

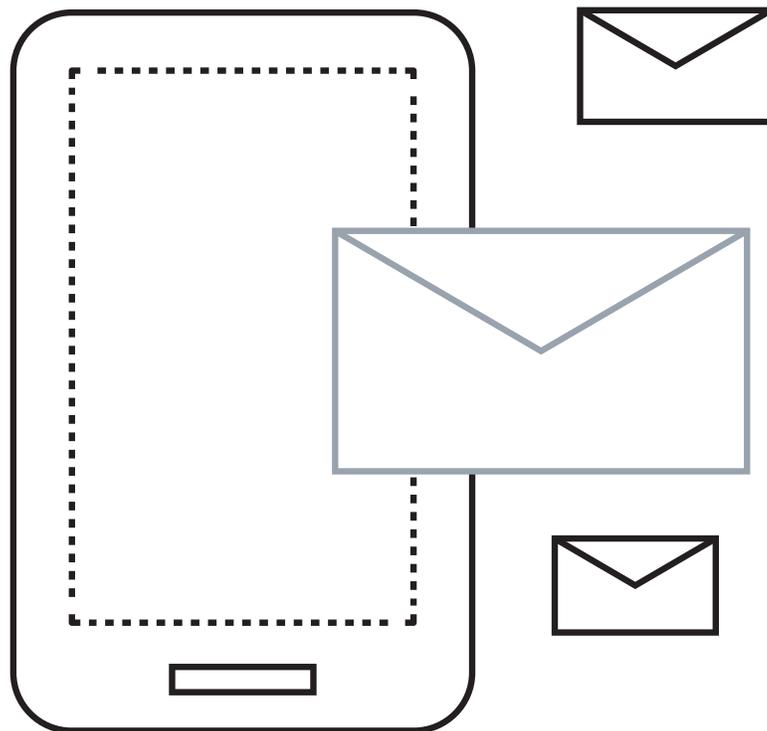
UNIT 2

Reading Correspondence

LEARNING FOCUS

- Reading skills
 - Previewing
 - Skimming
 - Scanning
-

Reading Part 1: Reading Correspondence starts with a personal letter or email. This is followed by a set of comprehension questions and a short response message with text-completion questions. To answer the questions, you need to understand the general meaning of the original message, locate specific details, and relate the response to the original message. You may need to infer knowledge based on your reading of the initial message.



Reading Part 1: Reading Correspondence

Time remaining: 11 minutes 0 seconds

NEXT

1 Read the following message.

Hi Janice,

I would like to apply for a leave of absence for the month of December. I know that's a very busy time for us in the store, and it will leave you in a difficult position since I am the chief buyer. I wouldn't ask except that it's important.

Lately I've been feeling very tired and not at all like myself. I went to the doctor and he said that I'm experiencing stress and that I must take time off. He said I have to do that now, before it gets any worse. I love my job, but he says stress can happen because of being too busy for too long. Well, that does describe me all right!

Fortunately, we've already interviewed some promising new staff members to help during the busy Christmas season. Perhaps they could start work soon, and I can help train them during the next two weeks before I'm off. I'm sure we'll have a good balance of experienced staff and new sales staff to see us through the busy period.

I've been ordering stock this month, as usual, so that we are fully prepared for Christmas shoppers. I think it's unlikely that more shoe orders will need to be made in December, unless there are special orders for occasions such as weddings. That's usually your area of expertise anyway.

If you recall, last summer you asked me to prepare a procedures manual for all store staff. I did this, and the permanent staff have given me feedback. I've made all the changes. It explains everything, such as store policies, breaks and time off, shifts, cash register procedures and problems, and chain of command. I think this will help new staff members learn what to do in their job.

David and I have made arrangements to spend the month in Florida. Hopefully the weather will be warm and sunny. The cottage we've rented is right on the beach and a bit isolated. I'm glad about that because we want to rest, not get caught up in a busy social circle.

Again, I'm sorry for the inconvenience, but I have no choice.

