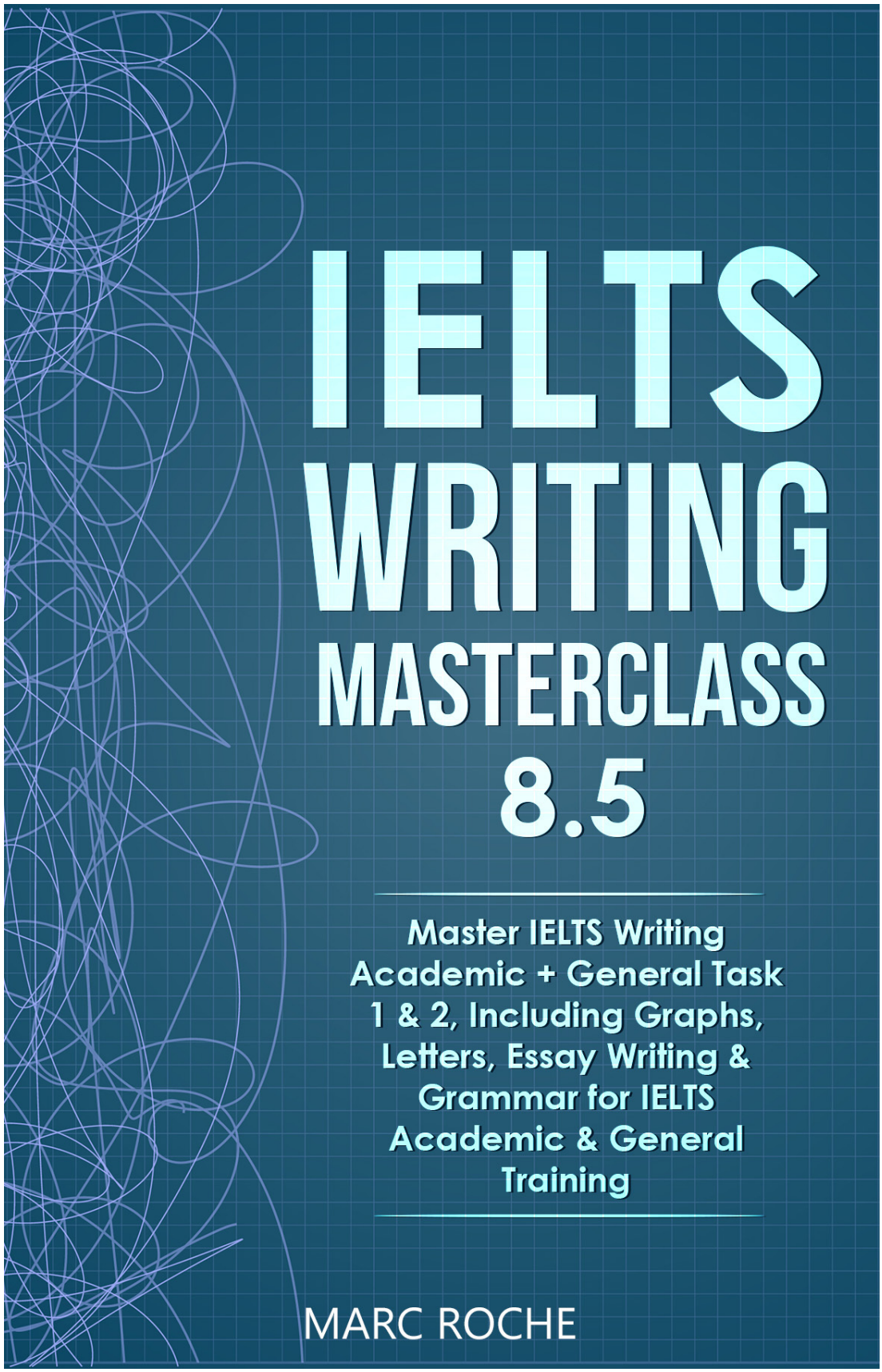
IELTS WRITING MASTERCLASS 8.5

Master IELTS Writing Academic + General Task 1 & 2, Including Graphs, Letters, Essay Writing & Grammar for IELTS Academic & General Training

MARC ROCHE


IELTS
WRITING
MASTERCLASS
8.5
Master IELTS Writing
Academic + General Task
1 & 2, Including Graphs,
Letters, Essay Writing &
Grammar for IELTS
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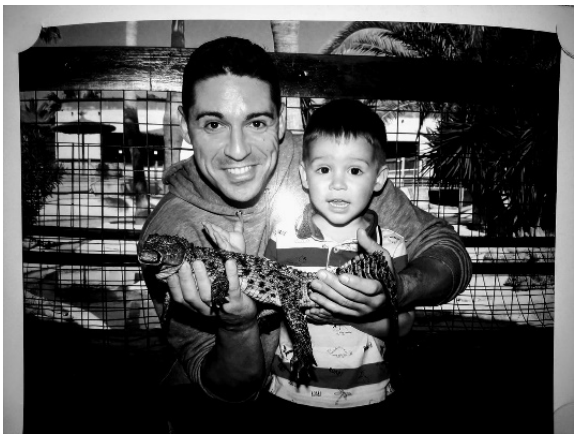
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About the Author



Marc Roche

Marc is originally from Manchester and currently lives in Spain He is a father, teacher, trainer, writer and entrepreneur. He has collaborated with organizations such as the British Council, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and University of Technology Sydney among others. Marc has also worked with multinationals such as Nike, GlaxoSmithKline or Bolsas y Mercados.

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About This Book

IELTS Writing Masterclass 8.5. IELTS Writing Masterclass 8.5. Master IELTS Writing Academic + General Task 1 & 2, Including Graphs, Letters, Essay Writing & Grammar for IELTS Academic & General Training , is a fully comprehensive self-study IELTS writing book designed for IELTS learners who want to achieve a band score of 8.5 in the IELTS Academic or General Writing tests.

Students are guided step-by-step through the different tasks to achieve the highest possible grade in the real exam. The activities in this book have been developed in the classroom by IELTS instructors with many years' experience in helping hundreds of candidates reach the highest possible scores in the exam.

IELTS Writing Masterclass 8.5. IELTS Writing Masterclass 8.5. Master IELTS Writing Academic + General Task 1 & 2, Including Graphs, Letters, Essay Writing & Grammar for IELTS Academic & General Training , shows candidates how to organize and structure an answer for all types of IELTS Academic and General writing tasks in the exam. This book quickly develops students´ fluency and confidence in producing Advanced pieces of writing and contains specialized IELTS grammar exercises in each unit, showing students how to apply a wide range of grammar items in their IELTS writing.

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IELTS Academic Writing Overview

Length: 60 minutes

Academic Writing Test

Task	Word count	Advised Timing	Task description
1	150	20 mins	Describing visual information such as bar charts, tables, graphs, maps or diagrams.
2	250	40 mins	Presenting arguments and opinions in a discursive essay about a topical issue.

TIP: The exam says to write a 'minimum of 150/250 words but don't write much more. Aim for 10 or 20 words more at the most.

IELTS Writing (Academic)



The Writing component of IELTS Academic includes two tasks. Topics are of general interest to, and suitable for candidates entering undergraduate and postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration.

Task 1

You will be presented with a graph, table, chart or diagram and asked to describe, summarize or explain the information in your own words. You may be asked to describe and explain data, describe the stages of a process, how something works or describe an object or event.

Task 2

You will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be in a formal style.

The Rules of IELTS Academic Writing

- Use correct spellings.
- Avoid contractions like we're; use we are.
- Never use 'slang' words like 'gonna'.
- Use formal English words, such as 'discuss' rather than 'chat'.
- Use correct punctuation: avoid very long sentences.
- Write a mixture of short and longer (complex) sentences.
- Use your own words or give a clear reference to the source.
- Write so that the reader understands exactly what you mean.
- Connect your ideas clearly (e.g. Finally/In conclusion/However)
- Use correct grammar that makes your meaning clear.
- Do not write informally, in a very friendly way
- Only give true data; do not invent or change it.



How to Evaluate Your IELTS Writing

The following table gives you a glimpse of what examiners are asking themselves when they read your writing test and decide on your score.



Task achievement	Did you understand and answer the question? Is there a clear opinion? What information did you include? Are there at least 150 (Task 1) or 250 words (Task 2)?
Organization	How well did you plan and organize the writing task? Did you use good connecting words?
Vocabulary	What vocabulary did you use? Did you use it well? How good is the spelling? To get a high band score you must: • Have a good range of vocabulary used correctly. • Attempts to use less common vocabulary and uses it correctly a lot of the time. • Very few or no spelling mistakes
Grammar	What grammar did you use? Did you use it well? How good is the punctuation? To get a high band score you must: • Produce a lot of error-free sentences. • Use a variety of complex sentences and have good control of grammar • Have good control of punctuation

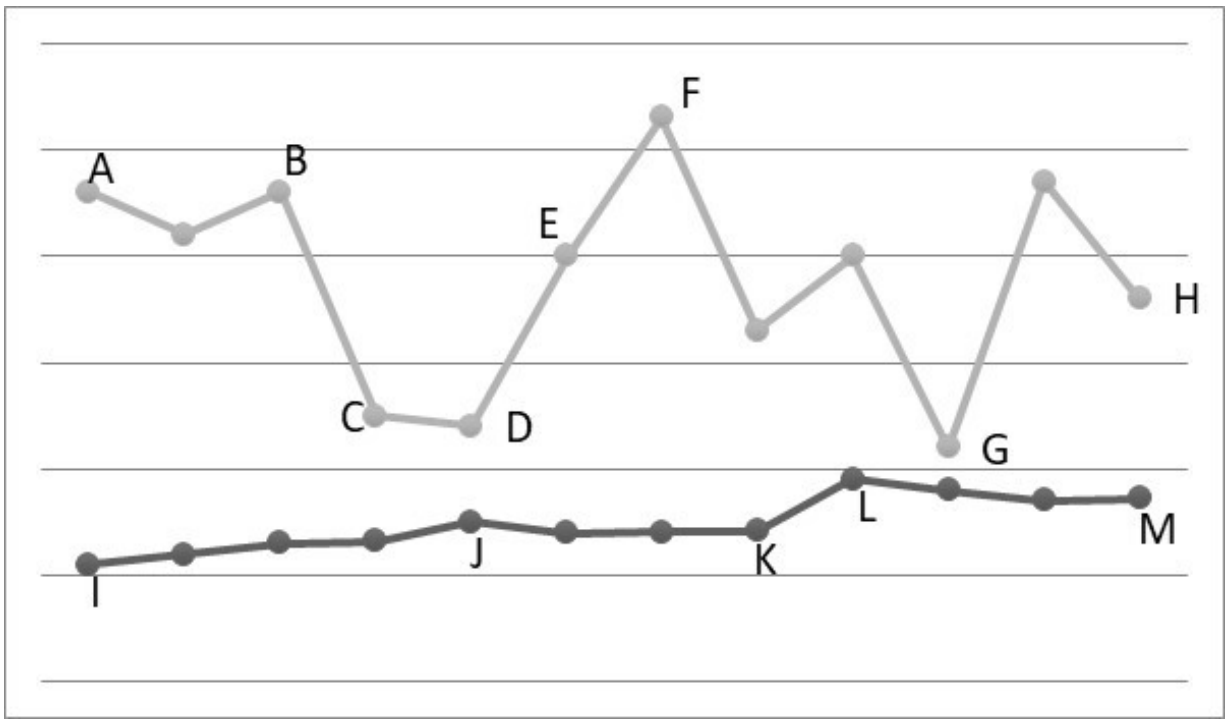
Chapter 1: Language of Change



When you write about a graph in Task 1 of IELTS, you will most likely be using the language of change and / or the language of comparison and contrast. In this first part we'll look at expanding your range of vocabulary and grammar structures for describing changes.

Exercise 1

Match the words of change with the parts of the graph. More than one option is possible.



Rose/increased steadily	Rose/increased dramatically	Rose/increased gradually
Plummeted to/Plunged to …	Hit a peak / Peaked at/reached a high of …	Fluctuated
Fell/dropped/shrank drastically/ dramatically / sharply	Remained flat/constant/unchanged/stable at	Dropped and then levelled off/evened out at
Hit a low of …/ bottomed out at	Fell and then quickly recovered	Dipped
Soared	Rocketed	Was erratic
Fell gradually / steadily		

A-B ……..

B-C ……..

B-D …….

D-F …….

F …….

F-H …….

G ……..

I-J ……..

J-K ……..

L-M ……..

Definitions for some difficult words

Word	Explanation
Plunged	a very quick and large drop or reduction
Peaked at / reached a high Of	The highest point on the graph
Hit a low of / bottomed out	The lowest point on the graph
Remained constant/unchanged/stable at …./ Levelled off/evened out at …	a 'flat' part of the graph where there is no change
Fluctuated/ was erratic	Increases and decreases randomly, irregularly or unpredictably
Rose/increased dramatically/Soared/ Rocketed	Increased very quickly and drastically
Dipped	Fell slightly but recovered quickly

Answers

A-B *Fell and then quickly recovered / Dipped*

B-C Fell/dropped/shrank drastically/ dramatically / sharply/ Plummeted to/Plunged to

B-D *Dropped and then levelled off/evened out at*

D-F *Rose/increased dramatically/Soared/ Rocketed*

F *Hit a peak / Peaked at/reached a high of*

F-H *Fluctuated/ was erratic*

G *Hit a low of …*

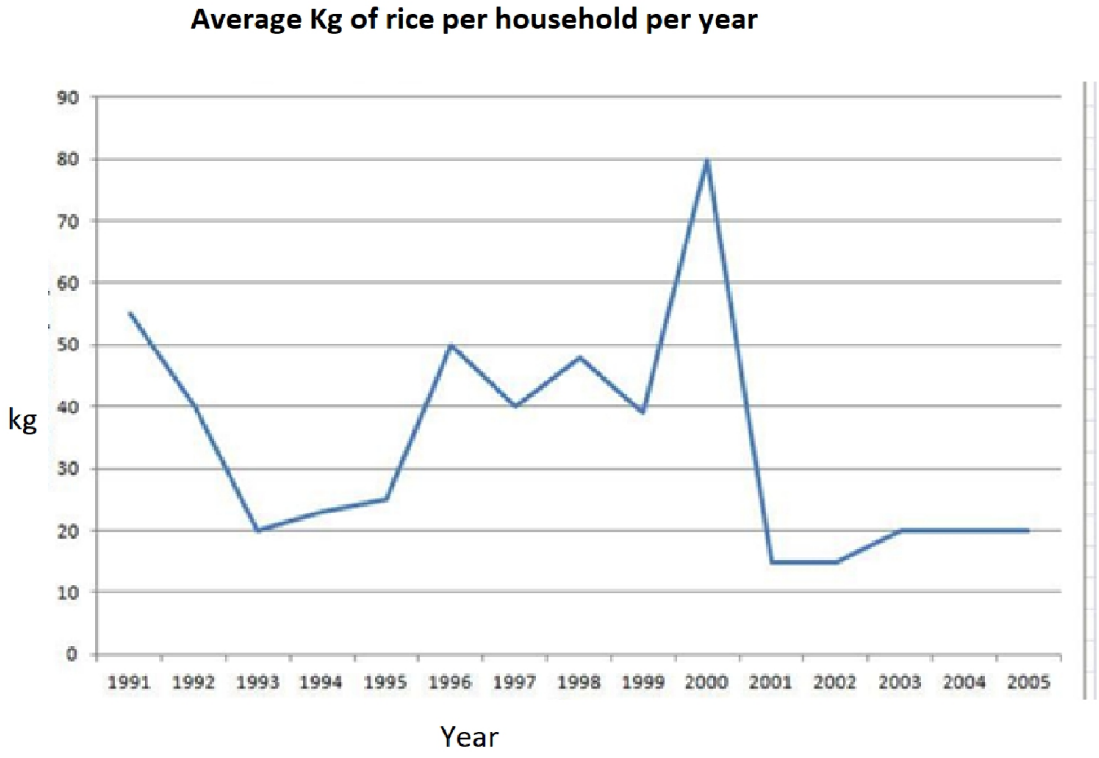
I-J *Rose/increased steadily/ Rose/increased gradually*

J-K Remained flat/constant/unchanged/stable at

L-M Fell gradually / steadily

Mastering Sentence Structures to Describe Change

Take a look at the following graph and read the paragraph which describes it.



Graph Description:

To begin, in 1991, the average number of kg of rice consumed per household per year was 55, but over the next two years, there was a dramatic drop to 20 kg per year (annum). The number then increased (grew, rose, climbed) significantly between 1995 and 1996 to 50 kg per year (per annum). 1996 to 1999 saw an erratic period (a fluctuation) in the amount of rice consumed, which was followed by a sharp rise at the end of the period, with the figures hitting a peak of 80 Kg in 2000. Next, the average consumption plummeted, hitting a low of 15 Kg in 2001. It levelled off for the next year, but then slowly increased to 20 kg, remaining steady at this rate for the rest of the period.

Exercise 2

Now, read the following sentences from the graph above. There are four different parts: **'bold'** , 'CAPITALS', '*italics* ' and 'underlined ' Each part has a specific function.

Read the sentences and say what you think the purpose of each different part is:

1. **To begin** , in 1991, the average number of kg of rice consumed per household per year was 55.
2. But OVER THE FOLLOWING two years, *there was a dramatic drop to* 20 kg per year (annum).
3. The number then *increased (grew, rose, climbed) significantly* BETWEEN 1995 AND 1996 to 50 kg per year (per annum).
4. 1996 to 1999 *saw an erratic period (a fluctuation) in the amount of rice consumed*
5. **Which was followed by** *a sharp rise* at the END OF THIS PERIOD,
6. *With the figures hitting a peak of* 80 kg in 2000.
7. **Next** , *the average consumption plummeted, hitting a low of* 15 kg in 2001.
8. *It levelled off* for the NEXT YEAR,
9. **But then** *slowly increased to* 20 kg ,
10. *Levelling off* at this rate for the REMAINDER OF THE PERIOD.

The answers are on the next page. Don't look until you've worked out the purpose of each part.

Answers:

Bold	Introduces sentence and adds coherence and contrast to the paragraph. (Connector)
CAPITALS	Tells when something happened (Time)
Italics	Describes the changes to the figure (what happened to the figures?) (Change)
<u>Underlined</u>	Provides a specific number or value per year, etc., connected to the change that has taken place or to the current point in the graph. Shows the movement. (Value)

The words in **bold** are connectors, or linking words, the words in CAPITALS are the time period, the words in *italics* are the change taking place, and the <u>underlined</u> words are the value the graph is measured in.

Connector	**Time**	**Change**	**Value**
To begin,	in 1991,	*the number of arrests for illegal drug use stood at*	55.

Connector	**Time**	**Change**	**Value**
However,	over the following three years,	*there was a sharp fall to*	20 per year.

Change	**Time**	**Value**	(no connector)
The number rose significantly	from 1995 to 1996	to 50 per year.	

Time	**Change**	**Connector**	**Change**
1996 to 1999	*saw a fluctuation in the arrest rate* ,	which was followed by	*a sudden increase*

Time	**Change**	**Value**	**Time**
at the end of this period,	*with the rate reaching a peak of*	80	in 2000.

This can help you see exactly what you need to be doing when you write about graphs to describe changes over time. Each sentence you write should have all or some of these elements.

If you don't feel very confident writing about graphs yet, this is a particularly useful trick to get you started. As you internalize these sentence structures, you will be able to use them naturally and automatically.

3 structures used when describing changes:

There are 3 vital sentence structures you must learn and practice so that in the end you can write them automatically! If you know these structures and you can apply them correctly in your description, you are on the right road to achieving a good or even a great score.

	There + be + adjective + noun + in + noun		
	There was a slow rise in the number of kg consumed.		
2	Noun + verb + adverb		
	Rice consumption rose steadily.		
3	Time + saw/ experienced/ witnessed + adjective + noun + in + noun		see table 1
	*1999 saw a gradual increase in rice consumption.		

**** there is no preposition before time words in this 3rd pattern (Not: In 1999 saw…)***

Using varied language with a range of sentence structures is vital to achieving a high band score in the IELTS exam. However, it is very common to see candidates who have learnt one of these sentence structures, and then use them throughout their graph description. If you do this, it will make your answer unnatural and will not demonstrate that you know a wide range of sentence structures.

For many students, the difficult part of using these sentence structures is getting the word forms right. Adjectives (gradual) change to adverbs (gradually) and nouns (a rise) change to verbs in the past (rose) depending on the sentence structure you are using.

You have to be very careful when using them and you have to practice them so that it becomes almost automatic for you and you can use them without thinking.

Now, you will see three different tables that will show you all the language of change you require for the exam.

Table 1: There + be + adjective + noun + in + noun

Time	Verb	Adjective	Noun	In the	Quantity of	Item	Time
		dramatic					
		gradual					
		large	decline				
		marked	decrease				
	There was a(n) (very)						
		minimal	drop		amount of		
		rapid	fall		number of		
Time		sharp	growth	in the	percentage of	noun	Time
		significant	increase		price of		
		slight	rise		value of		
		slow	fluctuation*		etc.		
	saw						
		small	jump*				
	witnessed						
		steady	plunge*				
	experienced						
		steep					

Table 1

Time + saw + adjective + noun + in + noun

Note: as you can see in the table, the time phrases can fit in three different places.

* Some words do not work with all adjectives and adverbs. Only use these with the following:

Fluctuation/(fluctuated) – dramatic(ly) /Slight(ly) / small.

e.g. There was a dramatic fluctuation in the amount of rice consumed.

Jump – sharp(ly), dramatic(ally), sudden(ly), minimal(ly), slight(ly) or small

e.g. There was a sharp jump in ice-cream sales

Plunge – sudden(ly)

e.g. 2009 saw a sudden plunge in ice-cream sales to 20,000.

Table 2 Noun + verb + adverb

The number of (noun)……..

The price of…

The value of…

Etc. +

<u>Verb</u> - <u>Adverb</u>

Declined - dramatically

decreased - gradually

dropped - markedly

fell - minimally

grew - rapidly

increased - sharply

reduced - significantly

rose - slightly

fluctuated* - slowly

jumped* - steadily

plunged* - suddenly

remained - constant

remained - stable

levelled out

did not change

reached a peak/trough

peaked at + Number- percentage or value

hit a high of/low of + Number- percentage or value

Table 3

Time phrases
From (time 1) to (time 2) Between (time 1) and (time 2) During the period (time 1) to (time 2) During (month or year) In (month or year) On (day) On the (date) At (time; hours/minutes) (time/time 1 to time 2) saw/experienced/witnessed

Table 4

Connectors
Moving to a more detailed analysis,…/First of all,…/To begin,… Following that/this, … Subsequently,… Afterwards,… After that/this,… Next,… Then,… Finally,… In contrast,… However,…

Exercise 3

Practice

Look at the tables carefully and make sure you use the correct form and tense for each verb.

Examples

The + noun + verb + adverb + in + time

The consumption of gas rose gradually in 2012.

There + BE+ adjective + noun + in + noun + in + time

There was a gradual rise in the consumption of gas (in gas consumption) in 2008.

Time + saw+ adjective + noun + in + noun

2018 saw a gradual increase in the consumption of gas.

Alcohol consumption dropped suddenly during January and February.

There was a …..

January and February saw a…..

There was a slight dip in car sales at the start of the new year.

Car sales……..

The start of the new year witnessed……..

In May, weather conditions improved significantly

May……

There…….

There will be a sharp increase in employment next year.

Next year ……..

Employment …….

Visits to European cities increased steadily from 2010 to 2017.

There was a …….

The period……

July experienced a fluctuation in the number of houses rented.

There was ……..

Answers

Exercise 3

Alcohol consumption dropped suddenly during January and February.

There was a sudden drop in alcohol consumption during January and February.

January and February sa w **a sudden drop in alcohol consumption.**

There was a slight dip in car sales at the start of the New Year.

Car sales **dipped slightly at the start of the New Year.**

The start of the New Year witnessed **a slight dip in car sales**

In May, weather conditions improved significantly

May **saw a significant improvement in weather conditions.**

There **was a significant improvement in weather conditions in May.**

There will be a sharp increase in employment next year.

Next year **will see a sharp increase in employment.**

Employment **will increase sharply next year.**

Visits to European cities increased steadily from 2010 to 2017.

