



IELTS Writing

David Richards

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Introduction

The writing sections of the IELTS exam are challenging. They require students to learn a variety of skills. In my experience as an IELTS teacher, many students do not learn these skills from standard coursebooks and courses.

To help my students, I designed the following materials. These materials were written over a period of five years. I constantly made changes to the materials based on experience and student feedback. This process led to students making great improvements in their writing scores.

This book can be used by both teachers and students who want to study independently. It has been formatted so that each section can be printed individually. I believe that learning one skill at a time helps students to progress faster.

This book is recommended for students who can score at least 5.0 on the IELTS exam and aim to achieve 6.5 and above.

Thank you for purchasing this book.

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Writing Task 1

To succeed in this task, you need to learn specific language and skills. This chapter features simple explanations of everything that you need to know. In addition, there are 27 exercises to consolidate learning.

In Writing Task 1, you must describe one or more graphs, charts, or diagrams (infographics). You have 20 minutes to write an answer of 150 words. This is a short amount of time, so you need to prepare well.

It is useful to keep in mind *why* you are doing this task. Being able to understand infographics is an important skill; you will come across them at university and work.

This book is divided into three main sections; one for each question type that you can be asked.

1. Chart and/or graphs. You need to describe one or more graphs or charts. This is by far the most common type of task, so this book mainly focuses on it.
2. Process Diagrams. This is a diagram (picture) showing how something is made or works. You need to explain what the diagram shows.
3. Maps. You are presented with two maps and are asked to compare them.

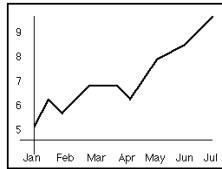


– This symbol is used to introduce key vocabulary.

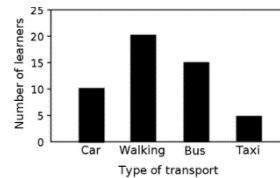
Charts and Graphs

This section explains how to answer questions featuring graphs and charts. There are four types of charts and graphs:

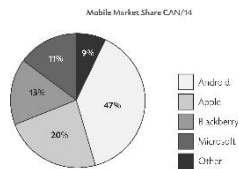
Line graph



Bar graph / chart



Pie chart



Tabular chart

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%

When completing this task, imagine that you are giving a business presentation. Your job is to *explain* the data to the audience.



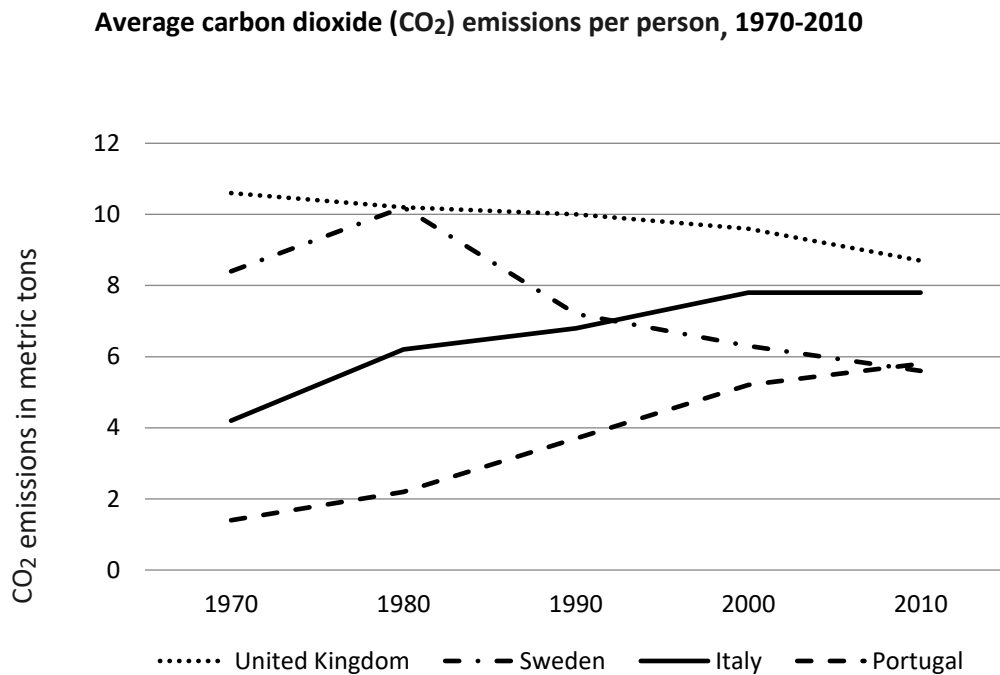
In this task you need to only *describe* a graph or chart. You should NOT provide reasons for the data.

There are three main skills you need to master:

- *How to describe numbers*
- *How to point out overall trends rather than details*
- *How to compare and contrast data*

This is an example question and answer.

The graph below shows average carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions per person in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Italy and Portugal between 1970 and 2010. Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



The line graph provides information on the average carbon dioxide emissions per person in four countries from 1970 to 2010. Overall, the average emissions of the four countries became more similar, with emissions in the UK and Sweden decreasing moderately and those in Italy and Portugal increasing dramatically.

Over the period, the average emissions per person in Portugal almost tripled from just two metric tons to slightly under six tons. Similarly, average emissions in Italy also rose significantly, from just over four metric tons to finish at slightly under eight metric tons. In contrast, average emissions in the UK fell gradually over the period from just over ten metric tons to finish at approximately nine; however, it still had the highest emissions per person in 2010 at around eight and a half metric tons. Sweden initially rose rapidly to peak at just over ten tons, which was followed by a rapid fall to finish at just under six tons. (151 words)

How to Describe Numbers

The most important language in this task is the language of numbers. First, let's look how to use the words percent and percentage.

🔑 **Percent / Percentage %** There is a difference in how these two words are used.

Percent – the word percent comes after a number.

Just over 25 percent of the students came from Brazil.

Percentage - The word percentage comes after words like *the, a, this* and *that*. Often, it is preceded by an adjective.

A small percentage of visitors were unhappy with the refurbishments.

There are two more rules that you should follow.

1. For numbers up to ten, write the numbers in words. For numbers over 10, you can write the numbers in numbers. *Five percent of the employees were late this month. More than 50 percent of the students handed in their assignments late.*

2. If the sentence starts with a number, always write it in words. *Wrong: 25 students were from China. Right: Twenty-five students were from China.*

➔ Decide if the following sentences are right or wrong. Circle tick or cross.

Less than 40 percentage of American women go to university.	✓	X
By 2000, the percentage of people who lived in Europe had fallen to 14%.	✓	X
87% percent of British people aged between 16 and 24 regularly download music.	✓	X
In July, the percentage of people who visited the Science Museum increased dramatically.	✓	X
The birthrate rose by seven percent in 2003.	✓	X
In 1995, the total amount of waste recycled rose to fifty-four percent.	✓	X
Thirty-five percent of people aged 50-65 donated money to charity.	✓	X
A large percent of people emigrated to Australia.	✓	X

Now let's do some basic math. Here is a set of figures.

0-5	a small fraction
10	one tenth
20	a fifth
25	a quarter
33	one third
40	two fifths
50	a half
60	three fifths
66	two thirds
75	three quarters
80	four fifths

➔ Match the terms on the left to the numbers on the right.

- | | | |
|------------------|---|-------|
| two fifths | • | • 75% |
| one tenth | • | • 25% |
| a half | • | • 4% |
| a third | • | • 20% |
| three fifths | • | • 50% |
| three quarters | • | • 80% |
| two thirds | • | • 66% |
| a small fraction | • | • 60% |
| a fifth | • | • 33% |
| four fifths | • | • 10% |
| a quarter | • | • 40% |

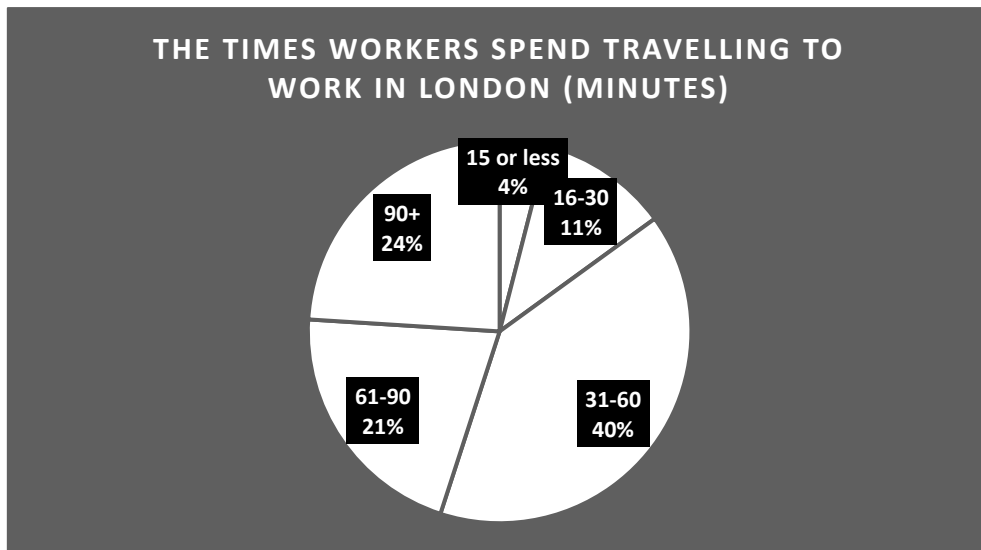
Now let's try some more difficult examples. The figures you are given are usually approximate numbers. It is important that you are accurate in how you describe these figures. A fifth is not the same as nearly a fifth.

Basic meaning			
about	approximately	around	more or less
more than	just over	slightly over	
less than	just under	almost	nearly
exactly	precisely		

➔ Match the items on the left to the items on the right.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|-----|
| Nearly 20 percent | • | • | 10% |
| more or less 50 percent | • | • | 76% |
| precisely one in ten | • | • | 52% |
| approximately a quarter | • | • | 9% |
| just under 10 percent | • | • | 31% |
| slightly over half | • | • | 48% |
| almost a third | • | • | 26% |
| just over three quarters | • | • | 18% |

→ Look at this pie chart and then put one qualifier and one number in each space.



Qualifiers

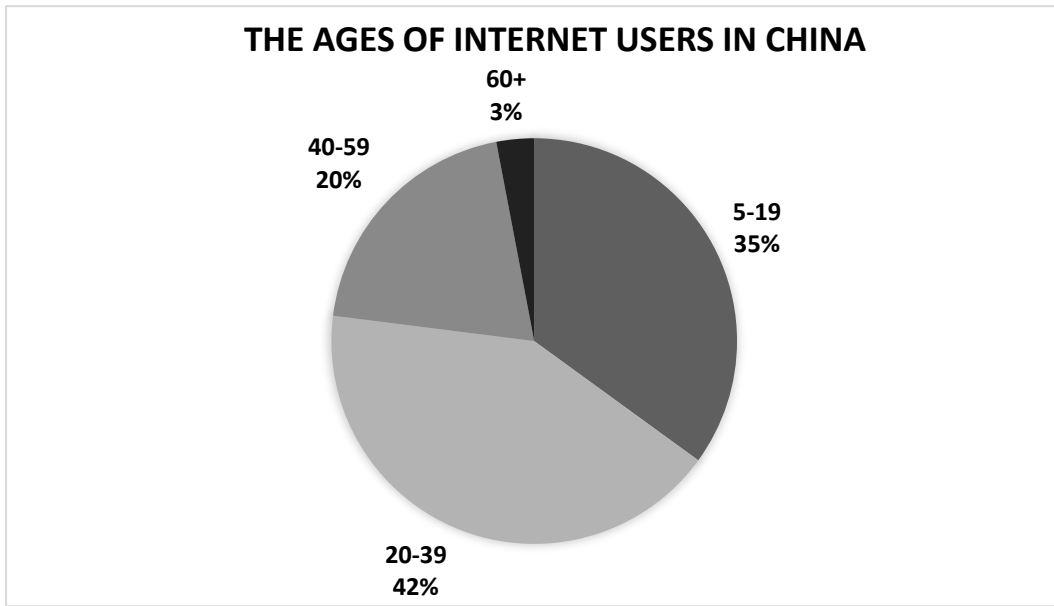
- Just over
- Precisely
- Just under
- Slightly over
- Only

Numbers

- A fifth
- A small fraction
- A quarter
- Two-fifths
- A tenth

1. _____ of people spend 15 minutes or less travelling to work.
2. _____ of people spend between 16 and 30 minutes travelling to work.
3. _____ of people spend between 31 and 60 minutes travelling to work.
4. _____ of workers spend between 61 and 90 minutes travelling to work.
5. _____ of workers spend over 90 minutes travelling to work.

→ Write three more sentences describing the numbers in this pie chart.



Just over a third of internet users in China are between five and 19 years old.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

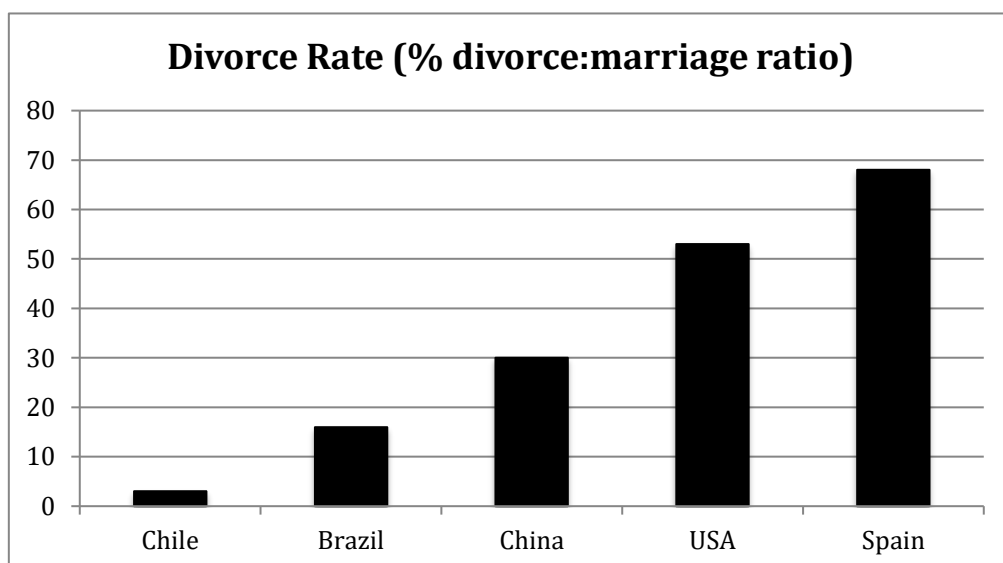
There are other ways to describe numbers. Here is some key vocabulary.

- 🔑 **Proportion** – a part, a number considered in relation to a whole.
- 🔑 **Majority** – the greater number or part, especially more than half.
- 🔑 **Minority** – a smaller number or part.

Percentage	Descriptor
0-5	an insignificant minority/number
6-19	a small number
20-39	a good proportion
40-55	a large proportion
56-90	a significant majority

🔑 **Rate.** A number measured against some other quantity. For instance, the infant mortality rate, which is the number of deaths of children under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births. In Sweden, the infant mortality rate is 2.6/1000 live births, but we just say, 'The infant mortality rate in Sweden is 2.6.'

➔ Use the phrases above to write three more sentences about this bar chart.



Example: A small number of couples in Chile divorce. / The divorce rate in Chile is insignificant

1 _____

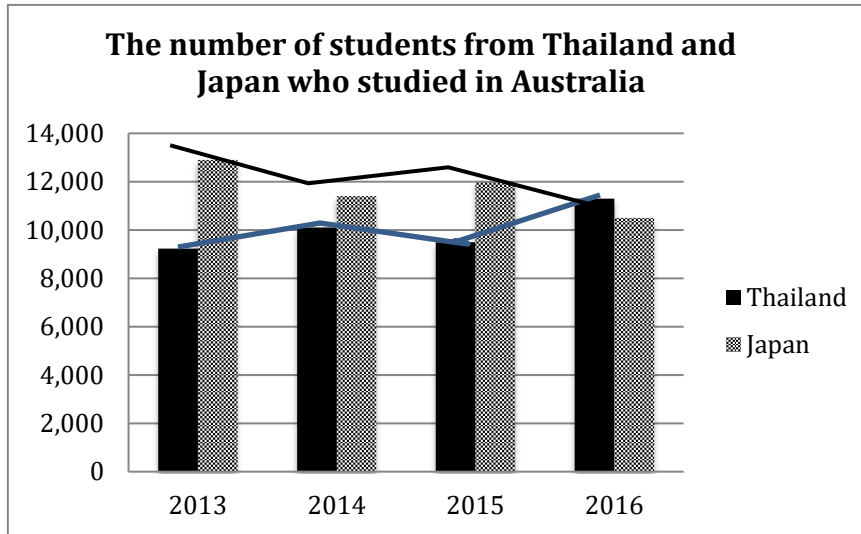
2 _____

3 _____

How to Describe Trends

In order to get a good mark, you need to describe the most important changes in a chart or graph.

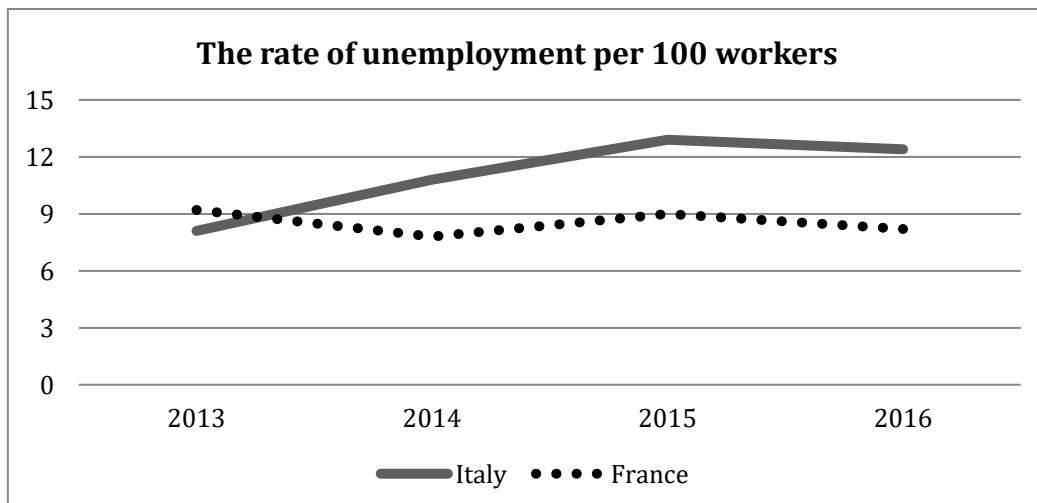
To do this, you need to describe trends. These are movements in data. To make them easier to see, try to *outline* the trends in your mind. You should describe three or four trends in your answer. Look at this example:



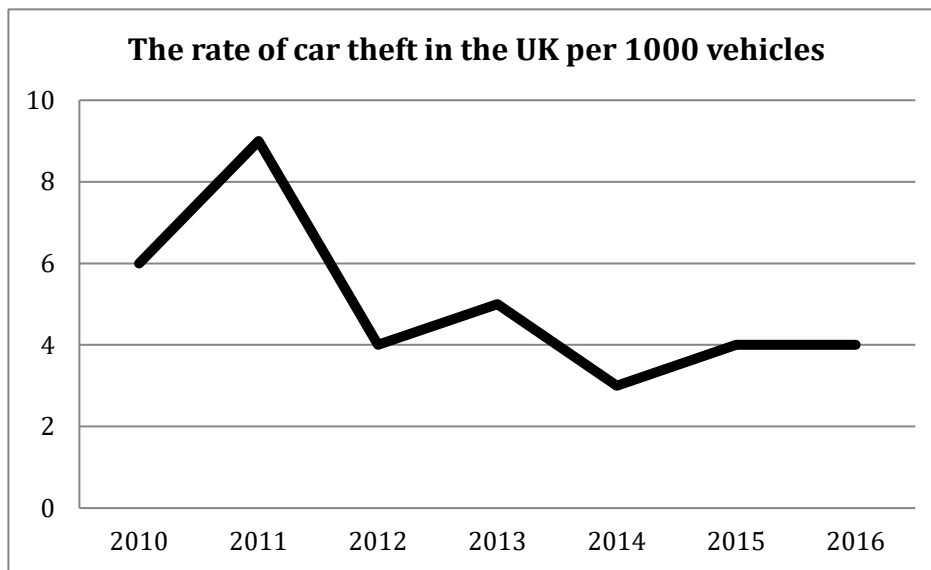
There are four main trends here:

- Thailand has an upward trend.
- Japan has a downward trend.
- Both Thailand and Japan move up and down.
- Japan started with the higher number of students, but Thailand overtook them.

→ Write three or four trends for this line graph.



This is the vocabulary you need to describe basic movements in data. The following list of words is illustrated by describing this line graph.



The trends are:

Up: 2010-2011

Down: 2011-2012

Up and down: 2012-2015

No change: 2015-2016

The highest point: 2011

Upward movements

There are grammatical differences when using these words as either verbs or nouns. First, let's look at **verbs**. In the graph the timeline ends in 2016, so we need to use the past tense.

🔑 Prepositions – 'by' and 'to'. 'By' tells you the size of the change. 'To' tells you the figure at the end of the change.

Verb	By	To
Rise	It rose by 3%	It rose to 9%
Grow	It grew by 3%	It grew to 9%
Increase	It increased by 3%	It increased to 9%

You can also use the same words as **nouns**. When using the words as nouns, you generally use the present tense form.

🔑 Prepositions – ‘in’ and ‘of’. We use ‘in’ to describe changes in things and ‘of’ to describe changes in number or amount.

Noun	Of	In
Rise	There was a rise of 3%	There was a 3% rise in the rate of car theft.
Grow	There was a growth of 3% (Note- the past participle is used here).	There was a 3% growth in the rate of car theft.
Increase	There was an increase of 3%	There was a 3% increase in the rate of car theft.

Downward movements

The grammar is the same for downward movements.

Verb	By	To
Decrease	It decreased by 5%	It decreased to 4%
Fall	It fell by 5%	It fell to 4%
Decline	It declined by 5%	It declined to 4%

Noun	Of	In
Decrease	There was a decrease of 5%	There was a 5% decrease in the rate of car theft.
Fall	There was a fall of 5%	There was a 5% fall in the rate of car theft.
Decline	There was a decline of 5%	There was a 5% decline in the rate of car theft.

Up and down

When describing a period when the data goes both up and down, you can use the word ‘fluctuate’. The word can be used as both a verb and a noun.