Thanks,

Tracey

2 Using the drop-down menu (▼), choose the best option according to the information given in the message.

3

- Who is Tracey writing to?
- Which item would the store be worried about?
 - a) a coworker
 - b) a doctor
 - c) her friend
 - d) her manager
- Why is Tracey worried about taking time off?
- Tracey is going to Florida to
- Which statement best describes Tracey?
- Why does Tracey mention the manual?

4 Here is a response to the message. Complete the response by filling in the blanks. Select the best choice for each blank from the drop-down menu (▼).

4

Hi Tracey,

I've noticed that you haven't seemed yourself lately, and I've been worried. I'm glad you are 7. . But it will be difficult getting through 8. without you!

5

I'm wondering if you ordered enough of product number BL-4829. This item was very popular last winter, so I think it 9. . Maybe you could show me how to reorder, so I can be prepared. Overall, I agree that 10. .

As you say, we have some good temporary staff members starting soon. I'll contact them to see if they can begin work next Monday. You and I can do the training together. I'm sure 11. will be useful when you're not here.

I hope the break in December does you good!

Janice

- ① The main passage is an email.
- ② There are eleven questions in total.
- ③ The first six questions refer to the main passage.
- ④ The second passage is a response to the main passage.
- ⑤ There are five text-completion questions for the short response.



Reading Skills

There are three essential reading skills that will help you complete the Reading Test within the given time.

- PREVIEWING:** Glance quickly at the overall structure of the screen, identify the various sections, and check how long you have to answer the questions.
- SKIMMING:** Look over the main text quickly to identify the topic, and get a general idea of the content by reading over the first sentence of each paragraph.
- SCANNING:** Quickly locate the information you need to answer the question.

You should spend about 1–2 minutes previewing and skimming a passage as soon as it comes onscreen, before looking at the questions. It is not necessary to read the entire text to find the information you need. Skimming the text first will give you a general idea of where to look for specific details when you are answering the questions.



Previewing

When each test part begins, start by previewing the screen to check format and timing.

- Determine how long you have to complete this part of the test.
- Identify how many sections there are.
- Check how many questions there are.



Activity 1

Without looking back at the reading on page 6, answer the following questions:

1. How long do you have to complete Reading Part 1?
2. How many sections are there?
3. How many questions are there?
4. Roughly how long do you have to answer each question?



Skimming

Skimming is a type of speed-reading; you need to quickly look over the text to understand how the passage is organized and identify the topic of each paragraph. Follow these steps when you skim a passage:

- Read the first sentence or two of each paragraph; the main idea of a paragraph is often introduced here.
- Spend a little more time on the first paragraph; the topic will be introduced here.
- Make note of words and phrases that are repeated; these may be key words in the test questions.



Activity 2A

Reading Part 1 is formatted as a personal message and response. Read the Greeting, Sign-off, and first sentence of each paragraph in the reading on page 6 and answer the questions below. These questions will help guide your reading as you go through this part.

1. Who is the writer?
2. Who is the recipient?
3. Paragraph 1:
 - a) Tracey is requesting 1 month off work at the end of the year.
 - b) Tracey wants to leave work for 2 months, beginning next month.
 - c) Tracey has the right to ask for a leave of absence for a month.
 - d) Tracey needs to leave work early today as she has an errand to run.
4. Paragraph 2:
 - a) Tracey is explaining why she's tired of her current position.
 - b) Tracey is informing the reader about how tired she is today.
 - c) Tracey is giving reasons for her request for a leave of absence.
 - d) Tracey is giving reasons why she prefers working by herself.
5. Paragraph 3:
 - a) Tracey is informing the reader of the promises made by new staff.
 - b) Tracey is finished interviewing new staff for Christmas.
 - c) Tracey is busy during Christmas and can't do more interviews.
 - d) Tracey is informing the reader of the upcoming interviews.
6. Paragraph 4:
 - a) They will need more stock for December.
 - b) Stock is already ordered for Christmas.
 - c) As usual, shoppers are ready for Christmas.
 - d) She has prepared stock for all occasions.
7. Paragraph 5:
 - a) The manual for all store staff is ready.
 - b) Tracey cannot recall what she did last summer.
 - c) Tracey is waiting for feedback about the manual.
 - d) Tracey had asked her manager for feedback last summer.
8. Paragraph 6:
 - a) Tracey will arrange to stay in Florida soon.
 - b) Tracey will be alone in Florida for 30 days.
 - c) Tracey has asked David to make arrangements.
 - d) Tracey has planned a trip for two to Florida.
9. What is the relationship between the writer and the recipient?
10. What is the main purpose of the email?