There was **a steady increase in visits to European cities from 2010 to 2017.**

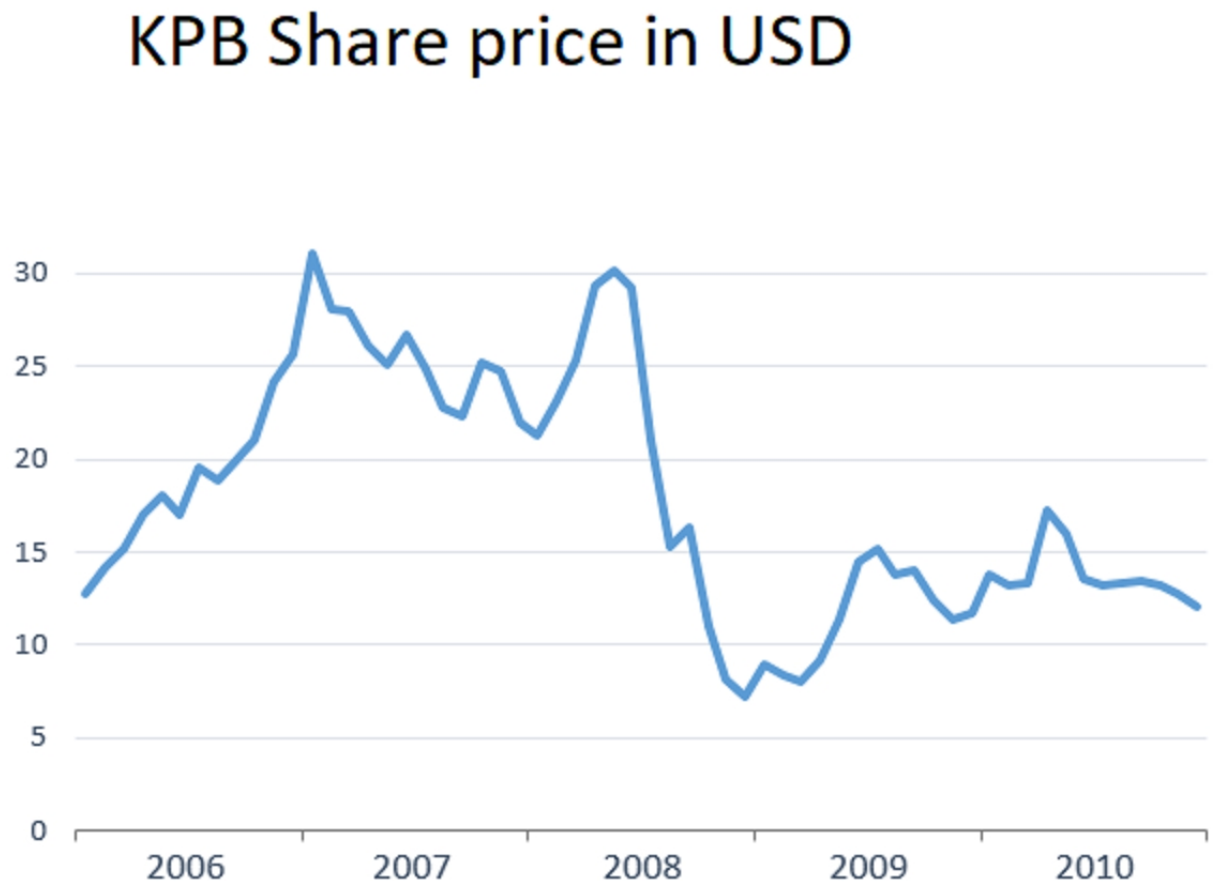
The period **from 2010 to 2017 saw a steady increase in visits to European cities .**

July experienced a fluctuation in the number of houses rented.

There was **a fluctuation in the number of houses rented in July.**

Exercise 4

Here is a similar graph. The topic is slightly different, and so is the data. **Write some sentences describing the different patterns on the graph, making sure you vary your sentence structures between the three examples we´ve looked at.**



Test Tip

Calculate how much space 150 words occupy on a page. This means you won't need to waste time counting during the exam. Make sure your handwriting is neat and that the examiner can easily read it.

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Model answer

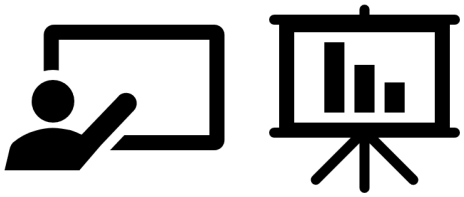
The graph shows the changes and the overall decline in the share price of KPB over a five-year period from 2006 to 2010.

At the beginning of the period the share price was at USD 13 per share. There were several fluctuations until late 2006 when there was a sudden increase from USD 21 to USD 31 per share. This higher price did not last long, however, and it fell before rising strongly again in 2008. From mid-2008 there was a sharp downward trend until the end of the year when it fell to the lowest point in this period at just over USD 7 per share. After that the share price recovered and, despite some fluctuations, continued to rise until it reached a peak of USD 17 in early 2010. Until late 2010 the trend was downward again, ending the year at just over USD 12.

KPB made significant gains and losses during this period but overall lost around USD 1 per share.

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Chapter 2: Introducing Your Graph Description



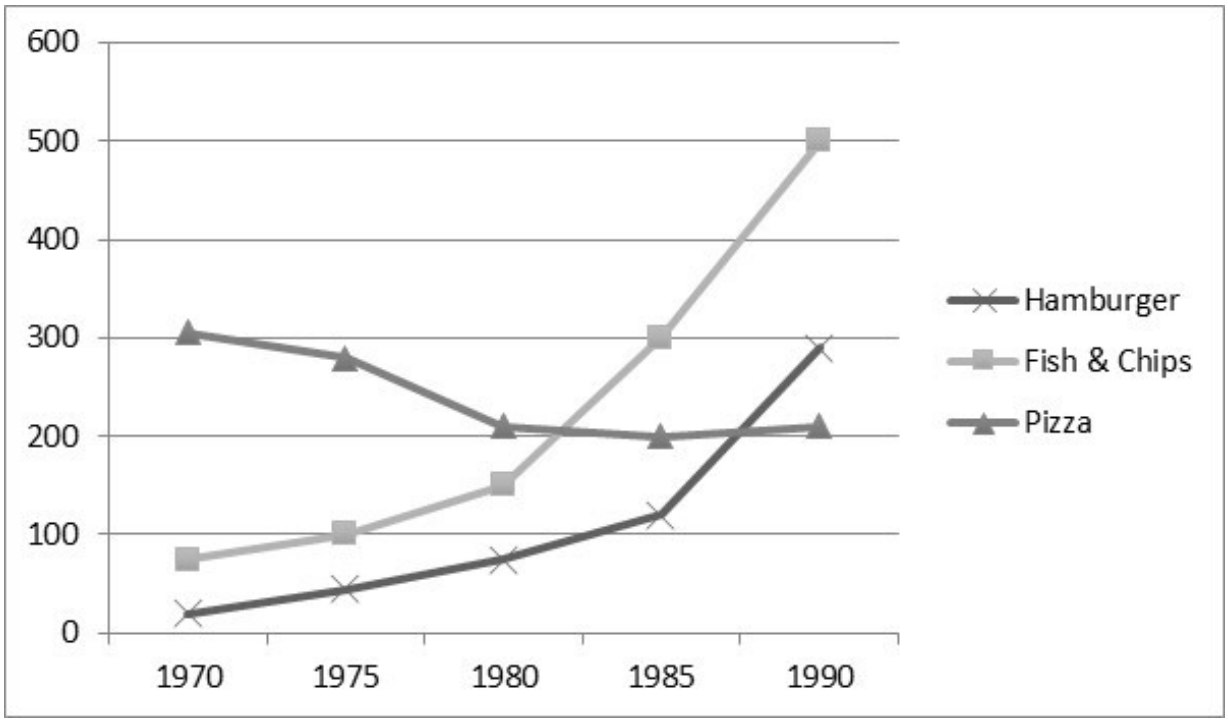
Look at the following graph and analyze both the descriptions.

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The line graph below shows changes in fast food consumed in the UK between 1970 and 1990.

Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.



Option 1:

The graph illustrates shifts in the amount of fast food consumed in the UK between 1970 and 1990. Several trends are apparent. Firstly, the UK population are eating more and more fast food. Secondly, the type of fast food has changed.

In 1970, the most popular fast food was pizza. Over 300g were consumed each week. By 1990, however, this had fallen to just over 200g - a 50% drop. Consumption of other fast foods such as fish and chips and hamburgers increased, however. The number of hamburgers eaten shot up from about 20g a week to more than 270g, overtaking pizza in the late 1980s. Fish and chips consumption also increased, rising from about 80g in 1970 to 500g in 1990.

Accompanying this change in the choice of foods was an overall increase in the amount of fast food consumed. In 1970, British consumers ate about 450g a week of fast food. In 1990, on the other hand, this had more than doubled, to almost 1000g.

Option 2:

The graph shows the amount of fast food eaten between 1970 and 1990 in grams per person per week. Overall, the amount of fast food consumed more than doubled during the period.

The amount of pizza eaten declined slightly. In 1970, the consumption was about 300g/week. This fell to 220g/week in 1990.

In contrast, sales of hamburgers and fish and chips rocketed. In 1970, very few hamburgers were consumed - less than 50g/week. This rose to 280g/week by 1990. In the same period, fish and chips sales shot up by more than 500%, from 80g/week in 1970 to 500 grams in 1990.

In conclusion, although there was a big increase in the consumption of fish and chips and hamburger, sales of pizza decreased.

Analysis:

There are two parts to the introductions:

1. **What the graph shows**
2. **The overview**

1. What the graph shows

This part of the introduction must answer the following questions:

1. What type of graph are we describing?
2. What is the information?
3. How is this information measured? (i.e. millions of pounds, kg, meters, liters etc..)
4. Is there a time period?

These questions can be answered by paraphrasing the title of the graph and using information from the x and y axis. See how the title of the above graph has been changed into the first line of the introduction:

Introduction 1	**The graph illustrates shifts in the amount of fast food consumption in the UK between 1970 and 1990. Several trends are apparent**. Several trends are apparent. Firstly, the UK population are eating more and more fast food. Secondly, the type of fast food has changed.

Introduction 2	**The graph shows the amount of fast food eaten between 1970 and 1990 in grams per person per week.** Overall, the amount of fast food consumed more than doubled during the period.

Note: Keeping some words the same or changing the order of the words **is** acceptable, but **you cannot copy** the title or large parts of the title, so **you need to paraphrase -**

Language

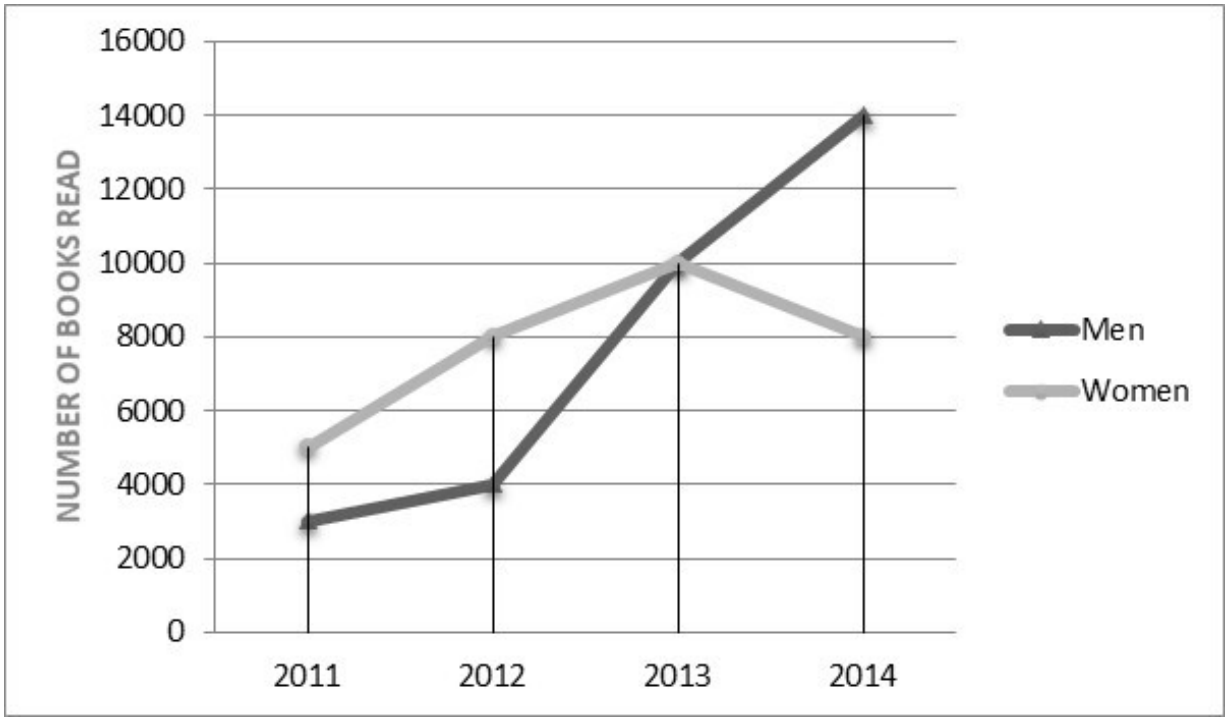
1. **Tense** - Use the **present simple** to say what the graph shows.
2. **Phrases** - You can use phrases like these to introduce the graph (never use the same phrase as the question):

    - The graph illustrates…
    - The graph shows …
    - The graph depicts…
    - The graph compares …
    - The graph provides information about…

Exercise 1

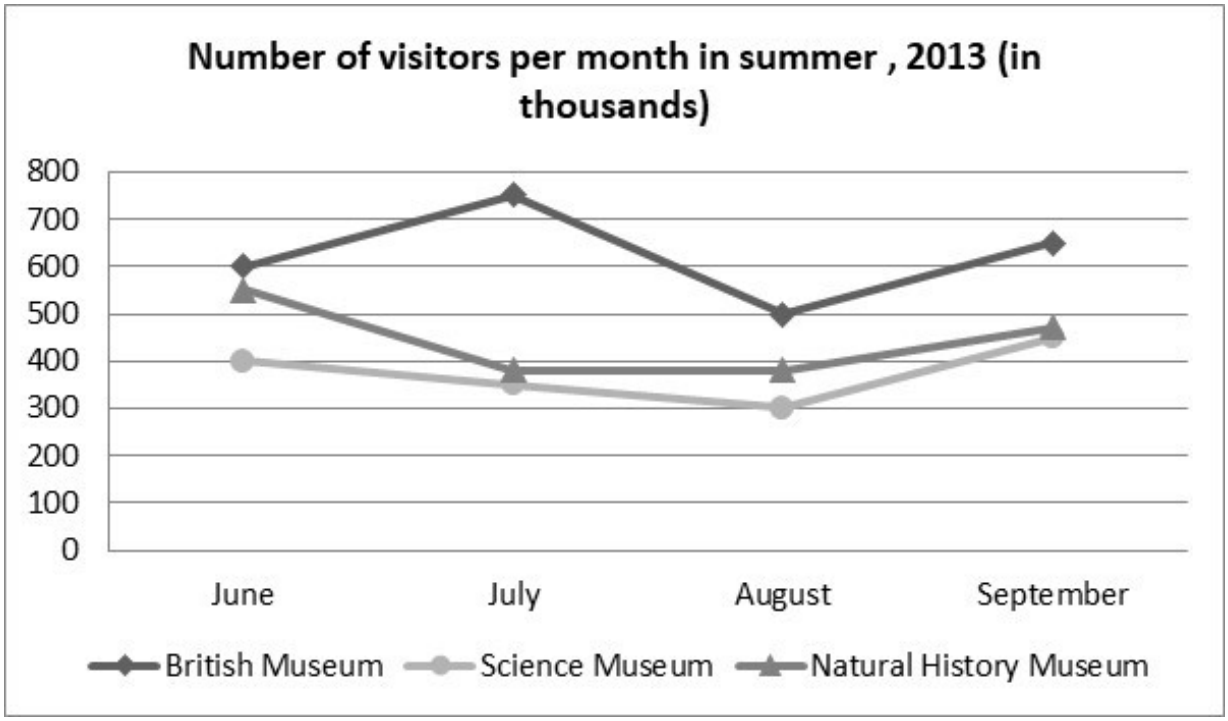
Now analyze the following three graphs. Write one (or more) sentences, paraphrasing the title to explain what the graph is about.

a) The graph shows the number of books read by men and women at Burnaby Public Library from 2011 to 2014.



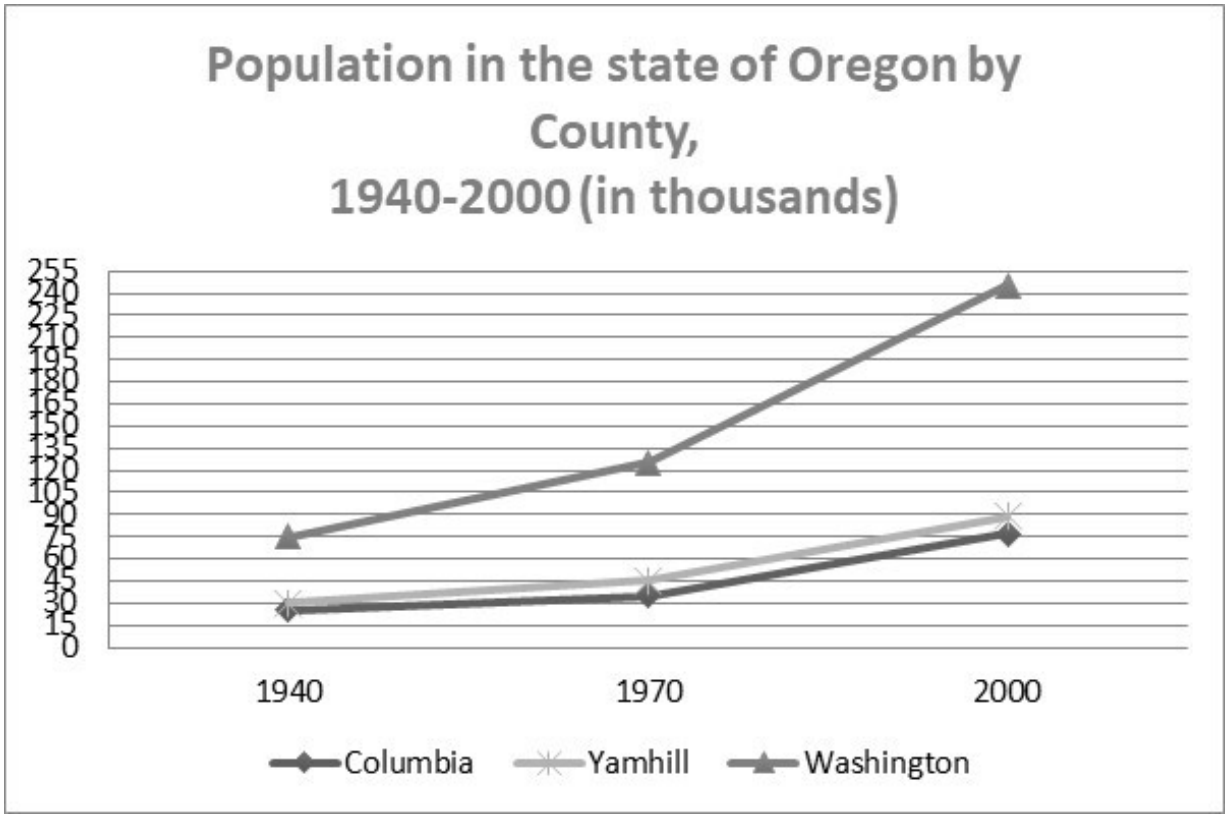
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b) The line graph gives information about the number of visitors to three London museums between June and September 2013.



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b) c. The graph shows the population change between 1940 and 2000 in three different counties in the U.S. state of Oregon.



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Possible Answers:

a) The graph provides data about how many library books males and females read at Burnaby Public Library between 2011 and 2014.

b) The graph illustrates how many people visited three different London museums during the summer of 2013.

c) The graph depicts the rise in population of Columbia, Yamhill and Washington in the U.S. state of Oregon, from 1940 to 2000.

2) Overview

After you have introduced the graph, you need to identify one or sometimes two main patterns or trends**.** To do this, think of the graph like a picture or a pattern. What are the most important things that have happened?

Normally one or two pieces of information in the graph can be chosen. It´s particularly important to write an overview, since according to the IELTS band score guidelines, you must have an 'overview' in your graph description to get a band 6 or higher under the marking criteria for 'task response'.

Overview	**Example 1:** "Overall, the amount of fast food consumed more than doubled during the period." **Example 2: "** Several trends are apparent. Firstly, the UK population are eating more and more fast food. Secondly, the type of fast food that they eat has changed."

Notice that the overview examples above don´t mention any statistical information about the graph (i.e. numbers, percentages, figures etc..). If you mention specific data it may appear like you are jumping straight into the description and you may lose points for not providing an overview.

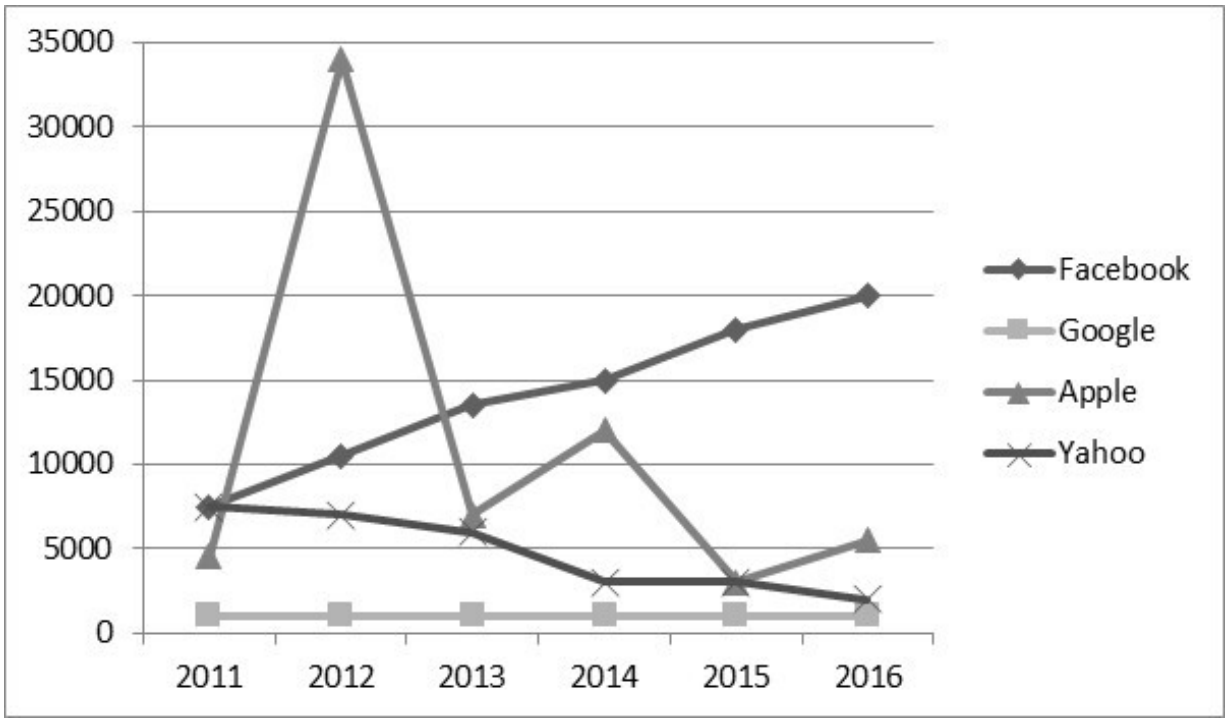
**You can use the overview in the introduction or as your conclusion at the end of the graph instead – either way is great providing you follow guidelines. If you think that you don´t have enough words in your description, a good trick is to paraphrase the ‘overview’ sentence that you used in the introduction of your description and place it as a conclusion as well but remember this is not necessary as long as you have included it once. Remember that a conclusion is not necessary in this part of the exam.

Recommendation: Always include the ‘overview’ in the introduction because if you run out of time in the exam and do not do an overview at the end, then you will lose marks under ‘task response’.

Exercise 2:

In order to write a good overview, you need to first, choose the key features.

This exercise will test your ability to identify the most important features in a data source correctly. Look at the following graphs and decide what the key features are for each.



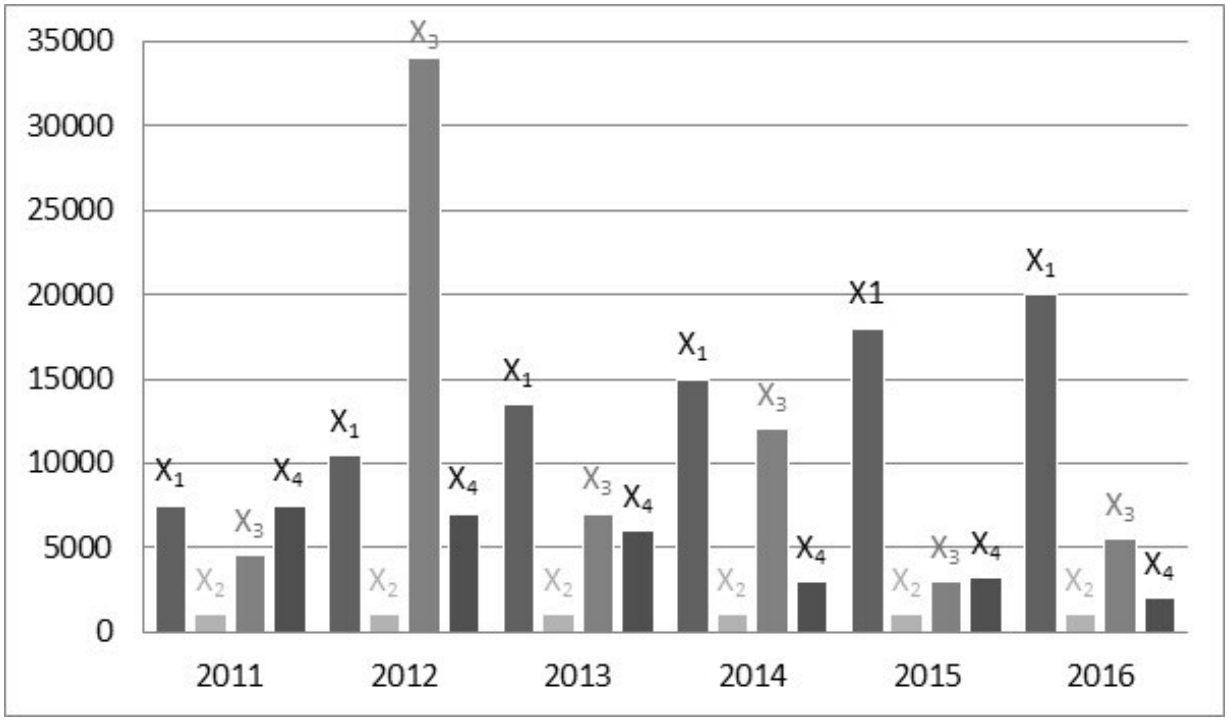
The graph above shows the stock price of four technology companies between 2011 and 2016. **<u>Choose 2-4 key features to include in your overview.</u>**

1. ……..

2……

3……

4……



The graph above shows the stock price of four technology companies between 2011 and 2016. **Choose 2-4 key features to include in your overview.**

1. ……..

