IELTS WRITING SECTION

(ACADEMIC)

How To Achieve A Target 8 Score!
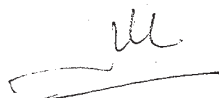
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Beat The IELTS!

By Tim Dickeson

Ngày 15 tháng 2 năm 2015

IELTS Writing Section

(Academic)

How To Achieve A Target 8 Score!

Tim Dickeson

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Who This Book Is For

This book is for anyone who is about to take the IELTS exam and wants direct instructions for how to write high scoring answers in the IELTS writing section (Academic test mode).

This material is perfect for you if:

- You didn't obtain the score you wanted in the writing section
- You don't know how to identify the possible question types you could receive
- You don't know how to develop the correct structures for the different question types
- You don't know how to formulate a high scoring report (Task 1)
- You don't know how to write a high scoring introduction (Task 2)
- You don't know how to write high scoring middle (supporting) paragraphs (Task 2)
- You don't know how to write a high scoring conclusion (Task 2)
- You have bought other IELTS preparation material but you found them confusing
- Your IELTS exam is very soon and you want direct strategies to use

Module 1 – IELTS Outline

What Is The IELTS?

The IELTS (International English Language Testing System) is a test that evaluates the English proficiency of people with English as a second language who would like to work or study where English is used as the primary communication language (usually in English speaking countries).

The IELTS test measures English proficiency covering: listening, reading, writing and speaking, and uses a 9-band scale to indicate proficiency level.

IELTS is required for people who want to study at secondary and tertiary level and for the application of visas and employment.

The Two Test Modes (Academic / General Training)

IELTS provides two types of test modes and the type of test mode that you will need to take will depend on your circumstances. The two test modes are; Academic and General Training. Let's look at the difference between the two test modes.

Academic – Evaluates English language competency for academic and tertiary purposes.

For example – University, TAFE

General Training – Evaluates English language competency in a practical, living context.

For example – Employment, Visas

Note: The Academic and General Training test modes are graded using the same criteria for the writing section of the IELTS.

Scoring Structure – How IELTS Will Score You

Your IELTS score will be given between 0 – 9 for each of the four sections and then an overall score given between 0 – 9.

Below shows the scoring range for each section and the overall score.

Section	Score Range
Writing	0 - 9
Listening	0 - 9
Reading	0 - 9
Speaking	0 - 9
Overall IELTS Score	0 - 9

The score bands as shown below outline the competency of the student and the scores are given in 0.5 point increments.

Score Band	Title	Description
9	Expert User	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	Very Good User	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7	Good User	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning

6	Competent User	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations
5	Modest User	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field
4	Limited User	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language
3	Extremely Limited User	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur
2	Intermittent User	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English
1	Non User	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words
0	Did Not Attempt The Test	No assessable information provided

Module 2 – IELTS Writing Section Overview

What Is The Writing Section?

The Writing section is an important section because there are only two parts to this section so there is less room for error.

The Writing section of the IELTS tests your ability to write effectively in the form of well-structured answers with correct sentence structure, grammar, spelling and vocabulary.

What Is The Answer Format?

- There are two writing tasks and BOTH must be completed within the 60 minute time limit.
- Answers must be given on the answer sheet and must be written in full.
- Notes or bullet points in whole or part are not acceptable as answers.

Timing

- 60 minutes for both sections.

Marks

- The two tasks are scored independently, however Task 2 is worth double the marks of Task 1.

Writing Section – Difference Between The Two Test Modes

The main difference lies in the content/topic of what the questions asks you to write about. The General Training mode requires more simple styled writing associated with personal ideas. However the Academic mode requires more formal and descriptive answers.

The table below outlines the requirements for both test modes:

	Academic	General Training
Task 1	• Minimum 150 words • Writing a letter in response to a situation • Informal, semi-formal, or formal	• Minimum 150 words • Interpreting, describing, or comparing information presented in graphic form • A diagram, bar chart, line graph, pie chart or table
Task 2	• Minimum 250 words • Writing a more personal essay • Informal style	• Minimum 250 words • Writing an essay on a general academic topic • Formal style

Writing Section – General Training Test Mode

The General Training writing section measures your ability to communicate about common, practical issues and expand on topics of personal interest. You may be asked to provide factual information, express likes and dislikes, make suggestions or present complaints, opinions or views.

- Task 1 – 150 words – 20 minutes
- Task 2 – 250 words – 40 minutes

Writing Section – Academic Test Mode

The Academic writing section measures your ability to write in clear, formal English used in an academic context.

- Task 1 – 150 words – 20 minutes
- Task 2 – 250 words – 40 minutes

Module 3 – Writing Task 1

Unit 1 – Writing Task 1 Introduction

Objective of this Unit: To understand what writing task 1 is.

What Is The Writing Task 1?

For writing task 1 you are required to write a short report on graphical information provided. This means you may be asked to describe a diagram, chart or graph, or some other graphic representation. You may also be asked to describe the process illustrated by a diagram.

Tip: The best way to think of this report is to imagine you are writing a report for somebody who cannot see the information, so they can understand what is happening.

Tip: Make sure your report is neutral and unbiased. This means that your opinion should NOT be included in your report.

Why Do Many People Find Task 1 Difficult?

This task is difficult for many people because they are not sure what things to write about and how to actually describe what is happening in the way that the IELTS evaluators want.

Once you know how to structure your answer and the way to express the information correctly and develop your answer in the way the evaluators love, it becomes very easy.

This book will show you exactly how to do this.

Unit 2 – Developing A System For Your Report

Objective of this Unit: To develop a system for answering writing task 1.