Verb	Example	Purpose
Fluctuate	(2012-2015) It fluctuated between 3% and 5%	Tells the highest and lowest point of the movements.

Noun	Example	Purpose
A fluctuation	There was a 2% fluctuation.	The difference in size between the highest and lowest points.

No change

🔑 **At** - introduces a stable number.

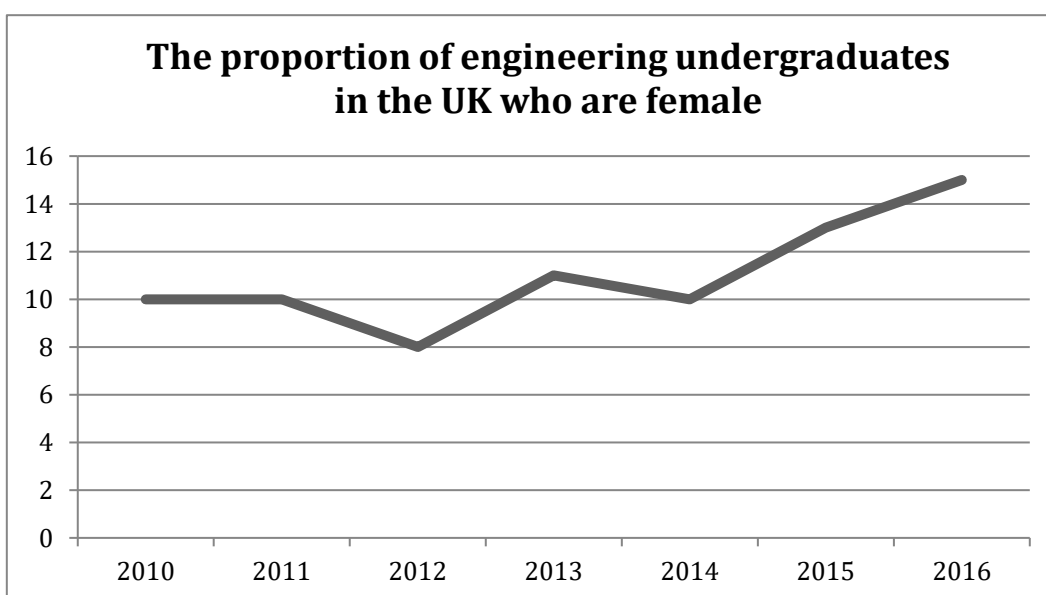
Verb	Example
Stabilise	It stabilised at 6%
Remain steady	It remained steady at 6%

The highest point

Verb	Noun	Example
Peak	(reach) a peak	It peaked at 9% / It reached a peak of 9%

🔑 **From ... to ... / Between ... and ...** These structures are used to show a period of time.

➔ Look at this line graph and decide if the following statements are right or wrong.



Between 2011 and 2014, the proportion of female students fluctuated between 8% and 11%. ✓ X

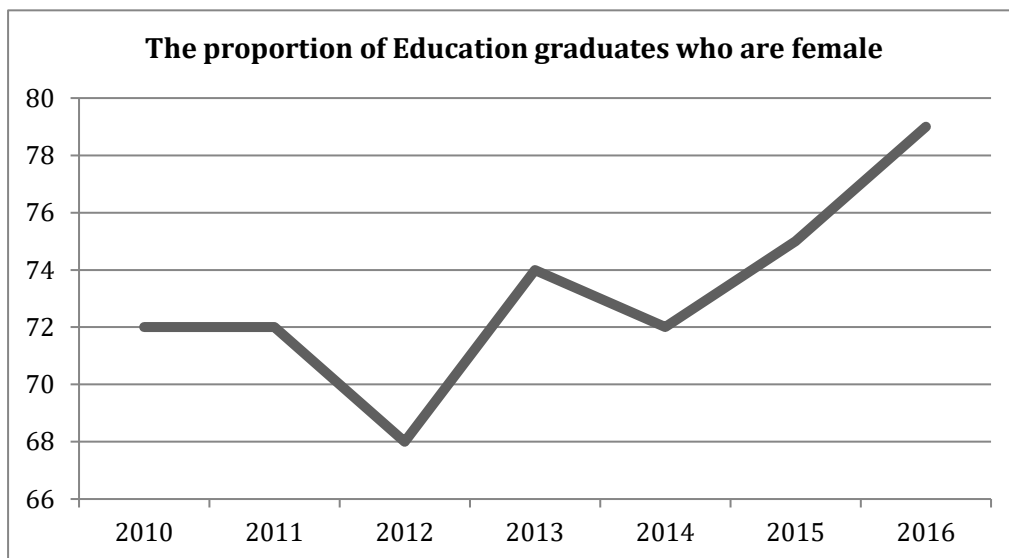
From 2011 to 2012, the proportion of female students fell by 3%. ✓ X

Between 2010 and 2011, the proportion of female students stabilized at 10%. ✓ X

The proportion of female students reached a peak of 15% in 2016. ✓ X

From 2014 to 2016, the proportion of female students grew from 10% to 15%. ✓ X

➔ Write three more sentences about this line graph.



From 2012 to 2013, the proportion of females rose by six percent.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Size of Change

It is important to describe the size of a change. This is the vocabulary that you need.

Large

Adjective	Adverb	Example
Dramatic	Dramatically	There was a dramatic growth in price / The price grew dramatically
Significant	Significantly	There was a significant fall in price / the price fell significantly

Medium

Adjective	Adverb	Example
Moderate	Moderately	There was a moderate fall in price / The price fell moderately

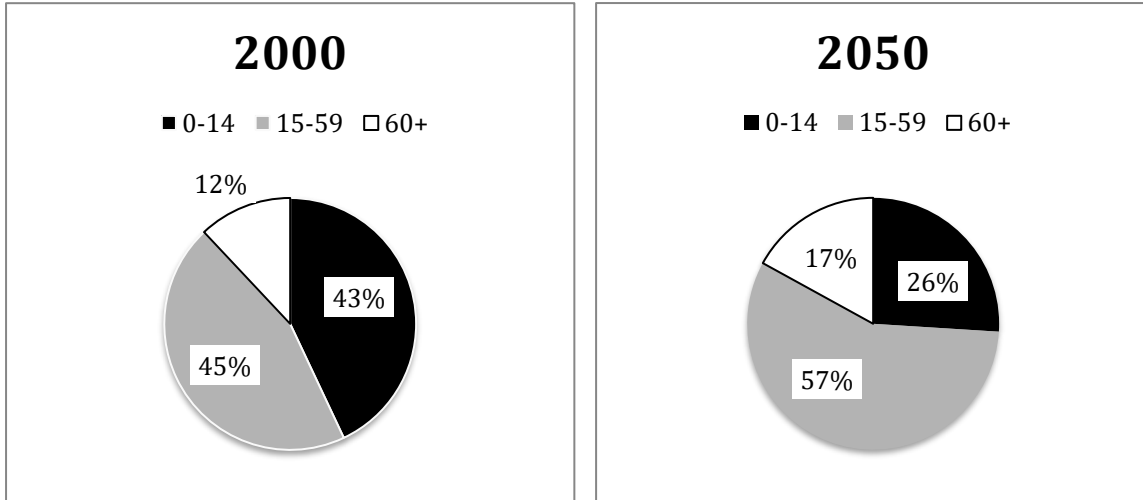
Small

Adjective	Adverb	Example
Slight	Slightly	There was a slight fall in price / The price fell slightly

Skill: Choose the correct tense. To get a good grammar score in this task, it is vital to work out which tense you should use. Usually, the charts and graphs are dated in the past, so you need to use the past tense. However, sometimes a graph or chart is set at a future date. In the below example, one of the pie charts is labeled for the year 2050.

🔑 **Projection.** An estimate or forecast of a future situation or trend based on a study of present ones.

Below are two pie charts providing demographic (population) information about Mongolia in 2000 and projections for 2050.



Skill: Relabel indexes. It is a good idea to describe the indexes (the categories of information). For instance, here one age group is 0-14, but instead we may just write 'children'. Another is '60+' but we may say 'elderly people'.

➔ Put the following words in the correct spaces. Write one 'trend' and one 'size' word for each sentence.

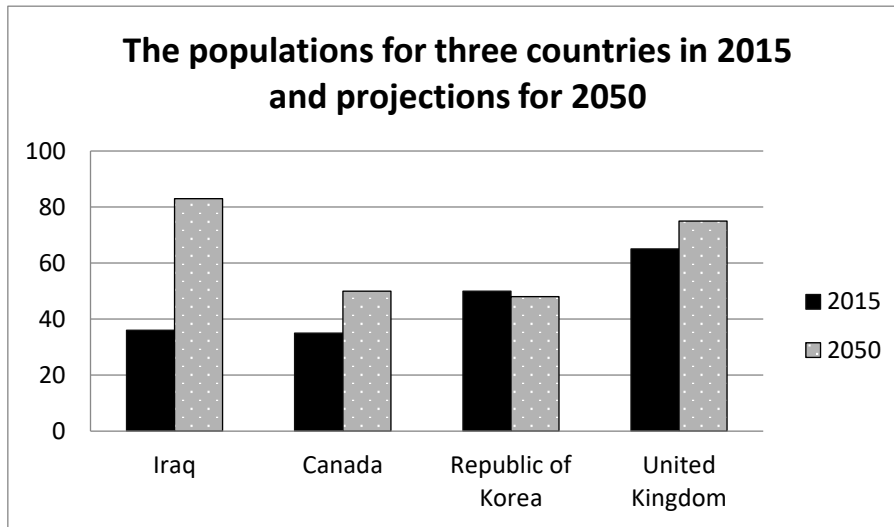
Trend	Size
Fall	dramatically
Rise	moderately
Grow	slightly

The proportion of children is projected to _____ .

The proportion of elderly people is projected to _____ .

The proportion of people aged 15-59 is projected to _____ .

→ Write three more sentences for this chart, describing the size of change.



The population of the United Kingdom is projected to rise moderately from 65 to approximately 75 million.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

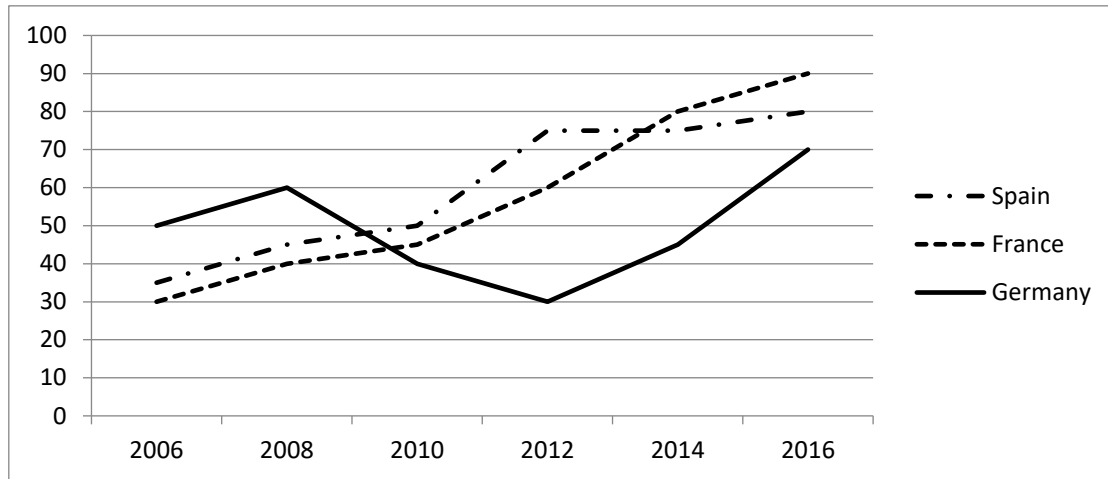
Using Multiplication

Another way to describe the size of change is to state how many times a figure has increased or decreased.

Times 2	double	the figure doubled from five to ten percent
Times 3	triple	the figure tripled from five to 15 percent
Times 4	quadruple	the figure quadrupled from five to 20 percent

➔ Put the words in the correct spaces.

The household recycling rates (%) in three European countries



doubled tripled quarter halved

From 2008 to 2014, the recycling rate in France _____, rising from 40 to 80 percent.

Between 2008 and 2012, the recycling rate in Germany _____, falling from 60 to 30 percent.

Over the period, the recycling rate in France _____.

From 2010 to 2012 the recycling rate in Germany fell by a _____.

The Speed of Change

It is useful to be able to describe how quickly a movement happens. This is the vocabulary that you need.

Fast

Adjective	Adverb	Example
Fast	Quickly	There was a fast growth in price / The price grew quickly
Rapid	Rapidly	There was a rapid growth in price / The price grew rapidly

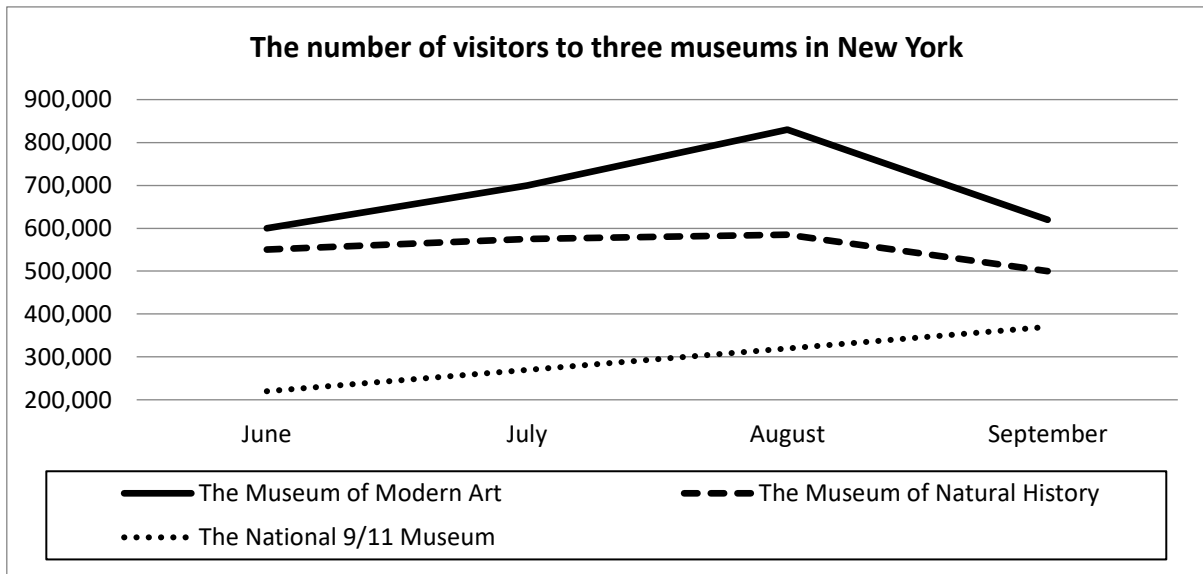
Medium

Adjective	Adverb	Example
Steady	Steadily	There was a steady growth in price / The price grew steadily
Gradual	Gradually	There was a gradual growth in price / The price grew gradually

Slow

Adjective	Adverb	Example
Slow	Slowly	There was a slow growth in price / The price grew slowly

➔ Look at this line graph and decide if the statements are true or false.



🔑 **Overall / Over the period.** The whole timeframe of the graph, so in this instance it means from June to September.

From June to August the number of visitors to the Museum of Natural History grew quickly. ✓ X

Overall, the number of visitors to the National 9/11 Museum increased gradually. ✓ X

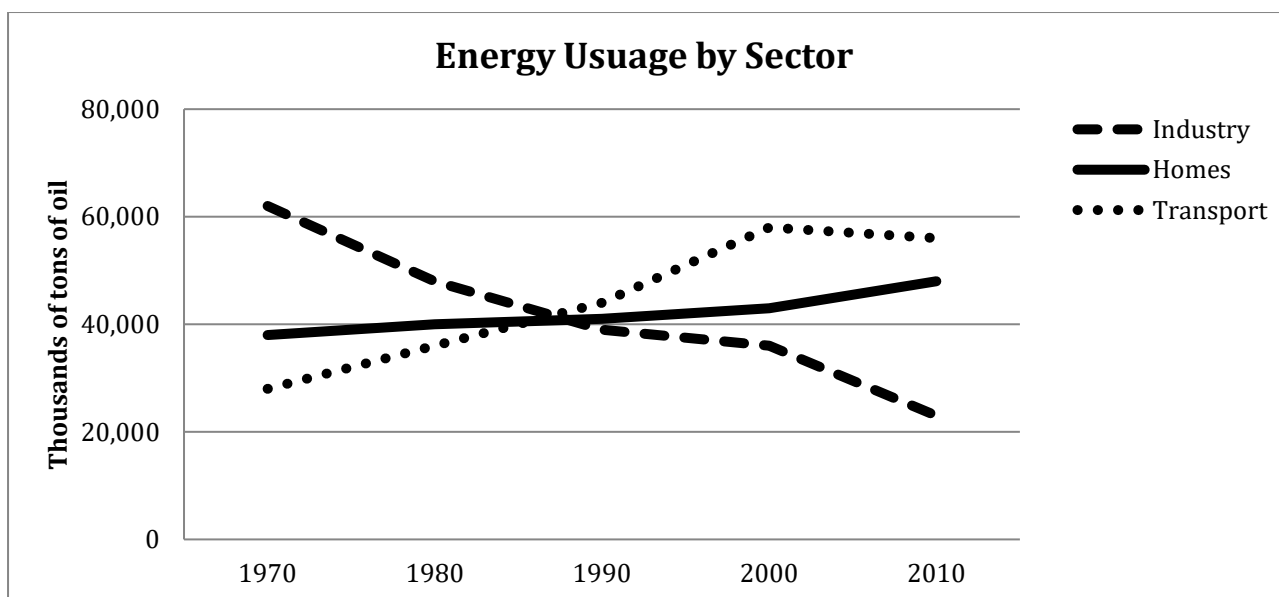
Between August and September, the number of visitors to the Museum of Modern Art fell rapidly. ✓ X

Between June and August, the number of visitors to the Museum of Modern Art grew slowly. ✓ X

Skill: State the period, the change and the data in one sentence. This is a way to use all the vocabulary you have learned in this section in one sentence. First, you state the time period, then the trend and then describe the data. For example, for the following line graph, you could write.

Between 1970 and 1990, the amount of energy used by the industry sector fell rapidly by just over 20,000 (to finish at approximately 40,000) / from just over 60,000 (to finish at approximately 40,000).

➔ Write three more similar sentences about this line graph.



🔑 **Amount / number of.** Use 'amount of' for uncountable nouns, and 'number of' for countable nouns. In this case, 'energy' is an uncountable noun so we must use 'amount'.

Between 1970 and 1990, the amount of energy used by the industry sector declined significantly by approximately 20,000 tons.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

How to Compare and Contrast

In this section, you will look at the vocabulary and structures used to compare and contrast information.

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

A simple method is to use comparative and superlative adjectives. As a quick revision, look at this table.

	Example	Comparative	Superlative
Words with one syllable	Large	Larger	Largest
Words with three syllables or more	Popular	More popular Less popular	The most popular The least popular
Words ending with -y	Wealthy	Wealthier	The wealthiest
Short words ending with a vowel/consonant/vowel	Hot	Hottest	The hottest
Irregular	Bad	Worse	The worst

➔ Put the correct form of the word in brackets in each space.

1. The amount of energy consumed was (high) _____ in January than February.
2. In 1990, the (popular) _____ meal with British teenagers was hamburgers.
3. The summer months are significantly (hot) _____ than spring.
4. The (dramatic) _____ fall was in 1995, when the rate of unemployment only declined by 1%.
5. The (large) _____ increase was from 2014 to 2015 when there was an almost twofold increase.
6. America is the (wealth) _____ country in the table.
7. Spain had the (low) _____ infant mortality rate.

The Size of the Difference

Look at this sentence; 'the birthrate is lower in Europe than Africa'. This statement is too vague. Is the birthrate *a lot* lower, or only *a little bit* lower?

You can use the following vocabulary to describe the size of difference more accurately.

- For big differences it is better to say, 'the birth rate is *far / much / significantly...*' For small differences you can write 'the birth rate is *slightly...*'
- With superlatives, you can use the phrase 'by far'. For example, '*by far* the highest', or '*by far* the lowest'.
- For data that is nearly identical you can say 'similar' or 'almost the same'.

➔ The following table gives statistics showing the quality of life in five countries. Put the letters in the correct spaces.

Country	GNI per head (2015: US Dollars)	Daily calorie supply per head	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Infant mortality (per 1000 live births)
Australia	45,300	3,200	83	4
Serbia	13,400	2,700	76	6
South Africa	12,900	2,900	63	33
Tanzania	2,600	2,000	62	42

- A** by far the highest **B** much higher **C** almost the same
D by far the lowest **E** far higher than **F** similar

1. Overall, the quality of life in Australia was _____ the other three countries.
2. Australia had _____ GNI at just over 45,000 dollars. It also had a _____ daily calorie intake and life expectancy.
3. While Serbia and South Africa had a _____ GNI at approximately 13,000, South Africa's infant mortality rate was over five times higher.
4. Tanzania had _____ GNI, at just over 2500. However, its life expectancy was _____ as South Africa's.

➔ This is the final medal table of the 2016 Olympic games in Rio. Write three more sentences comparing the data.

	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	United States	35	33	32	100
2	Great Britain	22	21	13	56
3	China	20	16	22	58
4	Germany	13	8	11	32
5	Russia	12	15	17	44

The United States won by far the highest number of medals.