The passage you just skimmed contains 231 words, but only about one-quarter of these were visible. This demonstrates that even if you don't understand all the words, you may still be able to determine the overall meaning of a passage. The chart below shows how a high-level test taker might use the blacked-out information to determine the general idea of the passage.

The author of the passage	compares	motels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rooms on ground floor doors to the parking lot
		hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> several floors underground parking
	expresses a preference	motels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ground floor instant exit easy access to car
	suggests	researching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> websites travel guides written reviews
	warns against	badly managed hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complaints bed bugs unclean bathrooms not meeting company standards



Scanning

Scanning will help you locate specific details in the original message to complete the response and to answer the questions. The ability to recognize paraphrases can help with this. When a piece of text is paraphrased, different words are used to express the same meaning. For example, a paraphrase of “locate specific words” is “find particular terms.” The meaning remains the same, but different words—synonyms—have been used.

Since paraphrasing is often used in answer choices, try to notice synonyms or rephrased terms as you scan the text. Follow these steps to develop your scanning skills:

- Identify the information you need to find (read the question!).
- Briefly imagine what the information will look like (will it be a name, a number, a date, a phrase?).
- Skim the article to determine where the information might be (which paragraph?).
- Scan the target paragraph, and then read any sentences that might have the answer (focus on a specific chunk of text).
- Minimize time spent reading paragraphs that likely don't have the answer (stay focused).



Activity 3

Look at the question and scan the partial text to find the best answer. Look for words in the text that are synonyms or related to the words in the answer choices to help you find the answer. Then read the explanation in the Answer Key.

1. Most **motels** have
- a) a single **storey**.
 - b) a small **parking lot**.
 - c) too few emergency **exits**.
 - d) rooms with two **doors**.

Motels is definitely a key word here

Watch for these key words, or their synonyms, in the text.

Floor is mentioned frequently here; perhaps that's important.

Hi Jason,

As for the difference between motels and hotels, most motels have all of their rooms—and everything else—on the ground floor and their doors open directly to the parking lot. Hotels, on the other hand, have several floors—sometimes as many as fifty—and underground parking. I know you're travelling with your dog, so you'll probably prefer a motel. Honestly, I like motels better because if I'm on the ground floor, I've got an instant exit in the event of an emergency. And if I forget something, it's easy to run back out to my car to get it!

2. **Managers** have a lot of control over
- a) the **prices** they charge.
 - b) the **services** they provide.
 - c) the **quality** of their motels or hotels.
 - d) the **reviews** of their motels or hotels.

Managers seems to be a key word that we should be able to find in the text.

Watch for these key words, or their synonyms, in the text.

"Highest quality" in this phrase is a good hint. Maybe the answer relates to **"quality."**

You should do some research so you can decide ahead of time where to stay. This is important to do before you leave. I suggest you look at websites and in travel guides for reviews of hotels and motels. Most are rated on a five-star scale where a five-star rating means the highest quality. However, written reviews can be more helpful than star ratings because these reviews may mention things not listed on the websites or guides. I almost booked a room at a popular and respected hotel chain, but then I read some reviews complaining that they had bedbugs and unclean bathrooms! I guess some managers make sure their establishments comply with the company's standards, and some don't.

3. Marcel's **main point** is that his friend should
- a) **make some inquiries** before he leaves.
 - b) consider **leaving his pet** at home.
 - c) stay at a **hotel** instead of a motel.
 - d) **make reservations** in advance.

Main point indicates that this question is asking for the purpose here...