2……

3……

4……

Answers:

1. Graph:

Basically, the key features of this graph are that Facebook increased, Yahoo decreased, Apple fluctuated, and Google remained relatively stable.

Many students overcomplicate this type of graph. In the majority of cases, with line graphs and bar charts, the easiest or most obvious answer is the right answer.

The main objective of this kind of graph is to demonstrate the general trends over time and this is exactly what the examiners are looking for in the overview.

2- Bar Chart:

You knew it was a trick question! The information is exactly the same as in line graph 1, and therefore the key features are the same. Remember that all you are looking at is data. It doesn´t matter how the data is visually represented, focus on the data itself.

Language

a) Tense:

Historical data in a graph with dates: Although the present simple is probably the easiest – safest option to use, try to use the **active, past simple** to describe completed past events

If a graph has no date: you can use past or present, but your use of tenses must be consistent, so if you decide to use the present simple to describe data in a graph, you must use the present simple throughout the whole graph.

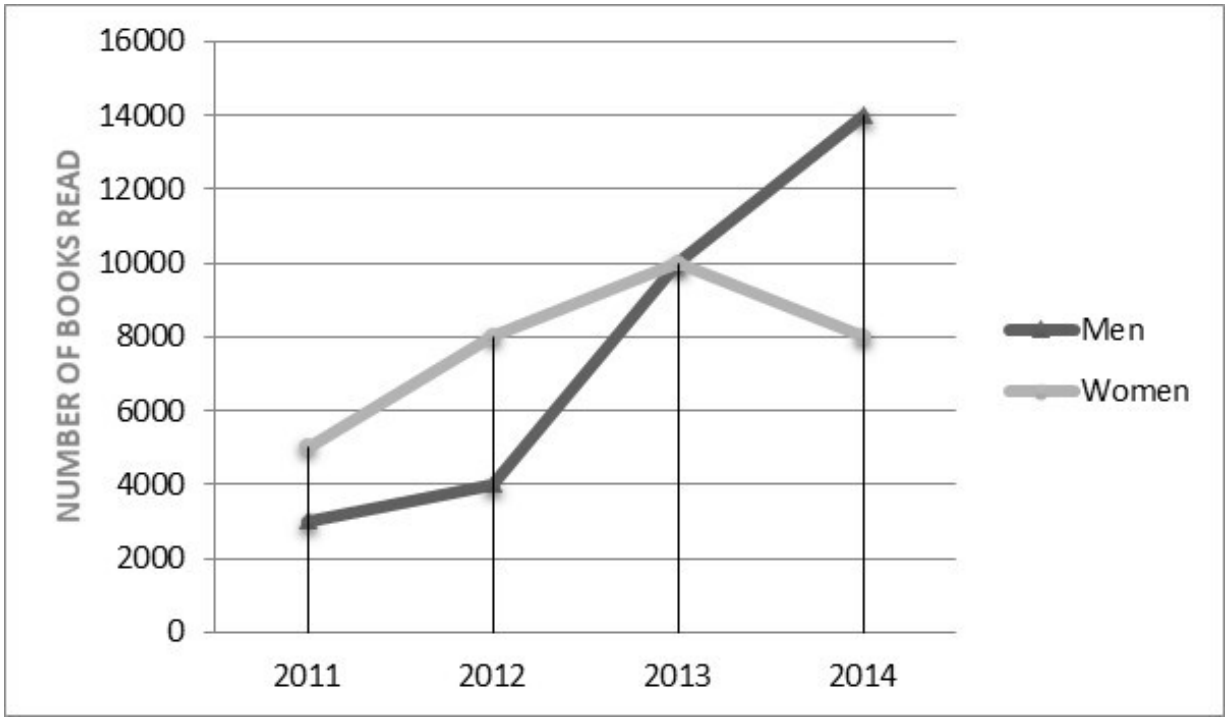
Future events and forecasts: If you are describing forecasts you need to use future tenses.

a. **Phrases:-** You can use phrases such as these to introduce the main points. Never try to memorize some or all of the phrases – **choose one you like- learn it and use it every time** .

i. Generally speaking…….. x was the most striking feature.
ii. Overall, it can be seen that …
iii. It is very clear from the overall trend that
iv. It can be seen from the graph that ….
v. It is noticeable that …
vi. Overall it is immediately apparent that…
vii. The most obvious pieces of information are that …
viii. The most striking feature was the …
ix. The main facts that stand out are that …
x. It is important to note that …
xi. The most significant facts to emerge from the graph are that …

Exercise 2

Look at the following graph from exercise 1 again. Write one or two sentences that identify the main key features.



……
……
……
……
……
……

Possible Answers:

Option 1: "*The most striking feature was the* strong upward trend in the number of books read by men. Although women read more books than men in 2011, their reading dropped/fell/decreased/shrank to below the level of men in 2014."

Option 2: "*It can be seen from the graph that* men tended to read more and more books over the 4-year period whereas the number of books read by their female counter-parts dropped/fell/decreased/shrank"

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Chapter 3: Bar Charts



Grouping information

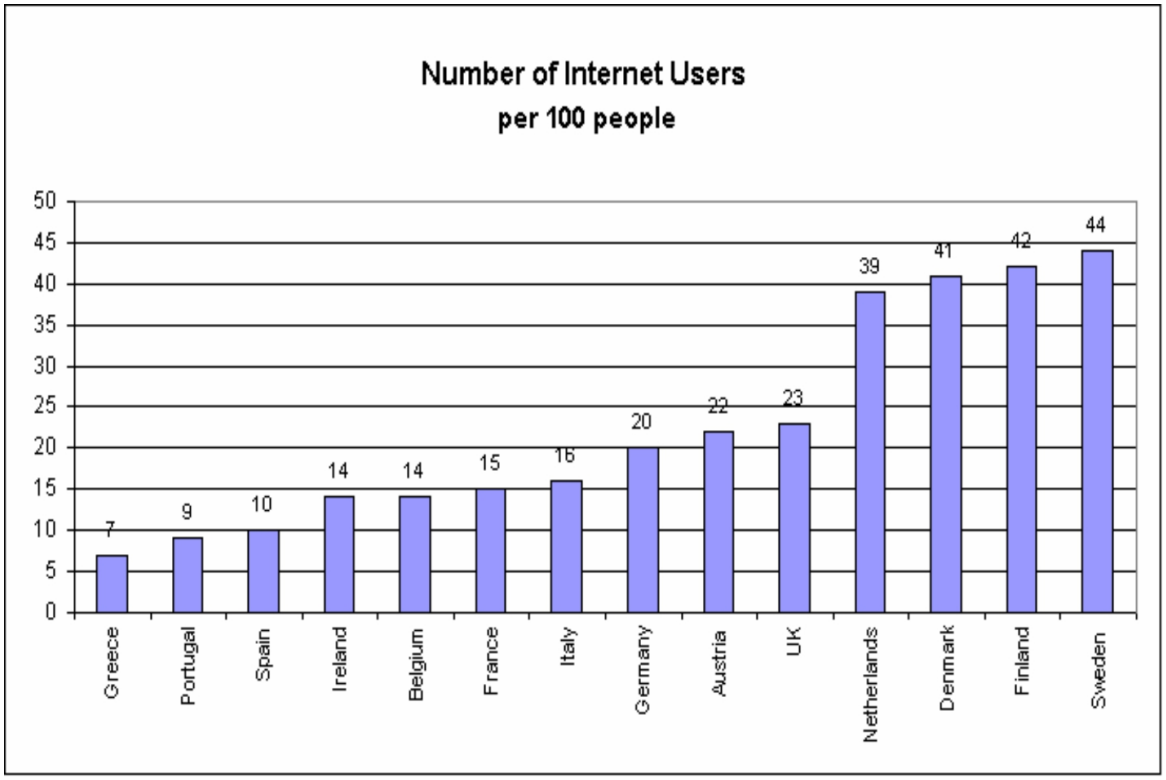
Organization is the Key!

You need a well-organized answer when you write about a task 1 graph or chart. It will have a negative impact on your band score if the examiner has difficulty understanding your ideas or the connection between your ideas.

To keep your answer organized you must group information. Look for similarities for things that can be grouped and write about them together.

For example, you could divide a list into two groups or even three groups. There is commonly one group at the top, one in the middle, and one at the bottom.

How can we group the information in this chart?



Group 1: …….

Group 2: …….

Group 3: …….

Group 4: …….

Answer:

Possible groups are:

Group 1: *Finland, Sweden, Netherlands, and Denmark (about 40 %)*

Group 2: *Germany, Austria, UK (about 20 to 25%)*

Group 3: *Ireland, Belgium, France and Italy (14-16%)*

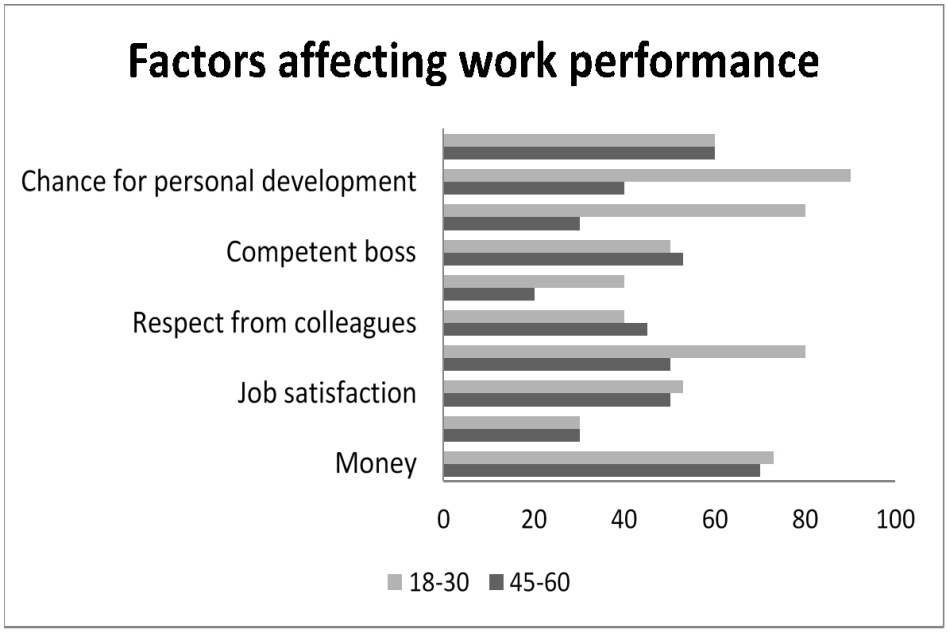
Group 4: *Spain, Portugal, Greece (10% or less Internet use)*

A difficult example :

The following bar chart shows the results of a survey conducted by a personnel department at a major company. The survey was done on two groups of workers: those aged from 18-30 and those aged 45-60, and shows factors affecting their work performance.

How can we group the information?

Remember: Look for similarities for things that can be grouped together in your description.



.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Answer:

This is a very difficult example since most of the time you will be able to group the information by results. For example: around group 1 40,000, group 2 around 60,000 etc.…

In this case we will need to group them by type of factor. Internal or external.

For example: *"These factors are divided into internal and external factors. The internal factors are competent boss, team spirit, job satisfaction and respect from colleagues. The external factors are chance for personal development, job security, promotional prospects and money".*

Language

As mentioned earlier, in order to write a well-organized and structured answer for task 1, you should think about how you can group the information.

This will form the paragraphs for your task 1. You need to show how things relate to each other i.e. by comparing and contrasting.

You will not be using any language of change in most bar charts, so your focus will be on comparing and contrasting.

	Example Word	**Comparative**	**Superlative**
Words with one syllable	**High** **Low**	Higher Lower	the highest the lowest
Words with three syllables or more	**effective** **productive** **popular**	more productive more effective more popular less productive less effective less popular	the most productive the most effective the most popular the least productive the least effective the least popular
Words ending in –y	**Wealthy**	wealthier	the wealthiest
Short words ending with a consonant/vowel/consonant	**Hot** **cold**	Hotter colder	the hottest the coldest
Irregular	**Good** **Bad**	Better Worse	the best the worst

2 x Quick Grammar Rules:

1. Comparatives are made with *more* or *-er* , but not both.

*The weather is getting **warmer** . (NOT ~~... more warmer.~~)*

*Please try to be **more polite** . (NOT ~~... more politer.~~)*

2. Use superlatives to compare people and things with the groups that they belong to.

Jessica is the tallest of the five girls. (NOT ~~Sandra is the taller of the five girls.~~)

I think I'm the oldest person in the class.

Other Important Language

Comparatives and superlatives are useful to compare and contrast, but they won't be enough.

Here are some other useful words and structures that look at differences:

Transitions

1. Germany consumes nearly 80 million tons of rice per year; however, it produces none.

2. The UAE produces large amounts of oil. In contrast, Taiwan produces none.

3. Russia consumes 184.2 million tons of gas. On the other hand, the Republic of Ireland consumes just 4.2 million per year.

Subordinating Conjunctions

1. Spain produces high levels of solar power, whereas / while Japan produces almost none.

2. While Germany consumes nearly 80 million tons of rice per year, it produces none.

3. Although Italy produced over 6 million tons of olives, Spain produced almost double during the same period.

Here are some structures for discussing similarities:

Transitions

India consumes almost 100 million tons of rice per year; Likewise/ Similarly, China consumes 118.8 million.

Other Structures

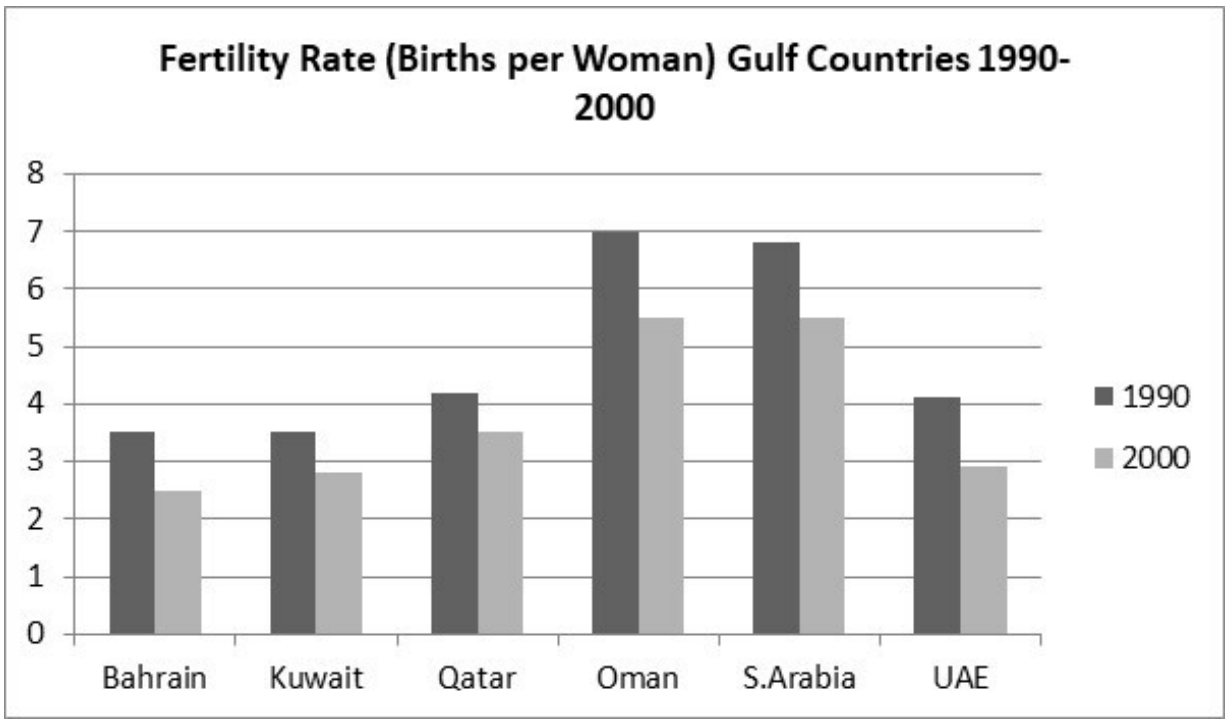
1. Both the UK and Spain produce medium levels of carbon emissions.
2. Austria produced the same amount of butter as Switzerland.
3. Wind power accounts for the same total energy production as solar power does.
4. Like Thailand, Malaysia produces 30,000 bottles.

Chart Analysis

The following chart provides information regarding the fertility in births per woman in six Gulf states from 1990 to 2000.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information below.

- You should write at least 150 words.
- You should spend about 20 minutes on this task



Exercise 1 :

To help you analyze the graph, answer the following questions:

1. ***What is the graph showing?***
2. ***What measurements are used?***
3. ***Is there a timeframe?***
4. ***What is/are the main trend/s?***
5. ***How could you group the information (look for any similarities between the patterns in the countries)?***
6. ***Based on your answer to number 5, how many paragraphs would you have in total?***

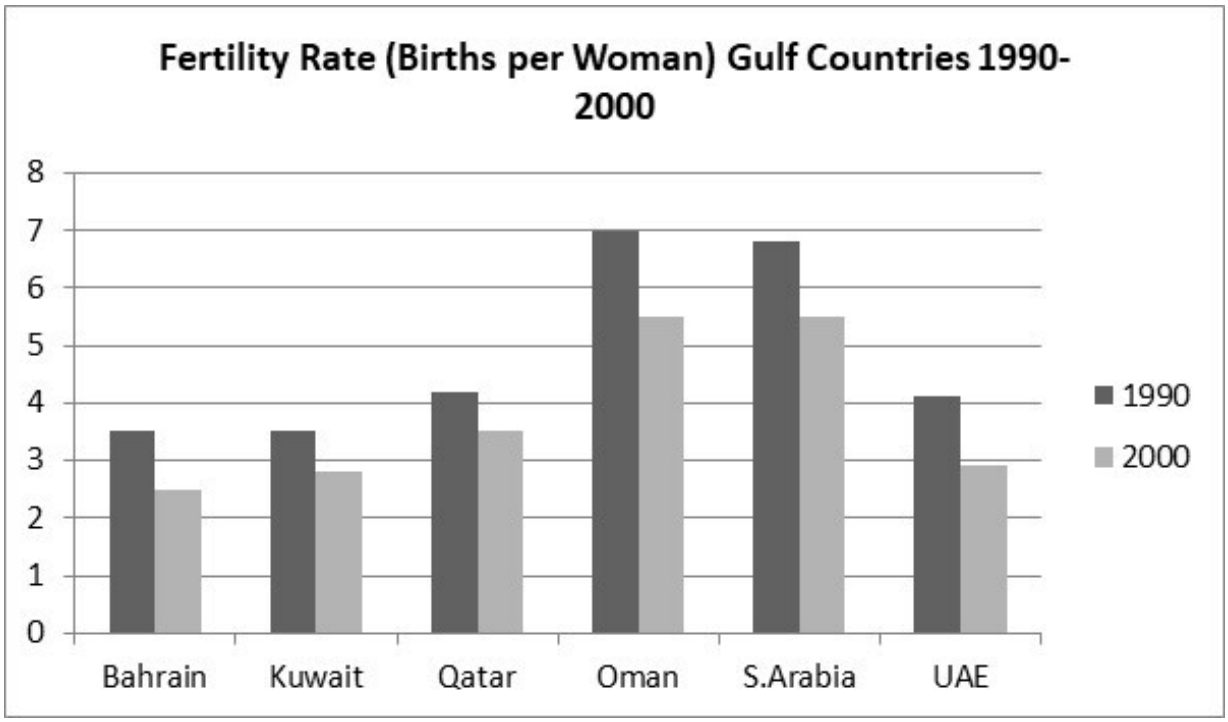
Check your answers on the next page…..

Answers:

1. **What is the graph showing?** The chart shows various shifts (changes) in the fertility rates of women in six Gulf countries, namely Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain between 1990 and 2000.
2. **What measurements are used?** Births per woman
3. **Is there a timeframe?** Yes (Years)
4. **What is/are the main trend/s?** there were major decreases in birth rates in all countries, but some countries in the region have double the fertility rate of others.
5. **How could you group the information (look for any similarities between the patterns**
6. **in the countries)?** Fertility rates vary widely between the six countries. Oman and Saudi Arabia had the highest rates, with over seven births per woman in 1990. This compared with around 4 births per woman in Bahrain and the UAE, and just 3.75 in Kuwait
7. **Based on your answer to number 5, how many paragraphs would you have in total?** 4-5 including the introduction

Sample Answer

Now we will look at a sample answer for the fertility rates chart.



Sample Answer:

The chart represents changes in the fertility rates of female members of the population (women) in six different Gulf countries, namely Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar between 1990 and 2000. Overall it can be seen that, there were major falls in birth rates in all (six) countries, although some countries in the region have (retain) much higher fertility rates than others.

From 1990 to 2000, there was a drop in the number of children born in all six countries. The most notable changes were in two nations, which already had low rates of fertility at the beginning of the ten-year period, the UAE and Bahrain.

Option 1 for paragraph 3:

There was a wide variation in birth rates between the six nations, with Saudi Arabia and Oman displaying the highest rates, (more than seven children born per woman), compared with around 4 births per woman in the UAE and Bahrain, and just 3.75 in Kuwait.

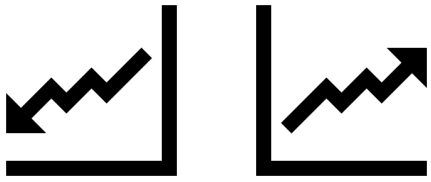
Option 2 for paragraph 3 (easier):

There was a wide variation in birth rates between the six nations. Oman and Saudi Arabia had the highest rates, with over seven births per woman in 1990. This compared with around 4 births per woman in the UAE and Bahrain, and only 3.75 in Kuwait

By the year 2000, the figures (numbers or rates) had dropped by over 25% in the UAE, which registered the same rate as (similar rates to) Bahrain and Kuwait at under (below) three births per woman. Similarly, the rates shrank by 20%, from 7.0 to 5.5. in (both) Oman and Saudi Arabia.

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Chapter 4: Describing Two Graphs Simultaneously



When there are 2 graphs it can seem harder than just one, but it isn't.

Tips

- Look at the first, summarize it then move to the second and compare it
- Write about both equally
- Make an effective plan by either addressing each paragraph then comparing them or choosing criteria and then comparing both charts in each paragraph.

Strategy

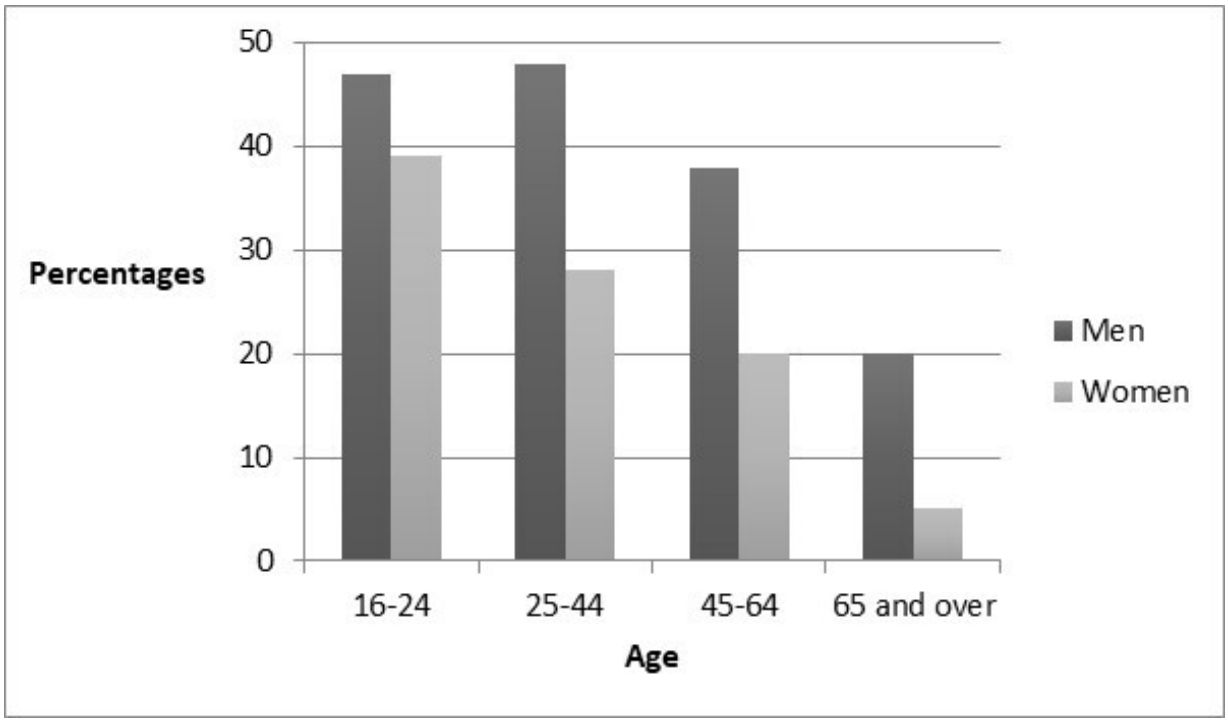
An effective strategy is to look at the graphs then ask yourself these questions:

1. What do they have in common?
2. What is different between them?
3. What are the most interesting results and the clearest trends in each graph?
4. What conclusions can you draw from both charts?