Writing System Creation

The most efficient way of approaching the writing section and the individual tasks is by implementing a systemized approach. A system reduces time wasting and makes sure you are answering the questions in the best way possible.

A writing system is something that has a level of automation. It can be used in all situations and provides a clear framework from which to produce the correct answer every time. This means that by developing a system for each writing task, you are developing a clear framework that will produce a high IELTS score.

Here is a suggested system to follow:

Step 1 – Recognize and identify the graphic form, i.e.; line graph, bar chart, pie chart, etc.

Step 2 – Look for trends, what information the chart is showing, the range of data and how the data change over time.

Step 3 – Write your answer according to the plan below:

Section	What To Write
1	One sentence to introduce the subject and graphic
2	One or two sentences to show the relationship between the data or to comment on the main trend of the data
3	A more detailed description of the information given including details from the most important to the least important

4	One – two sentences to conclude your answer

Step 4 – Make sure you use appropriate vocabulary when describing data. By using more advanced vocabulary you will obtain a higher score.

Unit 3 – Key Things To Remember When Writing The Task 1 Report

In Task 1, the best approach is to follow a system to plan, develop, write and review your letter for best results.

The key things to remember are:

- Describe what is happening in the graphic from an unbiased point of view
- Describe the graphic using the passive voice
- Respond to each of the bullet points
- Use a clear introduction and conclusion
- Use transition/connecting phrases to connect your ideas
- Use varied and some higher level vocabulary
- Check your spelling errors
- Check your capitalization
- Check punctuation
- Use a proven structure for organisation

Unit 4 – Important Expressions To Use For Describing Graphical Information

Objective of this Unit: To learn key expressions to use when you explain what is happening in the graphic.

High Scoring Expressions To Use In Your Report

Here are some example phrases and words to use:

Nouns	Verbs	Phrases	Adverbs	Adjectives
a rise	to rise	to show an	sharply	sharp
an increase	to increase	upward trend	suddenly	sudden
a surge	to surge	to show a	rapidly	rapid
a growth	to grow	downward	abruptly	abrupt
a peak	to peak	trend	dramatically	dramatic
a fluctuation	to fluctuate	to hit the	significantly	steep
a variation	to vary	highest point	steadily	significant
a period of	to fall	to hit the	considerably	steady
stability	to decrease	lowest point	markedly	considerable
a plateau	to decline	to reach a peak	slightly	marked
a fall	to dip	to show some	gently	slight
a decrease	to dive	fluctuation	gradually	gentle
a decline	to plunge	to fluctuate	wildly	gradual
a dip		wildly		
		to remain		
		stable		
		to remain static		
		to remain		
		unchanged		
		to stay constant		

Nouns	Verbs	Phrases	Adverbs	Adjectives
		to reach a plateau		
		to level off		
		to flatten out		
		the highest		
		the lowest		
		the second highest		
		the third highest		
		compared to		
		compared with		
		relative to		

Unit 5 – Task 1 Checklist For A High Scoring Answer

Once you have written a practice report, use the following questions to make sure you have included everything in the report:

- Have you identified the type of graphic that is used?
- Is the writing easy to follow?
- Have you correctly explained if the graphic relates to the past, present or future?
- Have you included all the subjects that are referred to in the diagram?
- Have you included references to the correct units? (e.g.; month, year, km, litres)
- Have you mentioned the peaks or troughs shown in the graphic?
- Have you noted the trends?
- Is the answer long enough (150 words)?
- Is there a sense that the report has been planned?
- Are words or phrases taken from the question paraphrased?

- Are there cohesive devices used?
- Is a wide range of vocabulary used?
- Is a wide range of grammar used?
- Is the language used simple or complex?

Module 4 – How To Structure A High Scoring Report (Task 1)

The task 1 report comprises of specific parts which the evaluators look for and if you are able to clearly write your report in accordance with these parts, you will go a long way to help increase your score.

The main parts of a report are:

1. **Introductory paragraph**
2. **Overview Middle paragraph**
3. **More Detailed Middle paragraph**
4. **Concluding paragraph**

Unit 1 – How To Write The Introductory Paragraph

Starting The Report

You must start the report by introducing the subject of what the graphic is representing and what the graphic is.

This introductory paragraph should explain the objective of the report and express what the overall trends are.

For example, if the graph is increasing or reducing over time, you should explain that.

Tip: You need to remember that you should be trying to describe the graphic to someone can't see it.

Write what the graph is about, its dates and location.

Here are the key points for writing the Introductory Paragraph:

- Write 1-2 sentences
- Identify the type of graphic. For example; graph, pie chart, line chart, flow diagram, table.
- Describe what information is being presented in the graphic as a whole, not in detail.
- The introductory paragraph should explain what the information is, not what the information is doing.
- It can be a paraphrase of the question.

Here is an example:

"The line graph illustrates changes in the consumption of beef, lamb, chicken and fish in a particular European country between 1967 and 2006."

Unit 2 – How To Write A High Scoring Overview Middle Paragraph

Writing The Overview Of The Graphic

The purpose of the overview middle paragraph is to begin describing the information presented in the graphic in accordance with what the question is asking.

This paragraph should explain the most important parts. For example, if there is a graph that has a significant peak, you should describe that; also explain when the peak occurs and what the value is.

An important thing you need to remember is that you need to write about the topic and time periods of the graph. If the graph covers several years (2001, 2002, 2003) – describe them all, or if it is about different countries – write about them all.

Tip: It's it important to identify what is important, then organize what you are going to explain, and then discuss the similarities and differences.

Here are the key points for writing the Overview Middle paragraph:

- Write 2-3 sentences.
- Make sure the sentences contain at least 20 words.
- Use expressive words to describe what is happening.
- Write the paragraph in accordance with the parts of the question.