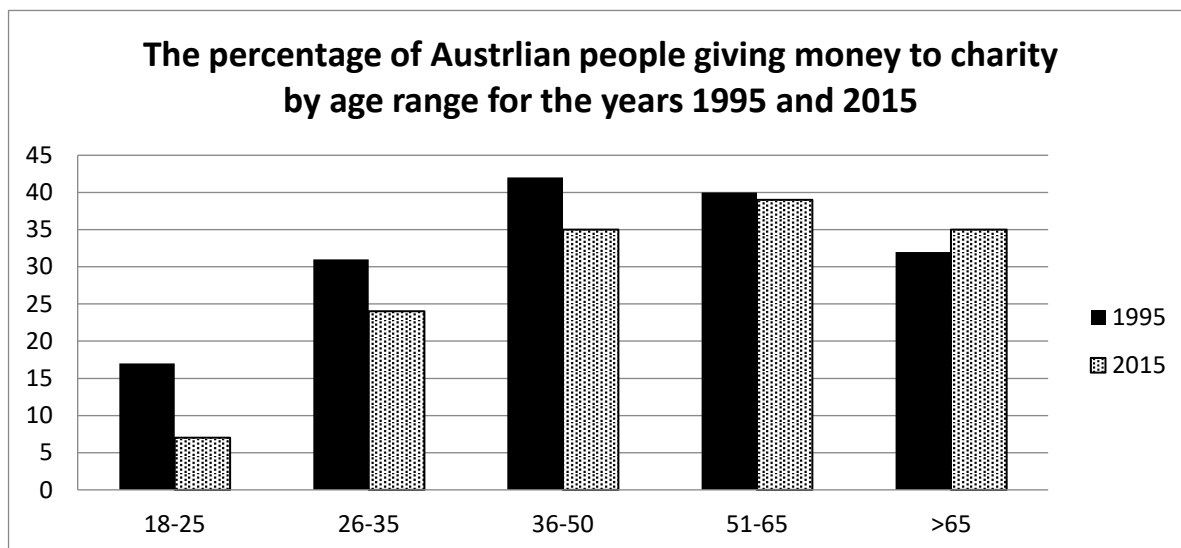
1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Transitions

You are likely to get a better score in this task if you write long sentences that compare and contrast information. Using transitions is a great way to do this. The following vocabulary is illustrated by describing this bar chart.



Compared to / compared with / in comparison with

The grammar is the same for these three phrases. They can be used at the beginning or in the middle of sentences.

The proportion of people aged 18-25 who donated to charity was very high in 1995 compared to/ compared with / in comparison with 2015.

Compared to / compared with / in comparison with 2015, the proportion of people aged 18-25 who donated to charity was high in 1995.

While

This is another way of comparing data. I recommend using it with numbers.

Over a third of elderly people donated to charity while only seven percent of 18-25-year olds did.

While only seven percent of people aged 18-25 donated to charity, over a third of elderly people did.

In contrast

Use this phrase to show a big difference.

The proportion of people aged 18-25 who donated to charity was low in contrast to people aged 36 and over.

However / On the other hand

This word can also be used to show contrasting information.

The proportion of people aged 51-65 who donated to charity decreased moderately; however, the proportion of those aged 65 and over rose slightly.

Similar

Use this word to show that two things are very alike. You can use the adjective (*similar*) or the adverb (*similarly*).

In 1995, the figures for people aged 36-50 and 51-65 were similar, at around 40%.

Similarly, the figures for people aged 36-50 and 51-65 were 42 and 40 percent respectively.

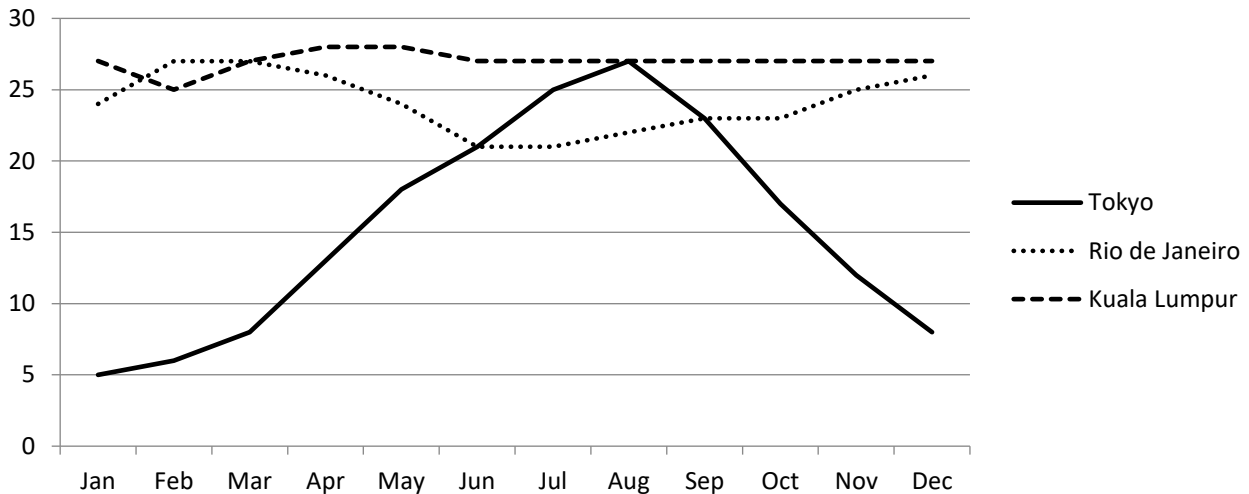
🔑 **Respectively** – This word is used to show that the first category refers to the first number and the second category to the second number.

Similarly, the figures for people aged 36-50 and 51-65 were 42 and 40 percent respectively.

In the above example, the use of the word *respectively* means that the figure for people aged 36-50 was 42, and for people aged 51-65 it was 40. Using this sentence structure is a great way to increase your grammar and vocabulary score.

➔ Look at the following infographics and write sentences using the prompts.

The graph and table below show the average monthly temperatures and the average number of hours of sunshine per year in three major cities.



Total annual hours of sunshine for Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro and Kuala Lumpur.

Tokyo	1,876
Rio de Janeiro	3,240
Kuala Lumpur	3,455

Note: no timeframe was given, so the present tense is used.

- The average temperature in Kuala Lumpur remained stable throughout the year.
- The average temperature in Rio de Janeiro fluctuated significantly.

(in comparison)

The average temperature in Kuala Lumpur remained stable throughout the year, in comparison to Rio de Janeiro where it fluctuated significantly.

(Note: instead of repeating 'the average temperature', the pronoun 'where' is used).

- Winter in Kuala Lumpur is very hot.
- Winter in Tokyo is cold.

(in contrast)

- The yearly low in Tokyo is 5c
- The yearly low in Rio de Janeiro is approximately 20c.

(while)

- For the majority of the year Tokyo has a relatively low temperature.
- During the summer months Tokyo is hot.

(however)

- Rio de Janeiro has approximately 3,200 hours of sunshine per year.
- Kuala Lumpur has approximately 3,500 hours of sunshine per year.

(similarly, respectively)

Other Useful Structures

Here are some more useful structures using *than* and *as*. They are illustrated by describing the following table. The table gives information on consumer spending on different items in five different countries.

Percentage of national consumer expenditure by category

Country	Food/Drinks/ Tobacco	Clothing/ Footwear	Leisure/ Education
Denmark	17.53%	7.79%	4.23%
France	26.12%	7.53%	4.37%
Portugal	19.87%	8.60%	2.01%
Turkey	31.15%	6.68%	4.55%
UK	23.87%	5.89%	3.67%

1. more / less... than

Turkish people spent far more on food, drink and tobacco than British people.

2. ... (number) times more... than (2 and 3 are the same)

French people spent over three times more on food, drink and tobacco than clothing.

3. ... (twice, three times, four times etc.) as many/much ... as....

Danish people spent nearly twice as much on food and clothing as leisure activities and education.

4. (nearly) the same ... as...

French people spent nearly the same proportion of money on clothing and footwear as people from Denmark.

➔ Write three more sentences about this table using the forms above.

The table gives information about the underground railway systems in five cities.

City	Date opened	Kilometers of route	Passengers per year (in millions)
Beijing	1969	574	3,664
Berlin	1902	132	534
Moscow	1935	346	2,451
New York	1904	1,070	1,762
Seoul	1974	331	2,619

Moscow metro has three times more track than Berlin.

1 _____

2 _____

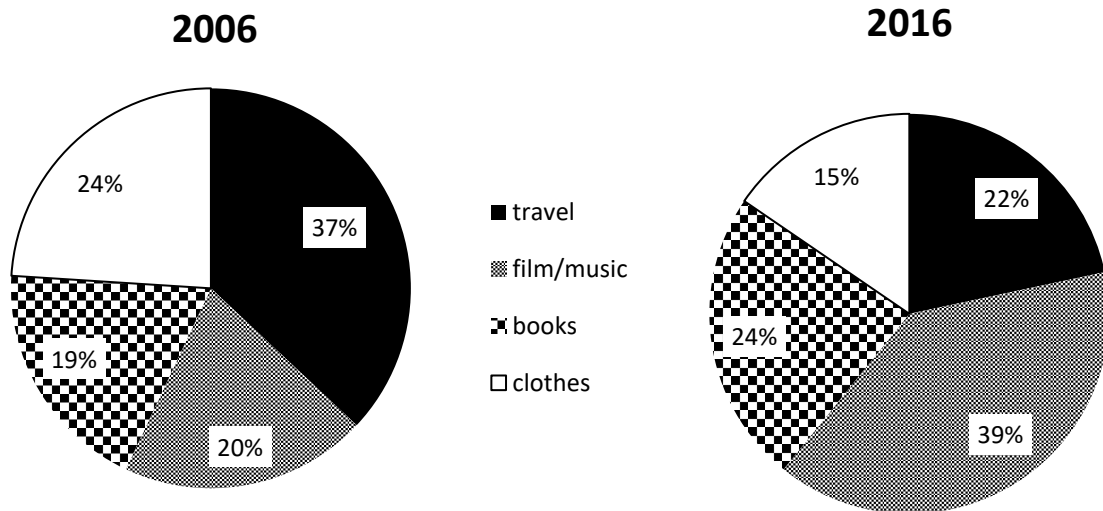
3 _____

How to Structure Your Answer

Your answer must be around 150 words. I recommend that you use a simple three-part structure. The three parts are: introduction, overview, and main body. You don't need to write a conclusion in this task. Look at how I use this structure to answer the following question.

The pie charts show the online shopping sales for retail sectors in the UK in 2006 and 2016.

Online sales for retail sectors in UK



1 – Write an introduction

You need to begin with one sentence that states what the graphics show. To do this, paraphrase the title of the graphics. To paraphrase means to say the same thing but using different words. You can use synonyms to help you paraphrase the title. I used two synonyms in this introduction.

The pie charts (~~show~~) illustrate the (~~online shopping~~) e-commerce sales for retail sectors in the UK in 2006 and 2016.

2 – Give an overview

An overview is a summary of the main trends. The overview is the most important part of your report, because the rest of your answer will be evidence to support it.

Your overview should be only one or two sentences. You may start it with the word *overall*. Other useful phrases are; *it is clear that, it can be seen that, it is noticeable that*.

For these pie charts, we can see that spending habits changed quite a lot over ten years. Also, there were large decreases in the proportions of money spent on clothes and travel, while there were increases in film/music and books. This is a good overview:

Overall, the charts show that consumers changed their spending habits significantly over ten years. There were increases in the proportions of money spent on film, music and books, but significant decreases on clothes and travel.

3- Write the main body

The main body should be around four to six sentences that provide detail to support the overview. Here are some details from the charts that I can use in the main body.

- *The largest change was the proportion of money spent on films and music.*
- *The proportion of money spent on films and music nearly doubled, rising from 20% to 39%.*
- *The proportion of money spent on books grew significantly from 19% to 24%.*
- *By far the largest decrease was in the proportion of money spent on travel.*
- *The proportion of money spent on travel fell dramatically by 15%, so that travel made up just over two-fifths of total sales.*
- *The proportion of money spent on clothes fell by almost 10% to finish only 15%.*

The Final Report

Read this full answer to see how the three components combine.

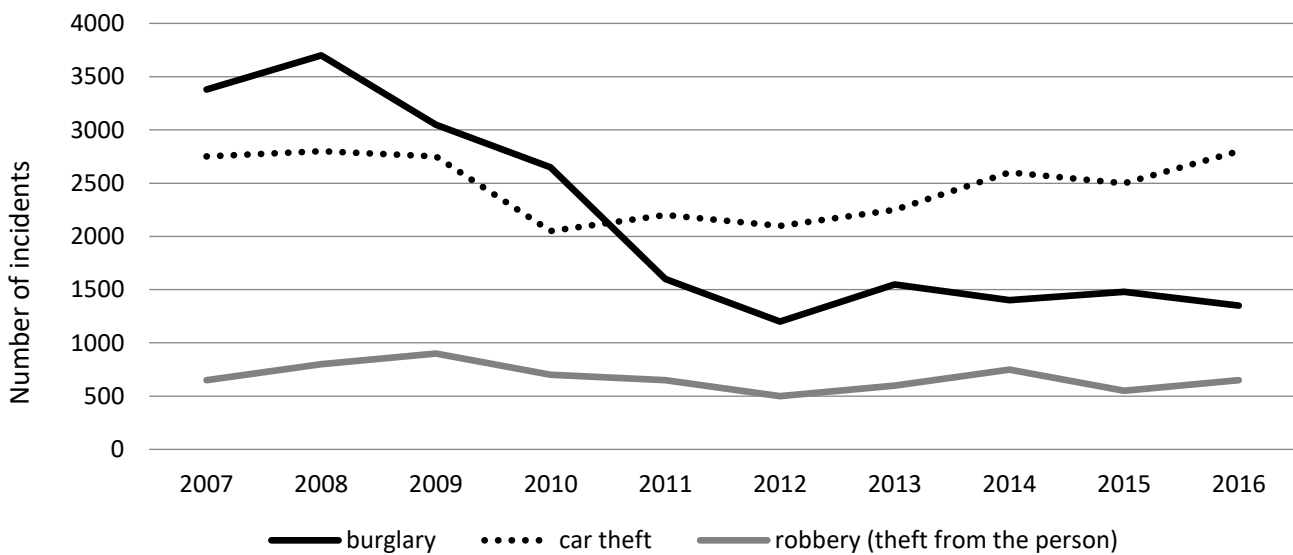
The pie charts illustrate the e-commerce sales for retail sectors in the UK in 2006 and 2016. Overall, the charts show that consumers changed their spending habits significantly over ten years. There were increases in the proportions of money spent on film, music and books, but significant decreases on clothes and travel.

The largest change was the proportion of money spent on films and music. This component nearly doubled, rising from 20% to 39%. In comparison, the proportion of money spent on books only grew moderately, increasing from 19% to 24%. By far the largest decrease was in the proportion of money spent on travel, which fell by 15%. In 2016, travel made up just over a fifth of total sales for retail sectors. The proportion of money spent on clothes fell by almost 10%, to finish at only 15%.

→ Write an introduction and overview for this line graph.

The chart below shows the changes that took place in three different categories of crime in Auckland from 2007-2016.

The changing rates of crime in Auckland

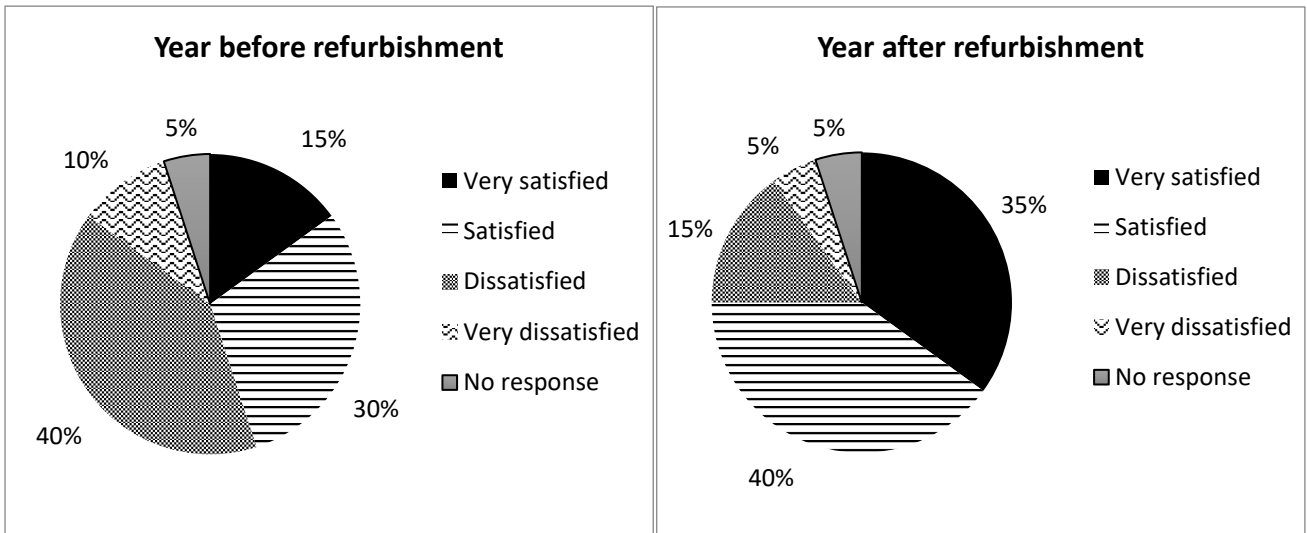


→ The main body should be around four to six sentences that provide further evidence and detail for the overview. Here is a question. An overview has been provided. Write four sentences to support it.

The table shows the number of visitors to Durham museum during the year before and the year after it was refurbished. The charts show the result of surveys asking visitors how satisfied they were with their visit, during the same two periods.

Total number of visitors to Durham Museum	
During the year before refurbishment	76,000
During the year after refurbishment	93,000

Results of surveys of visitor satisfaction



Overall, the level of visitor satisfaction increased significantly after the refurbishment.

1 _____

2 _____

3

4

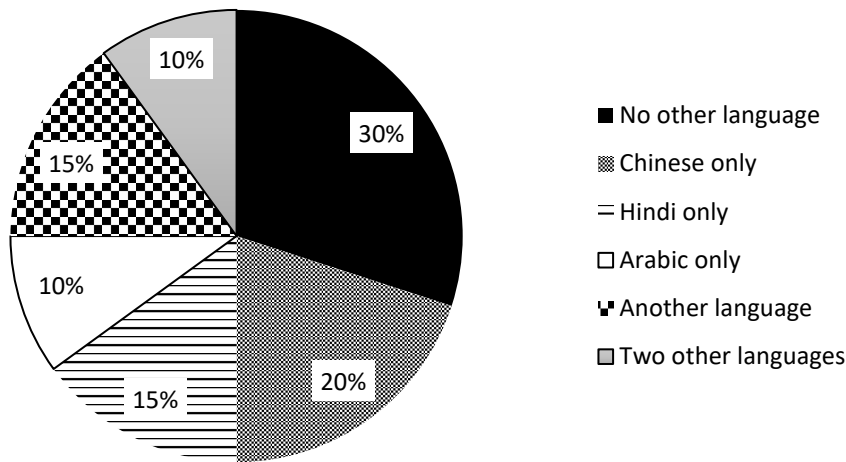
Full Questions

You can use these full exam questions for practice.

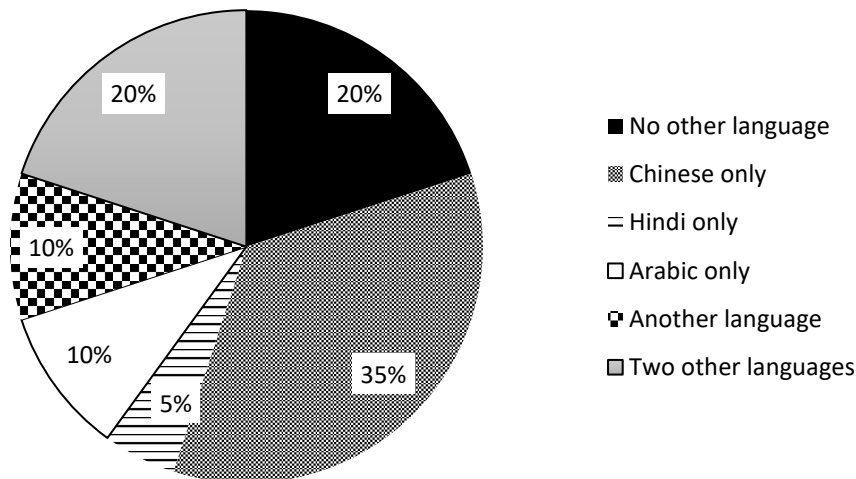
The charts below show the proportions of Australian students at one university in Australia who were able to speak other languages in addition to English, in 2005 and 2015.

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

% of Australian Students able to speak language other than English 2005



% of Australian Students able to speak language other than English, 2015



The tables below give information about the world population and distribution in 1970 and 2010, with an estimate of the situation in 2050.

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

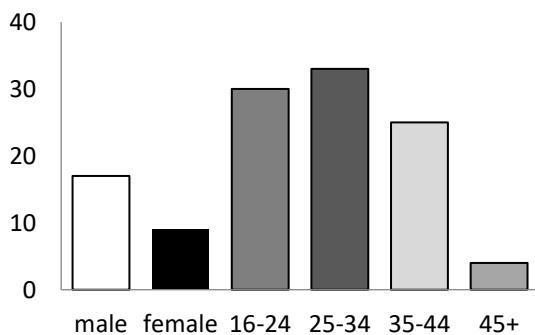
World Population 1950-2050			
World Population	1970	2010	2050
(billions)	3.5	6.0	9.0 (estimate)

Distribution of World Population by Region			
Africa	9%	13%	20%
Asia	58%	60%	59%
Europe	20%	12%	7%
Latin America	6%	9%	9%
North America	7%	5%	4%
Oceania	<1%	1%	1%

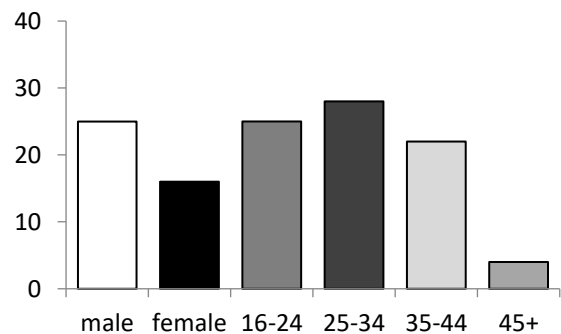
The graphs below show the types of music albums purchased by people in Canada in 2018, according to sex and age.

