True/False/Not Given and other question types: practise one at a time

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One-page cheat sheet · why test scores don't fix mistakes, the logic of each type, when to drill

> **A full test tells you how many answers were right, not why. You see the mistake but not the mechanism — so the next test repeats it.**

Why a full-test score teaches you nothing

- Reading test: 28/40, band 6.5; questions 4, 9, 17, 23 wrong. The key says "*the correct answer is NOT GIVEN*" — not **by what sign** you could tell it from FALSE without guessing.
- Next test: Not Given again, reasoned exactly the way that went wrong.
- Ten tests in a row build **stamina and timing**, not the mechanics of a format. Those need an explanation — and a test has no time for one.
- **Rare types** (matching sentence endings, flow-chart completion) don't appear in every test. Wait for them and your first real meeting is on exam day.

What one-type practice gives you

Every question type has its own internal logic, and it can be put into words. An explanation sticks the first time if it sits **next to your own mistake** — while you still remember why you chose the other option.

Not "the correct answer is NOT GIVEN", but "the researchers believe the eye helps and could not test this directly — so the claim is not confirmed, but it is not denied either."

The logic of each type — the rules that save a band or so

True / False / Not Given

Hedging — `believe` `suggest` `may` — usually means the claim is not settled. A statement that makes such an idea **certain** is more often **NOT GIVEN** than FALSE: the text doesn't deny it, it simply never asserts it.

Matching headings

A `yet` or `however` in the middle of a paragraph → the heading almost always belongs to the **second half**. The first half is the bait.

Sentence completion

Read the words around the gap. If the sentence already says *minutes*, then ✗ thirty minutes is three words and scores nothing — though right in substance. ✓ thirty.

Matching features

"*You may use any letter more than once*" is not a polite formality. The habit of avoiding a letter you've already used costs real marks.

Common mistakes

✗	✓
Reading the key and moving on to the next test	Find which question type the mistakes were in; drill that type
Choosing the heading from the paragraph's first sentence when a "however" follows	Match the heading to the part after "however"/"yet"
Repeating a word already in the sentence ("thirty minutes … minutes")	Check the word limit with the words around the gap
Never reusing a letter in matching features	Reuse letters when the instructions allow it
Meeting a rare format for the first time in the exam	Try it in advance on five questions

A mini-drill

- A short text + **one group of questions** of a single format.
- About **five minutes**, no timer, stop at any point.
- Same screen mechanics as the exam: drag headings, drag words from the box, a letter is taken by one question unless the task says otherwise.
- After checking: **a reason under every answer**.
- Limits: short practice texts, not a 900-word passage — no stamina. Reading types only for now.

When to drill — checklist

- ☐ **After every practice test:** one drill of the type you got wrong — while you remember your thinking.
- ☐ **Before a rare format:** matching features, summary completion with a word list — on five questions, not in the exam.
- ☐ **On the road and in gaps**, alongside vocabulary — one drill ≈ a few metro stops.
- ☐ **Not instead of full tests:** timing, fatigue and spreading 60 minutes are trained only by a whole section.