Here is an example:

"In 2000 the consumption of beef was by far the most popular amongst the students at Greenwich High School. Lamb and chicken had similar levels of consumption or approximately 200 grams per student per week. However, during 2001, both lamb and chicken became the most consumed with beef dropping significantly."

Unit 3 – How To Write A High Scoring 'Detailed' Middle Paragraph

The Purpose Of The Detailed Middle Paragraph

The purpose of the detailed middle paragraph is to provide further analysis and a description of the graphic by focusing on key data.

Again, the topic of this paragraph must specifically answer what the question is asking you to do.

Here is an example:

"The consumption of beef showed a downward trend in 2001, which meant that lamb was the most consumed during that year. However by 2004, it had increased to be above lamb and chicken as the most consumed."

Unit 4 – How To Write A High Scoring Concluding Paragraph

Writing The Concluding Paragraph

The purpose of the concluding paragraph is to close the report and summarize the main points that come from the graphic, which you have described in the previous paragraphs.

You should not be introducing new information but simply providing a closing sentence to finish the report.

Here is an example:

"To sum up, the consumption of meat amongst students remained consistent from the year 2000 to 2010, apart from a significant change during the years 2001 to 2003."

Module 5 – Writing Task 2

Unit 1 – Writing Task 2 Introduction

Objective of this Unit: To understand what writing task 2 is.

What Is Writing Task 2?

Writing task 2 requires you to write a well-developed, supporting and complete essay covering a specific topic.

These topics can range from social and environmental, to government and law. There is no requirement for you to have in-depth knowledge about the topic of the question as the evaluators are not testing you on this.

The evaluators are testing you on how well you can write an essay that; answers the question, is easy to follow, is grammatically correct and uses good vocabulary.

Why Do Many People Find Task 2 Difficult?

This task is often over-complicated by many people simply because they are unsure how to write it correctly and in a way that the evaluators will give them a high score.

Most people have an idea of what they need to do by looking at example essays, however if you do not know how to identify and then formulate your answer correctly, it is difficult to achieve a high score.

Fortunately, there is a way to achieve a high score by following key instructions and tips so you can provide the IELTS evaluators with exactly what they want.

Unit 2 – Developing A System For Your Essay

Objective of this Unit: To develop a system for answering writing task 2.

Writing System Creation

This is probably the most important part to increasing your IELTS score for the writing section. Your writing answers must use a clear and concise structure, which covers all of the essential items.

IELTS Writing Task 2

In writing task 2 you need to write an essay on a general interest topic writing at least 250 words. You may have to explain your opinion, discuss different opinions on a topic, or solve a problem.

The best approach is to follow a system to; plan, develop, write and review your essay for best results.

The key things to remember are:

- Use varied sentence structures
- Use transition/connecting phrases to link your ideas
- Use varied and some higher level vocabulary
- Check your spelling errors
- Check your capitalization
- Check punctuation
- Use a proven structure for organisation

Unit 3 – How To Identify The Different Question Types

Objective of this Unit: To identify the possible question types which are used for Task 2.

What Are The Question Types?

There are three possible question types for writing task 2, but you will only receive one question in the exam. However, it is very important to be able to identify the different question types because you will then find it much easier to write an essay based on the correct structure to use for that type.

Here are the three possible question types:

- Argument
- Proposal
- Discussion

Argument

Description - You are given a problem or issue and two different solutions or opinions about it. Typically, you are then asked to decide which solution/opinion is better.

Identification – Does it ask me to make a decision between two different views or discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the topic?

Examples – *"Stress is an increasing symptom of many employees today. What are the* **advantages** *and/or* **disadvantages** *of increasing the lunch break from 30 minutes to one hour?"*

"In **some countries** *people pay different rates of tax depending on their salary, in* **other countries** *everyone pays the same rate. Which do you believe is the best system?"*

Proposal

Description - You are given an opinion about a social issue to discuss. Typically, you are asked whether or to what extent you agree with it.

Identification – Does it ask me to discuss a particular proposal?

Example – *"Currently there is a trend towards the use of alternative forms of medicine. However, at best, these methods are ineffective, and at worst, they may be dangerous. To what extent do you agree or disagree?"*

Discussion

Description - You are given a social issue or problem and asked directly to discuss it and often asked to suggest a solution for it.

Identification – Does it ask me to clarify my own opinion about the topic?

Example – *"Many countries require visas for foreign people to work. Why do they do this? Do you believe that it is fair?"*

Question Type Exercise

Choose which question type fits each question below

1. *"Many people have an unhealthy diet and do not do enough exercise. What do you think are the reasons for this and what can be done to encourage people to lead a healthier lifestyle?"*

Argument | Proposal | Discussion

2. *"Although countries with long average working hours are economically successful, this often has some negative social consequences. To what extent do you agree or disagree?"*

Argument | Proposal | Discussion

3. *"Some people think that paying taxes is enough to contribute to society. Others argue that being a citizen involves more responsibilities. Discuss."*

Argument | Proposal | Discussion

4. *"Many people argue that children should stay in school until the age of eighteen. What are the advantages and disadvantages of making school compulsory until the age of 18?"*

Argument | Proposal | Discussion

5. *"Many people nowadays leave their county to work abroad and take their family with them. What are the advantages and disadvantages in terms of family development?"*

Argument | Proposal | Discussion

Answers

1. Discussion
2. Proposal

3. Argument
4. Argument
5. Argument

Unit 4 – Essay Structures To Use for Each Question Type

Objective of this Unit: To learn how to structure an essay for each of the different question types.