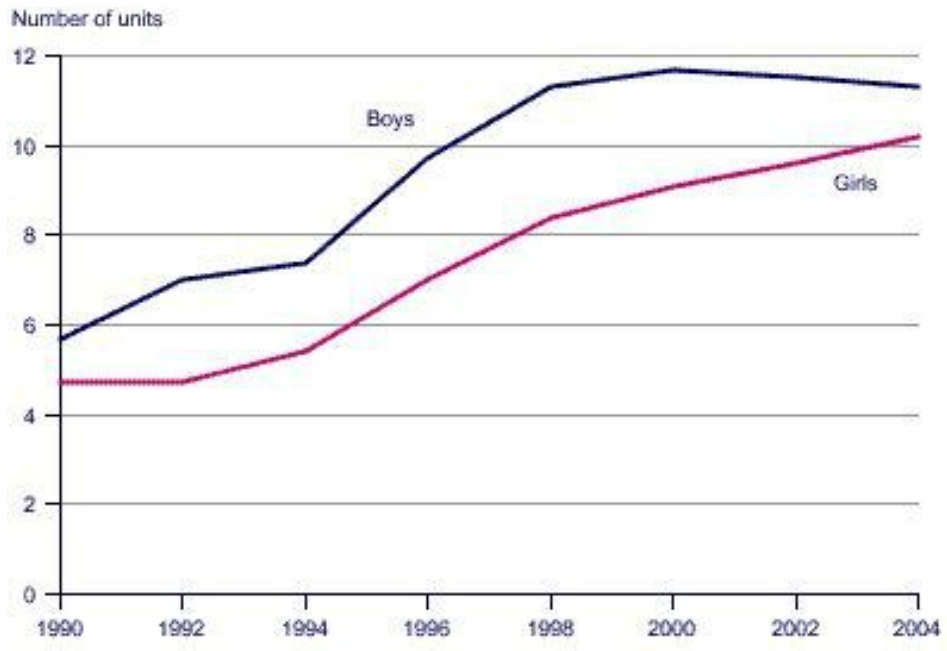
Understanding 2 graphs: Practice

Answer questions 1-5 about the following graphs.

The chart below shows the percentage of British adults drinking more than the recommended guidelines on at least one day a week in 2004.



The graph below shows the average alcohol consumption of children in the UK, aged 11-15, who drank in the last week. (1990-2004)



1. Which of the following statements do the 2 graphs NOT have in common:

i. Both show alcohol consumption in Britain.

ii. Both show the difference between the two sexes.

iii. Both show the similarities between the two sexes.

iv. Both show that boys/men drink more alcohol than girls/women.

2. What is different about the graphs?

i. Only the 1st graph shows percentages and age groups.

ii. Only the 1st graph compares male/female adults in Scotland.

iii. Only the 1st graph compares male/female adults in Britain.

iv. Only the 1st graph shows how many adults drank too much at least one day a week in 2004.

v. Only the 2nd graph shows the number of units, weeks and years (1990-2004.

vi. Only the 2nd graph shows the number of units and years (1990-2004.)

vii. Only the 2nd graph compares boys and girls in the UK aged 11-15.

viii. Only the 2nd graph shows the number of units the children drank in one week.

3. What are the clearest trends in graph 1?

i. In each age group men drank alcohol.

ii. In each age group men drank more than women.

iii. Nearly half of all men aged 18-44 exceeded the recommended amount.

iv. Nearly half as many men as women between 45-64 drank more than the recommended amount.

v. Nearly twice as many men as women between 25-64 drank more than the recommended amount.

vi. Almost half as many women aged 45-64 (20%) exceeded the recommended amount compared to the 18-24 age group (39%).

4. What are the clearest trends in graph 2?

i. Boys drink more than girls, but BOTH have increased since 1990.

ii. Between 1994 and 1998 there was a significant increase in both sexes.

iii. There was no significant increase in both sexes.

iv. The number of units consumed by girls more than doubled between 1990 and 2004.

v. The number of units consumed by girls more than tripled between 1990 and 2004.

vi. The number of units has decreased for boys since 2000.

vii. The gap between boys and girls is getting narrower.

5. Which is the best conclusive sentence?

i. The highest percentage of female drinkers are aged between 18-24.

ii. Girls and boys drank too much when they were young.

iii. The number of young girls is increasing significantly.

Answers:

1. Both show the similarities between the two sexes.
2. Only the 1st graph shows percentages and age groups.
3. Only the 1st graph compares male/female adults in Britain.
4. Only the 1st graph shows how many adults drank too much at least one day a week in 2004.
5. In each age group men drank more than women.
6. Nearly half of all men aged 18-44 exceeded the recommended amount.
7. Between 1994 and 1998 there was a significant increase in both sexes.
8. The number of units has decreased for boys since 2000.
9. The highest percentage of female drinkers are aged between 18-24.

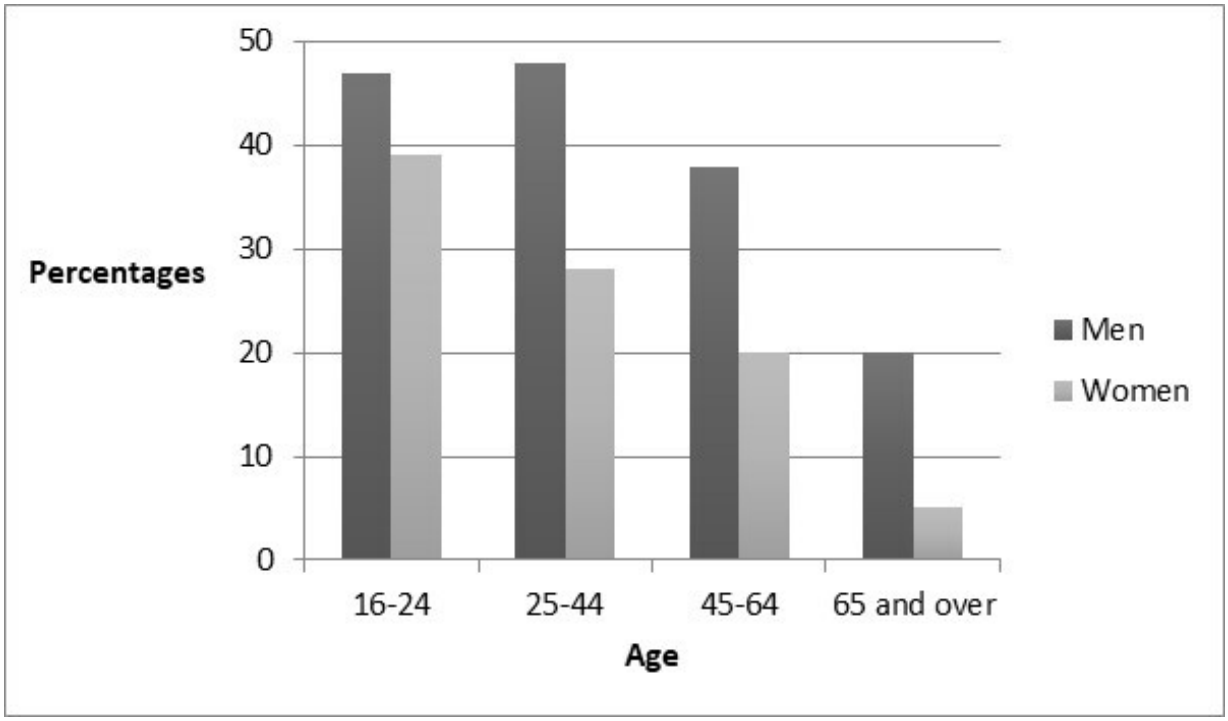
Sample Answer 2 Graph Description:

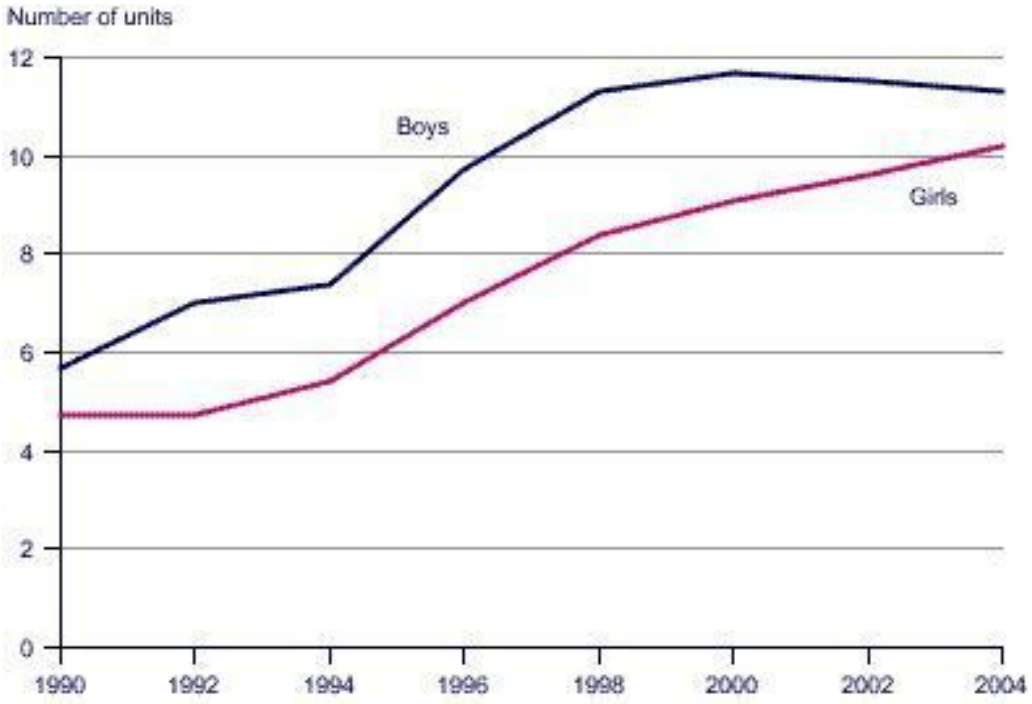
Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information below.

Write at least 150 words.

The chart on the left shows the percentage of British adults drinking more than the recommended guidelines on at least one day in the week in 2004.

The graph on the right shows the average alcohol consumption of children in England, aged 11-15, who drank in the last week (1990-2004).





Model Answer:

Both charts show the levels of alcohol consumption in children and adults in the UK.

The bar chart displays the difference in percentages between adult males and females in 2004, **while the second graph shows** the number of alcohol units consumed by girls and boys aged 11-15 between 1990 and 2004.

The first chart shows that nearly 50% of all men aged 18-44 consumed more than the recommended daily amount. Although the numbers were also relatively high for women aged 18-24 (39%), the figures for those aged 25-64 were approximately half the number of (that of) their male counterparts. **In addition** , the percentage of women over 65 was dramatically lower at just 5% as opposed to (compared to) 20% of men.

The second chart reveals that there was a substantial rise in alcohol consumption among children (both boys and girls) **between** 1990 **and** 2004. In fact, the number of units they drank approximately doubled for both genders with the sharpest increase occurring from 1994 to 1998, **increasing to over** 11 and 8 units for boys and girls respectively. **Since**

2000 the figure has dropped slightly for boys but for girls it has continued to grow, **hitting a peak** of **just above** 10 units in 2004.

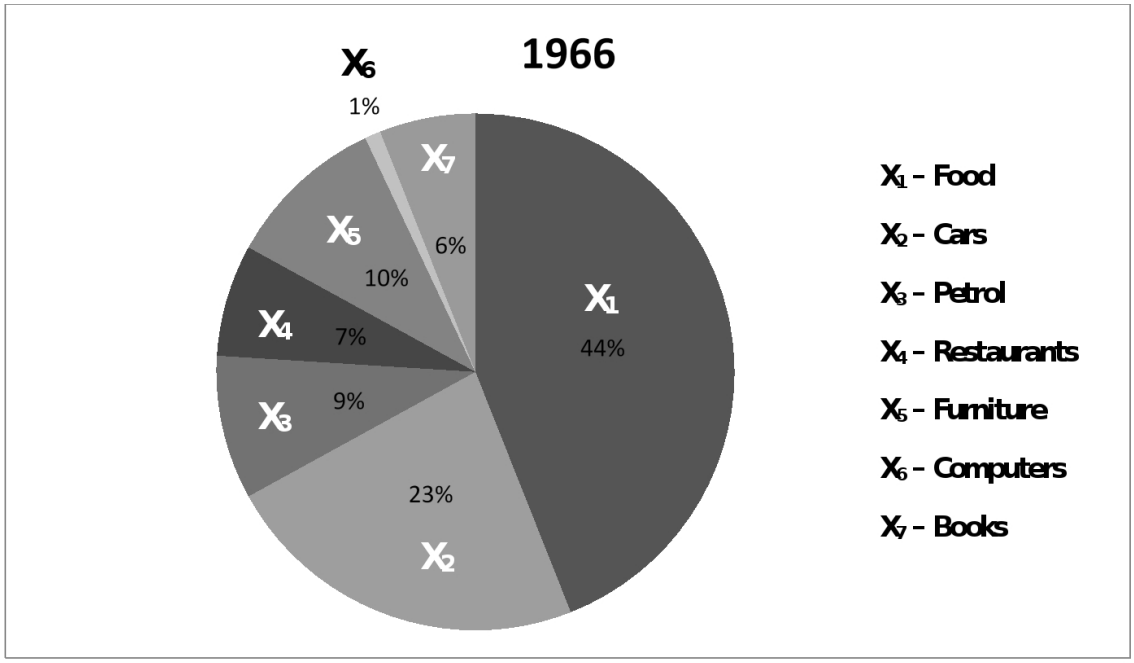
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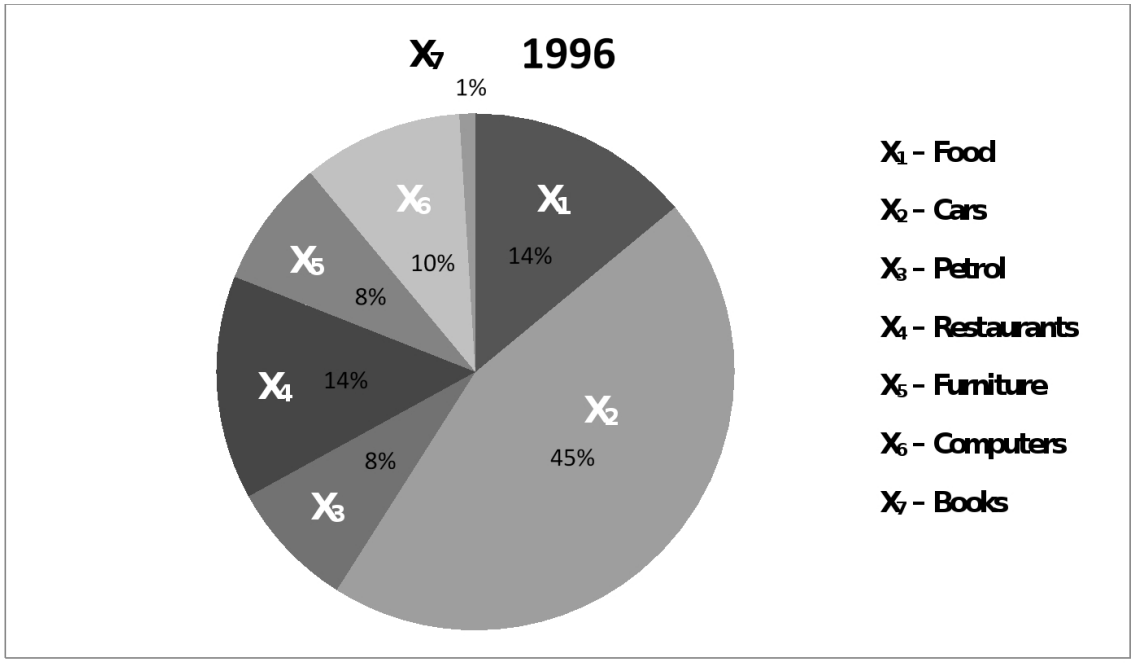
Chapter 5: Pie Charts



Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information below.

- You should write at least 150 words.
- You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.





How to organize your answer

In which order should you present the information?

Here you have two options:

1. Describe the chart in 1966 and then describe the information presented for 1996.
2. Write about both pie charts together, comparing each activity in turn.

Which way you choose to answer the question depends on how comfortable you feel with the description. The first method is probably the safest and easiest option of the two, but it can also be slightly boring and doesn´t allow you to display such a wide range of language and structures.

In addition, Method 1 doesn´t allow the reader to make immediate direct comparisons between the same categories. For example, with Method 1, if the reader wants to know how the use of cars has changed between 1966 and 1996, they have to read the whole description.

Students who are able to use Method 2 appropriately usually get the highest grades in the exam.

The first thing you should mention in your IELTS pie chart description

When you are describing the pie chart, the most relevant information is usually in the biggest 'portions' of the chart or the parts which have changed the most during the time period.

In this case then, you should look first at *food, cars, restaurants, computers and books*. .

Food, cars, restaurants, computers and books are particularly interesting as they show important changes, whereas furniture and petrol are of less interest because they show only small changes.

What should you include in the overview

This is the same as in the line graph and bar chart, you should always focus your overview on the most important changes or differences.

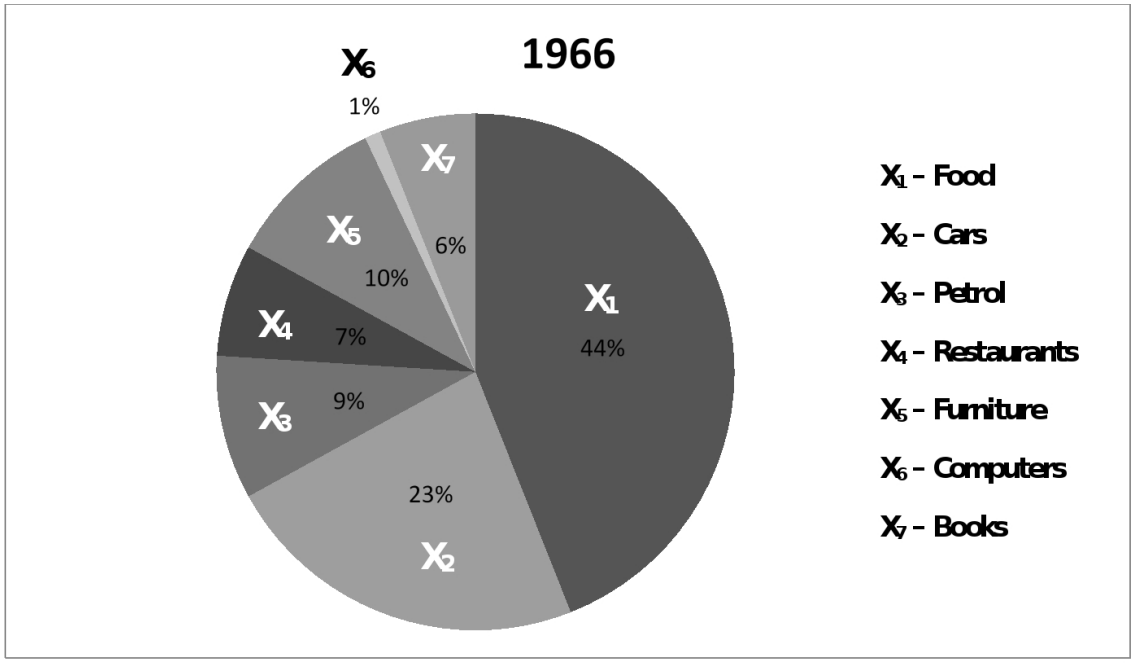
What language should you use?

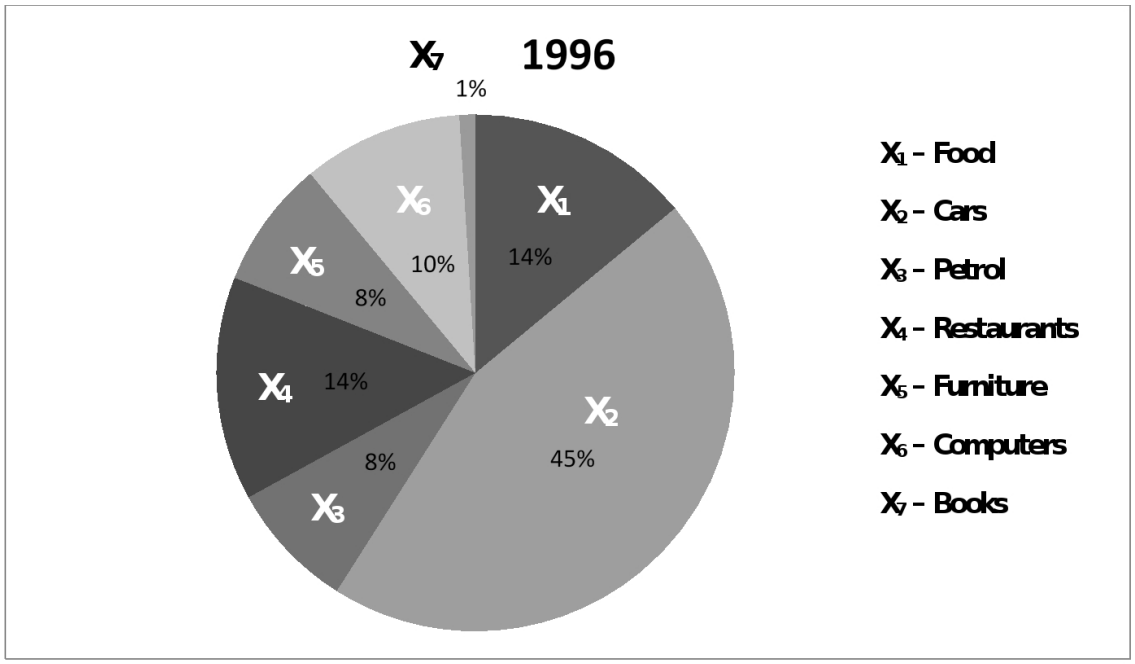
If the pie chart describes changes which happen over time you should use the language of change and the language of comparing and contrasting. Nevertheless, not all pie charts describe changes which happened over time, so check before you start writing.

Percentages and Proportions

While not all pie charts describe changes which happened over time, all pie charts display *percentages* and *proportions* , so you need to review the language for fractions and percentage.

See the following page for a sample answer




1996
X7
1%
X1
14%
X2
45%
X3
8%
X4
14%
X5
8%
X6
10%
X1 – Food
X2 – Cars
X3 – Petrol
X4 – Restaurants
X5 – Furniture
X6 – Computers
X7 – Books

Sample Answer:

Put the words in brackets into the correct form.

The pie charts 1……. (display) changes in UK spending patterns from 1966 to 1996.

Food and cars 2……. (make up) the two main items of expenditure in both years. Both 3…….

(comprise) over 50% of household spending. Food 4…… (account) for 44% of spending in 1966, but this 5…… (shrink) by two thirds to 14% in 1996. Nevertheless, spending on cars 6……. (double), 7……. (increase) from 23% in 1966 to 45% in 1996.

While spending on restaurants also 8…… (grow) twofold, 9……..(climb) from 7% to 14%, the percentage of salary spent on computers 10…… (increase) 11……. (dramatic), up from 1% in 1996 to 10% in 1996. However, as computer expenditure 12…….. (rise), the percentage of outlay on books 13……..(plummet) from 6% to 1%.

Some areas 14……. (remain) 15……. (relative) 16……. (change). Britons 17……. (spend) 18……. (approximate) the same amount of salary on petrol and furniture in both years.

In conclusion, there were 19…….. (relative) high 20……. (increase) in the amounts spent on cars, computers, and restaurants at the expense of food and books.

Answers:

1. display
2. made up
3. comprised
4. accounted for
5. shrank
6. doubled,
7. increasing
8. grew
9. climbing
10. increased
11. dramatically,
12. rose,
13. plummeted
14. remained
15. relatively
16. unchanged.
17. spent
18. approximately
19. relatively

20.
increases

You must demonstrate a variety of language in the exam. As in the example, a variety of fractions and percentages are ideal. In addition, phrases should be used to show when a number is not exact, such as 'roughly', 'just under' or 'just over' for example.

Here are some language examples to learn and increase your flexibility:

Percentage/Fraction

80% / four-fifths

75% / three-quarters

70% / seven in ten

5% 65% / two-thirds

60% / three-fifths

55% / more than half

50% / half

45% / more than two fifths

40% / two-fifths

35% / more than a third

30% / less than a third

25% / a quarter

20% / one fifth (a fifth)

15% / less than a/one fifth

10% / one in ten

5% / one in twenty

Percentage	Qualifier
77%	just over three quarters
77%	approximately three quarters
49%	just under a half
49%	nearly a half
32%	almost a third

Percentage	proportion / number / amount / majority / minority
75% - 85%	a very large majority
65% - 75%	a significant proportion
10% - 15%	a minority
5%	a very small number

Exercise 2:

Pie Charts which Compare Past and Future

Use the lists of words 1-4 below to write your own sentences to describe a pie chart. Add the relevant data in brackets and change the verb tenses accordingly.

1. High-speed transport account for (20%) traffic volume in 2015 while in 2050 forecast represent (45%).
2. Estimate proportion success rate 2025 (35%) in contrast to (63%) 2015.
3. in 2006 laptops make up bulk devices (94%) used but 2020 this forecast drop to (20%)

1. ……
   …….
2. ……
   …….
3. ……
   ……...

Answers:

1. High-speed transport accounted for 20% of traffic volume in 2015 while in 2050 it is forecast to represent 55%.

2. It is estimated that the proportion of success rate will fall to 35% in 2025 in contrast to 63% in 2015.

3. In 2006 laptops made up the bulk of devices used (94%), but by 2025, this is forecast to drop to 20%.



Chapter 6: Tables



You don´t need to learn any new language to successfully describe a table in the IELTS exam. Tables can look intimidating if you don´t know where to start, but in fact the description of a table is exactly the same as that of a line graph if the table is measured over time. If the table is not measured over time, then we would use exactly the same description as with a bar chart that is not over time.

When you start the task, you need to look for data that you can group together, as you would do in any other description.

It’s easier to appreciate the trends and patterns in the line graph, but if you can see the changes in the table, then the description is exactly the same.

Always start with the most interesting information (often the biggest things) and leave the least interesting data until the end of the description.

Exercise 1

Re-write sentences a-i using the language in the box below. You can make any necessary changes. There are four extra expressions you won´t need to use.