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

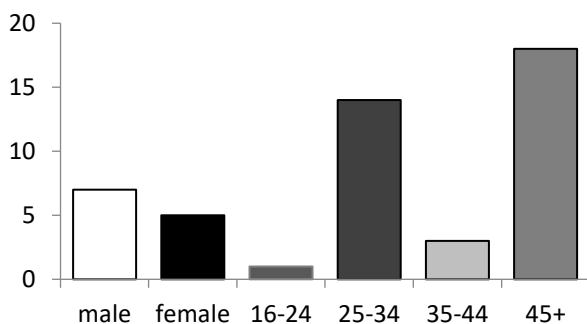
Percentage of people who buy pop music



Percentage of people who buy rock music



Percentage of people who buy classical music



Progress Diagrams

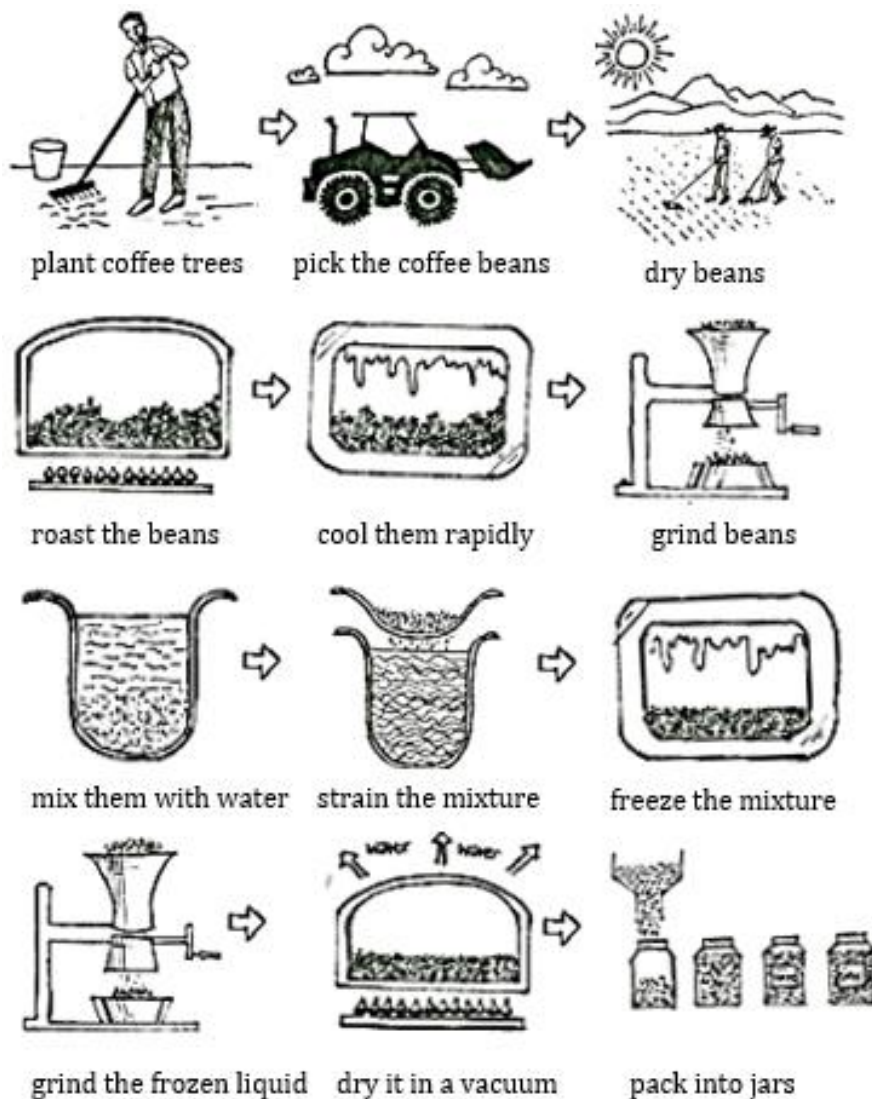
You are sometimes given a diagram that shows the process of how something is made or works.

Process diagrams need to be dealt with differently than charts and graphs. You can use this two-paragraph structure:

- A brief introduction
- A description of each stage in the process

Below, I provide a model answer and explain the important vocabulary and grammar that you should use.

This process diagram shows how instant coffee is produced.



Model answer

The diagram explains the process for making instant coffee. There is a total of twelve stages in the process, beginning with the planting of the coffee trees and finishing with the packaging of the coffee.

First, the coffee trees are planted in warm parts of the world, such as South America and Africa. Next, the coffee beans are picked by workers and then spread out in a field in order to be dried under the hot sun. Having been dried, the beans are roasted in an oven and then rapidly cooled. The next step is that the beans are grinded so that they can be mixed with hot water. The mixture is then strained and placed in a freezer. Once it is completely frozen, the mixture is then grinded before being dried in a vacuum. The beans are then packed into jars so that they can be sold in shops and supermarkets. (Word count: 153)

Sequence markers

You need to use sequence markers to show the different stages. These are words such as *first/to begin, secondly, then, next etc.* Here are a few more advanced variations that will help to improve your grammar and vocabulary score.

After / Once + full clause

After the beans have been picked, they are laid out in a field in order to dry.

Once the beans have been picked, they are laid out in a field in order to dry.

Having + third form of verb

Having been dried, the beans are then roasted in an oven.

The Passive Voice

We use the passive voice when it is not important who 'does' the action. This is important when writing a description of a process diagram because the focus is on the object that is being acted on. The passive is 'to be + past participle'.

Compare these two sentences:

<i>People plant the coffee trees.</i>	Active
<i>The coffee trees are planted.</i>	Passive

The active sentence sounds strange because it is obvious that it is people, in comparison to say, dogs, who plant coffee trees.

If you want to focus the attention on the object but also include the subject, you can use 'by'.

*The coffee trees are planted by workers. **Passive***

Showing purpose

You often need to explain what a stage in a process is for. In other words, you need to explain the purpose of a stage. Here are two ways to do this:

So that + full clause

The beans are grinded so that they can be mixed with hot water.

In order to + infinitive

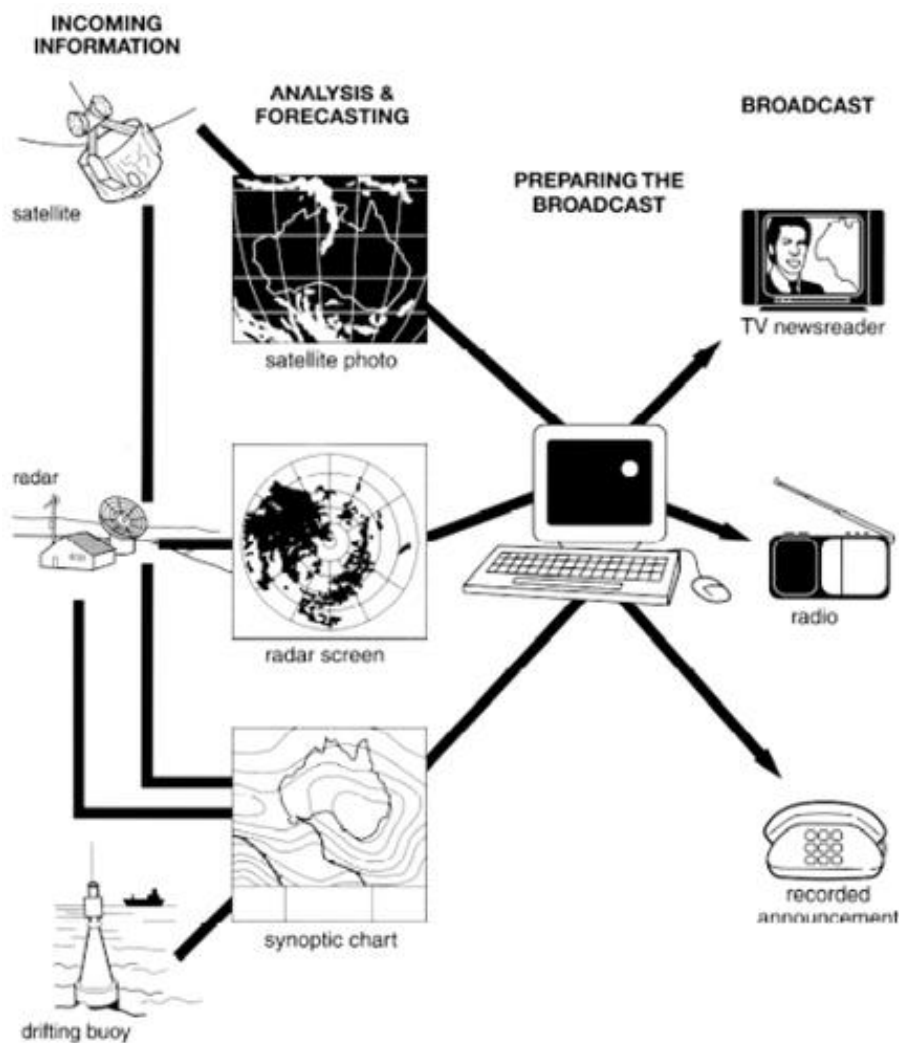
The coffee beans are picked by workers and then spread out in a field in order to be dried under the hot sun.

Problem: it can be hard to fulfill the word count for this task. Here are two ways to increase the word count:

1. **Fully describe the pictures** – You can describe every aspect of a stage. For example, 'Next, the coffee beans are picked by workers and then spread out in a field in order to be dried under the hot sun'. *The underlined parts were not necessary, but the added description increased the word count.*
2. **Add extra details** – You can provide additional information to the illustrations. For instance, I wrote, 'First, the coffee trees are planted in warm parts of the world, such as South America and Africa'. *The illustration does not mention that coffee is grown in South America and Africa; however, this is common knowledge*

➔ Write an answer for this question. Use the checklist to make sure that you use the key skills in your answer.

The diagram below shows how the Australian Bureau of Meteorology collects up-to-the-minute information on the weather in order to produce reliable forecasts. Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



Checklist

Tick each one after you use it.

I have used...

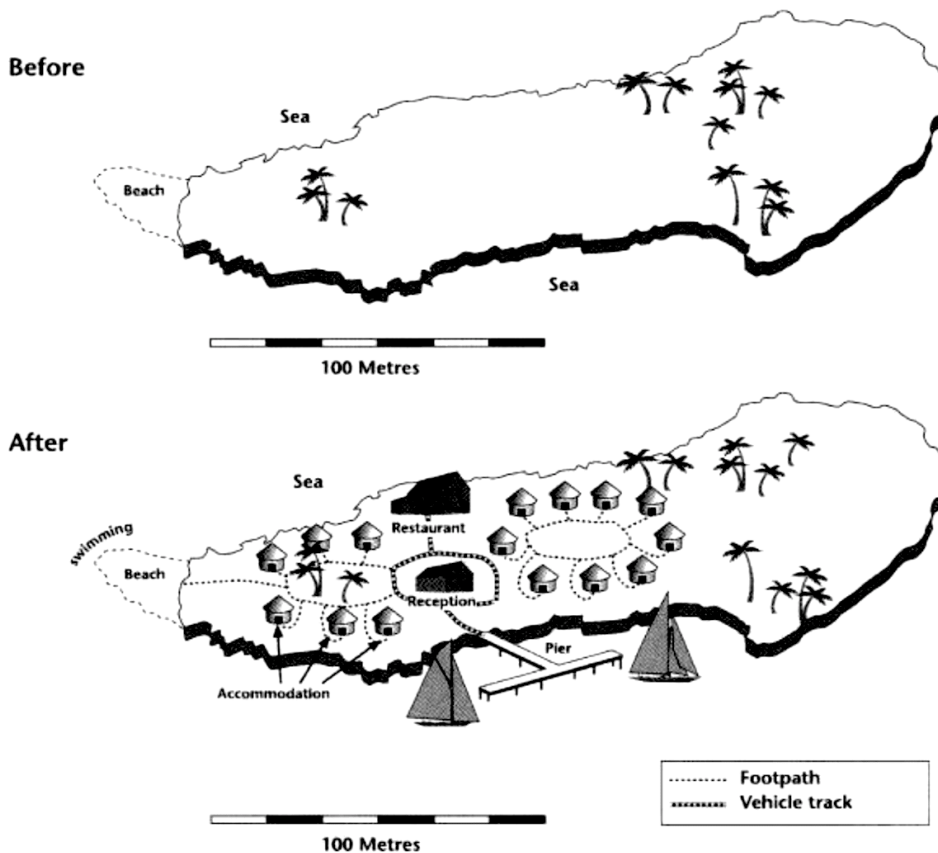
Sequence markers

Maps

In these questions, you are given two maps of the same location and asked to compare them. You need to explain how the area has changed.

Below, I provide a model answer and explain the important vocabulary and grammar that you should use.

These maps show an island which was developed for tourism.



The maps display an island before and after it was developed for tourism. Over the period, the island was almost completely transformed. The north-eastern part of the island was the only place left undeveloped.

The island is approximately 300 meters long, has palm trees dotted around it and a beach on the west coast. The palm trees were cleared to make room for construction. Everything has been provided for a vacation. Two accommodation areas have been built, which contain a total of 15 homes. Between the accommodation areas, a reception building and a restaurant have been developed. A network of paths have been designed so that visitors can easily walk around the complex.

A pier has been built on the south coast of the island, allowing yachts access to the resort. Apart from the trees, the beach remains the only natural feature to remain relatively untouched. (Word count: 146)

Describing Locations

You need to describe where things are on maps. It is good to use *north*, *south*, *east* and *west*.



You also need to use prepositions of place, e.g. *in*, *on*, *by*, *beside*, *to*, *in front of*, *between*, etc. to describe where things are.

The Passive Voice

Because construction is a man-made process, I recommend that you use the passive voice throughout your answer. These examples show how effective this is.

Developers completely transformed the island. **Active**

The island was completely transformed. **Passive**

Construction-workers built accommodation areas. **Active**

Accommodation areas were constructed. **Passive**

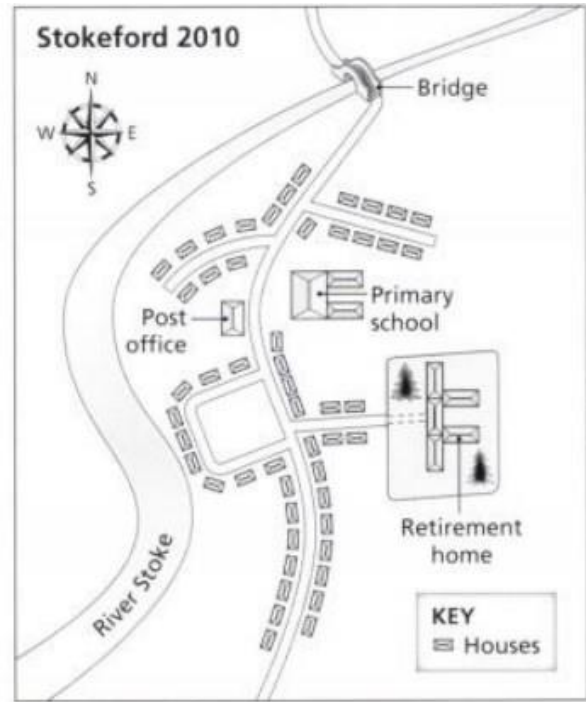
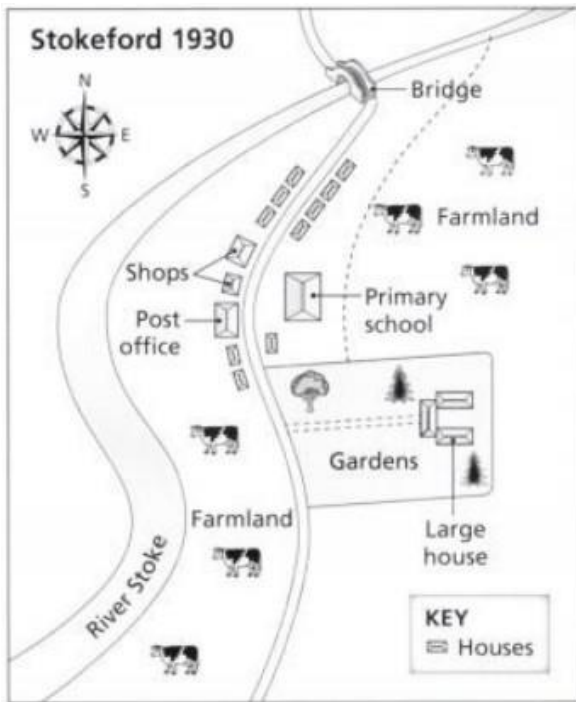
Specialist Vocabulary

You need to describe how various buildings and features have been built and destroyed. This is a list of useful vocabulary.

Buildings	+ construct, develop, replace – demolish, knock-down <i>Changed:</i> renovate, convert <i>Moved:</i> relocate
Trees and Forests	+ plant – clear, cut-down, remove
Leisure facilities	+ open, set-up - close-down

➔ Write an answer for this question. Use the checklist to make sure that you use the key skills in your answer.

The maps below show the village of Stokeford in 1930 and in 2010. Summarise the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.



Checklist

Tick each one after you use it.

I have...

Described location

Used the passive voice

Used specialist vocabulary

Answer Key

How to Describe Numbers

Wrong, Right, Wrong, Right, Right, Wrong, Right, Wrong.

Two-fifths=20%. One tenth=10%. A half=50%. A third=33%. Three-fifths=60%.
Three quarters=75%. Two-thirds=66%. A small fraction=4%. A fifth=20%. Four-fifths=80%. A quarter=25%.

Nearly 20%=18%. More or less 50%=52/48%. Precisely one in ten=10%.
Approximately a quarter=26%. Just under 10%=9%. Slightly over a half=52%.
Almost a third=31%. Just over three-quarters=76%.

Only a small fraction of people spend 15 minutes or less travelling to work.
Slightly over a tenth of people spend between 16 and 30 minutes travelling to work.

Precisely two-fifths of people spend between 31 and 60 minutes travelling to work.

Just over a fifth of people spend between 61 and 90 minutes travelling to work.

Just under a quarter of people spend over 90 minutes travelling to work.

Possible answers:

Just over two-fifths of internet users in China are between the ages of 20 and 39.

Exactly a fifth of internet users in China are between the ages of 40 and 59.

Only a small fraction of internet users in China are aged 60 and over.

Possible answers:

A small number of couples in Brazil divorce.

A good proportion of couples in China divorce.

A large proportion of couples in the USA divorce.

A significant majority of couples in Spain divorce.

How to Describe Trends

Possible answers:

Italy has an upward trend.

France has a downward trend.

Both Italy and France move up and down.

France started with a higher rate of unemployment, but Italy overtook them.

False, false, true, true, true.

Possible answers:

From 2010 to 2011, the proportion of female graduates stabilised.

From 2014 to 2016, the proportion of female graduates grew by seven percent.

Between 2013 and 2014, the proportion of female graduates fell by two percent.

Between 2010 and 2014, the proportion of female graduates fluctuated between 68% and 74%.

The proportion of children is projected to fall dramatically.

The proportion of elderly people is expected to rise/grow slightly.

The proportion of people aged 15-59 is projected to rise/grow moderately.

Possible answers:

The population of Iran is expected to grow dramatically.

The population of Canada is expected to rise moderately.

The population of South Korea is expected to fall slightly.

From 2008 to 2014, the recycling rate in France doubled from 40 to 80 percent.

From 2008 to 2012, the recycling rate in Germany halved, falling from 60 to 30 percent.

Over the period, the recycling rate in France tripled.

From 2010 to 2012, the recycling rate in German fell by a quarter.

False, True, True, False.

Possible answers:

Between 1970 and 2000, the amount of energy used by the transport sector increased significantly to just under 60,000 tons.

From 2000 to 2010, the amount of energy used by the industry sector declined rapidly to just over 20,000 tons.

Over the period, the homes sector rose gradually to just under 50,000 tons.

How to Compare and Contrast

Higher, most popular, hotter, most dramatic, largest, wealthiest, lowest

E, A, B, F, D, C

Possible answers:

Great Britain and China won almost the same number of medals.

Germany won by far the lowest number of total medals.
Germany and Russia won a similar number of gold medals.

Transitions

Winter in Kuala Lumpur is very hot, in stark contrast to Tokyo where it is very cold. While the yearly low in Tokyo is 5c, it is approximately 20c in Rio de Janeiro. For the majority of the year Tokyo has a relatively low temperature; however, during the summer months it is hot. Similarly, Rio de Janeiro and Kuala Lumpur have 3200 and 3500 hours of sunshine per year respectively.

Possible answers:

Beijing has far more passengers per year than New York.
Seoul has five times as many passengers per year as Berlin.
Moscow has nearly the same kilometers of route as Seoul.

How to Write a Report

Possible answer:

The line graph illustrates changes that happened in three different types of crime in Auckland between 2007 and 2016. Overall, the rate of burglary fell dramatically, while the rates of car theft and robbery remained relatively stable.

Possible answers:

After the refurbishment, the total number of visitors increased by nearly 20,000 to 93,000.

The proportion of visitors who were very satisfied more than doubled, rising from 15% to 35%.

After the refurbishment, three-quarters of visitors felt either satisfied or very satisfied after visiting the museum.

In contrast, the proportion of visitors who were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied fell from half of all visitors to only a fifth.

Full Questions

Possible answers:

The two pie charts compare the percentages of Australian students who can speak an additional language in 2005 and 2015. Overall, it can be seen that by 2015 more students could speak an additional language, with by far the most popular being Chinese.

The proportion of students who spoke no other language dropped by a third, from 30 to 20 percent. In contrast, the proportion of students who spoke Chinese nearly doubled, rising from 20 to 35%. The proportion of students who spoke two or more languages also rose significantly, doubling from 10 to 20 percent. Notably, the proportion of students who spoke Hindi fell by two thirds, from 15 to only 5 percent. The proportion of students who spoke another language also fell by a third to end at only one tenth of students. The proportion of students who could speak Arabic remained stable at 10 percent.

The tables provide data on the world population in 1970 and 2010, with a projection of the situation in 2050. Overall, the world population is expected to rise dramatically, with the vast majority of people still living in Asia.

The world population is estimated to reach 9 billion by 2050, which is a 50% increase on 2010. The proportion of people living in Asia is projected to be just under 60% which is nearly the same as in 2010 and 2000. The fastest increase in population is expected to be in Africa, rising from 13% to exactly one fifth of the world's people. The largest decrease is expected in Europe where it is expected to nearly half from 12% to 7%. The proportions of people living in Latin America and North America are expected to remain stable at around 9% and 4% respectively, while only a small fraction of people will live in Oceania.

The bar charts illustrate the genre of music albums bought by Canadians, according to gender and age. Overall, men bought slightly more albums than woman in all three genres. Pop and rock music were relatively popular with most age groups, while the vast majority of people who bought classical music were over 45.

The distributions for people who bought pop and rock music were similar. People aged 25-34 were the highest consumers of pop and rock music at just under 35 and slightly less than 30 percent respectively. In addition, a good proportion of people aged 16-24 and 35-44 bought rock and pop music. Only a small fraction of people aged 45+ bought rock and pop music, however the proportion that bought classical music was far higher, at just under 20%. Classical music wasn't popular with the other age ranges expect for people aged 24-35 with precisely 15%.

Process Diagrams

Possible answer:

The diagram illustrates the process used by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology to forecast the weather. There are four stages in the process, beginning with the collection of information about the weather. This information is then analysed, prepared for presentation, and finally broadcast to the public.