Essay Structures To Use For Each Question Type

The table below explains the essay structure to use:

Argument	Proposal	Discussion
Paragraph 1 – Introduction	Paragraph 1 – Introduction	Paragraph 1 – Introduction
Paragraph 2 – Discuss topic No.1	Paragraph 2 – 1ˢᵗ Reason with Examples	Paragraph 2 – Use first part of question as paragraph topic
Paragraph 3 – Discuss topic No.2	Paragraph 3 – 2ⁿᵈ Reason with Examples	Paragraph 3 – Use second part of question as paragraph topic
Paragraph 4 – State your opinion and why	Paragraph 4 – 3ʳᵈ Reason with Examples (3ʳᵈ reason is optional)	Paragraph 4 – Conclusion
Paragraph 5 – Conclusion	Paragraph 5 – Conclusion	

Unit 5 – The Process For Planning And Writing A High Scoring Essay

Objective of this Unit: To follow a process for writing a high scoring essay in the time limit given.

Answer Process

Step 1 – Read the question thoroughly and understand exactly what it is asking you to do. Write down the key things that you need to discuss or write about in your essay. The purpose usually falls under one of the following categories:

- complaint
- request
- explanation
- apology
- application
- suggestion

Step 2 – Make a decision about what your opinion is or what direction you will take with the essay. It is very important that you are clear with what your opinion is and that the evaluator understands what your resulting idea is.

Step 3 – Plan your essay by thinking of reasons or ideas (depending on the question type) to support your opinion. Also, think of examples or anecdotes you can use to help justify and explain each reason or idea.

Step 4 – Write your essay by following your plan and implementing the following:

- Connecting / transition phrases

- Clearly state your reasons
- Support your reasons
- Check your spelling and grammar
- Confirm your idea in your conclusion

Module 6 – How To Structure A High Scoring Essay (Task 2)

The task 2 essay comprises of specific parts which the evaluators look for and if you are able to clearly write your essay in accordance with these parts, you will go a long to help increase your score.

The main parts of an essay are:

- Introduction
- Supporting paragraphs
- Conclusion

Unit 1 – How To Write A High Scoring Introduction

What Is The Purpose Of The Introduction?

The purpose of a good introduction is to introduce the reader to your essay and tell them what you are writing. From the introduction, the IELTS examiner should be able to identify the theme of the essay and the main points that will be discussed and the order in which they will be discussed.

What Are The Three Main Parts To An Introduction?

There are three main parts to a good introduction:

1. **Hook** – To provide a powerful opening themed phrase to get the evaluators attention and provide information about what the theme of the essay is.

2. **Bridge** – To connect information that links the hook to the thesis statement.

3. **Thesis statement** – To tell the reader what your opinion is and how it will be developed in the essay.

Tip: Do not state your opinion in the first sentence of your introduction.

Hook

The opening sentence of your essay needs to be powerful and needs to get the attention of your evaluator. It needs to arouse their curiosity and make them want to know more about what you have to say in your essay.

There are a few ways to develop a hook:

1. *Ask a question.* If the opening sentence is a question, the reader will keep reading to find the answer. He or she will be curious. You should use this approach if you intend to answer your questions later on in the supporting paragraphs.

2. *Tell a brief story, also called an anecdote.* You should write no more than a few sentences to introduce the topic and the thesis statement.

3. *Make a broad general statement that most people will agree with.* This makes the reader sympathetic to your later ideas, because he or she is agreeing with the first idea.

4. *Give the readers a fact, number or statistic.*

5. *Use a quote.* It can be from someone you know or from a famous person or a well-known proverb / saying. The use of a famous quote will get your reader to read more, simply because he or she has probably read it before and is a little familiar with it. Beware - if you don't know who said the quote, or the exact

words of the quote, do NOT use it. You will look like you don't know what you are talking about!

6. *Start with an unusual detail.*

Bridge

The second part of your introduction connects information that links the hook to the thesis statement.

The most common way to develop a bridge is by using a question as the connection.

Here is an example:

"These days, many people live up to their 100's. An 80-year difference is stunning. We have basically the same bodies as our ancestors did, so why do we live four times longer?"

Thesis Statement

The third part of your introduction is a key organisational tool for your essay because it tells the evaluator what to expect. It also directly tells the evaluator what your answer is in direct relation to the essay question.

Here are some examples:

i. *"Even though I grew up in a small country town, there are several, rather obvious reasons, that make living in the city so much better. In my opinion, more career opportunities, greater consumer convenience and better public transportation are three key reasons for this growing trend."*

ii. *"In my opinion, better health awareness, increasing medical advancement and higher levels of personal contentment and satisfaction are three key factors which justify the increasing age of living."*

Tip: Remember that your Thesis Statement MUST state your answer to the question.

Unit 2 – How To Write High Scoring Supporting Paragraphs

What Is The Purpose Of The Supporting Paragraphs?

The purpose of a good supporting/middle paragraph is to provide valuable discussion or reason to persuade the evaluator that your essay answer is justifiable. Supporting paragraphs do not need to be complicated but simply provide a worthy explanation for your introductory statements.

Each supporting paragraph must serve as a specific and independent purpose within the essay.

What Are The Parts To A Supporting Paragraph?

There are three main parts to a good supporting paragraph with the last part being optional:

1. **Topic sentence** – To provide a clear opening phrase, which explains what the paragraph is about.

2. **Description/Explanation** – To describe and explain the topic and provide more detailed information about what the topic or reason is.

3. **Example** – To provide further justification with the use of specific examples directly relative to your description/explanation.