The bulk of
the lowest percentages
was noticeably higher
a smaller proportion of
was significantly higher
had the lowest percentages
had slightly higher figures
a third of the number of
40% of
Over 75%
Three times the number of
the largest proportion of
One in four

a. The Iron Maiden concert was attended by three times as many people as the Stone Temple Pilots concert.

b. More than four out of ten people chose to use public transport.

c. The largest proportion of purchases came from China as opposed to the E.U.

d. A quarter of customers ordered digital rather than traditional print products.

e. The social media website lost just under three quarters of its visitors when compared to last year.

f. Consumers in all countries spent more on food, drinks and tobacco than on any other product category.

g. Consumers spent the least on leisure/education in all countries.

h. Consumers in Turkey and Ireland spent quite a lot more on food, drinks and tobacco than consumers in the other countries.

i. Spending on clothing and footwear was a lot higher in Italy, at 9%, than in the rest of the countries.

a. .

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b. .

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c. .

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d. .

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e. .

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f. .

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g. ……

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h. .

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i. .

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Suggested Answers

The Iron Maiden concert was attended by **three times the number of** many people as the Stone Temple Pilots concert.

a. More than **40% of** people chose to use public transport.

b. **The bulk of** purchases came from China as opposed to the E.U.

c. **One in four** customers ordered digital rather than traditional print products.

d. The social media website lost just **under 75%** of its visitors when compared to last year.

e. **The largest proportion** of spending in all countries was on food, drinks and tobacco.

f. The leisure/education category has **the lowest percentages** in the table.

g. Consumer spending on food, drinks and tobacco **was noticeably higher** in Turkey and Ireland than in the other countries.

h. Spending on clothing and footwear **was significantly higher** in Italy, at 9%, than in the rest of the countries.

Sample Table

Country	Food/Drinks/ Tobacco	Clothing/ Footwear	Leisure/ Education
Ireland	28.91%	6.43%	2.21%
Italy	16.36%	9.00%	3.20%
Spain	18.80%	6.51%	1.98%
Sweden	15.77%	5.40%	3.22%
Turkey	32.14%	6.63%	4.35%

Suggested Answer

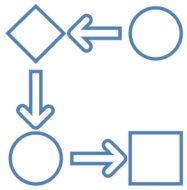
The table reveals proportions of consumer spending for three categories of products and services in Italy, Spain, Sweden, Ireland and Turkey in 2002.

Overall, it can be seen that the largest percentage of spending in all countries was on food, drinks and tobacco. On the other hand, the leisure/education category has the lowest percentages in the table.

Consumer spending on food, drinks and tobacco was noticeably higher in Turkey and Ireland, at 32.14%, and almost 29% respectively. The percentage of consumer spending on leisure and education products and services was also greatest in Turkey, at 4.35%, while spending on clothing and footwear was significantly higher in Italy, at 9%, than in the rest of the countries.

Sweden had the lowest spending levels for food/drinks/tobacco, at nearly 16%, and for clothing/footwear, at just above 5%. Spain, on the other hand, had slightly more elevated levels of spending for these categories, but the lowest percentage for leisure/education, at just under 2%.

Chapter 7: Process Description



Describing Sequences

The following linking words and phrases in the box **can** be used to describe a sequence.

initially	before	first - firstly
then	after that	next
immediately after	as soon as	once
after	before	following that- after that
when	where	At the same time- simultaneously
finally	prior to	in turn

Exercise 1:

Highlight or underline the linking words in A-G and decide which one is the first step in the sequence. Once you have done this, decide what is being described and put the sentences in order.

A. If it is the latter, the broken or faulty components of the device are repaired

B. and the tablet is then sent back for sale as a refurbished product.

C. Once the device breaks, it is either discarded or recycled at a specialist recycling point.

D. These are then transported to a different factory for assembly

E. First, the internal components for the processor are manufactured in an outsourced factory.

F. After that they are sent to the central warehouse for distribution around the country

G. At the same time, the exterior and the memory chip are produced

Exercise 2:

Match 1 to 6 below with a sentence or phrase A-F to complete sequence descriptions. Please note that each full sentence belongs to a different description.

1. As soon as the bricks have been cut with the wire-cutter
2. After fermentation,
3. Once the oranges are ripe they are collected,
4. The water then flows into a narrow chamber called a penstock,
5. When the plant reaches a certain width, the leaves are picked.
6. In the early stages of milk production, cows graze in the field and subsequently (then-afterwards) taken to a milking machine twice a day.

A. the chocolate is placed into molds and left to cool down.
B. The raw product is then heated to a high temperature to kill bacteria and make it safe for human consumption. Following this, it is put into refrigeration storage.
C. they are then spread (laid) out on a large (industrial sized) tray to enable them to dry under the sun.
D. they are put in an oven to dry for 24 – 48 hours.
E. They are then dried, sorted, blended and packaged ready for distribution to retailers.
F. where the resulting high pressure turns the turbine, which is in turn connected to a generator in the powerhouse above.

Answers:

Exercise 1

Linking words: if, and , then, once, then, first, after that, at the same time.

The lifecycle of a tablet computer is being described.

E, G, D, F, C, A, B

Exercise 2

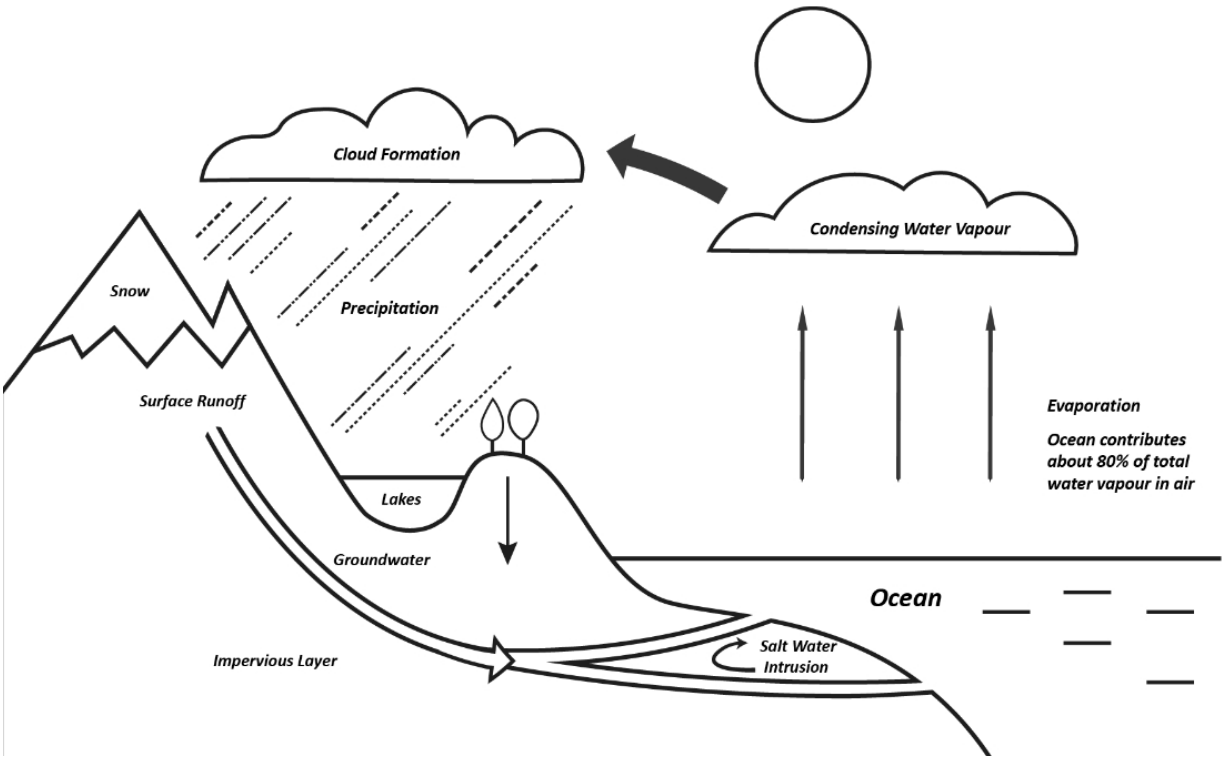
1d, 2a, 3c, 4f, 5e, 6b

Some Essential Vocabulary for Process Descriptions:

Noun	**Verb**
Storage	Store
Pasteurization	Pasteurize
Harvest – harvesting	Harvest
Delivery	Deliver
Assembly	Assemble
Packing -Packaging	Pack - Package

Exercise 3:

Read the process description on the next page and fill in the blanks with the missing word or phrase.



The diagram **……** the water cycle. Firstly, water **……** from the **……** , rises into the atmosphere, cools and condenses into rain or snow in clouds, and falls again to the surface in the form of rain and snow (precipitation). The next stage shows the water's journey after falling to the ground, **……** ends with **…….** . **(3 words)**

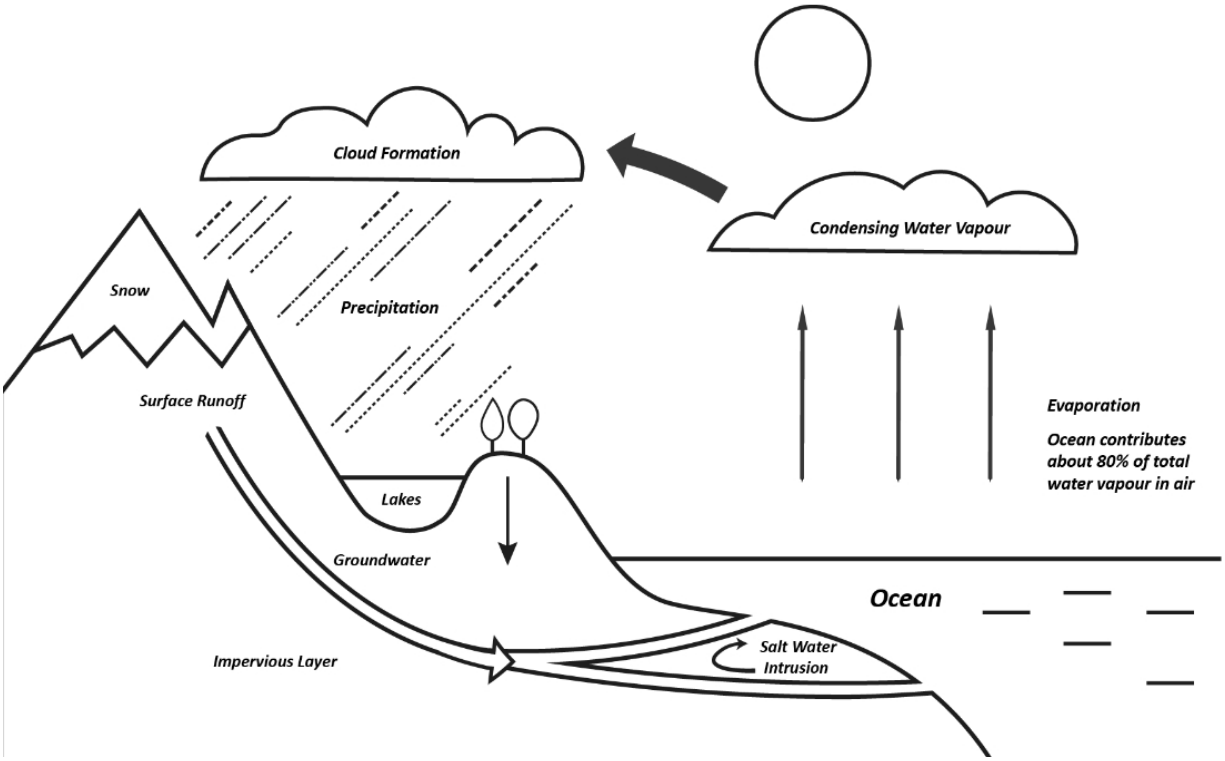
In the first stage of the **process** , water, approximately 80% of which comes from Oceans, **……** into the air as a result of the heat of the sun. After **……** , the water vapor condenses to form clouds. An **……** 80% of the water vapor comes from Oceans.

In the next **……** , as clouds accumulate condensation they produce precipitation in the form of rain and snow. A large part of the water

from the precipitation falls into lakes or is ..... by the earth.

Part of the groundwater then ..... back to the ocean without reaching the impervious layer through surface runoff.

..... , Ocean water flows (seeps) through to the freshwater aquifers during the process is saltwater intrusion.



Answers:

The diagram **illustrates** the water cycle. Firstly, water **evaporates** from the **Ocean** , rises into the atmosphere, cools and condenses into rain or snow in clouds, and falls again to the surface in the form of rain and snow (precipitation). The next stage shows the water‘s journey after falling to the ground, **which** ends with **salt water intrusion** .

In the first stage of the **process** , water, approximately 80% of which comes from Oceans, **evaporates** into the air as a result of the heat of the sun. After **this** , the water vapor condenses to form clouds. An **estimated** 80% of the water vapor comes from Oceans.

In the next **stage** , as clouds accumulate condensation they produce precipitation in the form of rain and snow. A large part of the water from the precipitation falls into lakes or is **absorbed** by the earth.

Part of the groundwater then **flows** back to the ocean without reaching the impervious layer through surface runoff.

Finally , Ocean water flows (seeps) through to the freshwater aquifers during the process is saltwater intrusion.

◄ ●►

Chapter 8: Describing Maps



Structure

It is usually better to use a standard structure with four paragraphs if you have to describe a map in the exam. The four-paragraph structure helps you write a well-organized description which is easier for the reader to follow.

Paragraph 1- Paraphrase Sentence

In your first paragraph you need to paraphrase the question using synonyms wherever possible.

Paragraph 2- Overview

In the overview section of your description write two general sentences about the map. You need to write about the most important differences between both maps.

Just like in all the other task 1 writing questions in the IELTS exam, you are going to need an overview here. Some examples of general sentences for a good overview are:

1. Over the time period, the area underwent radical changes
2. In the period between 1996 and 2006, the park was totally redesigned.
3. From 2008 to 2018, the city center was subject to some important developments.
4. The downtown area was completely renovated and modernized during the time period.
5. The city changed considerably over the period.
6. During the 20-year period, the woodland area was completely transformed.
7. Over the time period, the church was completely refurbished.
8. Between 2007 and 2017, the old block of flats was renovated.

Important questions to help you identify the main changes:

1. Were the changes big or small (major or minor)?

2. Were there any big improvements to the infrastructure of the area?
3. How did the buildings and facilities within the area change?
4. Is the area more residential than it was before or is it less residential?
5. Has the number of trees increased or decreased over time?

Paragraph 3- Main Body

You can group information together her either by location on the map or by time if you prefer. In this paragraph you should write around 4 clear and logical sentences about specific changes which occurred during the time period.

Paragraph 4- Main Body 2

In this paragraph you should write around 3 or maybe 4 clear and logical sentences about specific changes which occurred during the time period. You can group information together her either by location on the map or by time if you prefer.

Verbs to describe changes in maps

Exercise 1

Match each beginning of a sentence 1-7 with an ending A-G. More than one option may be possible.

Notice the verb phrases underlined in A-G (we will look at these later).

1. The center of the village
2. Several old houses
3. A new hospital
4. The old factories
5. Some old mills
6. Some of the trees around the old park
7. The fire station

A. replaced the old run-down sports center *
B. were knocked down to make way for a new park.
C. were pulled down , with a new hotel taking their place
D. were demolished to create more space which was turned into a campsite
E. were chopped down in order to increase the size of path.
F. was converted into a gym and the car park torn down .
G. was totally transformed over the fifteen-year period.

* run-down is an adjective which means decaying, dirty old and not taken care of

Useful change phrases for map descriptions:

Replaced	took the place of
were knocked down to make way for	when a building or wall is deliberately destroyed to create space for something else
were pulled down	building or wall was destroyed especially because it was very old or dangerous
were demolished to create	when a building or wall is deliberately destroyed to create space for something else
was turned into	were transformed or changed into something else
were chopped down	the action of cutting trees until they fall
to increase the size of	generic term for: to make bigger or wider
to reduce the size of	generic term for: to make smaller or narrower
taking their place	occupying the place where the other thing used to be
was converted into	was transformed or changed into
was torn down	was knocked down

Exercise 2

Underline the most appropriate verb in bold in sentences 1-8 and put it into the right form to suit the sentence.

1. The abandoned car-park near the woodlands **develop/become** into a museum.
2. The area around the city center **turn into/become** less accessible with the construction of the new theatre.
3. As the city **extend/expand** , more bus stations were built.
4. A bus station **construct/ become** after the old warehouses were knocked down.
5. The downtown area of the city completely **change/demolish** with the introduction of the new shopping center.
6. A number of important developments **take place/ convert** , which totally **alter/expand** the character of the premises.
7. The area **turn into/become** more family-friendly with the **introduce/ knock down** of new parks and open spaces.
8. The road was **extend/expand** to the town center, and a new bus service was introduced to carry passengers to and from the airport.

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Exercise 3:

Look at the following map task from an IELTS test. Read the sample answer on the next page and fill in the blanks with the missing word or phrase.

The two maps below show an island, before and after the construction of some tourist facilities.

Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.

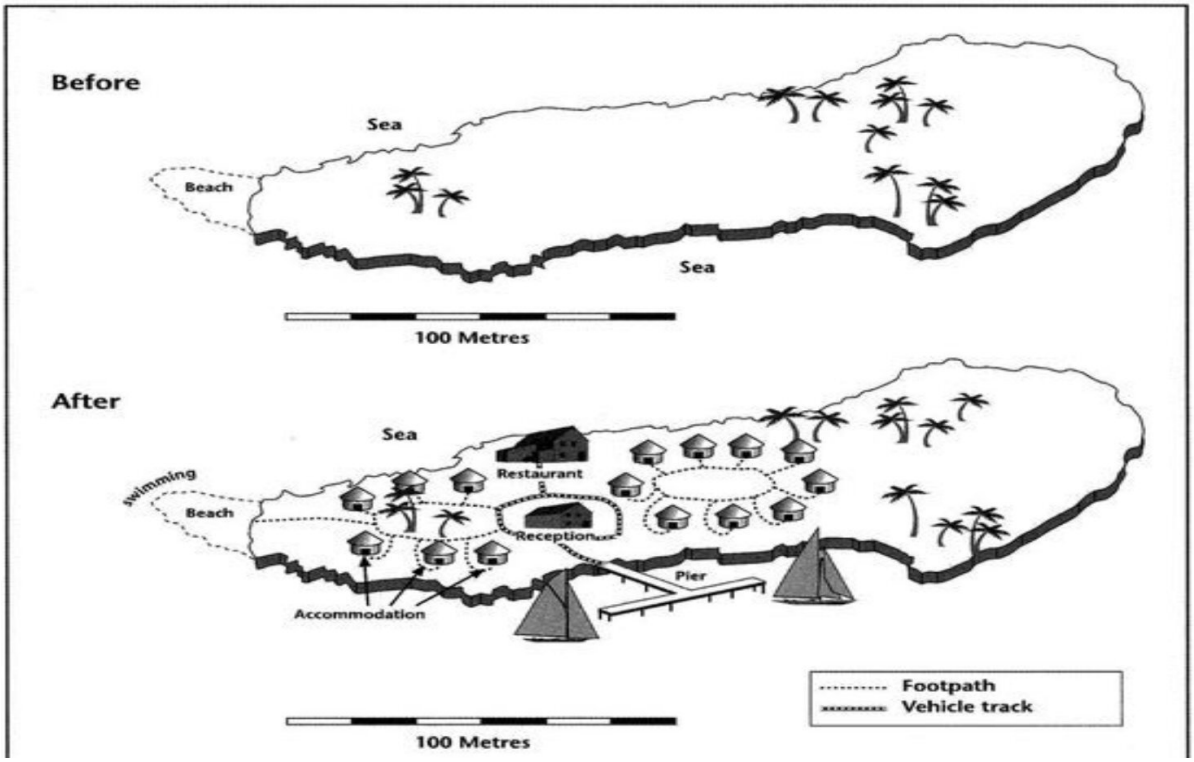


Image Source: Cambridge English Practice Tests.

Sample Answer:

The two maps illustrate the changes which have …….. (2 words) on a small island, before and after it was developed (its development) for tourism.

It is clear from the diagram that the island has ……. considerably with the ……... of tourism, and several new developments can be seen in the second diagram. The most important changes are that the island

now has ample accommodation for tourists and there is a peer to enable visitors to access the island.

One of the most striking changes are the accommodation huts which are connected by footpaths and which have been ……. around the reception and restaurant area. A total of 6 huts, have been constructed in the west of the island and another 9 have been built around the center of the island.

A pier has also been developed on the south coast of the island to make the island …… to tourists and there is a short road linking it with the reception and restaurant. The trees which were scattered around the island have been left untouched, and a swimming area has been ……. just off the beach.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. G
2. B/C/D
3. A
4. B/C/D
5. B/C/D
6. E
7. A/F

Exercise 2

1. developed / was developed
2. became
3. expanded
4. was constructed
5. was completely changed / completely changed
6. took place, altered
7. became , introduction
8. was extended

Exercise 3

The two maps illustrate the changes which have taken place on a small island, before and after it was developed (its development) for tourism.

It is clear from the diagram that the island has changed considerably with the introduction of tourism, and several new developments can be seen in the second diagram. The most important changes are that the island now has ample accommodation for tourists and there is a peer to enable visitors to access the island.

One of the most striking changes are the accommodation huts which are connected by footpaths and which have been built around the reception and restaurant area. A total of 6 huts, have been constructed in the west of the island and another 9 have been built around the center of the island.

A pier has also been developed on the south coast of the island to make the island accessible to tourists and there is a short road linking it with the reception and restaurant. The trees which were scattered around the island have been left untouched, and a swimming area has been designated just off the beach.

Chapter 9: Task 2- Essay for IELTS Academic & IELTS General Training



Task 2 in the IELTS writing exam is essential if you want to get a high band score in the exam. It is surprisingly easy to improve your writing score considerably as long as you are prepared to take some advice and practice, practice, practice.

The most common IELTS Writing Task 2 structures are:

Opinion Essay

Example:

Space exploration is much too expensive, and the money should be spent on more important things.

What is your opinion?

Advantages and Disadvantages Essay

Some people believe that it is better to take a gap year before going to university, while others think that this can be a waste of time and that going straight into higher education is the best option.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Problem Essay

Despite a large number of gyms, a sedentary lifestyle is gaining popularity in the contemporary world.

What problems are associated with this?

What solutions can you suggest?



Focus on the topic and the task

Essay instructions have two parts. You must understand both the topic and the task before you start the essay.

The first part tells you the topic of the essay:

Some people think that more money should be invested into space exploration as it is a vital form of investigation for the future of humanity, while others believe it is a waste of vital funding which could otherwise be used towards more important projects here on earth.

Space exploration is much too expensive, and the money should be spent on more important things.

Despite a large number of gyms, a sedentary lifestyle is gaining popularity in the contemporary world.

The second part of the question gives you the specific task you must complete to get marks:

Advantages & Disadvantages with your opinion: *Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.*

Or

Only your opinion essay: *What is your opinion?*

Or

Problem essay: *What problems are associated with this?*

What solutions can you suggest?

Understanding the Topic of the Essay

There are normally three ways the essay can be presented in the exam. Let's take the example of space exploration:

Type 1: Two **opposite views** to discuss:

"Some people think that more money should be invested into space exploration as it is a vital form of investigation for the future of humanity, while others believe it is a waste of vital funding which could otherwise be used towards more important projects here on earth. "

Type 2: "Two **opposite views** to discuss using the word *should* in the instruction.

"Should more money be invested into space exploration or should it be used towards more important projects here on earth?"

Type 3: A **statement** to discuss:

"Paying for space exploration is a waste of vital funding which could otherwise be used towards more important projects here on earth."

Connecting words and set phrases

Putting your reasons in order	Firstly/Secondly. Thirdly/Finally
Expressing an opinion	I hold the view that ... In my view… It is probably true to say that…. There can be no doubt that …
Mentioning what other people think	It has been suggested that…. There are those who believe that.. There are those who argue that… Opponents/ supporters of (e.g. hunting) … argue that…. Most people hold firmly to the belief that… It is often claimed that…
Common opinions in society	It is widely believed/thought that Few people would contest that…. Nobody would dispute the fact that …. It is generally agreed that…
Referring to evidence and facts	Research suggests that… All the evidence suggests that … Recent evidence indicates that …..
Changing direction	However/Nevertheless
Giving examples	For example for instance such as
Concluding	In conclusion / Overall,



Chapter 10: Writing Like A Pro: How to Write Advanced English Without Writing “Advanced” English



The IELTS essay in Task 2 of the IELTS writing exam is something that many students get nervous about.

Many students overcomplicate their lives by trying to express simple ideas in a complex way . The result is a collection of illogical and unnatural sentences which have very little meaning, and which the examiner struggles to understand. This is the perfect recipe for failure in the exam.

> **“The definition of genius is taking the complex and making it simple.”**
>
> **—** Albert Einstein

> **“Simplicity is the glory of expression.”**
>
> **—** Walt Whitman

The biggest problem when it comes to improving your writing are your ideas of what good writing in English, or in any language actually is. Try to think of a **definition of ´good writing** ´ for a second…

A definition from The Harvard University Writing Centre:

Writing a good academic essay means presenting a logical set of ideas to create an argument or opinion. Essays are linear—they offer one idea at a time—they must present their ideas in the order that makes most sense to a reader. Successfully structuring an essay means presenting the ideas in a logical way to the reader.

2000, Elizabeth Abrams, for the Writing Center at Harvard University

You will notice how it doesn´t say anywhere in the definition that a good essay uses complicated language or prioritizes complex sentences over logical sentences. It´s all about logic, the complex language will come, but it must come naturally, appropriately, and more importantly from logical thinking.

The trick to improving your writing is to keep it simple! When you over-think what you are writing and build structures thinking only about making them complex, that is when grammar problems happen, and essay

disasters occur! Think of each sentence you write as a small house: you have to start with a simple, solid and clear base. Then you can decorate it to make it sound “Advanced” and professional, but the initial base has to be made of a solid idea or group of ideas expressed in a clear and direct way.

Don´t forget the basic grammar rules of English. These rules do not change just because you are writing an academic essay!

Note: It is important to give your opinion clearly.