Looking at the first and second stages of the process, there are three ways of collecting weather data and three ways of analysing it. Firstly, incoming information can be received by satellite and presented for analysis as a satellite photo. The same data can also be passed to a radar station and presented on a radar screen or synoptic chart. Secondly, incoming information may be collected directly by radar and analysed on a radar screen or synoptic chart. Finally, drifting buoys also receive data which can be shown on a synoptic chart.

At the third stage of the process, the weather broadcast is prepared on computers. Finally, it is delivered to the public on television, on the radio, or as a recorded telephone announcement.

Maps

Possible answer:

Both maps display the village of Stokeford, one in 1930 and one in 2010. Over the period, the village changed significantly as the population grew.

The number of houses increased dramatically, more than tripling. It is clear that the construction of houses has come at the cost of decreasing the amount of farmland. In 1930, there was a lot of farmland in the village; however, in 2010, there was no farmland left. More roads were built so that people can easily access their homes. The larger population necessitated that the school grew significantly in size. It also required the building of a retirement home for many old people in the village who need support. In 1930, there were three large houses with big gardens, and this complex was transformed into the retirement home. Notably, there were shops in 1930 but not in 2010; this suggests that in 2010 the villagers drive out of Stokeford in order to go shopping.

Writing Task 2

IELTS Writing Task 2 involves writing a 250-word essay. This chapter provides the specific vocabulary and structures needed to write good IELTS essays.

IELTS essays are marked according to four criteria:

- 1 Lexical Resource** = How difficult was the vocabulary used? Was the vocabulary used correctly?
- 2 Grammatical Range and Accuracy** = Were a good variety of grammatical structures used? Were there any grammatical mistakes?
- 3 Task Achievement** = Were all parts of the question answered?
- 4 Coherence and Cohesion** = How well was the essay organised and structured?

This book is divided into three parts:

Part One – Lexical Resource & Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Ten sections designed to improve vocabulary and sentence structure. I have selected key vocabulary and sentence forms which can be used as the building blocks for essay writing. Each section contains short exercises to check understanding.

Part Two – Task Achievement & Coherence and Cohesion

Guidance and templates for all question types. There are five different question types and it is important to approach each one differently. Each section contains an essay question to complete.

Part Three – Subject Content

This section contains ideas for twenty IELTS essay topics. By reading these sheets, you will learn key ideas for many important topics. This will help you to come up with ideas during your exam.

Part One

Sentence Types

It is important to master various sentence forms. Using a variety of different sentences will help you to achieve a high score. Let's look at the main sentence types.



Simple Sentences

A simple sentence has one subject and one verb.

My friends take a lot of selfies.

Noun Verb

Compound Sentences

A compound sentence has two or more simple sentences linked by the conjunctions *and*, *or* and *but*.

Some people enjoy the challenge of working abroad, but ***others would rather stay in their home country.***

(Simple sentence 1 / ***Simple sentence 2***)

Complex Sentence

A complex sentence has two clauses, one main (or independent) and one subordinate (or dependent).

Although it can cause harm, ***the internet is generally a positive force.***

(Subordinate clause / ***main clause***)

The main clause is known as the independent clause because it could stand alone. The subordinate clause is known as the dependent clause because it could not stand alone. In this sentence, the main clause (*The internet is generally a positive force*) could be a sentence, but the subordinate clause (*although it can cause harm*) could not.

Subordinating Conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions are words used to create complex sentences. The two most common structures are:

Main Clause + SC + **Subordinate Clause**.

SC+ **Subordinate Clause** + , + **Main Clause**.

There are over fifty subordinating conjunctions. Instead of attempting to master all of them straight away, first learn a short list, knowing what function each one serves.

Function	Word
Time	After ('Once' is a more academic way of writing 'after') / Before When
Cause/effect	Because As
Condition	If Unless
Contrast	Even though / although While

⇒ Put the letters in the spaces.

A: Although	B: As	C: Before	D: If
--------------------	--------------	------------------	--------------

1. It is difficult to solve the problem of traffic congestion in major cities ____ more and more people own cars.
2. Traditional cultures may disappear ____ the internet continues to heavily influence popular culture.
3. ____ watching television can be a good way to relax, it is not as educational as reading books.
4. ____ world hunger can be tackled, it is necessary to create stronger global institutions.

A: Once

B: When

C: While

D: Unless

5. ___ a country has a good education system, it will struggle to meet the challenges of the future.
6. Some people are horrified ___ they see the realities of animal testing.
7. Social care can only be improved ___ there is greater funding.
8. ___ it can cause environmental problems, tourism boosts a country's economy.

Note: Do not repeat the main noun in a sentence

A common mistake that students make when writing complex sentences is to repeat the main noun in a sentence. In this example, the noun 'crime' is repeated twice.

If crime is to be reduced, local police forces need to be strengthened to combat crime.

This error makes your writing look bad. There are two ways to avoid it.

1. Only refer to the main noun once

You can simply not mention the noun again.

If crime is to be reduced in poorer countries, local police forces need to be strengthened.

2. Use a pronoun

Instead of mentioning a noun a second time, you can replace it with a pronoun. In academic writing, you will mostly be using the singular 'it' and the plural 'they/them'.

If crime is to be reduced in poorer countries, local police forces need to be strengthened to combat it.

⇒ Under each sentence write the correct pronoun to replace the second noun.

Even though space exploration has scientific value, the money spent on **space exploration** could be better spent on relieving starvation around the world.

It

After students study in Western countries, **students** can return to their home country and find a decent job.

While overpopulation is becoming an increasingly serious issue, few countries are taking measures to deal with **overpopulation**.

Relative Clauses

A relative clause is one kind of dependent clause. It is used to give more information about a noun. There are four main words that are used:

People = who / that

Things = which / that

Places = where

Divorce, which is on the rise in Western countries, can have a negative effect on children.

Social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram have created online communities that are global in scale.

There are three main rules that you should follow.

1. Relative clauses modify nouns, and they must come after the noun they are modifying.

Athletes who take performance enhancing drugs are not good role models.

The relative clause is referring to "athletes", so it comes after that noun.

2. If the information is 'extra' information, there are commas.

The European Union, which is a group of 27 countries, is one of the largest political bodies in the world.

The relative clause is not identifying the noun, it is just extra information.

3. If the information is 'essential' (i.e. the sentence would not make sense without it), there are no commas. For example:

In my experience, people who have a good work ethic are more likely to achieve academic and professional success.

With 'essential' relative clauses, 'that' can replace 'who' or 'which'.

Cities that (which) have bad traffic congestion are often very polluted.

Learning English is necessary for students that (who) want to study at Western universities.

➤ Write the correct relative clause in each space.

1. Better public transport is needed in crowded cities like Mumbai, _____ the roads are very congested.

2. New technologies such as 5G, _____ will increase internet speeds, will make conducting business online easier.

3. In my experience, people _____ have a good work ethic are more likely to achieve academic and professional success.

4. Learning English is necessary for students _____ want to study at Western universities.

5. Developing countries like Vietnam, _____ the population is rapidly increasing, need to invest a lot of money in education.

➤ Underline the relative clauses in these sentences. For example:

People who do a job they love may be happier than millionaires.

People who do a job they love may be happier than millionaires.

English, which is widely spoken around the world, is generally accepted as the international language for business.

Advertising can persuade people to buy things that they don't need, which can lead to waste.

Cities that have bad traffic congestion are often very polluted.

Companies that have offices in different countries can communicate interally via email, social networking and video conferencing.

Compound-Complex Sentences

A compound-complex sentence has two or more simple sentences and one or more subordinate clause. It is simply adding an extra clause to a complex sentence using *and*, *but* or *or*. This sentence type is a useful way to extend your sentences and improve your grammar score.

If someone has a high level of education (subordinate clause), they will have more work opportunities in the future (simple sentence 1) and enjoy a higher standard of living. (simple sentence 2)

⇒ Join the sentences together using the words in brackets. Do not change the order of the sentences. You may have to change and delete some of the words.

The world is changing rapidly. (SS1)
The rate of technological progress is fast. (SC)
People have the ability to adapt. (SS2)
(*because, but*)

Violent crime cannot be tackled. (SS1)
There is a concerted effort to defeat drug gangs. (SC)
An effort to stop violent drug users. (SS2)
(*unless, and*)

Animal testing is cruel. (SC)
There is no other way to trial experimental medicines. (SS1)
There is no other way to test potentially dangerous chemical products. (SS2)
(*although, or*)

Connectors

Connectors are words that link together full clauses, sentences, and ideas. We will look at two types of connectors: conjunctive adverbs and sequencers.



Conjunctive Adverbs

These are adverbs that connect two independent clauses. There are two main forms for you to master (these are not the only way to use these words, but the best in academic writing).

1. The adverb comes after a semi-colon or comma. For example:

*Young people are adapting quickly to the rate of technological progress; **conversely**, many older people are struggling.*

2. A conjunctive adverb can also introduce a single main clause. You need a comma to separate the adverb from the rest of the sentence.

***Conversely**, young people are adapting quickly to the rate of technological progress. many older people are struggling.*

Here is a list of common conjunctive adverbs.

Function	Words
To Show the result	Therefore Consequently
To Provide more information	In addition / additionally Also
To compare	Similarly In comparison
To contrast	However Conversely
To state an unexpected result	Instead Otherwise

⇒ Put the letters in the correct spaces.

A: Therefore **B: Instead** **C: However** **D: In comparison** **E: In addition**

1. The internet is often lauded as one of man's greatest inventions; ____, not all of the effects of this new technology have been beneficial.
2. Fast food can lead to obesity; ____, children should be discouraged from eating it.
3. Computer chess games are getting cheaper all the time. ____, their quality is improving.
4. It is beneficial to spend your free time doing activities that improve the mind such as reading and doing word puzzles, ____ to wasting your time relaxing.
5. The government shouldn't waste money investing in the arts. ____, they should invest more money in public services.

A: In contrast **B: Consequently** **C: Similarly** **D: Otherwise** **E: Also**

6. Overfishing is caused by the inability of countries to work together. ____, rises in worldwide population puts pressure on fish stocks.
7. The internet provides cheaper opportunities for students from developing countries to access quality education. ____, traditional educational institutions are becoming more expensive.
8. The cost of international transport has dropped over the last few decades; ____, more people can afford to move abroad.
9. Steps need to be taken to tackle global warming now; ____, future generations will suffer the consequences.
10. The proportion of Chinese students who have mastered a foreign language has increased dramatically in the last few decades. ____, the number of foreigners who can speak Chinese has risen.

Sequencers

To build an argument, you need to link your points together. Here are the words you need:

Function	Words / Phrases
To introduce your first point	Firstly First of all
To introduce your second point	Secondly
To connect your points	Furthermore Moreover
To introduce relatively important points	More importantly
To show your most important point	Above all
To conclude your point	Finally

⇒ Read this passage about the benefits of solar energy, and place the sequencers in the correct places.

A: Secondly **B:** Finally **C:** Most importantly **D:** Furthermore **E:** First of all

What are the factors in favour of solar energy? _____, solar energy is renewable because the sun will always shine and never run out. _____, solar energy is reliable as the sun always shines and the solar panels are dependable. _____, solar panels offer individuals energy independence as companies cannot monopolise the usage of sunlight. _____, solar energy is clean as it produces virtually no greenhouse gases. This not only results in cleaner air but helps to mitigate the disastrous effects of global warming and help to save the planet. _____, solar energy is likely to save individuals money over a long period of time. Once the cells have been paid for, the energy generated is then virtually free.

When using the following phrases, you first state the effect, then a comma, the phrase and then the cause.

Owing to

Due to

Blood sports should be made illegal, **owing to** the high level of suffering they cause animals.

Blood sports should be made illegal, **due to** the high level of suffering they cause animals.

Effect

With these phrases you first state the cause, the phrase and then the effect.

Causes

Leads to

Smoking **causes/leads to** a number of illnesses, such as cancer and diabetes.

A poor work ethic can **lead to** fewer career opportunities.

In these phrases you state the effect, then the phrase, and then the cause.

A result of

Brought about by

Global warming is **a result of / brought about by** many factors.

Pollution is **a result of / brought about by** heavy traffic.

⇒ Here are two reading passages. The first is about the importance of reading, and the second is about the global popularity of hip-hop. Put the letters in the correct spaces.

A: leads to

B: result of

C: one reason

Reading for Pleasure... and Success!

For ESL learners, developing a reading habit is a prerequisite for success.

To achieve a mastery of the English language – or indeed any language, it is important to read for pleasure. Good exam marks are often the ____ having a reading habit. ____ for this is that when students read, they learn new vocabulary in context. Furthermore, learning to enjoy reading ____ students spending more of their time immersed in books, which improves their English.

A: Leads to

B: One of the causes of

C: Owing to

It's a Hip-Hop World

From Shanghai to Nairobi to Sao Paulo, hip-hop is evolving into a truly global form of communication.

Hip-hop is a global phenomenon and its reach is growing. To its critics, hip-hop is a low form of art, ____ the aggressive and often controversial lyrics. However, hip-hop has become one of the most far-reaching art forms of the last three decades. ____ this is that hip-hop acts as a vehicle for young people to express their identity, wishes and desires. In addition, the great success of high-profile hip-hop stars ____ young artists to believe that being a rapper will make them rich and famous.

Showing Purpose

This vocabulary is slightly different to cause and effect vocabulary. The following phrases are used to explain the *reason* why something happens.



In order to

This is a more academic form of 'to'. It is an infinitive, so is followed by the simple form of the verb.

In order to stop the ice caps melting, it is necessary to tackle global warming.

So that

This is followed by a full clause.

The government should invest in the education system so that all children have an opportunity to succeed.

Enable / Allow

This is a verb. It is often used as an infinitive (to + verb).

Cheaper forms of travel are needed to allow / enable people to work in different countries.

New technology has allowed / enabled many manufacturers to replace workers with machines.

⇒ Read the sentences and circle the correct letter.

I believe sport stars should be role models (...) young people are inspired to behave well.

A: In order to

B: So that

C: Enable

The government should provide maternity pay to (...) mothers to properly look after their children.

A: In order to

B: So that

C: Enable

Many people wish to be self-employed (...) make more money.

A: In order to

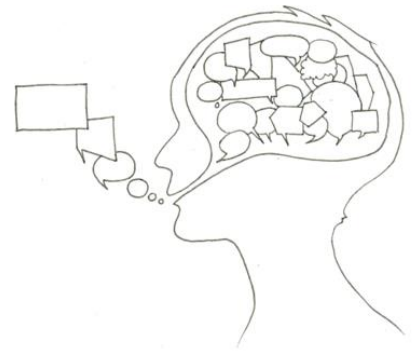
B: So that

C: Enable

Opinions

Stating your opinion is a necessary skill when answering questions. There are the typical phrases such as 'in my opinion' and 'in my view', but there are also other variations which can be useful.

There are two types of opinions; a personal opinion (your opinion), and an impersonal opinion (other people's opinion). Look at this question and see how vocabulary is used for different purposes.



We are becoming increasingly dependent on computers. They are used in business, hospitals, crime detection and even to fly planes. What things will they be used for in the future? Is this dependence on computers a good thing or should we be more suspicious of their benefits?

Personal Opinions

I would argue that *(A more academic of saying 'In my opinion')*

I would argue that our dependence is generally a good thing.

I tend to believe that *(not completely sure)*

I tend to believe that the advantages of using computers outweigh the disadvantages.

I am convinced that *(100% sure)*

I am convinced that our increasing dependence on computers cannot be stopped.

In my experience *(in your life experience)*

In my experience, there are many negative psychological effects of spending too much time online.

Impersonal Opinions

It can be argued that (*presenting an argument that you may or may not agree with*)

It can be argued that our growing dependence on computers makes us more vulnerable to cyber attacks.

It is generally accepted that (*most people agree with this point of view*)

It is generally accepted that computers have increased our quality of life.

A common belief is that (*a lot of people believe something to be true*)

A common belief is that computer systems save companies time and money.

⇒ Write one personal opinion and one impersonal opinion stating agreement or disagreement with the following questions. An example has been done for you.

Why do some people fail at school?

PO:

I am convinced that some people fail at school because they do not work hard enough.

IO:

It can be argued that some people fail at school because they do not work hard enough.

Why do some students want to study abroad?

PO:

IO:

What is the best way to reduce pollution?

PO:

IO:

Giving Examples

A key skill in essay writing is giving examples. The most common phrase is 'for example / for instance'. Here are some different ways to give examples. Using these phrases can help to improve your scores for vocabulary and sentence structure.



For example, if ...

Using 'if' in an example allows you to fully explain your idea.

One problem with internet bank accounts is that they can be hacked. For instance, if your account is hacked, it could be emptied of funds before you could stop it.

This is illustrated by

This is another useful pattern.

Disease spreads rapidly when communities do not have access to clean water. This is illustrated by the high rates of cholera and malaria in parts of Africa.

Such as

Use *such as* to provide a brief example or list of examples. This phrase cannot be used at the start of a sentence.

There are many downsides of living in a city, such as traffic congestion, air pollution and a busier lifestyle. (A list)

There are many negative features of city life, such as traffic congestion, which may cause someone to move to the countryside. (A single example)

⇒ The short text below provides examples of why education is beneficial. Use this list to construct sentences with examples using the phrases provided. The first one has been done for you.

The Benefits of Education

Education gives people knowledge and skills.
People with qualifications are more likely to find work.
They can earn a higher salary.
They can contribute positively to society.
Schools aim to teach young people moral values such as tolerance and sharing.

For example, ...

There are many benefits of having an education. For example, people with qualifications are more likely to find work.

For example, if...

This is illustrated by

Such as

Paragraphs

You should aim for your paragraphs to have three elements; a topic sentence, an explanation and examples.

There are two types of paragraphs; single-point and multiple-point paragraphs. Single-point paragraphs use only one argument to support the topic sentence, whereas multiple-point paragraphs use more than one argument to support the topic sentence.



Single-point paragraph

Topic Sentence – I tend to believe that advertising encourages people to purchase goods that they don't really need. **Explanation** - A great deal of advertising features non-essential goods such as expensive watches and bottled water. The techniques in advertising can be very persuasive and often are selling an image rather than the actual product. **Example** - This is illustrated by the use of attractive models and celebrities to sell goods in order to persuade consumers.

Multiple-point paragraph

A multiple-point paragraph can feature sequencers such as 'firstly, secondly, finally' etc.

Topic Sentence - It can be argued that travel makes people more tolerant and understanding of others. **Explanation (P1)** - Firstly, when you visit new countries, you meet people with very different mindsets to your own. **Example** - For instance, if a British person visits China, they may gain a greater understanding of Chinese culture. **Explanation (P2)** - Furthermore, travelling abroad requires individuals to alter their behaviour, especially to suit the laws of a country. This may make people more sympathetic to and aware of different forms of behaviour.

⇒ Read these two paragraphs and put the letters in the correct spaces.

Single-point

A: Consequently B: One reason C: Especially D: As long as E: Such

_____ I believe traditional cultures will erode is the decreasing cost of international travel. In the past travelling across the world was incredibly expensive and time consuming. The advent of cheap forms of travel, _____ as air flights and ferries, has transformed the work opportunities of people worldwide. _____ the forms of travel continue to get cheaper, I believe that even more people, _____ businessmen and young people, will choose to go abroad. _____, more people will leave areas with strong traditions and people from around the world will come to visit and live in those places, radically altering them.

Multiple-point

A: Furthermore B: Illustrated C: Convinced D: Firstly E Leads to F: Because

I am _____ that students from developing countries should do their utmost to study abroad. _____, the quality of education in developed countries is often superior to those in their native country. This allows students to attain more advanced skills, which often _____ greater job and financial opportunities in their home country. _____, studying abroad is affordable to a large number of students _____ there are many scholarships. This is _____ by the generous grants provided by prestigious universities in countries such as Great Britain and Australia.

⇒ Read this text that lists common problems in developing countries, and use the information to write two paragraphs on the following page.

Problems in developing countries

Standards of healthcare are low.

Standards of education are low.

There is a lack of infrastructure.

There is a lack of good quality housing.

Single-point

Write a topic sentence, an explanation and give an example.

Multiple-point

Write a topic sentence, at least two points with explanations (and at least one example).

Expressing Caution

Direct statements or statements implying full certainty should be avoided in academic writing. This is because issues are complicated and can be viewed from different perspectives. Look at this statement:

Advertising informs us about the choices we have.

This is only one way of looking at advertising. Another perspective is:

Advertising manipulates people.

Because it is only one perspective, the first statement needs to be written with caution.

Advertising may inform us about the choices we have.

Advertising tends to inform us about the choices we have.

The following exercises show you how to express caution in a variety of contexts.

1. Being cautious when giving explanations of hypothesizing

These are a few forms to use with words such as *may*, *could*, *possible*, *likely*, etc.

The obesity crisis	may be could be might be is almost certainly	caused by our sedentary lifestyle.
It may be It could be It is possible It is likely It is probable It is almost certain	the obesity crisis	is a result of our sedentary lifestyle.



⇒ Rewrite the following sentences using the phrases above. The first one has been done for you.

Extreme weather patterns around the world are caused by climate change.

Extreme weather patterns around the world may be caused by climate change.

The increase in crime is a result of less strict sentences.

Increased migration to cities is due to people searching for work opportunities.

2. Devices to avoid overgeneralisation

To generalise means to draw a general conclusion from several examples. This can be a useful thing to do. For example, you may see different bulls over time, and you notice that all the bulls have horns, so you correctly conclude that all bulls have horns. However, overgeneralisation is bad. This is when you generalise more than is reasonable, and therefore reach a false conclusion. For instance, 'All men like football' is an overgeneralisation. *A lot of* men do, but not *all*. The following phrases will help you to avoid overgeneralising.

Use these expressions instead of 'all'

(Only) A small number of A minority of A significant proportion of A majority of Most Almost all	people in my country prefer to live in cities.
---	--

People are addicted to social media.

Young people in Kazakhstan learn English.

3. Use adverbs of frequency

Divorce	occasionally sometimes often frequently generally nearly always	has a negative effect on children.
---------	--	------------------------------------

Learning English leads to better career prospects.

We connect wealth and material possessions with happiness and success.

4. Being cautious when writing about the future

We can never be sure of what will happen in the future, we can only speculate (make an educated guess). Therefore, we should show caution when writing about the future. Use these structures to rewrite the sentences that follow.

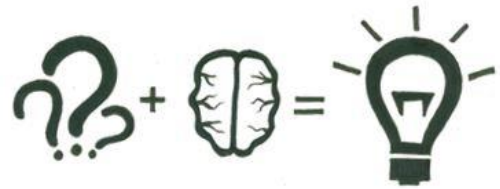
Severe weather	may could might is likely to will probably will almost certainly	become more common in the future.
There is a small chance It is possible It is likely It is almost certain There is a strong possibility	that the situation will improve in the long term.	