4. **Close/Summary (Optional)** – One sentence to close and summarize what you have just explained. (Please note: the Close/Summary is optional and should only be used if you are comfortable paraphrasing)

Topic Sentence

The topic sentence is the first sentence of the supporting paragraph. This sentence is extremely important because it provides a clear opening sentence which explains what the theme of the paragraphs is.

The way to develop a good topic sentence is very similar to the "hook" part of the introduction. The best way is to think of a general themed sentence is to make a broad general statement that most people would agree with.

Here are some examples:

i. *"In today's society, more and more people are choosing to take public transport to work."*

ii. *"Change is something that happens to everyone during their life."*

iii. *"Restaurants are becoming a popular way to eat out because of the increasing diversity of cuisines."*

Description/Explanation

The description/explanation is used to further describe and explain the theme of the supporting paragraph. This is an important part of the paragraph because this is where you start to provide background information about the topic.

The description/explanation must naturally flow-on from the topic sentence.

Here are some examples based on the topic sentences above:

i. *"The reason for this is because many people are increasing their consciousness about the pollution levels of high numbers of cars on the roads these days. In fact, there are companies which provide incentives for employees who take public transportation to work as a way to decrease the pollution levels and subsequent effects on the environment."*

ii. *"Even though many people do not like change, it will always be inevitable throughout everyone's life. The group of people who do not like change tend to avoid it as much as possible by maintaining a position of comfort. Their decisions are made to avoid the unknown effects of change by always deciding to continue doing the same thing."*

iii. *"This is more the case in large cities due to the increasing multi-cultural diversity of inhabitants. Many large cities have precincts of restaurants covering all different cuisines and due to this increasing diversity; many restaurants have to provide lower cost meals in order to compete. This competition provides opportunities for more people to eat out rather than cooking at home."*

Example

Examples are used within the supporting paragraph to provide specific information to help justify and support your explanation of your idea. IELTS evaluators see the use of examples as very valuable which means that it is very important that you include examples in your supporting paragraphs.

Tip: It is very important that your examples directly relate to the description/explanation that you have just written about. This is because the purpose of the example is to provide specific information which explains your description. If it is not then it is redundant because it doesn't support your description.

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There are the two ways you can develop easy examples:

1. Personal example – explain a personal story or event that directly relates to your reasons.
   Example: *"For instance, last week my boss allowed me to attend my sisters graduation, which meant a lot to me."*

2. General example – explain something is a general sense.
   Example: *"For example, in my city, it is very difficult to travel across the city quickly due to the high levels of traffic."*

Here are some examples based on the topic sentences above:

   i. *"For instance, my uncle works for a multi-national company and he receives a pack of 10 discounted movie tickets every two months by taking public transport."*

   ii. *"For example, my father dislikes change to the extent where he has worked in the same position in the same company for his entire life, even though he has been offered several promotions."*

   iii. *"For example, in my city there is an area where there are many restaurants where you can eat for under $10, which is not much more if you were to make dinner at home."*

Close/Summary (Optional)

The close/summary part of the supporting paragraph is used to summarize and re-confirm what your paragraph is about. This part does not need to be long but simply

close the paragraph so the evaluator clearly understands what you have just explained in the paragraph.

It is very important that if you use a Close/Summary part in your paragraph that you DO NOT repeat or use the same words.

An easy way to look at how to develop a close/summary is to paraphrase your topic sentence.

Here are some examples based on the topic sentences above:

   i.   *"This example is an indication that more and more people are choosing to take public transport to work."*

   ii. *"Therefore, even though change is inevitable in everyone's life, there are still many people who avoid it at any cost."*

   iii. *"With the increasing diversity of cuisines and increasing affordability, it is obvious that the popularity of eating out will continue."*

Tip: Think of your middle paragraph as a circle, where you start and finish at the same point.

Unit 3 – How To Write A High Scoring Conclusion

What Is The Purpose Of The Conclusion?

The purpose of a good conclusion is to integrate the ideas covered in the body of your essay and make statements to summarize the meaning of all the ideas. It should not be very long, approximately 2 – 3 sentences are sufficient.

What Are The Parts To A Conclusion?

There are three main parts to a good conclusion:

1. **Paraphrase your 'Thesis' statement**
2. **Summarize the main points from your supporting paragraphs**
3. **Final thought or comments**

Tip: Do not include new information in a conclusion.

Here are some examples:

i. *"The choice to live in the city rather than a small town is a growing trend for all ages. Career opportunities, consumer convenience and transportation all provide big advantages for this change. Whether this trend will continue or stop is something that will be of great interest, but for the time being it is clear why the trend is moving to the cities."*

ii. *"The age of 100 hundred is now becoming a common achievement, even though several generations ago, this milestone was very uncommon. This is all due to the development of human awareness and medical advancement. With these developments, the age of 120 may become a common age in several generations time."*

Unit 4 – Transition / Connecting Phrases

What Are Transition/Connecting Phrases?

Transition phrases or connecting phrases are phrases, which allow your ideas and paragraphs to flow together. Without these transition phrases it is difficult to connect your ideas throughout your essay.

It is highly recommended that you memorize some of these transition phrases to use in your system.

Exercise

Choose 1 or 2 of your favourite transition phrases and write them into your system.

Introduction paragraph

- "There are three reasons why..."
- "Firstly, ... Secondly, ... Thirdly, ..."
- "What I want to talk about is..."
- "And most important, ..."
- "A major development..."
- "Why it was so important..."
- "In my opinion/view, ..."
- "Personally, I believe that it..."
- "From my point of view, I think..."
- "There are two reasons why..."
- "My two points which I will discuss are..."