Watch for these key terms, or their synonyms, in the text.

The question states that Marcel's friend may need to **consider doing something**. There are a number of sentences phrased as **suggestions** in this paragraph, so it might be a good idea to start with these.

Often, the star rating is based on the number of amenities the hotel or motel offers. This is also something for you to consider because things like internet are usually free, but parking sometimes costs extra—you don't want to be surprised by this. Will you want breakfast included? Do you plan on swimming? You probably won't care about room service. And I know you're travelling with your dog; some motels charge a mandatory pet fee in addition to the basic room fee. Check out the written reviews, the websites, and the guides to find the hotel experience you want. And be sure to check for extra fees. Sometimes it's even a good idea to call the hotel or motel directly because this information may not be found anywhere else.

Good luck, have fun, and send me some pictures!

Marcel



Time Management

- **EMAIL:** Take up to **1 minute** to **skim** for a quick overview.
- **COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:** Take about **45 seconds** for **each question**.
- **SHORT RESPONSE:** Spend **1 minute** **skimming** the text. Choose an answer for **each question** within **45 seconds**.



Test Practice

Use the skills you have learned in this unit to answer these questions from a new example of Reading Part 1.

Reading Part 1: Reading Correspondence
Time remaining: 11 minutes 0 seconds
NEXT

1 Read the following message.

Hi Andy,

I listen to you every week on CBC national public radio. It's great to hear your selection of music recordings from the 1950s to the 1980s. I like it even more when you play the songs you recorded as a guitarist with your rock group, The Isotopes, back in the 1960s and 70s. I wish The Isotopes would get back together. I remember when your band played in Brandon, Manitoba. In fact, I still have the diary in which I wrote about that show. It was December 4, 1972—before you became famous across North America in the 1980s. We were the young adults screaming and whistling in the front row!

I loved your recent shows, especially the one on December 14th featuring songs with catchy piano solos. I also liked the recent January 11th show featuring songs about world travel. Because of this year being a leap year, there was also last week's February 29th episode. It featured songs that were at first considered too long by their producers—who had tried unsuccessfully to make the artists shorten them. I like how you invite listeners to email you their ideas for future show topics.

I wonder if you would consider creating an episode about singers who didn't want to sing. Noreen Coolidge comes to mind. She was famous for and enjoyed using her beautiful voice, and yet her lifelong wish was to be a drummer instead! You could also include the fantastic Aileen Parker. One of the greatest jazz singers of all time, she wanted only to be a dancer. Another example is Alton Zimmer, a young man set on becoming an architect until his girlfriend pushed him to become a singer, even though he didn't want to. Perhaps you could call this episode "The Reluctants."

By the way, on last year's March 30th show ("The Inchworms"), you mentioned that pianist Arno de Luca won the reality TV show The Rockinators in 2010. Trust me, I've watched every show; de Luca won in 2014. The 2010 winner was violinist Arno Beswick. I still love your show. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Rhonda Pobanz

2 Using the drop-down menu (▼), choose the best option according to the information given in the message.

1. What is Andy's present job?
2. When did Rhonda see Andy in person?
3. In which paragraph does Rhonda say why she emailed?
4. What did Rhonda mostly want to tell Andy?
5. What would Rhonda like to hear on the radio soon?
6. What is true of all the singers mentioned?

3 Here is a response to the message. Complete the response by filling in the blanks. Select the best choice for each blank from the drop-down menu (▼).

To: Rhonda Pobanz
Subject: Your email received on 7. 7th

Hi Rhonda,

So you were one of those young people I saw 8. in Row 1 at the one-and-only Isotopes concert in Brandon, Manitoba! It's interesting to find out that at least one of my fans from past years is nowadays a fan of 9. .

Thanks a lot for your message, Rhonda. I'll be bringing it up at my next meeting with my 10. . In the meanwhile, stay tuned! We have some great shows coming up.

Best,

Andy

PS: I gather from the clues in your email that, like me, you 11. . Keep on rocking!