The use of clean energy will increase in the next few decades.

People will become increasingly reliant on computers.

Problems and Solutions

Being able to write about problems and solutions is an important skill for IELTS essay writing. One of the question types is known as the 'problem and solution' question. The following vocabulary will help you to do this.



Synonyms for 'Problem'

Issue

This is a problem that people are talking and thinking about.

Racism is one of the biggest issues in America.

Concern

This means a worry shared by many people.

Global warming is a serious concern for the whole world.

Difficulty

This is to point out one aspect (part) of a problem.

One of the biggest difficulties with solving global warming is regulating transport.

Describing Problems

Big problems = Significant / Serious

The high rate of youth unemployment in my country is a significant/serious problem.

Small Problems = Minor

Some argue that the rate of unemployment is a minor issue.

Urgent Problems (problems that need to be solved quickly) = Pressing

Climate change is a pressing issue that needs to be dealt with urgently.

Complicated Problems = Complex

Legalising marijuana is a complex issue and there are no easy solutions.

Solving Problems

You normally 'find' or 'come up with' a solution

It is crucial that we come up with/find a solution to the housing crisis.

Resolve – this a synonym of solve

It is crucial that we resolve the issue of childhood obesity / The problem of childhood obesity needs to be resolved. The best way of resolving the problem of youth unemployment is for the government to create jobs.

Deal with / address

It is important that we deal with/address the problem of income inequality between the rich and poor.

⇒ Put the words in the correct spaces (in some instances, there is more than one possible answer.

A: Resolving B: Complex C: Deal with D: Minor E: Issue F: Serious G: Pressing
--

1. How to combine work and having children is an ____ facing many women.
2. In my opinion, overpopulation is a ____ problem that needs to be dealt with urgently.
3. Lowering the voting is a ____ issue and there are no easy solutions to it.
4. The Chinese government needs to ____ the problem of overpopulation.
5. I tend to believe that unemployment in Britain is only a ____ problem.
6. It is generally accepted that alcoholism is a very ____ problem that affects of all society.
7. The best way of ____ the problem of teenage pregnancies would be to implement more sex education in schools.

⇒ Using the vocabulary you have just learned, put one word in each space.

The Negative Effects of Tourism

Tourism can have many negative effects on a place. Firstly, tourism can result in a rise in the cost of living, which may be a significant _____ for local people, as they may be forced to move away. For instance, companies will spend a lot of money to buy the land in the area in order to build holiday homes and hotels, and this can make the land too expensive for local people. Another _____ is that tourism creates pollution and waste. This is a serious issue that needs to be _____ _____ urgently; otherwise, many beautiful parts of the world will be irreversibly destroyed. Furthermore, local traditions and cultures may be endangered. This is a _____ because local people may want to benefit from the economic boost that tourism brings; however, it can argued that a loss of unique local customs is humanity's loss.

There are no easy solutions to these problems. One way to _____ the problem of increasing land prices would be to protect a certain amount of land for local people. This could be achieved by the national government or by an international authority such as the United Nations. The best way of _____ the problem of pollution and waste is to make sure that tourism companies have a legal obligation to reduce and clean up waste. Some may argue that this will impinge the rights of businesses, but this is a weak argument as protecting the environment is a bigger priority. The task of protecting the local culture is a _____ issue and there are no easy _____. One possible solution may be to allow only certain areas to have tourism businesses.

Change

Essay questions often ask you to compare the past to the present, or the present to the future. To do this effectively, you need to master the language of change. Look at this example:

The internet has transformed the way that we socialise.



This is vocabulary for different types of change.

Big Changes

Dramatic / dramatically

*There has been a dramatic rise in the number of students who study abroad.
The number of students who study abroad has risen dramatically.*

Transform / Transformation

*Internet and mobile phone technologies have transformed working life.
There will be a transformation in the way that children learn.*

Radical shift

In recent years, there has been a radical shift in the way people think about the environment.

Small Changes

A slight shift

There has been a slight shift in people's attitudes towards recreational drug use.

An adjustment

There only need to be adjustments made to the healthcare system.

Negative Changes

Decline

*There has been a decline in the number of people who consume traditional media.
The number of people who consume traditional media is declining.*

(Progressively) Getting Worse

It can be argued that the healthcare system is progressively getting worse.

Speed of Change

Rate / Pace of Change

Not everyone is happy with this rate of change and many would prefer that there were fewer new developments built in town centers.

Fast

Rapid / Rapidly

*There has been a rapid change in people's attitudes towards the environment.
The number of English speakers around is growing rapidly.*

Medium

Gradual / Gradually

*There has been a gradual move towards shopping online.
Gradually more people are shopping online.*

Slow

Slow but steady / slowly but steadily

*There has been a slow but steady rise in the number of women who want to study engineering.
Slowly but steadily more and more people are doing their shopping in out of town supermarkets and this is changing town centers.*

⇒ Put the letters in the right spaces.

A: Rate	B: Shift	C: Gradual	D: Slowly but	E: Slight
F: Rapidly	G: Adjustments	H: Dramatically		

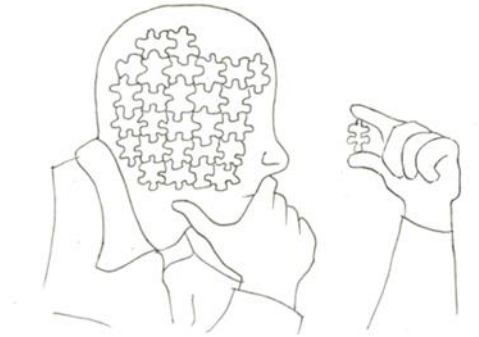
1. In recent years there has been a radical ____ in the way people think about the environment.
2. There has been a ____ shift in attitudes towards immigration and more people believe that it can benefit their country.
3. There need to be some ____ made to the education system.
4. Not everyone is happy with this ____ of change because it is destabilising communities.
5. It is unrealistic to expect this to occur ____ as first of all attitudes towards air travel have to change.
6. ____ steadily more and more business people are willing to live abroad.
7. This change has been a ____ process as it has taken people some time to get used to the idea of shopping online.
8. Over the last twenty the Vietnamese economy has grown ____.

⇒ Put a suitable word or phrase in each space

1. Technology is _____ the way that students learn.
2. There has been a _____ in the public's acceptance of taxation; people are now more willing to pay higher taxes if services will improve.
3. The education system in my country is _____ getting worse due to cuts in funding by the government.
4. Getting people used to recycling has been a _____, but now a large proportion of the population do it.
5. The birthrate in many developing countries is _____. One reason for this is that very often both men and woman work, so they don't have much time to raise children.

There are five types of essay questions:

- Opinion questions
- Problems and solutions questions
- Discussion questions
- Advantages and disadvantages questions
- Direct questions



In Part Two I will illustrate how to answer each question type. Before I do that though, there are two pieces of advice I would like to give you.

1. Plan for Ten Minutes

You have forty minutes to plan and write your essay. Many students make the mistake of planning as quickly as possible so that they have more time to write. However, it is best to plan for around ten minutes. That may seem a long time, but the longer you plan for the better your essay will be and the quicker you will write.

2. Paraphrase the Question

To paraphrase means to state the same thing but in a different way. In your essays, you may want to paraphrase the essay question so that you can use it in your introduction. If you copy the essay exactly, you will get no marks for that sentence. This is an example of paraphrasing:

Some people think dangerous sports should be banned.
A common view is that dangerous sports should be outlawed.

‘A common view is that’ is similar to ‘some people think’, and ‘outlawed’ is a ‘synonym’ of ‘banned’. Paraphrase this statement:

Overpopulation in many major urban centers around the world is a major problem

Opinion Questions

In these questions you are given a statement and then asked your opinion. Different phrases are used to ask your opinion. Here are some examples:

- *Some people think dangerous sports should be banned. **Do you agree or disagree?***
- *All fathers should be entitled to time off work when their children are born. **What is your opinion?***
- *In many countries, plastic shopping bags are the main type of rubbish. They cause water pollution and land pollution, so they should be banned. **To what extent do you agree?***
- *Although more and more people are reading the news on the internet, most people still prefer reading the news in a newspaper. **What are your views?***
- *Some people use technology to take advice for their medical problems rather than seeing a doctor. Why is this so? **Is it a positive or negative development according to you?***
- *Some people spend a lot of money on sports and cultural events. **Do you think this is good or bad?***

Suggested Structure

It is best to write a one-sided argument for these questions, rather than a more balanced response. This is because it is simpler to plan and write a one-sided argument. This is a four-part plan that you can use to answer these questions.

Introduction: Short and simple. Just write two sentences:

Introduce the topic

Give your opinion:

1) I agree / disagree with the idea that... **(For an agree or disagree question)**

2) My view is that... **(For other forms of opinion questions)**

Paragraph 1:

1) Firstly, **(First supporting argument)**

Paragraph 2:

1) Another reason why... is that... **(Second supporting argument)**

Conclusion: Repeat your overall opinion:

For the reasons mentioned above, **(+ Your opinion)**

Model Answer

In many countries, plastic shopping bags are the main type of rubbish. They cause water pollution and land pollution, so they should be banned. To what extent do you agree?

Plastic bags are the main type of rubbish in many countries. I agree with the idea that plastic bags should be banned because they cause a great deal of damage to the environment and there are better alternatives.

Firstly, there is a strong argument that plastic bags cause serious damage to the environment. Plastic takes many years to decompose and therefore does not disappear once it enters the environment. A striking illustration of this is plastic in the oceans, which makes the ocean dirty and poisons sea life. This may lead to some creatures becoming extinct and may make the fish we eat poisonous.

Another reason why plastic bags should be banned is that they are not necessary. It is easy for people to use other bags which can be reused many times, such as bags made of canvas. If plastic bags were banned, then people would be forced to use alternatives which are better for the environment. Some people argue that charging money for plastic bags also encourages people to use alternatives; however, the prices charged for bags are often very low and therefore many consumers do not mind paying the extra charge.

For the reasons mentioned above, I am convinced that plastic bags should be banned in as many countries around the world as possible.

➤ Now try this question:

Some people think that the government should take care of disadvantaged people such as the unemployed and homeless people. Do you agree or disagree?

Problem and Solution Questions

These questions first ask you to explain what causes a problem, and then to offer solutions to it. These questions are phrased in different ways. Here are some examples. I have highlighted the parts that ask you to describe the problem and underlined the parts that ask you to provide solutions.

- *Overpopulation in many major urban centers around the world is a major problem. **What are the causes of this?** How can this problem be solved?*
- *More and more wild animals are on the verge of extinction and others are on the endangered list. **What are the reasons for this?** What can be done to solve this problem?*
- *Many offenders commit more crimes after serving the first punishment. **Why is this happening,** and what measures can be taken to tackle this problem?*
- *Scientists have been warning for many years about the importance of protecting the environment and that we must limit the use of energy in our daily lives. Despite warnings, many people do not do this. **What are the reasons for that** and how can people be encouraged to take an interest in protecting the environment?*

Suggested Structure

This is a four-part structure that can be used for these questions.

Introduction: Short and simple. Just write two sentences: It is certainly true that... (Introduce the problem) There are several reasons for this problem, and various measures can be taken (by governments/individuals/parents/schools etc.) to improve the situation.
Paragraph 1: Problems (Problem) may be caused by a variety of factors. Firstly, Secondly, (Use this structure to organise several points)
Paragraph 2: Solutions The best way to solve this problem would be to... (Suggest a solution) Firstly, In addition, (Add another suggestion)
Conclusion: Summarise the problems and solutions: In conclusion, governments/individuals (etc.) should tackle (Problem) by... (Suggestions) If these measures are taken, (Predict the result of your suggestions)

Model Answer

Childhood obesity is increasing in many countries. Explain the main reasons for this, and suggest some possible solutions.

It is certainly true that childhood obesity is a serious issue in many countries. There are several reasons for this problem, and various measures can be taken by parents to improve the situation.

Childhood obesity may be caused by a variety of factors. Firstly, the proliferation of fast food has caused a dramatic increase in childhood obesity. These days, it is relatively cheap and easy to buy unhealthy snacks, such as chocolate bars and crisps. Many children love these foods; however, they often do not understand how unhealthy they are. Secondly, many children have gadgets such as tablets and phones, which give them access to a lot of entertainment. This often encourages children to stay indoors instead of playing outside with their friends.

The best way to solve this problem would be for parents to monitor their children's behaviour more. Firstly, they should control what their children eat, making fast food an occasional treat rather than a regular meal. To this end, parents must spend more time preparing not only their children's meals but also their snacks. In addition, they should restrict the amount of time that children spend watching television and going online, and instead encourage them to do exercise. For example, parents can get together and organise sporting activities in their community.

In conclusion, parents should tackle childhood obesity by limiting children's consumption of fast food and the amount of time they spend watching entertainment. If these measures are taken, childhood obesity is very likely to decrease.

➤ Try this question yourself:

Some people are less fit nowadays than in the past. What are the reasons for this? What measures can be taken to fix this?

Discussion Questions

In these questions you are given two opposing views. You must discuss both views and give your own opinion. Here are some examples:

- *Some people believe that teachers have an important role to play in educational success, while others think it is the students' attitude that matters. Discuss both views and share your opinion.*
- *These days people move from one country to another for work. Some people think children of these families suffer because of this, while others think it is helpful for them. Discuss both views and give your opinion.*

Suggested Structure

I recommend that you decide which view you agree with and make this clear in your essay. To achieve this, first present the view that you don't agree with, and then the view that you do agree with. You can use this planning template:

Introduction: Short and simple. Just write two sentences:

Introduce the 2 points of view and give your opinion:

It is often argued that... while... **(Introduce both views)**

In my view, ... **(Give your opinion)**

Paragraph 1: First Point of View

Some people argue that... **(Introduce the first point of view)**

Firstly, Secondly, **(Use this structure to organise several points)**

For example, **(Try to give an example for one of your points)**

Paragraph 2: Opposite Point of View / Opinion

On the other hand, I would argue that...

Furthermore, **(Develop the idea)**

For example, **(Give an example)**

Conclusion: Summarise the ideas. Give your opinion:

In conclusion, it is clear that there are valid arguments on both sides of the debate.

For the reasons mentioned above, I tend to believe that... **(Give your opinion)**

Model Answer

Some people think that modern technology is making people more sociable, while others think it is making them less sociable. Discuss both views and give your opinion.

It is often argued that modern technology encourages people to be more sociable, while others believe that it is making them less sociable. In my view, modern technology is generally making people less sociable.

Some people argue that modern technology may be making people more sociable. Firstly, many people use social media on their phones to chat to friends and acquaintances. For example, many people keep in regular touch with people who live far away using applications like WhatsApp. Secondly, people can make new friends using apps on their phones. A good illustration of this is dating apps, which are hugely popular in many parts of the world. People use these apps to meet a potential love interest and go on a date.

On the other hand, I would argue that technology is making people less sociable. This is because increased use of technology often leads to people spending less time together in person. For example, if you can message someone on your phone, you may decide that you don't need to meet them in person. Furthermore, there is so much cheap media available online and on streaming services that many people may prefer to watch something instead of going out and meeting people. In my experience, it is often tempting to watch a show instead of going out, because it is cheaper and many shows are excellent entertainment.

In conclusion, there are valid arguments on both sides of the debate. For the reasons mentioned above, I tend to believe that modern technology is making people more anti-social.

➤ Answer this question.

It is thought by some that it is better to live in a city while others believe that life is better in the countryside. Discuss both sides and give your opinion.

Advantage and Disadvantage Questions

In these questions you are told a trend and then asked to describe the advantages and disadvantages of it. Some questions also ask you to give your opinion. Here are some examples (the parts that ask for your opinion have been underlined).

- It is becoming increasingly popular to have a year off between finishing school and going to university. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?
- Some people think that to reduce traffic and pollution, the government should increase tax on petrol (gasoline). Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

Suggested Structure

This is a planning template that you can use for these questions. Note that some parts of it should only be used for essays that ask your opinion.

<p>Introduction: Short and simple. Just write two sentences: Introduce the topic Introduce the 2 points of view (only give your opinion if the question asks for it): There are advantages and disadvantages of... (In my opinion...)</p>
<p>Paragraph 1: First Point of View / Advantages ... has several benefits. (Introduce the first point of view) Firstly, Secondly, Finally, (Use this structure to organise several points) For example, (Try to give an example for one of your points)</p>
<p>Paragraph 2: Opposite Point of View / Disadvantages On the other hand, some people would argue that... (Introduce the opposite idea) OR: On the other hand, I would argue that... (if the question asks for your opinion) First of all, furthermore (Use this structure to organise several points) For example, (Give an example)</p>
<p>Conclusion: Summarise the ideas. Give your opinion if the question asks you for it: In conclusion, (Summarise) OR: For the reasons mentioned above, I believe that the (advantages/disadvantages) of... outweigh the (advantages/disadvantages) (Your opinion if the question asks for it)</p>

Model Answer

The rise of convenience foods has helped people keep up with the speed of the modern lifestyle. Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

There are advantages and disadvantages of convenience foods. In my opinion, the disadvantages outweigh the advantages.

Consuming convenience foods has several benefits. Firstly, they are easy to get hold of because they are sold in shops everywhere, and they are generally affordable. This is useful because many people lead busy lives and eating convenience foods can save time preparing meals. Secondly, convenience foods tend to last for a long time. For example, food items like ready meals can often be frozen and last for many months, while foodstuff such as tinned soup can last for years. Therefore, having these food items in your house means that you will always have something to eat.

On the other hand, I would argue that there are significant disadvantages to buying convenience foods. First of all, a lot of convenience foods are unhealthy because they are processed. For example, it is often better to eat a home cooked meal which contains fresh and healthy ingredients, instead of a ready-made meal which may not be particularly fresh or nutritious. Furthermore, convenience foods can be far more expensive than homemade food. For example, buying the ingredients and making your own cheese pasta is likely to be much cheaper per serving than buying packets of pre-made cheese pasta from stores.

For the reasons mentioned above, I believe that the disadvantages of convenience foods outweigh the advantages. This is because convenience foods are often unhealthy and can be a waste of money.

➤ Try this question.

It is often considered that change is more beneficial to people than trying to avoid it and have everything remain the same. Do you think the advantages of change outweigh the disadvantages?

Direct Questions

These essay types are known as 'two-question essays'. They consist of a statement followed by two questions that you need to answer. Here are some examples.

- Most people agree that money can't buy happiness. Why is happiness difficult to define? How can people achieve happiness?
- It is often said "when in Rome, do as Romans do". Do you think people should adapt and accept the culture of the country they visit? Do you think it is possible to learn a culture without learning a language?
- The internet is a great source of information and has opened up opportunities for people to learn all over the world. Is all information reliable on the internet? What could be done to control information online?

Suggested Structure

This is a template that you can use for these questions. Note that the answer to each question is in a separate body paragraph.

Introduction: Short and simple. Just write two sentences:

Introduce the 2 points of view and give your opinion:

A common belief is that... **(Introduce both views)**

In my view, ... **(Give your opinion to all the questions)**

Paragraph 1: Answer to first question

Personally, I would argue that... **(Introduce the first point of view)**

Firstly, Secondly, **(Use this structure to organise several points)**

For example, **(Try to give an example for one of your points)**

Paragraph 2: Answer to second question

I tend to believe that...

First of all, Furthermore **(Use this structure to organise several points)**

For example, **(Give an example)**

Conclusion: Summarise your answers to the questions:

In conclusion,... **(Summarise your argument)**

Model Answer

It is often said “when in Rome, do as Romans do”. Do you think people should adapt and accept the culture of the country they visit? Do you think it is possible to learn a culture without learning a language?

A common belief is that visitors should act in accordance with the cultural norms of the country that they visit. In my view, travelers should indeed adjust to the local culture, and they should be able to understand the culture even if they don't speak the language.

Personally, I would argue that people should fit in with the culture of the country they visit. Firstly, I think that travelers will be safer if they do this. Breaking a law or even just a cultural norm, can lead to serious consequences. For example, alcohol is illegal in certain countries such as Brunei, so a visitor shouldn't drink beer there or they may get arrested. Secondly, I think that it is also a matter of respect. It is arguably unfair for travelers to disrupt the way of life of people in their own country.

I tend to believe that it is possible to learn a country's culture without knowing the language. First of all, a lot of cultural behavior can be observed without speaking, such as how people interact. For example, Japanese people are generally quite orderly and polite, and this is obvious even if you don't speak Japanese. Furthermore, it is possible to learn about another culture by reading books and watching television documentaries.

In conclusion, visitors should adjust to the culture of the place that they visit because it is respectful, and it may also make them safer. A traveler can understand a foreign culture without being able to speak the local language because there are other ways to learn about it, such as by observation and reading books.

➤ Try this question.

Success is often measured by wealth and material belongings. Do you think wealth is the best measure of success? What makes a successful person?

It is difficult to write about complicated issues in English. To help you, this section provides key ideas for 20 common IELTS essay topics. For each topic there are a list of ideas followed by essay extracts, which illustrate how the ideas can be used in essay paragraphs.

You can use these sheets how you like. However, to really learn the material I recommend that you use this five-step process.

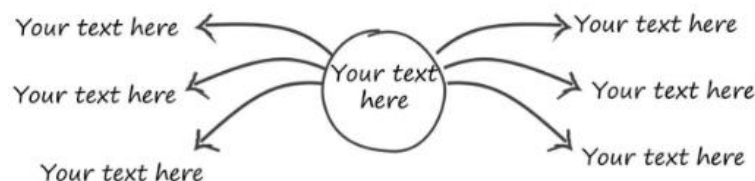
1 Read the key ideas.

2 Read them again and think about them. For example, 'Advertising informs us about the choices we have'. How does advertising inform you of what purchasing options you have? What useful things do you own which you heard of in an advert?

3 Read the essay extracts multiple times, focusing on key vocabulary and structure. For example, here is a paragraph about advertising. I have written notes in italics.

It can be argued that *(an academic phrase that introduces an impersonal opinion)* advertising causes a lot of damage. First, *(sequencer)* advertising manipulates people. Most advertising does not focus on selling the practical function of an item, but on selling a brand image. Advertising aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier. *(Two sentences that explain the idea)* For example, many adverts show glamorous, successful people using a product, and the message is that the viewer could be like them if they bought the product. *(An example that illustrates the point)*.

4 Close the book and try to remember the key ideas. You can say them out loud, write notes, or make a spider diagram (below).