Exercise 1:

Essay structures: Writing "Advanced" English

As already mentioned, writing advanced English is not as hard as it may initially seem.

Try the following exercise to help you improve your writing:

The original sentences are too personal, too informal and sound too simple for an essay. Use the key phrase in CAPITALS to complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first sentence. Try to completely change the original sentence while retaining the same basic message.

1. Vegetables are good for you, but meat is also good for you.

NOBODY WOULD DISPUTE THE FACT THAT…

……
……
……

2. Newspapers lie.

IT IS PROBABLY TRUE TO SAY THAT…..

……
……
……

3. Lots of people like chocolate because it is delicious, but it makes people fat.

FEW PEOPLE WOULD CONTEST THAT….

……
……
……

And now a particularly challenging sentence… Tips: Remember words like *hence, therefore, as a result, in turn etc….*

4. If people have jobs they have more money, so they buy more things. When people buy more things, businesses sell more things. This is good for businesses. When businesses sell more things they need more people. When businesses need more people they employ them, so more people get jobs and have money to spend. It´s a circle of capitalist awesomeness.

ALL THE EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT……

……
……
……

Suggested Answers:

1. **Nobody would dispute the fact that** vegetables have a positive impact on health, **however** meat is also vital **in order to** maintain a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

2. **It is probably true to say that** newspapers and other media often distort the truth.

3. **Few people would contest that** chocolate is very popular due to its taste, however it can often lead to obesity and other health issues.

4. **All the evidence suggests that** an increase in the level of employment would lead to higher levels of spending (which would benefit businesses) and **in turn** increase employment further as businesses would seek to meet the increase in demand.

OR

All the evidence suggests that an increase in the level of employment would lead to higher levels of spending (which would benefit businesses). This, **in turn** , would increase employment (further) as businesses would seek to meet the increase in demand.

Exercise 2

Fill the gaps with an appropriate word or phrase from the box:

To conclude	**I hold the view that**	**however.**	**Firstly, research suggests that**
may	**which can lead to**	**For instance,**	**when people**
they are more likely to	**Secondly, few people would contest that**	**Therefore**	**it is likely that**
Finally,	**such as**	**However, there are those who argue that**	**nobody would contest the fact that**
In addition, it is often claimed that	**Nobody would dispute the fact that**	**there can be no doubt that**	**Hence,**

Model Essay

…….. many programs on television include violent scenes, especially action and horror movies. …… they should not be allowed, …… many people disagree with this opinion. In this essay, I will discuss both sides and give reasons for my opinion.

……., …….. people who watch violent programs and play violent computer games ……. worry more about their own safety, …… problems in society. ……., …… are worried about their safety, …… react aggressively towards strangers. …….. some children copy what they see on television and in computer games. …… if they are watching and interacting with violence on a daily basis …… they will copy this type of behavior. ……,

there are more beneficial activities that children could be participating in, …….. playing a sport or reading a book.

…….. violence is not something we learn from television and computer games. For example, …….. there were murders before television and videogames were invented. ……., …….. children cannot watch violent programs and play inappropriate videogames easily. For instance, there are restrictions for some programs and games, and many parents do not allow their children to watch television after a certain time.

……. , although there are some reasonable arguments against higher restrictions on violent videogames and programs for children, ……. the potential disadvantages of children copying what they see and hear in these programs and games far outweigh the advantages of having free access to them. Furthermore, current restrictions are ineffective and easy to ignore. ……. , governments and local institutions should do more to promote alternative activities and to engage young people in their local communities from an early age.

Answers:

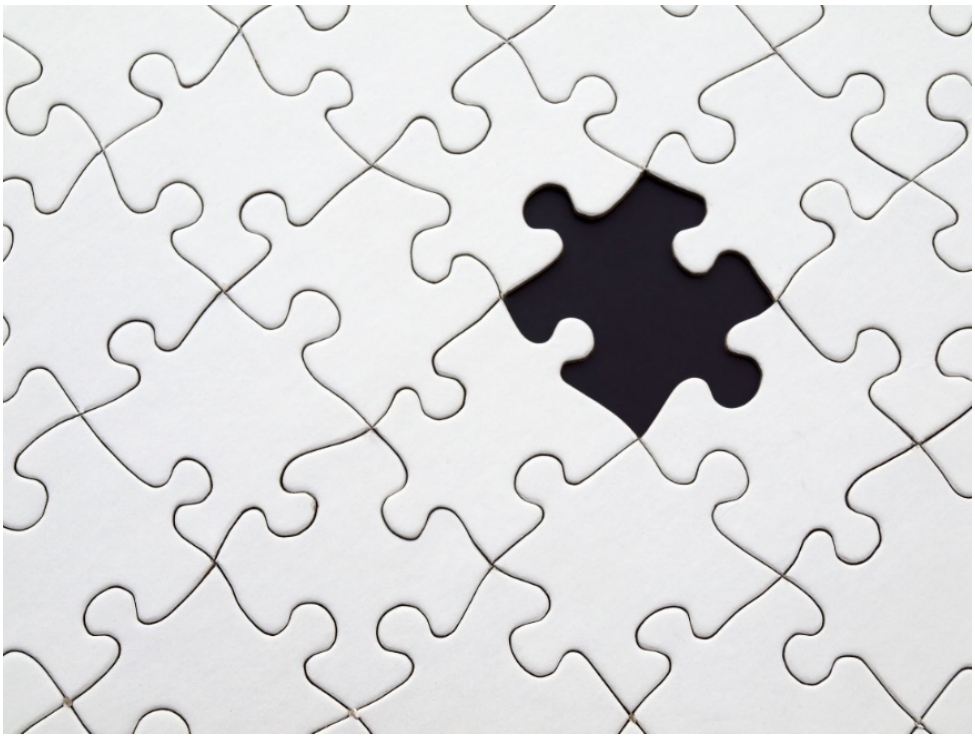
Nobody would dispute the fact that many programs on television include violent scenes, especially action and horror movies. **I hold the view that** they should not be allowed, **however** many people disagree with this opinion. In this essay, I will discuss both sides and give reasons for my opinion.

Firstly , **research suggests that** people who watch violent programs and play violent computer games **may** worry more about their own safety, **which can lead to** problems in society. **For instance** , **when people** are worried about their safety, **they are more likely to** react aggressively towards strangers. **Secondly** , **few people would contest that** some children copy what they see on television and in computer games. **Hence** , if they are watching and interacting with violence on a daily basis **it is likely that** they will copy this type of behavior. **Finally** , there are more beneficial activities that children could be participating in **such as** playing a sport or reading a book.

However, there are those who argue that violence is not something we learn from television and computer games. For example, **nobody would contest the fact that** there were murders before television and videogames were invented. **In addition** , **it is often claimed that** children cannot watch violent programs and play inappropriate videogames easily. For instance, there are restrictions for some programs and games, and many parents do not allow their children to watch television after a certain time.

To conclude , although there are some reasonable arguments against higher restrictions on violent videogames and programs for children, **there can be no doubt that** the potential disadvantages of children copying what they see and hear in these programs and games far outweigh the advantages of having free access to them. Furthermore, current restrictions are ineffective and easy to ignore. **Therefore** , governments and local institutions should do more to promote alternative activities and to engage young people in their local communities from an early age.

The Structure of Paragraphs



A paragraph normally has three parts:

1. a sentence that introduces the topic or gist of the paragraph (and **can** link it to the previous paragraph)
2. 2-3 sentences that develop the topic (with analysis, evidence or detail)
3. 1 sentence that concludes the topic (or links it to the next paragraph).- This is optional in the IELTS essay

Have a look at some example paragraphs, where each section has been numbered 1-3.

(1) There is no doubt that corruption is the most important point to focus on, because it originates from positions of power. **(2)** Corruption can take many shapes and forms, such as political, which involves crimes in a country's legal system and within the police, and economic, for example by misusing tax money. **(3)** All the evidence suggests that countries with corrupt governments are not able to develop as fast as countries where there is less corruption.

(1) Another obstacle which developing countries face nowadays is the loss of investments. **(2)** When there is a fast movement of investments out of a country it can cause problems. This situation can happen as a result of economic reasons, such as an increase in taxes, or it can happen due to political problems, such as wars or corruption. **(3)** These issues can have an extremely negative effect on the level of trust that people have in their governments, and investors may choose to invest in other countries.

Vocabulary Boost:
Obstacle (obstacles)**- Countable Noun**
Refer to anything that makes it difficult for you to do something as an obstacle.

Connecting Paragraphs to each other

When you start a new paragraph, you are telling the reader that the previous point is finished, and you are starting something new. Nevertheless, this new paragraph is not disconnected from the previous one, and you need to communicate to the reader what the connection is. For instance, if you start with *However, there are those who argue that violence is not something we learn from television and computer games* ... then the structure you have used signals to the reader that you are discussing a different argument ('However,') which contradicts the previous ideas ('However') and which is expressed by other people not you 'there are those who argue that'. You have communicated a lot of information to the reader with only seven words (*However, there are those who argue that*…). This is one of the definitions of good writing- effective while using as few words as possible to maintain clarity.

"Another argument is that…"

If you start a new paragraph with the phrase 'Another argument in favor of stricter laws is that crime is directly related to…' then you are signaling to the reader that you are changing to a different argument ('Another') with the same purpose ('in favor of..').

To give more specific information use 'This argument ...'.

This is a handy structure to learn and which can be adapted to many different contexts.

The words in the box below are all useful examples of words like ‘argument’, which you can use with the word ‘this’ (or ‘these’ in plural) to specify more information.

analysis	approach	concept	context
data	definition	environment	evidence
factor	function	interpretation	issue
measure	method	period	policy
principle	procedure	process	research
response	sector	structure	Theory

Here is an example of how we can use this structure in an essay.

There is no doubt that corruption is the most important point to focus on, because it originates from positions of power. Corruption can take many shapes and forms, such as political, which involves crimes in a country’s legal system and within the police, and economic, for example by misusing tax money. All the evidence suggests that countries with corrupt governments are not able to develop as fast as countries where there is less corruption.

These factors [...].

OR

This negative environment [...].

The first sentence of a paragraph is vital, as it shows how it connects with the overall structure and can signal what will happen next.

When you practice writing, always check that your essay is logical by underlining the most important sentences in each paragraph. You should be able to understand the whole essay only by reading those sentences. If you can’t, you need to make changes.

The beginning of the essay

To get the highest grades in the IELTS exam the essay has to introduce the topic, so you must begin with a relatively general statement. However, the trick is not to over-generalize, otherwise the statement becomes meaningless and can be annoying to read. For example, the following first sentence of an essay is too vague or general and the structure which is used is not appropriate.

First sentence of essay

There are those who argue that water is necessary for human life and therefore water shortage is one of the most important problems in the world.

Comments

Water is vital to human life and this is an absolute fact, not something that people can argue about. The student wanted to use '*There are those who argue that'* , but this structure is wrong for the meaning of the sentence. The statement is also too general, and it is not clear what this essay is about.

Possible improvement

Water shortages affect millions of people worldwide each year, and there is evidence which suggests that they are becoming increasingly difficult to tackle due to climate change.

You will see in the comments section above that it is a bad idea to memorize words or structures ('There are those who argue that', 'nobody would dispute the fact that…' etc..) to insert your ideas into. As we discussed in previous chapters, each sentence and paragraph are like a house which need logical, solid foundations before you decorate them. It is better to start with your ideas and then to think about how you can express them best.

Expressing the importance of the topic

Superlatives can be useful to indicate that the topic is important:

(one of) **the most**	significant important	causes of ...	is ...
		problems of ...	
(some of) **the most**		conditions for ...	are ...
		aspects of ...	

... is	(one of) **the most**	significant important	causes of ... problems of ... conditions for ... aspects of ...

The following **adjective** and noun combinations can also be useful:

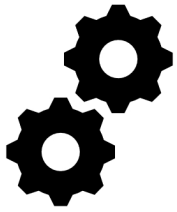
Adjective - Noun combinations

increasing concern	an **important** part	a **key** role/factor	a **great/major** problem
a **central** area of	a **common** problem	an **increasing** need/concern	**heightened** awareness
rapid developme nt	a **dramatic** increase	**renewed/unprecedent ed** interest	a **serious** effect/impact on

You can also use the following combinations with **adverbs** :

is becoming **increasingly** important	is becoming **increasingly** challenging	has been **extensively** researched

Efficiency



Efficient writing expresses an idea, opinion, reason or consequence without using too many words. A big mistake many students make is that they try to fill the page with words thinking this will make them finish the essay sooner and that it will look good because it means they know a lot. This is completely wrong for most if not all exams, whether it's the IELTS or a university exam. Always use the minimum number of words possible and do not repeat yourself.

According to Google, the definition of efficiency is: "maximum productivity with minimum wasted effort or expense". In your writing, this means few words but lots of meaning. **Note:** remember that in the IELTS, the word count indicated in the exam is a minimum not a maximum, so you still need to reach this minimum or you will be penalized but you should avoid repetition and meaningless sentences by carefully proofreading your writing before you finish.

Using nouns in your essay

If you pay attention to the best essay examples and the best academic writing in general, you will notice that many noun phrases are used. Here is an example:

“At an investigative level the availability of digital resources, simulators and other tools provide the researcher with increased access to information, which otherwise would not be accessible. “

A large portion of that sentence is made up of nouns. Using nouns is extremely efficient, whereas using verbs can be long and repetitive in an essay or description at times.

For example, you use less space if you are talking about processes without describing the action:

Temperature increase	they have increased the temperature
efficiency increase (increase in efficiency)	They have increased the efficiency

Note: Ideally, you should aim to have a mixture of structures to avoid repetition.

Exercise 2

Change the sentences by using nouns instead of verbs where possible.

The trick is to find the verbs first, then transform some of them into nouns, e.g.:

The area <u>would benefit</u> if businesses <u>increased</u> the amount they <u>produced</u> .

The area would benefit from <u>an increase</u> in <u>business productivity</u> / <u>business production</u> .

1. The local government should train their employees better so that they can be more efficient.

……

……

2. There is a difference between cultures, so they need to communicate by using different strategies.

……

……

3. If governments around the world implement this strategy, they may reduce the pollution.

……

……

4. If they recycle waste, they may have a better chance of reducing poverty in the area

……

…….

Suggested Answers

Exercise 2

1. *Better employee training would increase the local government's efficiency. / With better employee training the local government's efficiency would increase.*
2. *Cultural differences need/require a wide range of/different communication strategy.*
3. *The implementation of this strategy by (world) governments may lead to reductions in pollution.*
4. *The recycling of waste may improve chances of reducing poverty in the area / may lead to a reduction of poverty in the area / may lead to an improved chance of reducing poverty in the area.*

Showing Balance in your Essay

The IELTS writing exam prepares you for writing within an academic and professional setting where you need to be respectful of the ideas of others.

In your essays it would look very bad if you said something like 'These people are completely wrong' or 'I think these researchers were wrong'. Instead, you would need to express yourself in a more diplomatic way, for example: 'However, it might be the case that ….' or 'Recent research suggests that this is not the case.'

You are supposed to analyze different sides and project a sense of impartiality while you say whether you agree or disagree.

Remember you always need to remain modest about your opinion and show the reader that you understand that you may be wrong just like anybody else.

For example:

"Students have a very low level of basic mathematical knowledge due to over-dependence on calculators."

This is the student's personal opinion, but she/he cannot write this without evidence. In the IELTS exam you are not likely going to be able to cite real evidence to support your arguments, so you need to change your language: "Over-dependence on calculators **may** have a negative effect on the basic mathematical knowledge of **some students"**

Use cautious language. This is also called 'hedging' language, because 'to hedge against something' means to protect yourself from its negative consequences.

Students often make the mistake using cautious language where it is not appropriate. They sometimes use 'would', 'might', 'likely to', etc. because they have learnt that these verbs are common in academic writing.

For example:

"Annual financial reports **<u>might</u> include information from financial statements and other sources** ."

You don´t need to know a lot about accounting or business to know that the objective of financial reports is to provide financial information taken from financial statements and other sources. Therefore, the verb ‘might’ can´t be used here.

Vocabulary: Being Specific Enough

Exercise 3

Eliminate the word 'thing' in these sentences and add a more specific word or phrase.

1. The availability of water has a significant effect on every living thing.
2. This environment is made up of non-living things like air, water and rocks.
3. It is essential from a scientific perspective to investigate every single thing that is possible.

Suggested Answers:

Exercise 3:

1. *The availability of water has a significant effect on every living* ***organism/being.***
2. *This environment is made up of non-living* ***elements*** *like air, water and rocks.*
3. *It is essential from a scientific perspective to investigate every single* ***possibility/possible factor*** .

Remember…

Link your sentences in IELTS Writing

Always use Linking Adverbs like therefore, additionally, consequently, firstly, secondly, finally, moreover, however

Use synonyms to replace basic level vocabulary

To (purpose): in order to, so as to

Like = such as, for example, for instance

Get = receive, acquire, obtain

Help = aid, assist, support

Not only does X do Y but it also does Z

Look at the difference between these sentences....

Version 1: Working gives you experience to help your career. Working also improves important skills like social skills.

Version 2: Not only does working provide you with experience to assist your career, but it also improves essential skills such as social abilities and communication.



ACADEMIC WRITING TEST: THINGS TO REMEMBER

WRITING: TASK 1

Expressing figures and quantities

- Take time to read and understand the title of the diagram.
- Check you understand what the vertical and horizontal axes represent.
- Be careful to describe the data correctly.
- Compare and contrast figure in different ways.

The opening statement

- Don’t copy the title of the diagram. Instead, write a comment about the general trends shown.
- Stick to the information provided in the diagram.
- Specific details are not needed in the opening statement.
- If there is more than one diagram, you should include any other important information.

Describing changes

- The language you use must reflect the diagram and data you are describing e.g. are you talking about a *sharp* or *gradual fall* ?

Selecting and grouping key information

1. You do not need to include all the details of the diagram.
2. Group key information in a logical, relevant way.
3. Back up your statement with specific data from the diagram.
4. Include a range of different expressions to compare or contrast data in your answer.

Describing a process

- Decide whether the process has a start or end point or if it a cycle (a continuous process such as blood circulation in the body).
- Write an introductory statement about the process you are describing.
- Write your description in a logical order by following the picture and using the vocabulary provided.
- Include linking words to help sequence your description.

TASK 2

Understanding the topic and the task

- Make sure you understand what the topic or subject of questions is. Underline the key words if necessary.
- Read the questions carefully to identify exactly what you need to.

- Focus on the question itself, not on what you want to write about.

Brainstorming and planning

- You must write at least number of words specified or you will lose marks.
- You will not have time to count words in the exam, so count words when you are practicing so you know roughly how to write.
- It is important to generate ideas as quickly as possible.
- Use mind-maps, spider-grams and list to organize information quickly.
- A good essay or composition must have a beginning, middle and an end.
- Decide what you are going to write and make a brief plan outlining what each paragraph will contain.
- Write brief notes on what on what you want to include in each paragraph. This helps to prompt you as you write your essay and serves as a useful checklist when you have finished.
- A useful guiding to follow is to write an introduction of approximately 50 words, the main body of 170 words or more and a conclusion of 30-40 words. However, these amounts are flexible.

THE INTRODUCTION

Aim and contents

- Don’t copy out the question. You will not gain marks for this.
- The introduction needs to be relevant to the question.
- Write in an impersonal, academic style.

THE MAIN BODY

Aim and contents

- Paragraphs and topics sentences give your writing structure and provide links between sections.
- Use linking words to give your writing cohesion.

CONCLUSION

Aim and contents

- The conclusion must refer back to the points made in the essay. Don't include new information.
- The conclusion can sum up you views but for best marks should be written in an impersonal, academic style.



Chapter 11: Useful Language for IELTS Academic Writing Task 1 & 2

IELTS- WRITING TASK 1

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS DESCRIBING THE GRAPH

- …significantly declined…
- …remained the same..
- …reached a plateau…
- …rose dramatically…
- …fell slightly…
- …fluctuated…
- …increased steadily…
- …fell gradually…
- …decreased steadily…
- …remained stable…
- …recovered…
- …fluctuated dramatically…
- …rocketed…
- …plunged…
- …a dramatic fall…
- …a period of stability…
- …a slight dip…
- …it doubled…
- …it halved…
- …increased sevenfold (7 times)
- …increased fourfold (4 times)
- …proved to be the most popular…
- …began the year higher , however by the end of the year …
- …followed the same sale trend..

- …were consistently the lowest…
- …A similar pattern is also noted on…
- …With regards to…
- …is in favor of…
- …is similar/ dissimilar…

REMEMBER!- REPORT

✓ 150 words;

✓ 20 minutes;

✓ Start by noting down 8 to 10 main features of the chart;

✓ Write an introductory sentence which describes the purpose of the chart; (*opening statement!*)

✓ Write out your report using the variety of verbs describe upwards and downwards movement;

✓ A variety of phrases which introduce numbers;

✓ A variety of words which contrast or add information;

✓ What is the striking feature of the chart?

✓ Short summary;

SUMMARY

✓ …It can be seen from the data that…

✓ …saw barely any increase…

✓ …considerably fewer that…

✓ …Thereafter… = Afterwards…

✓ …stabilized at just ….level

✓ …numbers rose but much less significantly…

✓ …As regards…

✓ …hovering at this level until…

✓ …In conclusion…

TALKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

- …the estimated sales for…
- …It is anticipated that…
- …Meanwhile, it is estimated that before increasing to…
- …As it can be seen
- …The overall sales trends for… are forecast..

REPORTING

✓ People *said* it was…

✓ People *mentioned* that it was…

✓ People cited that it was…

✓ People stated that it was…

✓ People saw it was…

✓ People regarded it was…

✓ People claimed that it was…

✓ People considered it was to be…

✓ People rated ….as being…

✓ By contrast , it was cited that…

✓ The bar chart indicates a survey on ….on factors…

✓ Whereas… there are contrasting results…

DESCRIBING THE PROCEDURE

- The procedure for… is as follows.
- In order to …the following process takes place.
- First of all…
- Then…
- After that…
- At the next stage…
- This is done by…
- Finally…
- This completes the procedure.

OTHER USEFUL PHRASES TO REPORT

✓ In all cases there was an increase in…

✓ By far…

✓ This figure had more than doubled…

✓ The second greatest volume of…

✓ An increase of approximately…

✓ …showed significant rises were…

✓ At the lower end of the scale…

✓ The chart confirms the increased popularity of…

✓ The trend was reversed…

✓ The trend confirmed…

✓ … rate was at its highest but then it started to decrease.

Useful Language for IELTS Writing Task 2 (Academic & General Training Tests)

USEFUL PHRASES

- If you consider… you could be convinced by an argument in favor of….
- But you have to think about another aspect of the problem…
- I do not feel this is a direct cause of…
- Of course it goes without saying that…
- There has been a growing body of opinion that..
- … the situation can be addressed by adopting the methods mentioned above…
- While I admit that… I would argue that…
- One approach would be…
- A second possibility would be to…
- Obviously,…
- However,
- This suggests that…
- In addition…
- To sum up…
- In fact..
- I tend to disagree…
- I am unconvinced by…
- Overall,…
- In the final analysis…
- Ultimately,…
- To conclude…
- In conclusion…
- On the other hand…
- There is no doubt that…

- This could involve…
- Thirdly…

EXPRESSING VIEWS

- I would argue that…
- I firmly believe that…
- It seems to me that..
- I tend to think that…
- People argue that..
- Some people think that…
- Many people feel that…
- In my experience…
- It is undoubtedly true that..
- It is certainly true that….

REFUTING AN ARGUMENT

- I am unconvinced that…
- I do not believe that..
- It I hard to accept that…
- It is unjustifiable to say that…
-

There is little evidence to support that…

PROVIDING SUPPORT

- For example,…
- For instance,…
- Indeed,…
- In fact,…
- Of course,…
- It can be generally observed that…

- Statistics demonstrate…
- If this is/were the case…
- Firstly,…
- Naturally,…
- In my experience…
- Let me illustrate…

DEFINING/EXPLAINING

- I would argue that…
- By this I mean…
- In other words..
- This is to say…
- To be more precise..
- Here I am referring to …

USE SPARINGLY (=a little)

- First/second, etc.…
- Moreover..
- In addition…
- Furthermore,…
- Nevertheless/nonetheless…
- On the one/other hand…
- Besides…
- Consequently…
- In contrast…
- In comparison…

USE MODERATELY

- While…
- Meanwhile…

- Although…
- In spite of…/ Despite the fact that…
- Even though…
- As a result…
- However…
- Since…
- Similarly…
- Thus…
- In turn

OTHER USEFUL PHRASES

- My response to this argument depend on what is meant by…
- There is surely a difference between…. and….
- I intend to illustrate how some of these differences are significant to the argument put forward.
- However, whilst I agree that… I am less convinced that…
- I certainly believe that…
- One of the main arguments in favor of…. is that…
- In other words…
- Admittedly, in some ways…
- Surely…
- Arguably..
- Either way…
- In any case…
- The most important point is that…
- Another point is that…
- Of crucial importance , in my opinion, is…
- There is , however, another possible way of defining…
- …that I am in favor of , although I also realize that…
- Therefore…

- There is no doubt that…
- However, it is possible to tackle this serious issue in a number of ways.
- One approach would be..
- …would be particularly beneficial.
- A second possibility would be to…
- …this could involve…
- Many people feel that this is unacceptable because…
- Opponents of… point out that … and argue that…
- On the other hand it cannot be denied that…
- Supporters of…argue that…

INTRODUCING A FALSE ARGUMENT

- *It could be argued that…*
- *Some people would argue that…*
- *There is also the idea implicit in the statement that…*
- *It is often suggested that…*

DEMOLISHING A FALSE ARGUMENT

- *This is partly true, but…*
- *To a certain limited extant, there is some truth in this…*
- *However, the implication that… is oversimplification.*
- *This argument has certain specific logic, but…*

PROPOSING A CORRECT ARGUMENT

- *It is clear that…*
- *The real situation…*
- *Obviously…*
- *On the contrary…*
- *It is therefore quite wrong to suggest that…*

REMEMBER! AN ESSAY CONTAINS:

INTRO

- ✓ *About 50 words*
- ✓ *General statement about the topic*
- ✓ *The purpose of the essay*
- ✓ *Initial views of the writer on the subject*

BODY

- ✓ *About 170 words*
- ✓ *Develops the key ideas and topic mentioned in the intro*
- ✓ *consist of 2-3 paragraphs*
- ✓ *related to the opening and closing paragraphs*

CONCLUSION

- ✓ 30-40 words
- ✓ No new info!
- ✓ sums up the key points covered in the essay

REMEMBER!

