

STUDY ENGLISH

IELTS PREPARATION

TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE 17: NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

Hello. I'm Margot Politis. Welcome to Study English, IELTS preparation.

Today on Study English, you'll have the chance to practice your *reading comprehension skills*.

These are important skills, not just for the IELTS reading test, but for general academic studies as well.

Today, we'll focus on the skills you need to answer the range of question types in the IELTS reading test.

Let's begin by taking a look at the text.



NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE

A. Since the earliest beginnings, every known culture has been treating disease with natural therapies. Through centuries of trial and error, healers in these cultures laid a foundation for herbal medicine. The first known medical books of China, India and Greece all mention formulas used in healing. The Chinese also espoused the benefits of using insects and animal parts in their formulas, while the Indians described the use of water in healing disease.

B. It is not clear when naturopathic medicine originated as a science, but historians agree that one of the first "healers" to make a link between food and health was the Greek philosopher, Hippocrates, who lived from about 460 to 400 BC. He is regarded as the father of naturopathic medicine, and also called the father of Western medicine. The Hippocratic school taught that the principles of good health and healing are found in diet and lifestyle. Patients were treated with herbs, fasting, diet, hydrotherapy* and exercise.

* a natural method of treating disease or injury using water

So there's our comprehension piece.

It seems quite long. But let's start at the beginning.

Read the title.

We know that the passage is about 'naturopathic medicine.'

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Do you know anything about the subject?

You know the word 'medicine', but maybe not 'naturopathic'.

It's OK if you don't. You don't need to understand every word. We can probably figure out the meaning by paying attention to the context the word is used in, or by looking closely at the parts of the word.

We know that 'naturopathic' is an adjective, because it qualifies 'medicine'.

Now, let's break naturopathic down.

The first part 'naturo-' sounds like 'nature'.

The ending is the suffix '-ic'. Do you know other words that end in '-ic'?

How about 'photographic' or 'historic'?

The suffix '-ic' means 'relating to' or 'of'.

So we could guess that naturopathic means something like 'relating to nature'.

Then we can guess that the meaning of 'naturopathic medicine' is something like 'medicine that heals in a natural way'.

Can you think of any words you know that might belong to this subject?

How about:

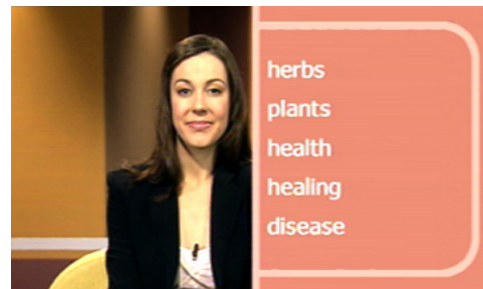
'herbs',

'plants',

'health',

'healing' or

'disease'



Let's look at the text again. After you've looked at the heading, look for some other clues as to what it is about.

Are there any illustrations or diagrams? What's the layout like? All these things will help your understanding of the subject.

What kind of text do you think this is?

It doesn't look like a newspaper article or an instruction manual. It's not an advertisement or a timetable.

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It's probably an article from a journal. We can tell by the style, the subject and the way it looks.

Did you notice the asterisk near the end of the text?

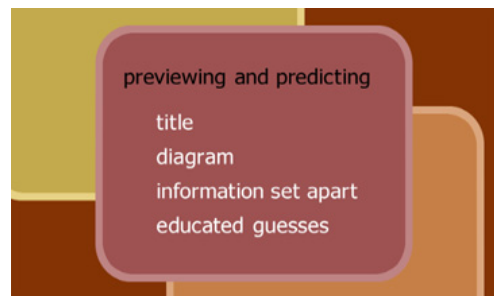
When an asterisk is used like this, extra information or explanation is given at the bottom of the page.

What we've just done is to use the skills of *previewing and predicting*.

We put together all the information we could about the text we are reading.

We looked for a 'title', a 'diagram' or any other 'information set apart' – like the asterisk at the end of the text.