5 Answer the essay question at the end of the section.

Advertising

Advertising is such a normal part of modern life that barely notice it. However, advertising has several positive and negative impacts on society. On one hand, advertising drives the economy and offers us more choice; on the other hand, it manipulates us into buying things that we do not need.

Positives of Advertising

Advertising is a key part of modern business.

It creates demand for products.

Companies need to tell customers about their products.

Advertisements inform us about the choices we have.

Without advertising there would be higher unemployment.

Advertising can be regulated.

Products that can be a risk to health should display warnings.

In some countries it is illegal to advertise cigarettes on television.

Summary

Advertising is a key part of modern business. Companies need to tell customers about their products, and this would not be possible without adverts. This is beneficial for everyone because it informs us about the choices that we have. Furthermore, by creating demand for products, advertising helps to increase the size of the economy and create jobs.

It is important to note that advertising can be regulated. Therefore, advertising that is a risk to public health can be banned. For example, in some countries it is illegal to advertise cigarettes on television. This shows that the government can control advertising and stop it from being dangerous.

Negatives of Advertising

Advertising manipulates people.

It aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier.

Advertisers focus on selling a brand image.

They use glamorous, successful people.

Advertisers often aim their marketing at children.

Children can easily be influenced by advertisers.

Children put pressure on their parents to buy them things.

Summary

It can be argued that advertising causes a lot of damage. First, advertising manipulates people. Most advertising does not focus on selling the practical function of an item, but on selling a brand image. Advertising aims to persuade people that buying a product will make them happier. For example, many adverts show glamorous, successful people using a product, and the message is that the viewer could be like them if they bought the product.

Secondly, advertisers often aim their marketing at children. This is unethical because children can be easily influenced by advertisers. They do not have the mental capabilities to understand that adverts are not a true depiction of real life. After watching an advert, children often put pressure on their parents to buy the product, and this can cause conflict between the parent and the child.

Practice Question

Some people say that advertising encourages us to buy things we don't really need. Others say that advertisements tell us about new products that may improve our lives. Which viewpoint do you agree with?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Animal Testing

When scientists make a new drug or cosmetic product, they test it on animals. This is to make sure it is safe before being given to people. Animal testing is a controversial issue because the experiments cause animals to suffer. This sheet describes the arguments for and against animal testing.

Arguments For Animal Testing

Animal testing helps to advance medical and scientific knowledge.

It is necessary to do medical tests on new drugs.

Many important medical discoveries involved experimentation on animals.

Researchers aim to minimize the suffering that animals experience.

Testing for the cosmetics industry is now banned in several countries.

Summary

Animal testing is important because it helps to advance medical and scientific knowledge. It is necessary to do medical tests on new drugs to know if they work and are safe. For instance, the drug Oxycontin, which relieves severe pain, was tested on rats and rabbits. This drug has improved the lives of people living with chronic pain, such as cancer patients.

Some people worry about the pain that experiments cause to animals. However, researchers aim to minimise the suffering that animals experience. Furthermore, it is increasingly the case that testing is only done on important products. For example, testing for the cosmetics industry is now banned in several countries.

Arguments Against Animal Testing

Humans have no moral right to do experiments on animals.

The lives of animals should be respected.

The benefits of research using animals do not justify the suffering caused.

There are alternative methods of research.

Summary

Humans have no moral right to do experiments on animals. The animals involved in testing do not want to be tested on. Their lives should be respected. Furthermore, the benefits of research using animals do not justify the suffering caused. The suffering to animals is awful; they live in cages and often suffer slow, agonising deaths.

Animal testing is unnecessary as there are alternative methods of research. For example, scientists can use advanced computer-modelling techniques to see how a drug would work. In addition, the drugs can be tested on human volunteers. This would be ethical as the volunteers would be choosing to take the experimental medicines, rather than being forced to take them.

Practice Question

Nowadays animal experiments are widely used to develop new medicines and to test the safety of other products. Some people argue that these experiments should be banned because it is morally wrong to cause animals to suffer, while others are in favour of them because of their benefits to humanity.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Bad Behaviour in Schools

Students often behave badly in class. This includes being noisy, not completing work, being rude to the teacher and bullying, among other things. We will consider the possible causes of bad behaviour and ways that it can be reduced.

Bad Behaviour in Schools: Causes

Bad behaviour is due to a lack of structure and discipline.

There are too many children in some classes.

Large classes are difficult to manage.

Many disruptive students come from an unstable family background.

Other parents are too lenient and spoil their children.

Some children are used to getting whatever they want.

Schools can do very little if they are not supported by parents.

Summary

There are many reasons why students behave badly. First of all, bad behaviour is caused by a lack of structure and discipline. If a teacher or school do not have clear rules and punishments, students may not worry about breaking the rules. Furthermore, some classes are too large for teachers to manage properly. For example, my lessons at school often had between 30 and 35 students. This makes it very difficult for teachers to keep an eye on each student and tell them off for bad behaviour.

There may also be issues related to the student's family background which cause them to misbehave. Many disruptive students come from unstable homes, and it is reasonable to suggest that if students are unhappy at home, they are more likely to behave badly at school. In contrast, some parents are too lenient and spoil their children. If a child is used to getting whatever they want, they may become hostile when a teacher asks them to do something which they don't want to do.

Bad Behaviour in Schools: Solutions

Schools need a clear code of conduct.

Schools need a clear set of rules about behaviour.

Teachers must have the power to punish disruptive students.

Schools should remove difficult children from lessons.

Schools need to work closely with parents.

Discipline could be lacking at home.

Parents must support the school rules.

They should take responsibility for their children's behaviour.

Summary

There are many ways to persuade children to behave better in school. Firstly, schools can create a clear code of conduct. If they have a clear set of rules and behaviour, then students will know when they are misbehaving. Students must also know there are consequences for bad behaviour. For example, schools should remove difficult children from lessons.

Secondly, schools need to work closely with parents. This is because discipline may be lacking at home, and sometimes students do not care about school if their parents don't. Ideally, parents should support the school rules. I believe that there should be government initiatives encouraging parents to take responsibility for their children's behaviour.

Practice Question

In many countries, schools have severe problems with student behavior. What do you think are the causes of this? What solutions can you suggest?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Consumerism

Consumerism is the idea that the consumption of goods is beneficial to society or its economy. In a consumer society people aspire to earn more money in order to buy better products, such as an expensive car, the latest phone or new clothes.

The problem with consumerism is that people become increasingly materialistic, which means that they care too much about material goods. We judge people based on what items and brands they can afford. Brands like 'Louis Vuitton' and 'Mercedes' are status symbols – they show us that someone has money.

There is also the problem of advertising, which creates new ideas and needs. It persuades us to buy the latest styles. This is a problem because people may be tricked and manipulated into buying things that they do not need.

Positives of Consumerism

Consumerism creates employment.

It helps to reduce poverty.

It encourages innovation and creativity in business.

We live in a global economy.

We have a better quality of life.

Summary

Consumerism creates more prosperous and advanced countries. Firstly, it helps to create employment because when people spend more money there is more demand for products and services. This increase in job opportunities helps to reduce poverty as more people will be able to find well-paying jobs.

Secondly, consumerism encourages innovation and creativity in business. In order to attract more customers, companies need to create new and better products. Furthermore, companies are driven to look for new customers in different countries. This is beneficial because it means that useful items are spread around the world, and to countries that could not produce them by themselves. Overall, consumerism can lead to us having a better quality of life.

Negatives of Consumerism

Consumerist societies create more waste.

Consumerism creates a 'throw-away' culture.

They use more natural resources.

They cause damage to the environment.

Advertisers tell us who we are and what we want.

Wealth does not lead to happiness.

We should return to traditional values like sharing.

Summary

Consumerism has many negative effects on society. First, consumerist societies create more waste because they have a 'throw-away' culture. This means that people buy more products rather than using the ones they already have. Therefore, these societies use more natural resources and cause damage to the environment.

Secondly, consumerism promotes the false idea that wealth leads to happiness. Advertisers persuade us to spend a lot of time and money to acquire an item which will not make us happier. For example, someone may spend a lot of money on the latest smart phone only to realise that it is remarkably like the phone they already have. We should be less focused on material items and return to traditional values like sharing because this will make us happier.

Practice Question

Many people say that we now live in 'consumer societies' where money and possessions are given too much importance. Others believe that consumer culture has played a vital role in improving our lives.

Discuss both views and give your opinion.

Crime

Crime is a major problem in big cities across the world. Common crimes include theft, assault, and drug abuse. This sheet describes the causes of crime and possible measures that can be taken to reduce it. First, look at this key vocabulary:

Commit (a crime) – we use the word commit with crime. *Commit* a crime means *do* a crime.

Offence – a synonym of crime.

Offender – a synonym of criminal.

Reform – to give up bad behaviour. If a criminal *reforms*, they stop committing crimes.

Rehabilitate – to rehabilitate a criminal means to help them to become a good member of society.

Vocational (training) – vocational means related to a certain job or career. So vocational training means training for a specific job or career.

Causes of Crime

The main causes of crime are poverty, unemployment and lack of education.

People who commit crimes often have no other way of making a living.

The prison system can make the situation worse.

Offenders mix with other criminals who can be a negative influence.

A criminal record makes finding a job more difficult.

Many prisoners re-offend when they are released.

Summary

The main causes of crime are poverty, unemployment, and lack of education. People who commit crimes often have no other way of making a living. If someone is from a poor background and did not do well at school, they will not have many opportunities. They may struggle to live a healthy lifestyle and be jealous of wealthy people. In these circumstances, they may think that crime is the only way they can be successful.

The prison system can make the situation worse. Offenders mix with other criminals who can be a negative influence. Furthermore, a criminal record makes finding a job more difficult. Therefore, many prisoners are in a bad position when they leave jail and may be tempted to reoffend in order to make money.

Possible Measures to Reduce Crime

Prisons should provide education or vocational training.

Rehabilitation programmes prepare prisoners for release into society.

Community service is another way to reform offenders.

It makes offenders useful in their local communities.

They might be required to talk to school groups or clean public areas.

Summary

There are several possible ways to reduce crime. Firstly, prisons can provide education or vocational training. For example, a prisoner could learn a trade like plumbing, so that when they are released, they are more likely to find work. A similar policy is rehabilitation programmes, in which offenders are given support to live in the outside world again. For instance, they can be given help when looking for accommodation and work.

Community service is another way to reform offenders. It makes offenders useful in their local communities. An example of community service is for offenders to clean public areas, or to talk to school groups explaining how they can avoid the same mistakes that they have made. I believe doing community service will make offenders appreciate their community more, and they will therefore be less likely to reoffend.

Practice Question

Many criminals reoffend after they have been punished. Why do some people continue to commit crimes after they have been punished, and what measures can be taken to tackle this problem?

Education in Developing Countries

Developing countries lack the money and resources needed to create a good education system. This is a problem because people need knowledge and skills to improve their lives. This sheet describes why many children are poorly educated, and what can be done to help them.

Education in Developing Countries: Problems

Children have to work from an early age.

There are no schools in many areas.

The schools are usually underfunded and lack resources.

Families do not have access to books or computers.

Literacy rates are low.

Summary

There are many reasons why children in developing countries cannot get a good education. In some countries, children must work from an early age. They have to work, often in terrible conditions, in order to help their families. Furthermore, there are no schools in many areas which means that either children can't attend school, or they must travel long distances to school. These schools are often underfunded and of poor quality. Finally, children may not receive learning support at home because their parents are illiterate, and they may not have access to books or computers.

Education in Developing Countries: Solutions

Governments of developed and developing countries must work together.

Developed countries could help developing countries by providing money.

They could supply the funds to build schools and pay for teachers.

Computer equipment could be donated.

The internet can expose students to a world of knowledge and information.

Governments should make education compulsory for all children.

Summary

Many developing countries do not have the money to create a good education system. Therefore, governments of developed and developing countries must work together. Developed countries need to help developing countries by providing money and resources. They could supply the funds to build schools and pay for teachers. Furthermore, computer equipment could be donated. This would be beneficial because the internet helps teachers and students to access knowledge and information. For their part, developing countries should make education compulsory for all children.

Practice Question

In developing countries, children in rural communities have less access to education. Some people believe that the problem can be solved by providing more schools and teachers, while others think that the problem can be solved by providing computers and Internet access. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

English as an International Language

English is becoming a global second language. It is estimated that 1.75 billion people worldwide speak English at a useful level. This sheet describes the positive and negative aspects of this trend.

Positives of English as an International Language

A global language helps to bring countries together.

It helps to form stronger ties between countries because there is no language barrier.

English is the dominant language of international business, technology and science.

The ability to understand English provides access to global media.

English allows people to travel around the world without difficulties.

Summary

The role of English as an international language is important. Firstly, it helps to bring the world together. It helps to form stronger ties between countries because there is no language barrier. This allows there to be more communication and collaboration across borders. For example, English is the dominant language of international business, technology and science.

Furthermore, the use of English allows people from around the world to access global culture. For instance, if someone from Pakistan learns English, they can read English versions of media from around the world. They would not have access to this information if English wasn't as widespread.

Finally, knowing English allows people to travel around the world without difficulties. This is because there are English speakers in every country and companies that work with tourists have workers who speak English. Therefore, knowing English makes it easier to enjoy and experience new countries.

Negatives of English as an International Language

If one language is dominant, other languages may disappear.

The dominant language brings its own culture.

American culture has become popular around the world.

Other cultures may be damaged.

Summary

The role of English as an international language has some drawbacks. Firstly, if one language is dominant, then others may disappear. This would be a shame as losing a language means losing part of human history, as each language carries the history of the people who created it.

Secondly, the dominant language also brings its own culture. This can be seen in the popularity of American culture around the world. Because people can understand English, they can access American films and TV shows. The problem is that the strong influence of American culture may damage the cultures of other countries.

Practice Question

The advantage of the spread of English as a global language will continue to outweigh its disadvantages.

To what extent do you agree or disagree.

Family

The modern family has changed over time. Namely, it has become smaller and weaker; couples are having fewer children and the divorce rate is increasing. This sheet describes the modern family and the negative effects it has on children.

Modern Families

Families in many countries are not as large as they used to be.

We tend to live in small nuclear families rather than large extended families.

Parents tend to have fewer children.

Nowadays both parents often work.

Busy parents have less contact with their children.

It costs so much to bring children up.

It is more difficult to raise a large family.

Divorce is more common these days.

Divorce can be extremely stressful.

Lone parents may face financial difficulties.

Summary

Families in many countries are not as large as they used to be. We tend to live in small nuclear families rather than large extended ones. The most obvious trends are that couples are having fewer children and the divorce rate is increasing.

These days couples tend to have fewer children for a variety of reasons. Firstly, both parents tend to work. This means that it is more difficult to raise a large family as one parent does not stay at home to look after the children. Secondly, it is increasingly expensive to have children. The cost of feeding, clothing and educating a child, among other things, can be a huge financial burden on a family.

The divorce rate is increasing, which means that families are breaking apart. Divorce can be extremely stressful and affect the mental health of everyone involved. Furthermore, divorce can impose financial difficulties on the parent who is left to look after the children alone.

Negative Effects on Children

The lack of closeness in families can have a negative effect on children.

Many parents have no idea how their children spend their time.

Friends, television and internet become the main influences on children's behaviour.

Teenagers are influenced by peer pressure.

Some of them join gangs.

Divorce can have a negative effect on children.

Children from single-parent families are more likely to get lower grades or drop out of school.

The rise in divorce rates may be related to some social problems.

Summary

The modern family unit can have many negative effects on children. Firstly, children need to feel loved and to have constant interaction with their elders. However, if families are smaller than they used to be and both parents are working, then children may spend too much time by themselves. Friends, television and internet then become the main influences on children's behaviour. This can lead to bad behaviour; for example, teenagers can be overly influenced by peer pressure and join gangs.

Divorce can also have a negative effect on children. It is often noted that children from single-parent families are more likely to get lower grades or drop out of school. This will harm their chances to be successful in the future. Furthermore, the rise in divorce rates may be related to some social problems. For example, some children may feel unloved when their parents' divorce, and this can fuel negative behaviour like drug use and violence.

Practice Question

Nowadays families are not as close as they used to be.

What do you think are the causes of this?

What problems can this cause?

Genetically Modified (GM) Food

Scientists can change the DNA of seeds to change crops, fruits and vegetables. These foods are genetically engineered to make them grow faster and be resistant to disease and predators. However, GM foods are controversial because some argue they are harmful to our health and the environment.

Genetically Modified (GM) Food: Advantages

Farmers can produce crops that can grow bigger and faster.

Some GM crops are more resistant to disease or insects.

This could be important for food production in developing countries.

Faster growing cereals, fruits and vegetables will mean more profit.

GM foods can be modified to look perfect.

They may be more attractive to customers.

Summary

Genetically-modified foods have many advantages. Firstly, farmers can grow faster and bigger crops. This may be especially beneficial in countries with food shortages, as GM crops may produce more food. Secondly, some GM crops are more resistant to disease or insects. This can also help to increase the size of harvest and potentially make crops cheaper.

Faster growing cereals, fruits and vegetables will mean more profit. Clearly, the companies who engineer the seeds will make lots of money selling them. However, farmers may also make more money if they can grow more produce. In addition, shops may make more money because GM foods can be modified to look perfect, so they may be more attractive to customers.

Genetically Modified (GM) Food: Disadvantages

There may be risks involved in the genetic engineering of foods.

GM crops might change whole ecosystems.

Food chains could be broken if crops are resistant to predators.

Organic foods are produced without chemicals or genetic modification.

Organic farming may be slower and more expensive.

However, the environment is not damaged by fertilisers or pesticides.

Summary

There are some significant downsides to the genetic engineering of foods. Firstly, GM crops can damage whole ecosystems. For example, some GM crops are designed to be poisonous to insects, which may lead to population numbers declining. This would then hurt the small animals that eat the insects, and then the larger animals that eat the small ones.

Furthermore, it is possible to produce organic foods without chemicals or genetic modification. While organic farming may be slower and more expensive, the food produced is safer to eat and does not damage the ecosystem. In addition, organic food is grown without the use of fertilisers or pesticides which damage the environment.

Summary

Biotechnology companies all over the world are developing different types of genetically modified (GM) crops. However, not enough is known about these crops on our health and the environment. Interfering with nature in this way should be prohibited.

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Global Warming

Global warming is a major issue of our time. However, many people are unclear about the main ideas underpinning the issue. This sheet explains what global warming is, how human activity causes it, and what can be done to stop it.

How Global Warming Works

Gases such as carbon dioxide trap heat from the sun.

This causes global temperatures to rise.

The process is known as the greenhouse effect.

Human activity is a major factor in the rise of greenhouse gases.

How People Cause Global Warming

Factories and vehicles produce emissions and exhaust fumes.

Many developing countries are becoming industrialised.

The number of cars on our streets is growing.

Cheap air travel is allowing more people to fly.

Effects of Global Warming

Global warming will have a significant impact on our planet.

It will cause certain places to become inhospitable.

Rising temperatures will cause melting of the polar ice caps.

Sea levels will rise.

We can expect more extreme weather conditions.

Flooding and droughts may become more common.

Solutions to Global Warming

Governments could introduce laws to limit emissions from factories.

They should invest in renewable energy from solar, wind or water power.

They could impose “green taxes” on drivers and airplane companies.

Individuals should try to decrease their carbon footprint.

We should take public transport rather than driving.

We should take fewer flights abroad for holidays.

Summary

Human activity is responsible for causing global warming. There are several ways in which we produce emissions which cause the greenhouse effect. For example, factories and vehicles produce exhaust fumes. The rate at which we emit greenhouse gases is accelerating. Developing countries are becoming industrialised, which means there are more power stations, factories and vehicles worldwide.

Global warming will have a negative impact on our planet. It will make places on the planet inhospitable for humans to live in. For example, rising sea levels may flood some towns and cities. Furthermore, global warming creates more extreme weather conditions such as droughts, which may make certain places impossible to live in due to a lack of water.

There are many possible solutions to the climate emergency. Firstly, governments could introduce laws to limit emissions from factories and vehicles. They should also invest in renewable energy from solar, wind or water power. Furthermore, individuals should decrease their carbon footprint. For example, we can take public transport rather than driving, and take fewer flights abroad for holidays.

Practice Question

Global warming is one of the most serious issues that the world is facing today. What are the causes of global warming and what measures can governments and individuals take to tackle the issue?

Globalisation

Advances in technology such as mobile phones, airplanes and the internet have made the growth of transport and communication networks possible. This means that people and countries can exchange goods more quickly and in a less complicated way.

This process is called globalisation. Globalisation comes from the word 'globe' and means the worldwide coming together of countries and nations. We will look at the positive and negatives impacts of globalisation.

The Positives of Globalisation

Business is becoming increasingly international.

Multi-national companies do business around the world.

Companies like KFC can be seen on high streets in most cities.

A global economy means free trade between countries.

Goods are produced in one country and sold in many others.

Globalisation can also create opportunities for employment.

It encourages investment in less developed countries.

It could reduce poverty in the developing world.

Globalisation spreads music, film and literature.

Globalisation can strengthen political relationships.

Key Vocabulary

Invest - *to put into use for the purpose of making money.*

Goods - *things that are sold.*

Poverty - *the condition of being poor; a lack of money.*

Free-trade - *trade between countries that has few restrictions.*

Multi-national company – *a large company that operates in more than one country.*

Developing Countries - *a poor agricultural country that is seeking to become more advanced economically and socially.*

Developed Countries – *a country that is advanced economically and socially, and has a high standard of living.*

Summary

Globalisation has many positive impacts across the world.

Firstly, free trade between countries makes everyone wealthier. Trade agreements allow countries to sell their goods and services abroad. This increases a country's income. For example, Sri Lanka can sell tea all over the world. It also allows nations to buy goods from abroad that they don't have, and to purchase them at affordable prices. A good illustration of this is oil; countries which don't have oil reserves can import it from places like the Middle East.

Globalisation encourages investment in less developed countries. Because businesses can operate across borders, a company can set up offices in multiple countries. In order to make this successful, the company may need to invest money in a country; for example, to help pay for infrastructure. This helps the country to develop.

Globalisation allows us to broaden our mind. It offers us the chance to (travel) experience media from other countries. It gives us the opportunities to learn about music, films and novels from different cultures. This gives us a broader range of media to consume. It also makes travel easier, so we can travel to different countries.

Finally, globalisation can create stronger political ties between nations. This is important, because if countries can communicate then they are less likely to start wars. For example, the United Nations offers a forum for discussion between nations.

The Negatives of Globalisation

Globalisation is not always beneficial for everyone.

Companies can move to countries where labour is cheap.

This creates redundancies, or job losses.