Write your favourite Introduction transition phrases in the spaces below:

1. _____

2. _____

Supporting paragraphs:

- "On the other hand, ..."
- "On the contrary, ..."
- "For example, ..."
- "Just like..."
- "Similarly, ..."
- "In contrast, ..."
- "Also, ..."
- "So, ..."
- "And in fact, ..."
- "Further, ..."
- "Furthermore, ..."
- "As an example, ..."
- "For instance, ..."
- "But, ..."
- "In addition, ..."
- "Because..."
- "Thus, ..."
- "Hence, ..."

Write your favourite supporting paragraph transition phrases in the spaces below:

1. _____
2. _____

Conclusion paragraph

- "Therefore, ..."
- "In conclusion, ..."
- "In other words, ..."
- "As a result, ..."
- "Finally, ..."
- "In summary, ..."
- "From this we see that..."

Write your favourite Conclusion transition phrases in the spaces below:

1. _____
2. _____

Module 7 – Checklist And Scoring Criteria For Task 1 And Task 2

Unit 1 – Scoring & Criteria

The marking for all Writing tasks are scored from 0 - 9. The two Writing tasks are then combined and adjusted to give you a weighted score also from 0 – 9 for the entire Writing section.

To simplify the scoring criteria, there are 4 main components that you are measured against.

They are:

a) **Task Response** – Have you actually answered the question fully?
b) **Coherence and Cohesion** – Can the evaluator understand the flow and organisation of your essay and all of your ideas?
c) **Lexical Resource** – Have you used a wide range of vocabulary, which is not repetitive?
d) **Grammatical Range and Accuracy** – Have you used a wide range of grammar structures with accuracy?

Unit 2 – Task 1 Checklist

Once you have written your letter it is important to go through a check list to make sure you have completed everything required in order to achieve a high score.

Below is a list of questions you can ask yourself:

- Have you identified the type of graphic that is used?

- Have you correctly identified whether the data in the chart relates to past time, the present or the future?
- Have you included all the subjects that are referred to in the diagram?
- Have you included references to the correct units? (e.g.; month, year, km, litres)
- Have you included the extremes shown in the graphic?
- Have you noted the trends?
- Is the answer long enough (150 words)?
- Is there a sense that the report has been planned?
- Are words or phrases taken from the question paraphrased?
- Is the writing easy to follow?
- Are there cohesive devices used?
- Is a wide range of vocabulary used?
- Is a wide range of grammar used?
- Is the language used simple or complex?

Unit 3 – Task 2 Checklist

Once you have written your essay it is important to review it and check that you have included all of the essential items in your essay.

It is recommended to do a checklist based on your system at the end of your essay.

Task Response	Yes/No
Have I written between 250 and 300 words?	
Do I clearly identify the task in the introduction?	
Do I state my position in the introduction and conclusion?	
Does each paragraph relate to the task?	

Coherence and Cohesion	Yes/No
Have I used paragraphs?	

Is there a clear introduction, main argument and conclusion?	
Have I used examples and reasons?	
Do my sentences link together?	
Have I used punctuation?	
Have I used transition/connecting phrases?	

Lexical Resource	Yes/No
Have I repeated the wording of the question?	
Are there any words I repeat consistently?	
Have I used some academic vocabulary?	
Have I used vocabulary specific to the topic of the question?	

Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Yes/No
Have I checked spelling?	
Have I checked my verb tenses?	
Are my sentences between 15 and 25 words long?	

Unit 4 – IELTS Writing Knowledge Test

Answer the following questions by choosing the correct answer A, B or C.

1. How many parts are in the IELTS Academic Writing section?

A   1

B   2

C   3

2. For the entire Writing section, you must write...

A 1 long answer

B 2 short answers

C 1 long and 1 short answer

3. How much time is given for Writing Task 1?

A 20 minutes

B 30 minutes

C 40 minutes

4. How much time is given for Writing Task 2?

A 20 minutes

B 30 minutes

C 40 minutes

5. Which of the following is true?

A Writing Task 1 is worth more marks than Writing Task 2

B Writing Task 2 is worth more marks than Writing Task 1

C Both Task 1 and Task 2 are scored equally

Answers

1. B
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. B

Module 8 – Task 2 Essay Analysis

Unit 1 – Practice Analysing Essays

Example Task 2 Essay

Question:

> *The care of old people is a growing problem. One point of view is that governments should be responsible for the care of old people. Another view is that the family should take responsibility. Discuss both views and then provide your own opinion.*

"The care of old people is an issue all over the world as it is no longer clear who has the responsibility for looking after old people. There are two main choices: the government or the family.

If the government pays for the care of old people this usually means that the old people go into old people's homes. In these all people are given equal and high quality care. Countries such as Sweden operate this system very efficiently.

The problem is that this solution is very expensive. The money comes from tax and many countries simply can't afford it. It also often means that old people go into homes where they know no one and have nothing to do.

The alternative is for families to support their elderly relatives. In theory this provides loving care and means the old person can be an active member of the family. In practice, it often does not work out, as families don't have enough money, and so,

much bitterness is created, and the old people are neglected. I can see this happening all around me in my country where there is no government support for old people. It is clear that neither of these solutions is good. Therefore, it seems to me that a mixture of the two is the best solution. The government should provide money to families to look after their elderly relatives. But I also think that old people should save up money during their working lives to look after themselves in old age."

Example Task 2 Essays

Question:

> *When children use computers every day, this can have a more negative effect than positive. Do you agree or disagree?*
>
> *Include reasons for your answer and provide examples that are relevant from your own experience or knowledge.*

Example Essay 1:

"In today's modern world, computers are an essential part of everyday life. Around the globe, children often use computers from a very young age. Although it is important for children to participate in various well-balanced activities, in my opinion, children who use the computer daily are actually developing a critical skill for future success. The bases for my views are personal, academic, and professional.