- Read the questions very carefully.
- Underline key points in the question and make sure is relevant to these.
- Consider your personal view on the topic. Do you disagree/ agree or have an impartial view?
- Take a minute to PLAN what you are going to say in your answer.
- Think of the main idea you will introduce in each paragraph, then think of some supporting points.
- Before you start writing think about how you will introduce the topic.

- Do not copy he question!!!
- Introduce some arguments that are relevant to your own society or personal experience.
- Clearly state your conclusion, make sure that you address the question.
- Read through your answer when you have finished and check grammar spelling and punctuation.
- Check that you have liked your points together well.
- Make sure you have written enough words. Not less than 250!!!

When you have finished writing your essay check what you have written by answering these questions:

 Is the length of the text appropriate?

 Does the text answer the question?

 Are there any common mistakes in the text? If so, what are they?

 Is there any repetition of words or phrases?

 Is anything missing?

 Are the paragraphs well linked together? If so, in what way?

 Does the essay contain a wide range of vocabulary and structures?

◄ ●►

Chapter 12: IELTS General Writing Overview

Length: 60 minutes

General Writing Test

Task	Word count	Advised Timing	Task description
1	150	20 mins	The candidate is presented with a situation and is asked to write a letter requesting information, or explaining an issue. The letter may be personal, semi-formal or formal in style.
2	250	40 mins	Presenting arguments and opinions in a discursive essay about a topical issue.

TIP: The exam says to write a 'minimum of 150/250 words but don't write much more. Aim for 10 or 20 words more at the most.

IELTS General

The Writing component of IELTS General includes two tasks. Topics are of general interest to, and suitable for candidates entering work and postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration.

Task 1

You will be presented with a problem or an issue and asked to describe, summarize, or explain the information in your own words. You may be asked to write a letter of application, a letter of recommendation, a letter concerning accommodation or a letter of complaint or which explains the problems with something among other possibilities.

Task 2

You will be asked to write an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem. Responses to both tasks must be in a formal style.

Chapter 13: Formal Letters in English



In this section we are going to examine the formal letter tasks in the IELTS General Training exam.

Firstly, we will practice identifying key information in the question. Next, we will suggest ways you can organize formal letters, and then we will look at the kind of language you should be using. Finally, we practice useful language, grammar and vocabulary, which are essential and will help you gain lots of marks in the exam.

We will examine two types of formal letter or email: the letter of reference and the letter of application. These aren't the only types of formal letter or email you might be asked to write about in the exam, but they will serve as perfect examples here.

Letter of Reference

In this type of formal letter, you're asked to provide a reference for a colleague or friend to a prospective employer or educational institution.

You may find it helpful to note down useful expressions which you can include,

Some Useful Language for this type of letter or email

I have known X for ....

I am confident that ....

I have no hesitation in recommending him ....

X is sociable, reliable, self-confident, outgoing

X possesses a thorough grounding in ...

stand him in good stead

as is shown by the fact that ...

As you may know, your writing will be assessed in terms of:

Task Achievement

Coherence and Cohesion

Lexical Resource

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Including all the relevant content in your letter and presenting it clearly will contribute hugely towards you scoring well as the target reader will be fully informed.

Candidates often lose marks in the exam, either because they have included irrelevant information, perhaps they've forgotten to include something important, or they've misinterpreted the question.

Here is a typical example of a formal letter question. We will practice identifying key content in order to avoid losing marks. We'll work through the task chronologically.

Read the example and answer the following question.

1. What is the first key piece of information you need to refer to in your answer?

A friend of yours is applying for a job in a popular shop, as a retail shop assistant for English speaking tourists visiting your city. The shop has asked you to provide a character reference for your friend.

The reference should indicate

how long you have known each other.

It must include a detailed description of the person's character

the reason why he or she would be suitable for the job.

Write at least 150 words

This seems like an obvious question but it's vital to have it very clear in your mind that <u>they are asking you to write a reference</u> . Firstly, this indicates that we need to be thinking about a formal register and it also helps us to start the letter.

For example:

"To whom it may concern,

Mary and I have been working together at J&J Retail for 10 years.

……..."

2. What is the next important information?

We need to pay attention to the type of job we are writing the reference for. The job in this case is a retail assistant for a popular shop. It is

important to remember that the information we provide must be relevant for this position.

3. What qualities or skills does a suitable candidate for almost any job need to have?

You can use the following ideas for any job reference.

i. Personal and social skills (people skills/inter-personal abilities): The successful candidate will need to have good personal and social skills, so we must emphasize the person's personal and social skills in the context of their application.

ii. English language skills: we must emphasize his or her English language skills, as all jobs that you will be asked to write references for in this exam will require the candidate to speak good English to communicate with customers, clients, tourists, guests etc.…

iii. Time-management ability is another skill that every person needs for a job, so regardless of the job that they present you with, you can talk about this.

4. So what's next?

Previous experience. We need to mention any relevant work the person has done in the past that will support their application. Again, we could link this with the earlier part about their people skills or about their time-management skills.

We need to show the person is suitable for the post, but this doesn’t necessarily need to be in a separate paragraph. You can write about their experience in the same paragraph whilst you describe their character and skills.

Alternatively, it could be something you include at the end of the letter but either way, you always need to emphasize the person's suitability for the post.

Organization (Reference and Application):

Read the example again and answer the following questions.

1. How many paragraphs would you have?

2. Which paragraphs would deal with which issues?

Example Question

A friend of yours is applying for a job in a popular shop, as a retail shop assistant for English speaking tourists visiting your city. The shop has asked you to provide a character reference for your friend.

The reference should indicate

• how long you have known each other.

• It must include a detailed description of the person's character

• the reason why he or she would be suitable for the job.

Write at least 150 words

One idea is to organize this around two or three content paragraphs along with an opening and closing paragraph, so four or five paragraphs in total.

Paragraph 1

The first paragraph is obviously going to deal with our reason for writing. In this case, to write a reference for a friend (or in the letter of application to apply for something). In a letter of reference or a letter of application, the first main content paragraph usually outlines the person's skills and experience, perhaps including any relevant qualifications they might have.

Paragraph 2

Then, we could move on to look at the person's character and their personal qualities.

We could deal with our friend's suitability for the post in these two paragraphs if we wanted to or we could choose to have a third content paragraph where we emphasize the person's strengths once again.

Finally, we would end the letter with a closing remark such as: *"Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. "*

Organizing your paragraphs in a logical way like this, would make the letter coherent overall and it would give the reader a visual guide to your organization especially if you leave a line or a space between each paragraph. It would also help you deal with the main sections of the letter in a logical order.

Expressing Ideas

But what about how you express ideas within paragraphs? How can you link ideas in and between sentences? Let's look at some of the ways you can do this.

Linking Words:

The first method are straightforward linking words that you've probably used in your writing for a while. Words or expressions like firstly

or in addition, or for instance. These enable you to link ideas simply and effectively.

Discourse Markers:

The assessment criteria often refers to discourse markers. These are just slightly higher-level linking words or expressions such as moreover, furthermore or by way of example.

Exercise 1:

Look at the gaps in sample answer below:

Where could you use these linking words and discourse markers to complete the text? You will not need to sue all of them.

Firstly, in addition, for instance, moreover, furthermore or by way of example.

To whom it may concern,

Mary and I worked together at J&J Retail for 10 years.

It is my pleasure to recommend her for the position of shop assistant.

1……., Mary is a self-confident and outgoing person, who finds it easy to relate to people from all kinds of backgrounds.

During her time at J&J Retail, Mary proved to be friendly, communicative, hard-working and excellent at managing her time. 2. ……., Mary is the kind of person who works well with others, as she displays great sensitivity and sympathy. She was always willing to contribute and help her colleagues. 3……. at J&J Retail she was popular and fully committed to the organization's objectives.

4…….. at J&J Retail, Mary demonstrated excellent English language skills dealing with English-speaking customers on a daily basis. She passed her English exams around 6 months ago and has a keen interest in fashion, which I am sure will stand her in good stead when she is helping customers in English.

I recommend Mary without reservation — she would be an excellent asset to your company.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Your name and Surname

Sample Answer (Letter of Reference):

To whom it may concern,

Mary and I worked together at J&J Retail for 10 years.

It is my pleasure to recommend her for the position of shop assistant.

Firstly, Mary is a self-confident and outgoing person, who finds it easy to relate to people from all kinds of backgrounds.

During her time at J&J Retail, Mary proved to be friendly, communicative, hard-working and excellent at managing her time. In addition, Mary is the kind of person who works well with others, as she displays great sensitivity and sympathy. She was always willing to contribute and help her colleagues. Moreover, (Furthermore) at J&J Retail she was popular and fully committed to the organization's objectives.

By way of example, (For instance) at J&J Retail, Mary demonstrated excellent English language skills dealing with English-speaking customers on a daily basis. She passed her English exams around 6 months ago and has a keen interest in fashion, which I am sure will stand her in good stead when she is helping customers in English.

I recommend Mary without reservation — she would be an excellent asset to your company.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Your name and Surname

(Word count: 197)

Notes: Well done if you answered correctly, but be careful when you write, as there is always the danger that you can overuse devices like these. This makes your writing seem unnatural and demonstrates to the examiner that you do not really understand how to use them. To avoid this issue, let's

look at some other cohesive devices you can use to help you organize your ideas.

Reference pronouns:

Reference pronouns like this, that, they or it are commonly used to refer back to something or someone recently mentioned.

Relative clauses:

Relative clauses can be used to give added information to a statement and they allow you to link ideas together in well-formed sentences.

Substitution:

Other forms of cohesive devices include things like substitution. This is where you use a synonym for example to refer backwards or forwards to a connected point in the text.

E.g. Replacing a verb phrase:

The management team at J & J Retails were very happy with Mary, and so were the rest of the staff (and the rest of the staff were also very happy with her).

Using paragraphs and a variety of cohesive devices effectively will help you score well in the "Coherence and Cohesion" and "Task achievement" parts of the assessment criteria. **Tip:** When you're reading, make a point of looking out for cohesive devices like the ones we've looked at in this section.

Letter of Application

In this type of formal letter, you're asked to write a formal letter or email applying for a job, accommodation or place on a course. Again, the recipient of this letter is a prospective employer or educational institution.

Cover letters, sometimes called letters of application, are a very important part of your application, whether you're a student at university or a candidate looking for a job. While there are virtually no limits to the different designs you can use for your letter of application, there are some general guidelines you will want to apply to make sure it is appropriate for the exam. It is first important to make sure your cover letter has an excellent appearance in terms of both structure and language.

Make sure you learn the name of the person or organization that you're writing if they appear in the instructions. The name must always be spelled correctly.

The next thing you want to do is to demonstrate your qualifications for the job. It is best to write two powerful sentences explaining why you have the necessary skills to perform the job you are interested in. After this, you will want to let the potential employer know that your resume is enclosed. It is also important to make sure you don't end the letter incorrectly.

Sample Task

You see this advertisement in an international student magazine.

Write an application to become a volunteer.

Volunteers needed

We are looking for volunteers to help out at a famous, international sporting event. We're looking for friendly, respectful people with good language skills, good team skills and a 'can-do' attitude. We need people to welcome delegates, provide customer service and solve problems.

If you think you have what it takes, apply now.

You should write at least 150 words.

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The first key piece of information in a letter of application is the fact you've seen the advertisement and where you saw it. This will be the perfect way to start the letter.

Remember that you also need to confirm which position it is you're applying for. This exam is designed to be as realistic as possible and in real life there may be more than one position. If you didn't mention the specific job, the reader would obviously not be fully informed.

For example:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to apply for the Volunteer position advertised in the International Student Magazine.

Language Skills

In this example, the fact that the sporting event international will give you the chance to emphasize your language skills such as your ability to speak English fluently.

As with the letter of reference, language skills are something which you can and should always mention in a letter of application in the IELTS General exam. All positions advertised will require the candidate to speak or write in English.

Suitability for the job

You need to explain your suitability for the job. The question will sometimes state what the required skills or knowledge are, but normally you'll have to include your experience, your qualifications, if any, and personal qualities.

Finally, it would be a good idea to point out that you're available for interview and perhaps to state any times when you're not available. If you cover all these points in your answer clearly, logically, persuasively and in an appropriate format, you should score well in terms of content and communicative achievement.

Sample Response (Letter of Application)

Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms [Hiring managers name – "Dear Sir or Madam" if name or gender are unknown]

I wish to apply for the role of [Volunteer] advertised in the [International Student Magazine]. Please find enclosed my CV for your consideration.

As you can see from my attached CV, I have over [time period, e.g.: 5 years] experience in [e.g.; volunteering or customer service], and I believe the knowledge and skills built up during this time make me the perfect candidate for this position. I am also keen to keep improving my English, as this is not only a hobby but also a real need.

In my current role as a [job title] at [employer name], I have been responsible for [e.g. a 5% increase in revenue], which when coupled with my enthusiasm and dedication [insert skills relevant to the role – usually found in the job description], has helped the business to [measure of success].

I am confident that I can bring this level of success with me to your organization and help [company name] build upon their reputation as an outstanding company. With my previous experience and expertise, I believe my contribution will have an immediate impact on the business.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss my application further.

Yours sincerely/Yours faithfully,

[Your name]

(Word Count 222)

Organization & Essential Language: Formal Letter of Complaint

As the title suggests, in this section, we are going to focus on features of organization.

In the last section, we looked at two common types of formal letter, which often appear in the exam: the letter of reference and the letter of application. As previously mentioned, both these tasks are very similar in structure and ideas. In this section, we will use a different example, so that you can see the slightly different tone and style required in each type of letter.

Up until now, we have concentrated on spotting the key content. The key content is the information we need to respond to in our letter. If you haven't done this yet, stop for a second and make a note of the key points in the letter of reference and the letter of application.

As we saw in the previous section, we need to respond to all of these key points in our letter if we want to score well in the exam.

Your overall organization of the piece of writing is vital. This includes using logical paragraphs for example, as well as clear organization of ideas within paragraphs. You do this by using linking words, discourse markers and other devices. The examples in the previous section show you exactly how to organize your letter of reference and letter of application but they do not show you how to organize other types of letter.

In this section, we'll look at paragraphing a letter of complaint and also at these additional organizational features.

Read the letter of complaint task below and answer the following question:

Question to think about:

How would you organize the paragraphs in your letter if you were answering this question? Think about how you might organize the

underlined points into logical coherent paragraphs.

Formal Letter of Complaint Task

Read this extract from a letter you have recently sent to a friend:

“.... I forgot to say, don't go to Dino's Bar for your birthday. We went there last night - the service was awful; the food was cold, and it was so expensive for such a bad meal! I complained to a member of staff, but he asked me to put it in writing ...”

W rite your letter of complaint to the manager of Dino´s bar

In your letter:

- Introduce yourself
- Explain the situation
- Say what action you would like the company to take

Write at least 150 words

Question to think about:

How many paragraphs would you have, and which power graphs would deal with which issues?

There are several ways to approach this letter, but one suggestion is to organize this around four content paragraphs, one for each problem and one at the end for suggestions.

The answer to this question can be planned and organized as follows:

The letter can be divided into 4 paragraphs:

1. Formal “hello” and state general problem, saying why you went to Dino´s in this case and that you are dissatisfied. State problem 1 (the service was awful)

2. Detailed explanation of problem 2 (the food was cold)

3. Problem 3: the price was high

4. Conclusion, what you want Dino´s to do- offer some suggestions here for improvement here.

A bit more on each paragraph:

OK, so the first paragraph is obviously going to deal with your reason for writing. In a letter of complaint, the first main content paragraph is used for outlining the person's problem saying why you went to the business they originally are complaining about and making sure they say that you are dissatisfied.

Then, we could go on to look at the specific details of the problem, using appropriate adjectives.

Finally, in the last paragraph, we could offer some suggestions or recommendations to help the business improve. You can us language such as:

I must insist that you…

I must urge you to…

Essential Language for a Letter of Complaint:

LETTER OF COMPLAINT

I am writing to complain about…

I would like to express my dissatisfaction with …

I am writing to express my concern about the….

I must complain in writing about…

I feel I must complain to you about…

I wish to complain in the strongest terms about…

I am writing to inform you of an apparent error in your records…

Paraphrasing exercise:

Example:

0) Basic Problem: *"I want to complain about the bad service in the restaurant. "*

ii. Key Language: *I would like to express my dissatisfaction with …*

iii, Key Word you must use: POOR (Bad is too informal, so we can use *poor* instead)

iv. Final Product: *"I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the poor standard of service in the restaurant. "*

Now try to complete the process using the following language:

1)

i. Basic problem: *"The cinema is really far away from everything"*

ii. Key Phrase: *I wish to complain in the strongest terms about…*

iii. Key Word: ACCESSIBILITY

Final Product:

……
……
…….

2)

i. Basic problem: *"During my course, there were too many students in the class"*

ii. Key Phrase: *I am writing to express my concern about the….*

iii. Key Word: NUMBER

Final Product:

……
……
…….

Answers:

1) I wish to complain in the strongest terms about the accessibility of the cinema.

2) I am writing to express my concern about the number of students in the class during my course

Topic specific phrases

• *Poor standard of service/slow service*

• *I am asking for/I would like to request a replacement*

• *No accommodation/Travel delays/Rather rude staff*

• *Badly scratched/dented wrapping/packaging*

• *To claim/demand for a refund*

• *I am returning … to you for correction of the fault/for inspection/repair/servicing*

• *Defective/faulty goods/defective item/machine*

• *The… may need replacing*

• *To restore an item to full working order…*

• *I am enclosing the broken radio in this package; please send me a replacement..*

• *You said that … I feel sure there must be some mistake as I am sure that…*

Ending the letter

• *I do not usually complain, but, as an old customer, I hope you will be interested in my comments.*

• *We look forward to dealing with this matter without delay.*

• *I feel that your company should consider an appropriate refund.*

• *I would be grateful if you would send me a complete refund as soon as possible*

•*We feel there must be some explanation for (this delay) and expect your prompt reply.*

• *Will you please look into this matter and let us know the reason for …*

• *Thank you for your assistance.*

• *I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.*

• *I am returning the damaged goods/items… and shall be glad if you will replace them.*

• *Please look into this matter at once and let me know the delay.*

• *Please check your records again.*

• *Thank you for your cooperation in correcting this detail…*

• *I wish to draw your attention to…*

• *I would suggest that…*

• *I suggest that immediate steps be taken.*

• *I wish to complain about…*

• *I look forward to a prompt reply and hope that you will take into consideration…*

• *I am really dissatisfied with…*

Now look at the sample answer for the question we looked at earlier in this section. Pay special attention to the language and structure used.

Sample Answer

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the poor standard of service we received during our recent visit to Dino´s Bar. Firstly, the staff were generally quite rude and unhelpful, they seemed to lack basic food knowledge and they did not seem interested in the job. For instance, none of them could offer any advice to me on choosing a dish.

A further cause for complaint was that the food was cold when it arrived at our table. I understand that it was a busy night, but, we booked the table and the menus the day before, so I feel that they should have been ready.

Finally, not only did we receive substandard food and unfriendly, unhelpful service, but we were also charged full price for our meals after we complained. In my opinion the prices seem to be very expensive for the quality of the food and the service provided.

I do not usually complain, but, as a loyal customer, I hope you will be interested in my comments. Perhaps it would be appropriate to offer some training courses to staff at Dino´s Bar, in order to avoid this from happening again. I feel that customer service was a big issue, as was the quality of the food. If these two problems were fixed, then price might not be such an issue in the future, as customers would be happy to pay little more for a better experience. I hope you will take these points into consideration

I look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully,

Name and Surname

Formal Letters: Structure Rules

Greeting

Name unknown: *Dear Sir/Madam,*

Name known: *Dear Mr…/ Dear Mrs… / Dear Ms..+ surname*

Reason for writing

I am writing to … I am writing with regard to …

I am writing on behalf of …

Asking questions

I would be grateful if … I wonder if you could ….

Could you …?

Referring to someone else´s letter /points

As you stated in your letter, …. Regarding …/ Concerning …

With regard to ….

Finishing the letter

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Signing

If Dear + name = Yours sincerely,

If Dear Sir/ Madam = Yours faithfully

Your first name + surname must be written clearly under your signature

Formal Letter IELTS General Exam Checklist.

When you have written your letter, check:

1. It is a formal letter
2. It includes all the information necessary
3. You have asked all the questions you need to
4. The questions are correctly formulated indirect questions
5. The letter is divided into paragraphs
6. You have checked the letter carefully for mistakes

Formal Letters: Language Practice

Letters can be anything from very formal to very informal. The IELTS General Writing paper will never ask you to write a specialized business or legal letter requiring a professional knowledge of business words, structures and expressions. However, they might ask you to write a formal, a semi-formal or an informal email or letter.

In this section of the chapter, we will focus on your use of language and in particular, your ability to create a formal register. This will help you to do well in two of the assessment criteria: language of course in terms of using a range of formal vocabulary and grammatical structures and communicative achievement by being able to create an appropriate formal tone that has a positive effect on the reader. We will identify some of the features of formal English that we often find in formal letters.

At the end of this section you will find a list of useful formal-informal equivalents. This list will save you a lot of time in your preparation for the exam. For example, in a letter of complaint: “I was rather disappointed” is a formal way of saying “I was furious” or “I was very angry”. See how many more formal and informal equivalent items you can learn next.

Exercise 1:

Transform the informal or semi-formal version of each phrase from a letter of complaint into a formal style. You can make small changes to the content of the sentences if you think it´s necessary and you can use a dictionary.

Example: I thought I’d write = I am writing

a. state of the playground =

……

b. I have noticed loads of rubbish =

……

c. I reckon =

……

d. The teacher I’m talking about =

……

e. On top of this =

……

f. a load of problems =

……

g. You could =

……

h. stop =

……

i. What’s more =

……

j. better =

……

k. To finish =

……

l. I´m looking forward to hearing from you =

……

Answers:

a. state of the playground = condition of the playground

b. I have noticed loads of rubbish = There is a great deal of litter

c. I reckon = It is my opinion that…

d. The teacher I'm talking about = The teacher in question OR The teacher I am referring to

e. On top of this = Furthermore

f. a load of problems = a number of problems

g. You could = it may be possible for you

h. stop = prevent

i. What's more = In addition

j. better = more suitable OR more adequate

k. To finish = In conclusion

l. I´m looking forward to hearing from you = I look forward to your reply OR I look forward to hearing from you

Exercise 2:

Now here are some full sentences from formal letters. Complete the sentences using only one word.

a. I am writing in ……. to your job advertisement in the ABC newspaper

b. I would like to ……. for the position of translator.

c. I am ……. to come for interview at any time convenient to you.

d. I would be ……. if you could send me further information regarding the position.

e. Please find my CV …….

f. I would like to express my ……. with the poor standard of service we received during our recent visit to your cinema.

g. For ……., none of them could offer any advice to me on choosing a dish.

h. Finally, not only ……. we receive substandard food and unfriendly, unhelpful service, but we were also charged full price for our meals after we complained.

i. I look forward …….

Answers:

a. *I am writing in reply/response to your job advertisement in the ABC newspaper*

b. I would like to apply for the position of translator.

c. I am available/ able to come for interview at any time convenient to you.

d. I would be grateful if you could send me further information regarding the position.

e. Please find my CV attached (email)/ enclosed (letter).

f. I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the poor standard of service we received during our recent visit to your cinema.

g. For instance, none of them could offer any advice to me on choosing a dish.

h. Finally, not only did we receive substandard food and unfriendly, unhelpful service, but we were also charged full price for our meals after we complained.

i. I look forward to your reply.

Use of the Passive (Sometimes)

Okay, the next example is one where the passive has been used instead of an active form. This is a common feature of formal writing but should not be overused. In real life (business and university included), you should try to avoid the passive, as it needlessly complicates sentences. In the IELTS exam however, you can use it once or twice to demonstrate versatility to the examiners.

This sentence is an example of how we might structure a sentence formally.

Informal: “The waiter did offer us another dish, but when it arrived it was cold again.”

Formal: “Although we were offered an alternative dish, when it was delivered to the table it was cold again”.

Notice two clauses in the informal version are joined by but whereas in the formal version, the two clauses have been reversed and but is replaced with although which starts the sentence. This is a more formal way of saying the same thing.

Within the formal sentence “Although we were offered an alternative dish, when it was delivered to the table it was cold again”, there are further examples of vocabulary that is more formal than the equivalent in the informal version. For example, alternative dish is a more formal way of saying another dish.

As we saw above, phrasal verbs are most typical of informal letters — although there are some which have no more formal equivalents and are common in all types of letter (look forward to, for example). Most phrasal verbs, however, do have formal equivalents and these would be preferred in most formal letters whereas the formal equivalents would be very rarely used in an informal letter.

6 Quick Rules of Formal VS Informal:

1. We tend to understate our feelings and would say *I was rather disappointed,* or *I was somewhat surprised* instead of saying how we really felt.

2. For the same reason, we do not use exclamation marks.

3. We often use the passive to emphasize the action when the person is of less importance

4. We avoid contractions in formal letters.

5. We use formal equivalence of idiomatic language and phrasal verbs

6. Particular sentence structures can be used to create a formal tone. Inversion is one example of this “Although we were offered an alternative dish, when it was delivered to the table it was cold again”.

Exercise 3:

Rewrite the following sentences using formal equivalents for the phrasal verbs. Use a dictionary if necessary. You might need to make other changes to the structures.

