have underlined some for you.)

Step 5: Read the section of the text where you know the answer is carefully to see which words will answer the question.

Ochre find reveals ancient knowledge of chemistry

The oldest ochre-processing toolkits and workshop ever found have been unearthed, indicating that as far back as 100,000 years ago, humans had an understanding of chemistry.

Archaeologist Christopher S. Henshilwood from the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and the University of Bergen, Norway has been excavating the site since 1992, and has reported the discovery of a mixture, rich in ochre, stored in two abalone shells. It dates back to the Middle Stone Age – 100,000 years ago. Ochre is a term used to describe a piece of earth or rock containing red or yellow oxides or hydroxides of iron. It can be used to make pigments, or paints, ranging from golden-yellow and light yellow-brown to a rich red. Its use spans the history of humans – from those living more than 200,000 years ago, to modern indigenous communities.



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Step 6: Check that your answers make sense grammatically. If the words you have chosen from the text don't make sense you have not got the correct answer. Double-check the instructions to ensure you are within the word count.

Step 7: Remember you have to use words from the text rather than your own. Even if you have a good idea of what the answer is you must find the words from the text and use them exactly as they are, you cannot change the words at all.



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Finding the right words from the passage

Sentence completion tasks also test your ability to find specific details or information in the passage. You will need to use words from the passage to complete the sentences so that they are grammatically correct. The sentences will paraphrase the ideas in the passage.

You can use the same steps that you just practised to complete the sentences. Good luck!

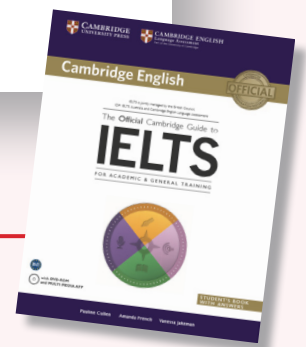
Choose **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

- Two ingredients used to make paint found in the cave were and
- Two examples of tools used to make the paint that were found in the cave are and
- The scientists used the on the equipment to help work out how the paint was made.

The Blombos Cave discovery is the earliest-known example of a pigment- or paint-producing workshop. All of the materials were discovered at the same site, and they included an array of raw materials including samples of bone and charcoal, as well as pigment-producing equipment such as grindstones and hammerstones. Judging by the equipment, which shows signs of wear, Henshilwood and his team were able to deduce the process used to produce the ochre mixture.

Adapted from pages 49-50
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I hope that you have found these exercises helpful. You can find lots more guided activities and authentic practise test material in *The Official Cambridge Guide to IELTS*, a fantastic resource for anyone preparing for IELTS.



You can find all the answers to the questions in this worksheet below.



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ANSWERS

1. 100,000 years ago
2. earth, rock
3. (two) shells / (abalone) shells
4. indigenous communities
5. bones ; charcoal
6. grindstones ; hammerstones
7. signs of wear



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