We also made some 'educated guesses' about what is in the article, by predicting some common words we might expect to see.



Previewing and predicting before you start reading can help you process information quickly, because you know what to expect. It can also help you to follow the author's ideas better, because you've prepared yourself for the text before reading it.

Let's get back to the text. How is it organised?

It's divided into paragraphs. Here, we have 2 paragraphs: paragraph A and paragraph B.

Usually, a reading passage would have an 'introductory paragraph', several 'body paragraphs' and a 'conclusion'.

Each paragraph should have a 'topic sentence'.

The topic sentence will give the main idea or subject of a paragraph.

The skill of *skimming* involves reading over a paragraph very quickly to get a general sense of what it is about. When you skim a text, you just want to get a general idea of the content. You're not trying to read every word.

If you just read the first and last sentences, you can often get a good idea of the main subject of the paragraph.

Let's try with paragraph A.

"Naturopathic Medicine"

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“Since the earliest beginnings, every known culture has been treating disease with natural therapies.”

So what is the main subject of paragraph A?

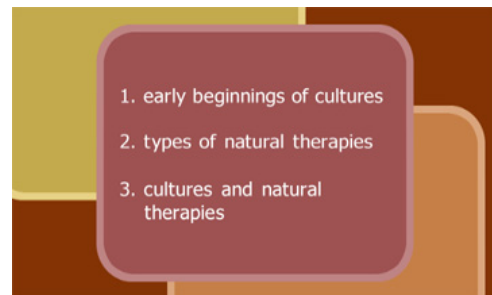
Well we read about:

‘the early beginnings of cultures’,

‘types of natural therapies’, and

‘cultures and natural therapies’.

Can you choose which one of these things tells us what the text is about most accurately?



Number one talks about ‘beginnings of cultures’. The text is probably not about that. It’s a bit too broad to be the topic sentence.

So you might think it’s number 2 – ‘types of natural therapies’. This choice is too narrow. The text is about more than just natural therapies.

It’s number 3 that covers the idea of the whole paragraph. It is about ‘cultures and natural therapies’. This is what the *topic sentence* is expressing.

You will be tested on your understanding of main ideas, so it’s a good idea to practice matching headings to paragraphs.

When you need to look for specific information, like a name, date or place, you can *scan* a text.

When you scan, your eyes move across the page very quickly looking for specific information. You can then skip over less important words.

Let’s try to scan over the text to find answers to some short answer questions.

Here’s our question:

“The early books of which countries mention natural healing methods?”

We’re going to scan the text, looking for the key words.

“The first known medical books of China, India and Greece all mention formulas used in healing.”

So we can answer by writing:

‘China, India and Greece’.

Let's try another short answer question.

"Who was the father of Western Medicine?"

Here are the key words. Let's scan the text.

'Hippocrates' is the father of Western Medicine.

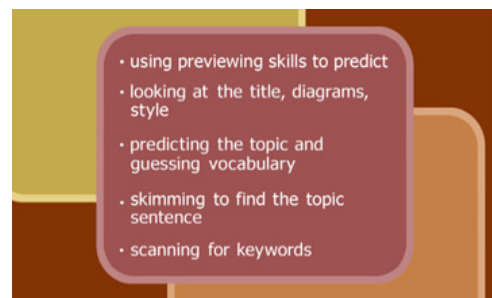
You can also use these skills when you need to answer multiple-choice questions, label a diagram or complete a table.

Let's take a quick look back over the skills we've used today:

We looked at using *previewing skills* to predict what the text was going to be about.

We talked about looking at the *title*, *diagrams* and *style* of the layout for clues to what the text might be about.

We practised *predicting* the topic and guessing vocabulary that might be in the text.



Next, we practiced *skimming* to find the topic sentence of the paragraph.

Finally, we talked about *scanning* for keywords.

And that's all for today, but you can try out these skills and more on the Study English website.

I'll see you next time. Bye bye.

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