From a personal point of view, computers are an invaluable resource to help young people explore the world around them. For example, children who use Internet to satisfy their curiosity about diverse topics are already becoming independent learners. No child with a computer is ever bored! By starting early in their lives, children feel

totally at ease around computers; they are also able to take advantage of the wide range of services computers provide.

From an academic viewpoint, children have no choice but to master this technological invention. For instance, when I was in university, students brought their laptops to class to take notes, do research and exchange information. They wrote assignments, created presentations and developed databases. Children who build early confidence and experience in these abilities are at a distinct advantage over those who have not.

From a professional perspective, the computer has found a permanent place in the workplace. Today, employers still pay to provide computer training to their employees. Tomorrow, corporations will expect prospective job applicants to already possess these critical job skills. Consequently, parents who encourage their child to use the computer for a reasonable period of time daily are in fact investing in the child's future career.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that the computer as a technological tool is here to stay. The sooner children become computer-literate, the better for many aspects of their future lives."
(299 words)

Example Essay 2:

"In today's modern world, computers are needed every day. Around the world, children use computers from the time they are little. It's true that children should have fun when they are young; however, in my opinion, a child who knows how to use the computer will be more successful in the future. My reasons for this view are personal, academic and professional.

From a personal point of view, computers can help young people to learn more about the world. For example, some children use the Internet to find information on different subjects. In this way, they learn to find answers by themselves. By using the computer

when they are little, children feel more comfortable around computers. They also know how to use the computer for different reasons.

From an academic viewpoint, children have to learn how to use this new invention. For instance, when I was in college, many students used to bring their laptops to class. They used to take notes, do research and share information. They wrote their essays, made presentations and created useful lists. Children who can use the computer when they are young have more confidence than other children.

From a professional perspective, the computer is found in every kind of office. Today, employers will still hire people who cannot use computers and give them computer training. But tomorrow, companies will expect people to have these skills already. As a result, by encouraging children to use the computer for a short time every day, parents are preparing their children for future jobs.

In conclusion, it is clear that computers are now a part of our regular life. Children who can use computers easily and confidently will do better in the future."
(285 words)

Essay 1 Score: (8-9)

Essay 2 Score: (6-7)

Unit 2 – Writing Task Planning

Follow the process below to plan your writing task:

1) Read and understand question – Look for exactly what is required.
2) Use the correct structure based on the question types to brainstorm ideas.
3) Write your essay.

4) Review and check your essay using the checklist below.

Task Response	Yes/No
Have I written between 250 and 300 words?	
Do I clearly identify the task in the introduction?	
Do I state my position in the introduction and conclusion?	
Does each paragraph relate to the task?	

Coherence and Cohesion	Yes/No
Have I used paragraphs?	
Is there a clear introduction, main argument and conclusion?	
Have I used examples and reasons?	
Do my sentences link together?	
Have I used punctuation?	
Have I used transition/connecting phrases?	

Lexical Resource	Yes/No
Have I repeated the wording of the question?	
Are there any words I repeat consistently?	
Have I used some academic vocabulary?	
Have I used vocabulary specific to the topic of the question?	

Grammatical Range and Accuracy	Yes/No
Have I checked spelling?	
Have I checked my verb tenses?	
Are my sentences between 15 and 25 words long?	

Module 9 – Sample Answers (Task 1 & Task 2) Written by Tim Dickeson

Unit 1 – Task 1 Answers

Report No.1

**Question:**

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The column chart below represent the number of men and women in Britain that have been involved in further education covering three periods and whether they were studying fulltime or part-time.

Summarise the information by identifying and stating the main features, and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.
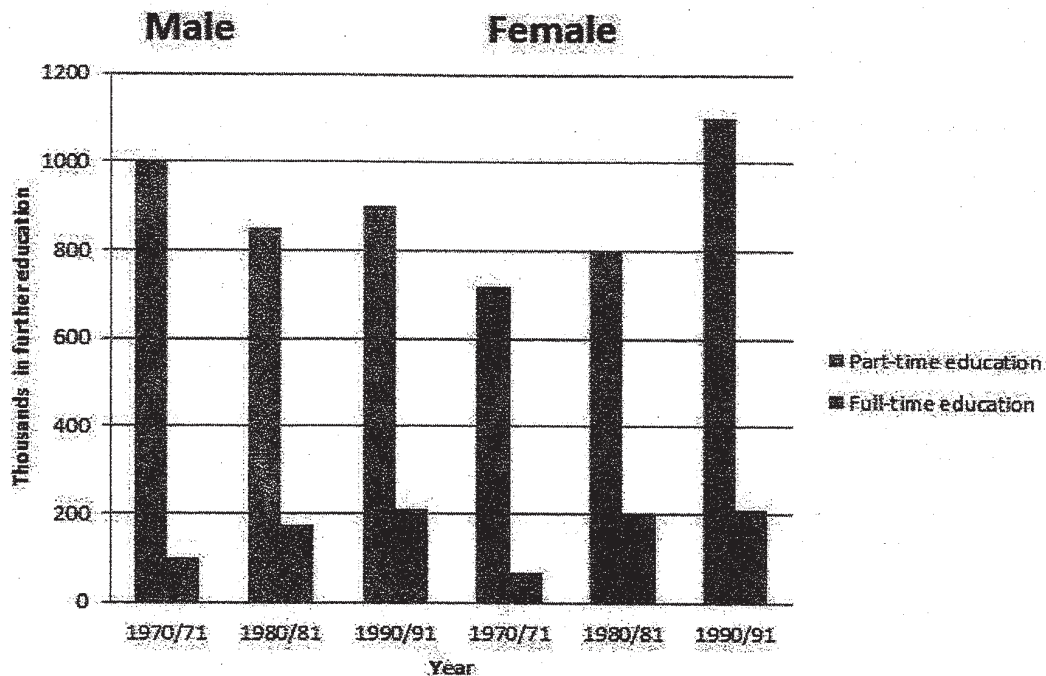
Answer:

"The bar chart illustrates how many males and females have studied in fulltime and part-time education in the following years: 1970 to 1971, 1980 to 1981 and 1990 to 1991.