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. What is Andy's present job?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) radio show host b) radio show director c) radio show musician d) radio show recorder | <p>2. When did Rhonda see Andy in person?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) in the 1950s b) in the 1960s c) in the 1970s d) in the 1980s |
|--|--|

3. In which paragraph does Rhonda say why she emailed?
 - a) one
 - b) two
 - c) three
 - d) four
4. What did Rhonda mostly want to tell Andy?
 - a) a correction
 - b) a suggestion
 - c) a complaint
 - d) her memories
5. What would Rhonda like to hear on the radio soon?
 - a) songs recorded by unwilling singers
 - b) songs with a world travel theme
 - c) songs that are longer than normal
 - d) songs with interesting piano solos
6. What is true of all the singers mentioned?
 - a) Singing was their second career.
 - b) Singing was not fun for them.
 - c) They were better at something else.
 - d) They wanted a different job.
7.
 - a) December
 - b) January
 - c) February
 - d) March
8.
 - a) dancing to the music
 - b) jumping up and down
 - c) making loud noises
 - d) waving your arms
9.
 - a) The Rockinators on television
 - b) live concerts by The Inchworms
 - c) The Reluctants on television
 - d) live concerts by The Isotopes
10.
 - a) band members
 - b) concert organizers
 - c) recording engineers
 - d) show producers
11.
 - a) have travelled the world
 - b) play guitar passionately
 - c) sing rather unwillingly
 - d) were born in the 1950s

- of them are correct because the specific aspects of options (b), (c), and (d) are not mentioned.
- You should be able to determine option (c) is correct by first locating the word “managers” on Line 7, which tells you that the information you need is nearby. The phrase “a five-star rating means the highest quality” relates strongly to answer choice (c).
 - This paragraph contains information about amenities that the hotel has to offer, and the extra fees that may be charged for these amenities. In the final sentence of the paragraph, Marcel recommends that his friend call the hotel or motel directly for additional information. From this, you should be able to determine option (a) is correct. “Make inquiries” has a similar meaning to “additional information,” while the other options do not match the information given in this paragraph.

Test Practice

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. A | 4. B | 7. D | 10. D |
| 2. C | 5. A | 8. C | 11. D |
| 3. C | 6. D | 9. A | |

READING – UNIT 3

Activity 1A

- traditional (see Barbara’s Best Bakery, point 1)
- voted (see Olia’s Online Occasions, point 1)
- reasonable (see Theresa’s Tastiest Treats, point 5)
- guaranteed (see Wanda’s Wonderful Weddings, point 1)
- unbeatable (see Theresa’s Tastiest Treats, point 1)

Activity 1B

- Barbara’s Best Bakery
- Wanda’s Wonderful Weddings
- Theresa’s Tastiest Treats
- Olia’s Online Occasions
- Theresa’s Tastiest Treats

Activity 1C

- Wanda’s Wonderful Weddings—they offer vegan, nut-free, and gluten-free options.
- Barbara’s Best Bakery—they use red roses and ribbons.
- Olia’s Online Occasions—they will follow the theme of your choice.
- Theresa’s Tastiest Treats—they state they have reasonable prices but they don’t give any examples.

Activity 1D

- Olia’s Online Occasions: voted most popular; offers tastings; themed cakes.
- Wanda’s Wonderful Weddings: serves 25–50 guests, which is good for a small guest list; vegan, nut-free, and gluten-free cheesecake would work for their families’ dietary needs.

Activity 1E

- B
Explanation: The key word here is “gluten-free.” The cheesecake made by Wanda’s Wonderful Weddings is the only option that mentions this term, so “cheesecake” must be the correct answer.
- D
Explanation: The key terms here are “July,” “topping,” and “lemon cake.” Strawberries ripen in the summer, and berries are a possible topping for the lemon cake made by Theresa’s Tastiest Treats, so “local strawberries” must be correct.
- C
Explanation: The answer is likely not Theresa’s from the previous question, and Barbara’s Best Bakery seems to serve the largest number of people. Therefore, “Barbara’s” must be correct.