1) I'm so chuffed that you've been talked into coming to the meeting.

……

……

2) The football club's facilities have been done up, so this should make our performances better.

……

……

3) As our town is quite cut off, perhaps we could arrange for you to be put up in a hotel in the city for a few days.

……

……

4) We will make up for the inconvenience of having to wait for so long.

……

……

Answers:

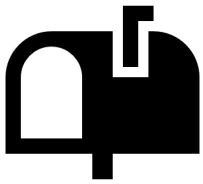
1) I am very happy that you have been convinced to attend the meeting.

2) The football club's facilities have been refurbished, which should improve our performances.

3) As our town is quite isolated, we could arrange hotel accommodation in the city for a few days.

4) We will compensate you for the inconvenience of having to wait for so long.

Chapter 14: Informal Letters



Example Task

An English-speaking friend is visiting your region for a couple of weeks during his holidays and has written to you to ask for several recommendations.

Write a letter to your friend.

In your letter you should:

• offer to help find accommodation

• give advice about things to do

• provide information about what clothes to bring..

In this type of task, you should begin your letter as follows:

Dear ... your friend's name.

A few things to keep in mind.

• You have about 20 minutes to write this.

• You should have at least 150 words. Aim for about 180 (a little bit more but don't go too long- If you're over 240 words, you've written much more than you need to.)

• Address the points, have your opening and closing and that's it!

Let's start with the general idea of what you're trying to do, what you're trying to accomplish.

The tone:

'The tone' of the letter means how your letter sounds, or the overall feeling it gives the reader. It should be very relaxed, very informal, this is what the examiners are looking for.

For example: if you're writing to your friend, write it as though you were speaking to your friend; very casual.

You can start with:

Dear- Hello- Hi and then the person´s first name, never their surname.

You shouldn´t use *Mr., Mrs., Dr.*.

Do not put first and last name because you do not address your friend or family member by his or her first and last name in real life.

Use contractions:

Now contractions are suitable. So in terms of how you're going to use I've, it's, don't etc.., In a formal letter, you say do not whereas in an informal letter, you say don't.

Slang and idioms

Not only are slang and idioms okay now, they're actually recommended because they demonstrate that you can adapt your language to different contexts. When you speak with your friends, you normally use very casual language including slang and idioms.

Nevertheless, remember it has to be natural, so don't be too heavy on the slang or the idioms. One or two here and there are great, but if you overuse them, it becomes unnatural and the examiners may penalize you for it.

Note that you can use idioms in your formal letter as well but very carefully, very selectively and it has to be very appropriate, so it´s generally not recommended.

Stay organized and focused:

You still have to remember what it is you're doing and make it very clear in the letter. Are you thanking the person, are you answering a question, are you asking for something, are you offering advice? Make this clear right away in the introduction. Make sure the body follows.

Language

Again, you don't want to use very serious language in an informal letter or email, you don't want to use too many formal or complex words because that's not how we speak to friends and family normally.

With our friends we're usually very casual and relaxed.

For example:

I just wanted to say thanks for helping me out last week.

In a formal letter, you would write

I'm writing to express my appreciation and gratitude for your assistance with last week's matter..

Notice the different feel of the two sentences. One is very casual, one is very formal.

Another example:

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me - formal.

Versus

Let me know if you need anything else - super casual.

To make your letter look real, the best thing you can do is ALWAYS rely on your personal experience.

Formal VS Informal Language List:

It is vital that you can distinguish between formal and informal language in English, not only for this exam, but also for communication in general. Writing a letter or email to a friend is obviously not the same as writing a letter of recommendation for a friend who has applied for a job. Here are some examples of formal and informal words with the same meaning,

VERBS:

FORMAL: INFORMAL

to depart: to go

to carry out: to do

to provide: to give

to retain: keep

to cease: stop

to seek: look for

assist, aid: to help

liberate: to free

obtain: to get

to desire: want

request: to ask for

to function: work

to demonstrate: show

to reside: live

require: need

OTHER WORDS:

FORMAL: INFORMAL

subsequently: next / later

immature, infantile: childish

sufficient: enough

further: more (information)

hence, therefore: so

deficiency, lack of: little, there is no

perspiration: sweat

inexpensive: cheap

The IELTS Writing Checklist

PREPARATIONS

- Look through your written work and check what mistakes you made
- Do any exercises/past papers that have not been done yet.
- Time yourself for reading and writing!!!
- Have a look at the list of phrases for *Writing 1 and 2* and highlight the ones that you use the most often.
- Read all Model and Authentic Answers for *Writing 1 and 2,* underline all the important phrases used.

CHECKLIST - THE DAY BEFORE THE EXAM:

- Write down a few phrases that you use the most often in your written assignments and that you would like to use in exam in *Writing task 1 and 2*
- Check if you have your passport (or any other proof of identity)
- You're ready for the exam
- Have a relaxing evening and don't worry.

Chapter 15: The POWER of WORDS



Active Voice

It's a good idea to use the active voice if possible, as it makes for more organized, clear and vivid sentences in general. Passive voice sentences are often not only longer and use more obscure word combinations, but they're also less specific and can lead to disconnected readers.

For example:

Simple Present

Active: Mary Higgins handles the new accounts.

Passive: The new accounts are handled (by Mary Higgins).

Present Continuous

Active: Mary Higgins is handling the new accounts.

Passive: The new accounts are being handled (by Mary Higgins).

Simple Past

Active: Mary Higgins handled the new accounts.

Passive: The new accounts were handled (by Mary Higgins).

Present Perfect

Active: Mary Higgins has handled the new accounts.

Passive: The new accounts have been handled (by Mary Higgins).

Past Perfect

Active: Mary Higgins had handled the new accounts.

Passive: The new accounts had been handled (by Mary Higgins).

Future

Active: *Mary Higgins will handle the new accounts.*

Passive: *The new accounts will be handled (by Mary Higgins).*

Auxiliary Verb "Must"

Active: *Mary Higgins must handle the new accounts.*

Passive: *The new accounts must be handled (by Mary Higgins).*

Converting from Passive to Active Voice

If the sentence has a phrase with "by", like *"by Mary Higgins",* it might be a passive sentence. Rewrite the sentence so that you're making it crystal clear who performs the action. For example: *"Nike pulled its factories out of China"* instead of *"All of Nike's factories were pulled out of China (by Nike)"*

When to Use the Passive Voice

1. **To emphasize the action itself instead of the Person or Thing that 'Does' the Action.**

"After four days of negotiations, an agreement was reached by the managing partners"

2. **To Be Tactful**

"The events were misconstrued."

"Mistakes were made"

3. **When the actor is unknown or not important**

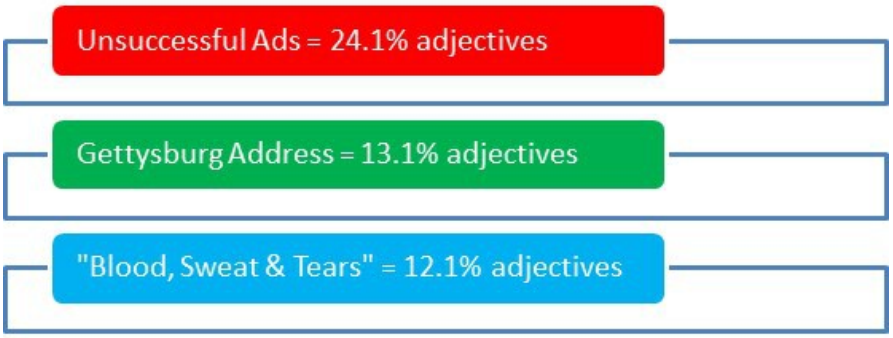
"Every month, hundreds of people are left homeless"

4. **To Set a Detached or Official Tone (Signs or Notices)**

"Guests are not allowed to smoke"

A Warning About Adjectives

Leo Burnet, who is a legend in the advertising industry, is reported to have asked his employees to calculate the percentage of adjectives used in 62 unsuccessful adverts and compare them to the percentage of adjectives used in some of the most powerful speeches ever delivered by historical figures.



Burnet's staff counted 12,758 words in the unsuccessful adverts, of which 24.1% were adjectives. They found that Lincoln's Gettysburg Address has only 13.1% adjectives. Winston Churchill's legendary 1940s speech "Blood, Sweat and Tears" has 12.1% adjectives. Leo Burnett observed that other influential works which had moved millions of people to action, such as The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution, contained similarly low numbers of adjectives.

129 POWER Verbs in English

I've compiled the following list of power verbs throughout the years. They have worked wonders for my students, so I wanted to share them with you. Some are powerful because of the associations they bring to mind, while others are powerful because of the sounds that make up the word.

I hope you find them useful as a quick reference and to give you some ideas and inspiration to come up with other words you might want to use in your writing.

- Abolish
- Absorb
- Accelerate
- Achieve
- Act
- Adopt
- Advance
- Advise
- Alter
- Align
- Amend
- Amplify
- Anticipate
- Apply
- Assess
- Attack
- Avoid

- Balloon
- Bash
- Batter
- Boost
- Break
- Bridge
- Build
- Burn
- Burst
- Capture
- Change
- Choose
- Clarify
- Comprehend
- Confront
- Connect
- Conquer
- Convert
- Create
- Cross
- Decide
- Define
- Defuse
- Deliver

- Deploy
- Design
- Develop
- Diagnose
- Discover
- Dismantle
- Drive
- Eliminate
- Ensure
- Establish
- Evaluate
- Exploit
- Explore
- Filter
- Finalize
- Find
- Focus
- Foresee
- Gain
- Gather
- Generate
- Grasp
- Gush
- Hack

- Hail
- Heighten
- Identify
- Ignite
- Illuminate
- Implement
- Improve
- Increase
- Innovate
- Inspire
- Intensify
- Lead
- Learn
- Leverage
- Magnify
- Manage
- Master
- Maximize
- Measure
- Mobilize
- Motivate
- Overcome
- Penetrate
- Persuade

- Plan
- Position
- Prepare
- Prevent
- Profit
- Raise
- Realize
- Reconsider
- Reduce
- Refresh
- Replace
- Resist
- Respond
- Retain
- Save
- Scan
- Segment
- Shatter
- Shave-off
- Sidestep
- Simplify
- Solve
- Slash
- Smash

- Snowball
- Soar
- Stimulate
- Stop
- Stretch
- Succeed
- Supplement
- Take
- Train
- Transform
- Understand
- Unleash
- Use
- Whittle-down
- Win
- Zap

Showing Cause and Effect

Cause and effect language shows a relationship between something that happens and the reason why it happens. Essentially, action and reaction.

It's extremely important to include this type of language when you're trying to convince someone of something, as it shows that you've thought things through logically. It also helps your reader logically explain to themselves why they agree with you!

Excellent examples of this type language are:

Coordinating Conjunctions

Cause:

for

Effect:

so

Nouns

Cause

the/a cause, the/a reason

Effect

The/an effect, the/a consequence, the/a result

Adverbs and adverb clauses/phrases

Cause

of, as a consequence of…., since, because, in view of…., due to the fact that…

Transitions

Conclusion

to summarize, in short, hence, in brief, as can be seen, in summary, to conclude, in conclusion

Effect

Therefore, as a result, hence, consequently

First cause or effect

first, initial

Second/third/etc. cause(s) or effect(s)

in addition, moreover, additional, another, next, second, still another, additionally, furthermore

Last cause or effect

finally, lastly, final, last

Verbs

Cause

is responsible for, results in, brings about, causes, leads to, produces, contributes to, gives rise to, is the reason for

Effect

results from, is due to, occurs as the result of, is the effect of

51 Words to Imply Safety and Security

Accurate

Advantage

Always

Anonymous

Arrange

Assure

Authentic

Backed

Best-selling

Certain

Certainly

Certify

Certified

Confident

Convenient

Definitely

Endorsed

Establish

Established

Genuine

Guaranteed

Human

Humility

Ironclad

Lifetime

Moneyback

No Obligation

No Questions Asked

No Risk

No Strings Attached

Official

Privacy

Privileged

Protected

Proven

Recession-proof

Refund

Research

Responsible

Results

Secure

Solid

Stable

Supported

Supportive

Sure

Tested

Transparency

Trusting

Verify

Unconditional

Bonus Chapter: 80 IELTS Writing Grammar Rules

This short instant note section was written to serve as a quick revision guide. These grammar tips are particularly crucial to improve your use of English for the IELTS exam, since the examiners will be evaluating the quality of your English in the Speaking and Writing parts of the test.

Once you read and internalize the advice in this mini-guide, you will be better equipped to succeed at an advanced level of English.

Let´s get started!

1. The word “people” is ALWAYS plural.

People are always talking about him (NOT People is...)

The people in the room were starting to get nervous. (NOT: The people in the room was…)

2. After would rather, use an infinitive (without to) or a past tense, not a present tense.

I'd rather stay at home this evening. (NOT I'd rather to stay at home...)

I would rather you paid me in cash. (NOT I would rather you pay me in cash.)

3. Use an -ing form after be/get used to.

I'm used to driving in London now, but it was hard at the beginning. (NOT I'm used to drive...)

I'll never get used to living in this place.

4. How long are you here for? Is a question about the future.

'How long are you here for?' 'Till Easter.' (NOT 'Since Christmas.')

5. Don't use could to talk about something that you succeeded in doing.

I managed to run 10 km yesterday in under an hour. (NOT I could run 10 km yesterday...)

How many eggs were you able to get? (NOT ...could you get?)

6. Indirect questions usually have the same construction as statements.

I asked where her parents were. (NOT USUALLY I asked where were her parents.)

The policeman wanted to know where I lived. (NOT ...where did I live?)

7. To say that something is not necessary, use needn't or don't have to, not mustn't.

You needn't pay now; tomorrow will be OK. (NOT You mustn't pay now; tomorrow will be OK.)

I don't have to wear a tie at work. (NOT I mustn't wear a tie at work.)

8. Everything is a singular word.

Everything was broken. (NOT Everything were broken.)

Is everything ready?

9. Use because or so, but not both together.

Because the train was late I missed the meeting. OR The train was late, so I missed the meeting. (BUT NOT Because the train was late, so I missed the meeting.)

10. We say something to a person.

She never says 'Hello' to me. (NOT She never says me 'Hello'.)

Andrew has said nothing to Peter. (NOT Andrew has said Peter nothing.)

11. Tell normally needs a personal object.

He told us that he was going home. (NOT He told that he was going home.)

I've told you everything I know.

12. Don't use *every* to talk about two people or things.

You can park on each side of the street. (NOT ...on every side of the street.)

He was holding a glass in each hand.

13. *Far* is unusual in affirmative sentences, except in a very formal style.

We live a long way from here. (NOT USUALLY We live far from here, as it can sound too formal unless you say “We live quite far from here”)

It's a long way to Manchester.

14. We don't usually use before to mean 'in front of'.

You can park in front of the station. (NOT ... before the station.)

There's a big tree just in front of our house.

15. After look, we use at with an object.

Look at the moon! (NOT Look the moon!)

What are you looking at?

16. We use when, not as or while, to talk about ages and periods of life.

When I was 14 I first got interested in archaeology. (NOT As/While I was 14...)

We lived in London when I was a child. (NOT ... as/while I was a child.)

17. After as long as, use a present tense to refer to the future.

I'll remember this holiday as long as I live. (NOT ... as long as I will live.)

You can have my bike as long as you bring it back tomorrow.

18. We say as usual, not as usually.

Let's meet tomorrow at 10.00, as usual.

Vanessa late as usual.

19. As well as (with a similar meaning to 'not only... but also') is normally followed by an -ing form.

As well as breaking his leg, he hurt his arm. (NOT As well as he broke his leg...)

He works full time as well as bringing up three children.

20. Expressions like in three hours' time refer to the future.

We'll need the report in two weeks' time. (BUT NOT He wrote the report in four hours' time.)

I'll see you again in a month's time.

21. We don't normally use to after arrive.

What time do we arrive in London? (NOT … arrive to London?)

The train arrived at our station half an hour late.

22. Because is a conjunction; because of is a preposition.

We cancelled the match because it rained. (NOT … because of it rained.)

We cancelled the match because of the rain. (NOT … because the rain.)

23. After the verb lack, no preposition is necessary.

The soup lacks salt. (NOT … lacks of salt.)

It's a good novel, but it lacks structure.

24. Before (meaning ‘before that') follows an expression of time.

Last summer, I decided to go and visit the town that I had left eight years before. (NOT … before eight years.)

I had already met her once, about three years before.

25. News is singular and uncountable

All the news is bad. (NOT All the news are bad.)

I have some news for you (NOT I have a news for you)

26. You borrow something from somebody.

I borrowed the money from my brother. (NOT I borrowed my brother the money.)

Can we borrow some sugar from you?

27. We prefer closed, not shut, before a noun.

When I talk to you, I feel as if I'm standing in front of a closed door. (NOT … a shut door.)

He's got a closed mind. You can't tell him anything.

28. We say come from (present) to give our town, country etc. of origin.

James comes from Liverpool. (NOT James came from Liverpool.)

Where do you come from?

29. Comparatives are made with more or -er, but never both.

The weather is getting colder. (NOT … more colder.)

Please try to be more polite. (NOT … more politer.)

30. We never use on the contrary to give another side of a question.

It's hard work. On the other hand, it's interesting. (NOT on the contrary, it's interesting.)

She's very bad-tempered. On the other hand, she's generous.

31. In affirmative sentences we generally use a long time, not long, except in a very formal style.

We waited a long time, but she didn't come. (NOT We waited long, but …)

It will be a long time before we invite her again.

32. Use superlatives to compare people and things with the groups that they belong to.

Sandra is the tallest of the five girls. (NOT Sandra is the taller of the five girls.)

I think I'm the oldest person in the class.

33. We often use in after dressed to describe the clothes

She was dressed in yellow from head to foot. She looked like a daffodil.

The bride was dressed in white silk.

34. We don't use it … + infinitive with allow.

Smoking is not allowed. (NOT It is not allowed to smoke.)

We weren't allowed to use calculators in the exam. (NOT It wasn't allowed to use …)

35. Whose means 'who is' or 'who has'; whose is a possessive.

Who's that? (NOT Whose that?)

Who's taken my keys? (NOT Whose taken my keys?)

Whose coat is that? (NOT Who's coat is that?)

36. We don't usually use other with uncountable nouns.

Can I have more rice? (NOT … other rice?)

Perhaps we should use different oil. (NOT … other oil.)

37. We use either, not any, to talk about two people or things.

I can write with either hand. (NOT … with any hand.)

'Do you prefer Monday or Tuesday?' 'Either day will do.'

38. Don’t put articles and possessives together before nouns.

She’s a friend of mine. OR She’s my friend. (BUT NOT She’s a my friend.)

Peter’s lost his keys. (NOT … the his keys.)

39. We say that somebody is good, bad, clever etc. at something.

My sister is very good at Science. (NOT … good in Science.)

I’m very bad at languages.

40. Don’t leave out a/an in negative expressions.

Don’t got out without a coat. (NOT … without coat.)

It’s difficult to get there if you haven’t got a bike. (NOT … if you haven’t got bike.)

41. We use any, not every, to say ‘one or another’.

‘Which newspaper would you like?’ ‘It doesn’t matter. Any one.’ (NOT … every one.)

‘When would you like to come to dinner?’ ‘Any day is OK.’

42. Advice is uncountable.

Can you give me some advice? (NOT … an advice?)

My father gave me three pieces of advice. (NOT … three advices.)

43. We don’t use some if we know the exact number.

You’ve got beautiful fingers. (NOT … some beautiful fingers.)

A mountain bike needs to have strong wheels. (NOT … some strong wheels.)

44. We don´t use articles in some common expressions with home, school and bed.

Why isn't Angela at school today? (NOT … at the school today?)

I want to spend a day in bed.

45. When which? what? or who? are subjects, we make questions without do.

Which costs more - the blue one or the grey one? (NOT Which does cost more …?)

What happened to your bike? (NOT What did happen to your bike?)

Who phoned? (NOT Who did phone?)

46. We don´t use articles after the amount/number of.

I was surprised by the amount of money that was collected. (NOT … the amount of the money …)

The number of unemployed rose sharply last month. (NOT The number of the unemployed…)

47. We use because, not as or since, if the reason is the most important part of the sentence.

Why am I leaving? I'm leaving because I'm fed up. (NOT I'm leaving as/since I'm fed up.)

They're laughing because they think your hat's funny.

48. Travel is normally uncountable.

I like travel.

We went on a trip/journey to the Antarctic last spring. (NOT We went on a travel …)

49. Can has no infinitive. We use be able to instead.

I'd like to be able to sing. (NOT … to can sing.)

When will you be able to meet us?

50. The difference between a and an depends on pronunciation, not spelling.

She's a US citizen. (NOT She's an US citizen.)

Would you like to be an MP? (NOT … a MP?)

51. Weather is uncountable.

We had terrible weather last week. (NOT … a terrible weather …)

I hope we get good weather at the weekend.

52. Words like President, King, Doctor in titles have no article.

President Obama visited the Pope. (NOT The President Obama …)

I'd like to see Dr Jones. (NOT … the Dr Jones.)

53. We usually use over, not across, to mean 'on/to the other side of something high'.

Why are you climbing over that wall? (NOT … across that wall?)

I threw his keys over the fence, where he couldn't get them.

54. Actually means 'really' or 'in fact', not 'now'.

She said she was 18, but actually she was 15.

In 1700 the population of London was higher than it is now. (NOT … than it actually is.)

55. Asleep and afraid are not normally used before nouns.

He had the innocent expression of a sleeping baby. (NOT … of an asleep baby.)

In the house, we found a frightened child hiding in the kitchen. (NOT … an afraid child.)

56. We don't usually put an adverb and its complement together before a noun.

We're looking for people who are skilled in design. (NOT … skilled in design people.)

He has a difficult accent to understand. (NOT … a difficult to understand accent.)

57. Eventually means 'finally', not ´from time to time´, 'possibly' or 'perhaps'.

It took a long time, but eventually he finished his studies.

I'm not sure what I'll do next year. Perhaps I'll go to university if I can get a place. (NOT Eventually I'll go to university …)

58. We don't usually use too before adjective + noun.

The problem was too difficult. (BUT NOT It was a too difficult problem.)

I put down the bag because it was too heavy. (BUT NOT I put down the too heavy bag.)

59. We usually put descriptive adjectives before classifying adjectives.

An old political idea (NOT A political old idea)

The latest educational reform (NOT The educational latest reform)

60. Nouns referring to nationality are often different from the corresponding adjectives.

Graham is a typical Welshman. (NOT … a typical Welsh.)

He's married to a Spaniard. (NOT … a Spanish.)

61. Adjectives that express opinions usually come before other descriptive adjectives.

a lovely cool drink (NOT a cool lovely drink)

their wonderful old house (NOT their old wonderful house)

62. Pronoun objects come before adverb particles.

Can you switch it on, please? (NOT …switch on it…)

I'm going to throw them all out. (NOT … throw out them all.)

63. Adverbs can't usually be used instead of adjectives.

She danced happily into the room. (NOT She danced happy …)

I'm terribly sorry. (NOT I'm terrible sorry.)

64. After all doesn't mean 'finally'. It means 'all things considered' or 'in spite of what was expected'.

It took a long time, but finally we found our dream house. (NOT … but after all we found our dream house.)

She can make her own bed. After all, she's not a baby any more.

I expected to fail the exam, but I passed after all.

65. Ago comes after an expression of time.

Ann phoned two hours ago. (NOT … ago two hours.)

I should have finished this work six weeks ago.

66. We don't normally use all without a noun to mean 'everybody'.

Everybody was quiet. (NOT All were quiet.)

I've written to everybody. (NOT I've written to all.)

67. In exclamations with how, the adjective or adverb comes immediately after how.

How cold it is! (NOT How it is cold!)

How well she sings! (NOT How she sings well!)

68. We don't use every with uncountable nouns.

I like all music. (NOT I like every music.)

I can do every kind of work. (NOT … every work.)

69. After *either* , we use a singular noun.

I can come on Wednesday or Thursday - either day is OK. (NOT … either days …)

She can write with either hand.

70. We usually ask, 'What color …?' without a preposition.

What color is your new bike? (NOT Of what color …?)

What color is her hair this week?

71. We don’t usually drop nouns after adjectives.

Poor little boy! (NOT Poor little!)

The most important thing is to be happy. (NOT The most important is to be happy.)

72. All day doesn’t mean the same as every day.

I worked all day yesterday, from 8.00 till bedtime.

I worked every day except Sunday last week. (NOT … all day except Sunday …)

73. Don’t drop a/an after what in exclamations.

What a rude man! (NOT What rude man!)

What an awful film! (NOT What awful film!)

74. Experience and experiment don’t mean the same.

We did an experiment in the chemistry lesson to see if you could get chlorine gas from salt. (NOT We did an experience …)

I’m experimenting with a new perfume.

I had a lot of interesting experiences during my year in Africa. (NOT I had a lot of interesting experiments

…)

Have you ever experienced the feeling that you were going mad? (NOT Have you ever experimented the feeling …?)

75. We don't usually use reflexive pronouns after feel.

I feel really energetic today. (NOT I feel myself really …)

Andrew often feels depressed. (NOT … feels himself depressed.)

76. We use half without of in expressions of measurement and amount.

They live about half a mile from here. (NOT … half of a mile …)

I only need half a pint.

77. We use hear, not listen to, to say that something 'comes to our ears'.

Suddenly I heard a strange noise. (NOT Suddenly I listened to a strange noise.)

Did you hear that?

78. After help, we can use object + infinitive (with or without to).

Can you help me (to) find my ring? (NOT … help me finding my ring?)

Let me help you (to) wash up.

79. We usually say hope …not, rather than do not hope.

I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow. (NOT I don't hope it rains tomorrow.)

'Is Peter coming this evening?' 'I hope not.'

80. We say that you crash into something.

Granny crashed into a tree yesterday. (NOT Granny crashed against a tree yesterday.)

The plane crashed into a mountain.

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