Employees cannot be confident that they have stable jobs.

Companies sometimes exploit their employees in developing countries.

Global trade creates more waste and pollution.

Key Vocabulary

Beneficial - *having a good or favorable effect.*

Labour – *a group of workers.*

Redundancies – *workers being let go by employers.*

Stable - *fixed, firm, or steady in position; not shaky or easily moved.*

Exploit - *to use for one's own advantage and in a way that is unfair to the thing or person being used.*

Summary

Globalisation has many negative impacts across the world.

Firstly, corporations can exploit workers in poorer countries. They often move production to countries where they can pay workers the least amount of money. This leads to oppressive and dangerous working conditions.

Furthermore, relocating factories and businesses causes job losses and redundancies. For example, if a car company moves their factory from America to China, the city in America will suffer. This means that there is less job security worldwide and corporations are constantly shopping around for the poorest paid workforce.

Globalisation is creating a standardised global culture. This is destroying cultures from around the world, which reduces diversity. For example, Hollywood movies dominate the global cinema market, and these generally have a very American perspective. It would be good to see well-funded film industries in other countries.

Globalisation can also make countries less independent. When countries sign up to large governmental organisations like the United Nations, they must follow certain rules and policies. This means that those countries have less freedom to make their own rules, and it can therefore be argued that these countries become less democratic.

Practice Question

It has been said that the world is becoming a global village in which there are no boundaries to trade and communication. Do the benefits of globalisation outweigh the drawbacks?

Health

Despite huge improvements in healthcare, the overall standard of physical health in many developed countries is now falling. This is mainly due to people having a bad diet and not exercising enough. However, there are several things that individuals and governments can do to reverse this trend.

Diet

The human body requires a balanced diet.

Many people nowadays rely on fast food or pre-prepared meals.

These foods contain too much fat, salt and sugar.

They are cheap to buy and very easy to prepare.

An unhealthy diet can cause various health problems.

Obesity, diabetes and heart disease are the increase.

Exercise

Regular exercise is essential in maintaining a healthy body.

Exercise burns calories and helps to build healthy bones and muscles.

Most people nowadays lead a sedentary lifestyle.

We tend to walk less and do desk jobs.

Most adults relax by watching television.

Children play video games rather than doing outdoor sports.

Summary

The human body requires a healthy diet. However, these days many people rely on fast food or pre-prepared meals, which contain too much fat, salt and sugar. These foods are attractive to people because they are cheap to buy and easy to prepare. An unhealthy diet can cause various health problems. For example, obesity, diabetes and heart disease are on the rise.

In addition, regular exercise is essential in maintaining a healthy body. Exercise burns calories and helps to build healthy bones and muscles. These days, many of

us live a sedentary lifestyle, so we are not active enough. We tend to walk less and do desk jobs, and in our leisure time we watch television or go online. Another example of this trend is that children often play video games instead of doing outdoor sports.

Governments' Role

Governments have a significant role to play in reducing obesity.

Hospitals rely on the government for money and resources.

More and more people are seriously overweight.

They are more at risk of heart disease and diabetes.

The situation will increase the burden on hospitals.

Governments should promote a healthy diet and regular exercise.

There should be more time for sport on school timetables.

Unhealthy junk food should be banned from school menus.

Individuals' Role

People should take responsibility for their health.

We need to watch what we eat and exercise regularly.

Food packaging shows information about what foods contain.

Parents should make sure that they feed their children nutritious food.

They should encourage their children to play outdoors.

Summary

Governments have a significant role to play in reducing obesity. First, they need to make sure the healthcare system has enough money and resources to cope with an increasingly unhealthy population. For example, more and more people are overweight, and has increased rates of heart disease and diabetes. This increases the burden on hospitals, so governments need to increase funding. Furthermore, governments should also promote a healthy diet and regular exercise. For example,

there should be more time for sport on school timetables and unhealthy junk food should be banned from school menus.

Secondly, individuals should take more responsibility for their health. We need to exercise regularly and watch what we eat, which is easy to do as food packaging shows information about what foods contain. Furthermore, parents need to take more responsibility for their children's health. They need to feed their children nutritious food and encourage them to play outdoors.

Practice Question

Despite huge improvements in healthcare, the overall standard of physical health in many developed countries is now falling. What could be the reason for this trend, and what can be done to reverse it?

Immigration

Immigration is the act of coming to live permanently in a new country. There are many reasons why people immigrate:

- Some people move to another country in search of a better life.
- Richer countries may offer better opportunities for employment.
- Free healthcare and schooling are available in some developed countries.
- Other people move to a foreign country to improve their academic qualifications.

Immigration has both positive and negative consequences.

Positives of Immigration and Multi-Cultural Societies

Immigration can help the economy of a country.

Many immigrants have skills that are needed in the country that they move to.

Immigrants who find work contribute to the economy of their new country.

Many immigrants send money home to help family members.

Immigration also creates cultural diversity.

People of many different nationalities learn to live together.

This can help people to become more open-minded and tolerant.

Summary

I have always been a strong supporter of immigration. Most people don't realise how much immigration benefits the economy. Immigrants have skills that we need, and this improves the workforce and helps the economy to grow. Furthermore, immigrants often send money back home, which helps their own country to develop.

Immigration also creates cultural diversity, which makes society far more interesting. For example, restaurants in Britain serve food from all over the world. In addition, cultural diversity helps to reduce racism and intolerance. When we meet people from different cultures, we become more open-minded and tolerant.

Negatives of Immigration

Some people believe that immigrants take jobs that should go to local people.

Some immigrant workers work long hours for less money.

Companies might pay lower salaries to immigrant workers.

Unemployment rates could rise if there are too many immigrants.

Cultural diversity can lead to countries losing identity.

Summary

We need to be aware of the negative impacts of immigration. Firstly, immigrants often take the jobs of local people. This is because employers often pay immigrant workers lower salaries. This means that local people may become unemployed or need to take a pay cut in order to keep their jobs.

Cultural diversity can bring benefits, but when there is too much immigration then it can lead to the breakdown of a culture. A nation can lose its identity and I believe this is a bad thing. People are happy when they feel part of a group and have a sense of national identity.

Practice Question

Immigration has a major impact on the society.

What are the main reasons for immigration?

To what consequences can it lead?

Mobile Phones

It is hard to imagine life without mobile phones. We use them throughout the day for a variety of purposes. There are many advantages and disadvantages of mobile phones.

Positives of Mobile Phones

The mobile phone is the most popular gadget in today's world.

Smart phones are multi-functional; users can send text messages, surf the internet, take photos and listen to music.

Mobile phones have revolutionised the way we communicate.

We can stay in touch with family, friends and colleagues wherever we are.

Having a smart phone is essential in many workplaces.

Summary

Smart phones are popular because they are multi-functional. Users can surf the internet, take photos and listen to music, among other things. This means that the mobile phone is useful in many different circumstances. For example, people often use Google Maps to get directions when they are walking.

In addition, mobile phones have revolutionised the way we communicate. We can communicate instantly with family, friends and colleagues wherever we are. This is very important because these days people often live long distances from their loved ones. Having a mobile phone is also essential in many workplaces, so having a good phone can improve your performance at work.

Negatives of Mobile Phones

People can become addicted to their phones.

Using smart phones can distract us from doing work.

Mobile phones can be a dangerous distraction.

Using a mobile phone while driving reduces the driver's concentration.

Having a mobile phone means that we can always be contacted.

Mobile phones are a popular target for thieves.

Summary

Mobile phones have many disadvantages. First of all, they are very addictive. This can distract us from doing our work, and from doing more fulfilling activities such as reading and exercise. In some situations, being distracted can be dangerous. For instance, if a driver is distracted by their phone, they may have an accident.

Furthermore, having a mobile phone means that we can always be contacted. This may be frustrating when someone wants to be left alone. For example, it is common nowadays for people to receive calls from work when they are at home. Finally, mobile phones are a popular target for thieves. This means that having a nice phone may encourage thieves to attack you.

Question

The use of mobile phones has increased rapidly in the twenty-first century. Additionally, mobile phones can now be used for many purposes besides making phone calls.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of mobile phones?

Plastic Waste

The amount of plastic waste is rising on a global level. This is a huge problem because plastic can take up to 1000 years to decompose. This sheet describes the reasons for plastic waste, the problems that it causes, and some ways to reduce it.

Waste

The amount of plastic waste we produce has increased.

Most items are sold in non-biodegradable plastic packaging.

The amount of household waste is growing.

Many people nowadays rely on fast food or pre-prepared meals.

People do not think about the consequences of dropping rubbish.

They assume that somebody is paid to clean the streets.

Effects

Plastic packaging does not break down easily.

Plastic waste makes our environment look dirty.

The waste ends up in landfill sites.

Waste is dumped into rivers and the ocean.

Sea life consume plastic and get ill.

The fish that we eat increasingly contain micro plastics.

Recycling and Other Solutions

We should recycle and reuse plastics.

There are collection banks for plastic.

Companies should be incentivised to use recycled plastic.

The government should ban some plastic items.

People should use metal or wooden straws instead of plastic ones.

Summary

The amount of plastic waste is rising on a global level. This is because most items are sold in non-biodegradable plastic packaging. For example, many people nowadays rely on pre-prepared foods which have plastic packaging. Furthermore, many people do not think about the consequences of dropping rubbish. They assume that somebody is paid to clean the streets, and therefore do not consider littering to be a problem.

Plastic waste damages the environment. Plastic does not break down easily and stays in the environment for hundreds of years. Litter ruins the way our towns and cities look and shows that people do not respect their communities. Furthermore, plastic is dumped into landfill sites which can poison the ground water, and into rivers and oceans. Sea life consume plastic and get ill. The fish that we eat increasingly contain micro plastics which are bad for our health.

There are several ways to reduce the amount of plastic waste. First, the government should require people to recycle their plastic waste. There are some collection banks for plastic already, but the number should be increased. Furthermore, companies should be incentivised to use recycled plastic in their products. Finally, the governments can ban some plastic items. A good example is plastic straws which are unnecessary and create a lot of waste. The government should mandate that cafes only provide reusable wooden or metal straws.

Practice Question

The amount of plastic waste is rising on a global level. What are the consequences of this trend? What can be done to reduce the global amount of plastic waste?

Stress

Modern life can be stressful. Our busy lifestyles mean we have less time to relax. This sheet looks at causes of stress in developed parts of the world, especially in cities.

Causes of Stress

People work long hours with strict deadlines.

Unemployment is a major cause of stress.

Divorce is more common these days.

Children may be affected by their parents' relationship problems.

Tests and exams can also cause stress.

Summary

Modern life is stressful for a number of reasons. First of all, many people work long hours with strict deadlines. This is made more stressful by the fact that many jobs are not secure, and people fear unemployment. Furthermore, divorce is quite common these days and this means that people may worry about their relationship. Children are likely to be negatively affected by their parents' relationship problems. Finally, tests and exams can cause a lot of stress for young people.

How to Reduce Stress

Stress can be reduced by exercising regularly and eating a healthy diet.

It is also important to get enough sleep and make leisure time a priority.

People should work less overtime and take regular holidays.

Schools have started to employ psychologists.

They can offer emotional support to students.

They can help students cope with exam stress.

Summary

Stress can be reduced by looking after our bodies. We should exercise regularly and eat a healthy diet. It is also important to get enough sleep and make leisure time a priority. In order to do this, people should work less overtime and take regular holidays. Secondly, schools can support stressed students by employing psychologists. They can offer emotional support and help students cope with exam stress. If a student has someone to listen to their issues, then they make feel better.

Question

Stress is now a major problem in many countries around the world. What are some of the factors in modern society that cause this stress, and how can we reduce it?

Studying Abroad

Students take IELTS in order to study abroad. Moving to a new country is an exciting opportunity to get a good education and meet new people. However, living and studying abroad can also be difficult. This sheet describes the benefits and drawbacks of studying abroad.

Benefits of Studying Abroad

Many students want to attend a prestigious university.

Foreign institutions may offer better courses.

The best universities employ teachers who are experts in their fields.

Qualifications gained abroad can open the door to better job opportunities.

Living abroad can broaden students' horizons.

Overseas students are exposed to different cultures and customs.

They become more independent.

They are responsible for cooking, cleaning and paying bills.

Summary

There are good reasons to study abroad. First, many students want to attend a prestigious university. Foreign institutions may offer better courses because they employ teachers who are experts in their field. Secondly, qualifications gained abroad can open the door to better job opportunities. This not only includes jobs at home, but also chances to work abroad.

Furthermore, living abroad can broaden students' horizons. Overseas students experience different cultures and customs, and this exposes them to new ideas and perspectives. Finally, overseas students are likely to become more independent because they live alone. For example, they are responsible for cooking, cleaning and paying bills. This helps to prepare them for adulthood.

Drawbacks of Studying Abroad

Living and studying abroad can be difficult.

Students have problems with paperwork such as visa applications.

Students have to find accommodation and pay bills.

Studying in a foreign language is challenging.

Living alone in a foreign culture can cause homesickness.

Summary

There are drawbacks to studying abroad. First, students may have problems with paperwork such as visa applications. They may be confused and struggle to make all the necessary documents. Secondly, there are practical issues when living abroad, such as finding accommodation and paying bills. These tasks may be challenging for someone who is living abroad for the first time.

Furthermore, studying in a foreign language is challenging. Even if a student has a high English level, they may still struggle with complicated academic literature and the speed at which people talk. This may lead them to lose belief in their ability to pass the course. Finally, living alone in a foreign country can cause homesickness. Students are likely to be separated from their family and friends, and this can make them feel depressed.

Practice Question

More and more students are choosing to study at colleges and universities in a foreign country. Do the benefits of studying abroad outweigh the drawbacks?

The Internet

The internet is a central part of modern life. We use it throughout the day to communicate, shop, work and for entertainment. This sheet describes the positive and negative impacts that the internet has on our lives.

Positives of the Internet

There are many advantages to using the internet.

It gives us instant access to information on almost any subject.

Shops and other services are now available online.

People can buy goods and services from the comfort of their homes.

The internet has revolutionised communication.

We can keep in touch by e-mail or instant messenger services.

Video messaging is becoming common for business meetings.

Summary

There are many advantages to using the internet. It gives us instant access to information on almost any subject. This has multiple benefits, such as finding information to use in a university research paper. Furthermore, the internet has radically altered the way that we can buy goods and services. We can now select from a wider selection of products from the comfort of their homes.

Finally, the internet has revolutionised communication. We can now communicate instantly and over long distances by using instant messaging services. This ability has allowed work environments to become more flexible as people do not have to go to work to do their jobs. For example, video messaging is becoming common for business meetings.

Negatives of the Internet

Many websites contain offensive content.

Some sites show violent or sexual images.

Parents find it difficult to control what their children see online.

They do not always know who their children are chatting to.

With so many websites it is difficult to search for good information.

Criminals increasingly use the internet to steal people's money.

Summary

The internet has brought with it many problems. Many websites contain offensive content that is disturbing to witness, especially for young people. For example, some websites show sexual imagery which may disturb the minds of young people. Parents find it difficult to control what their children see online. For example, they do not always know who their children are chatting to.

Furthermore, while the internet contains so much valuable information, it can be very difficult to find it. There are so many websites that it is difficult to search for exactly what you are looking for. Finally, criminals increasingly use the internet to steal people's money. For example, people have had their online bank accounts emptied by online criminals.

Question

The internet has brought about many changes into our day to day life. Nowadays we are doing things such as mailing, contacting, banking and communication much faster. Do these developments have more advantages than disadvantages?

Tourism

Tourism is an enjoyable leisure activity and an important part of the global economy. It has been estimated that 1/10 jobs worldwide are supported by the tourism industry. However, tourism can cause social disruption and damage the natural environment. This sheet describes the positives and negatives of tourism.

Positives of Tourism

Tourism is a popular leisure activity.

People go on holiday to relax and have fun.

Tourists can experience different cultures.

Travelling abroad opens our minds.

The tourist trade is vital for some economies.

It creates employment in services like accommodation, transport and entertainment.

Some areas rely on tourism for their income.

Tourism attracts investment from multi-national companies.

It helps to improve the standard of living.

Summary

Tourism has many benefits. Firstly, tourism is an enjoyable leisure activity. People need to have a break and go somewhere to have fun. Tourism also gives us the chance to experience different cultures. This opens our minds and we learn to understand how other people live. These experiences can make us more tolerant.

The tourist trade is vital for some economies. Tourism creates employment, especially in services like accommodation, transport, and entertainment. This may give local people career opportunities which they wouldn't otherwise have. Furthermore, tourism attracts investment from multi-national companies which can help to improve the standard of living for local people.

Negative Effects of Tourism

Tourism can have a negative effect on the natural environment.

The building of facilities and infrastructure can destroy the habitat of wild animals.

Beautiful beaches are spoilt by the building of hotels.

Tourism creates pollution and waste.

A rise in the cost of living affects local people.

The prices of goods, services and housing may increase significantly.

Summary

I think that the disadvantages of tourism outweigh the advantages. Firstly, tourism can harm the environment. The building of facilities and infrastructure destroys the habitat of wild animals. Furthermore, tourists tend to leave a lot of rubbish. It is awful to see beautiful beaches covered in litter.

In addition, tourism displaces local people. Tourists bring in a lot of money and this means that the cost of living, such as the price of food, rises above the means of local people. Furthermore, the prices of housing and services may increase significantly. This means that some local people may no longer be able to afford to live there and must move.

Practice Question

A lot of places in the world rely on tourism as a main source of income. Unfortunately, tourism can also be a source of problems if it is not managed correctly.

Describe the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in the modern world. Do you think that benefits of tourism outweigh its drawbacks?

Traffic Congestion

Traffic congestion is when there are too many vehicles on the road, and this causes slower speeds and longer journey times. It is a serious issue in cities around the world. It makes large cities uncomfortable and stressful places to live. This sheet looks at the causes of traffic congestion, and possible ways to reduce it. The focus is on traffic congestion in Great Britain.

Traffic Problems

Traffic congestion is caused by commuters travelling to work.

Most people live in the suburbs outside city centres.

Commuters tend to travel at the same time of day.

They tend to travel alone.

Cars and road space are not efficiently.

This causes traffic jams during rush hour.

Vocabulary

Commuter – someone who travels between home and their workplace.

Suburb – an area or community located just outside a city or a town.

Traffic jam – when the traffic slows down or stops because there are too many drivers in one area.

Rush hour – a period of peak traffic, usually in the morning and late afternoon, when many people are on their way to or from work.

Summary

Traffic congestion is a significant problem in British cities. The main reason for this is that most people live in suburbs outside city centres, and travel into the centre for work. Commuters tend to travel alone which means that road space is not used efficiently. This causes traffic jams during rush hour. Commuters tend to travel at the same time of day which causes a large number of vehicles on the road at one time. This causes traffic jams during rush hour.

Traffic Solutions

In order to reduce traffic, we should change our working habits.

The internet can now be used to connect people.

More people could work from home.

Meetings can be held as video conferences.

Workers could be given flexible timetables.

Another solution would be to tax drivers.

In London, for example, there is a congestion charge.

This helps to raise money for better public transport.

Workers should share their cars and travel together.

Public transport needs to be reliable and efficient.

Summary

There are several ways that traffic congestion can be reduced. Firstly, we can change our working habits. Due to the internet, more people can now work from home and meetings can be held as video conferences. Furthermore, workers could be given more flexible timetables, so they would work at different times. This would reduce the number of people commuting at one time.

Secondly, measures can be taken to reduce the number of cars on the road. One solution would be to tax drivers. For instance, in London there is a congestion charge where motorists need to pay money to drive during rush hour. The money raised from this is used for better public transport. If public transport is reliable and efficient, more people will be persuaded to use it.

Question

In some cities and towns all over the world, the high volume of traffic is a problem.

What are the causes of this and what actions can be taken to solve this problem?

Answer Key (Part One Only)

Sentence Types
1.B 2.D 3.A 4.C : 5.D 6.B 7.A 8.C : They, It : Where, Which, Who, Which/That, Where : which is widely spoken around the world, which can lead to waste, that have bad traffic congestion, that have offices in different countries : The world is changing quickly because of the rate of technological progress, but people have the ability to adapt. Violent crime cannot be stopped unless there is a concerted effort to defeat drug gangs and control violent drug users. Even though animal testing is cruel, there is no other way to trial experimental medicines or test potentially dangerous chemical products.
Connectors
1.C 2.A 3.E 4.B 5.D : 6.E 7.A 8.B 9.D 10.C : E, A, D, C, B
Cause and Effect
B, C, A : C, B, A
Showing Purpose
B, C, A
Opinions
Various answers. Ex: In my experience, students want to study abroad in order to go to better universities : It can be argued that students want to study abroad in order to go to better universities : I tend to believe that the best way to reduce pollution is to improve public transportation : It is generally accepted that the best way to reduce pollution is to improve public transportation
Examples
Various answers. Ex: There are many benefits of having an education. For example, if you get good qualifications, then you are likely to have better work opportunities : There are many benefits of having an education. This is illustrated by the knowledge and skills which students learn in school : There are many benefits of having an education, such as gaining qualifications and learning moral values
Paragraphs

B, E, D, C, A : C, D, E, A, F, B : It can be argued that one of the biggest issues in developing countries is the lack of good infrastructure. A lack of infrastructure may mean that people do not have a good water supply, a functional sewage systems and roads, among other things. If people do not have these basic structures, then they cannot thrive. For example, if a child has to walk a significant distance to get clean drinking water, then they may not have enough time and energy to study at school : There are many significant issues in developing countries. Firstly, standards of healthcare education are low. This means that people are unable to attain a high level of education, which means that they may struggle to get a good job and the country may struggle to develop. For example, a country cannot develop an ICT industry if they do not have trained ICT specialists. Furthermore, standards of healthcare are low. This leads to people being sick for extended periods of time and then struggling to work.

Expressing Caution

Various answers, ex: The increase in crime may be a result of less strict sentences : It is almost certain that increased migration to cities is due to people searching for work opportunities : A significant proportion of people are addicted to the internet : Almost all young people in Kazakhstan learn English. Learning English often leads to better career prospects : We generally connect wealth and material possessions with happiness and success : The use of clean energy is likely to increase in the next few decades : People will almost certainly become increasingly reliant on computers.

Problems and Solutions

1.E 2. G 3.B 4.C 5.D 6.F 7.A : concern/issue/difficulty, issue/difficulty, dealt with, serious issue/concern, address/resolve, addressing/resolving, complex, solutions

Change

1.B 2.E 3.G 4.A 5.F 6.D 7.C 8.H : transforming, slight shift, gradually/rapidly, gradual process, declining