It is clear that in all three time periods more people of both sexes were involved in part-time education than fulltime. Overall the number of men in fulltime education rose from approximately 100 thousand to 200 thousand, whereas the number of men in part-time education was lower in the early nineties than twenty years earlier.

As far as women are concerned, the numbers increased in both sectors of education. The number of part-time female students increased dramatically from 700 thousand to 1.2 million in the twenty year period. The amount of women in fulltime education went

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up more gradually from 100 thousand in 1971 to just over 200 thousand in 1991. This was similar the increase for fulltime male students.

To sum up, the number of women in both sectors increased significantly while it seems that the rate of men entering part-time education decreased a little and was fluctuating."
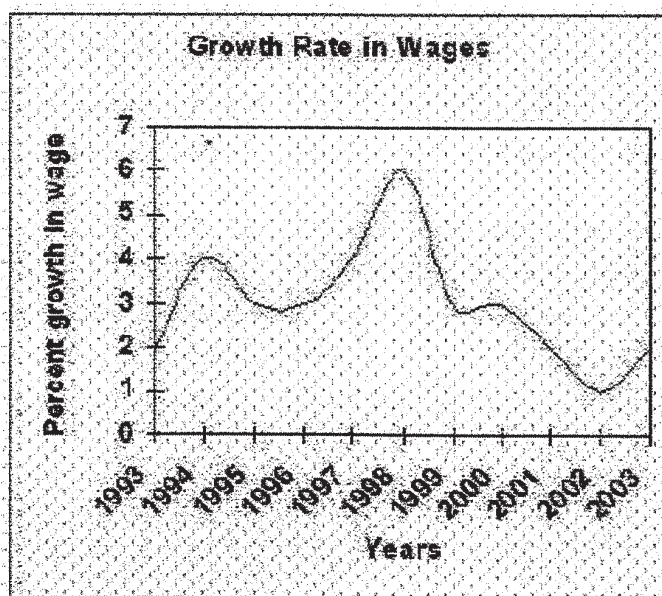
Report No.2

Question:

You are advised to spend a maximum of 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below gives information on wages of Chile over a ten-year period. Write a report for a university tutor describing the information shown.

You should write at least 150 words.

Growth Rate in Wages

Answer:

"The line graph shows the growth of wages in Chile from year 1993 to year 2003.

It is evident that there are substantial changes over the ten year period described in the graph. In 1993, the growth commenced at 2%, however did not stay there and increased rapidly to 4% by 1994. Over the next two years the percentage declined to 3 % before starting to rise steeply ending up at 6% in 1998.

However, after 1998 the wages dropped consistently nearly every year; the lowest point being 1% in the year 2002. Between 2002 and 2003 the percentage began rising again but more moderately to 2%. It is important to note that 2002 was the only year which had a lower percentage than 2% since the beginning of the data in 1993.

This confirms that the percentage begins and finishes at the same percentage from 1993 to 2003, however goes through large changes during the ten years."

Report No.3

Question:

You are advised to spend a maximum of 20 minutes on this task.

The table below describes percentages of home schooled students in Ireland in 1999-2004. Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information shown.

You should write at least 150 words.

Grade/Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Kindergarten	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.9
Grades 1-2	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.8	2.1
Grades 3-4	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.2
Grades 5-6	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.6	2.1	2.6
Grades 7-8	1.6	1.6	1.6	2.2	2.4	2.5

Answer:

"This table presents home-schooled students in Ireland from the year 1999 to 2004 and covers grades from Kindergarten to Grade 8.

The main trend that can be taken from the table is that all grades including Kindergarten increased from 1999 to 2004. Kindergarten started the highest at 2.4 and also ended the highest at 2.9 percent which shows a constant increase. However, Grades 1-2 and Grades 5-6 showed small decreases from 1999 to 2000 with a 0.3 and 0.2 percent drop respectively. Both of these Grades change to a positive increase in 2001 and continued steadily until 2004.

Grades 3-4 had a slower rate of change over the 6 years but maintained a positive increase year after year. Grades 7-8 started at 1.6 percent in 1999 and stayed there for three years until a rapid rise up to 2.2 in 2002 and peaks at 2.5 in 2004.

To summarize, all grades including Kindergarten had a rise at approximately 1 percent over the 6 year period."

Unit 2 – Task 2 Answers

Essay No.1

Question (Argument):

Should museums and art galleries be free of charge for the general public, or should a charge, even a voluntary charge, be levied for admittance? Discuss this issue, and give your opinion.

Answer:

"Museums and art galleries all around the world provide people with the opportunity to view and experience historical information. Even though these places hold priceless artefacts, an important issue resides around the accessibility and whether or not they should be free. In my opinion, museums and art galleries should reserve the right to charge a fee upon entry just like many other attractions.

To begin with, there are many people who hold the view that museums should be free for key reasons. Firstly, museums are public services and therefore should be available to anyone without the restriction of monetary funds. Also, they argue that fewer people would visit if a fee was required at entry. For example, only the wealthy or people with more disposable income could afford the enjoyment of visiting museums. Consequently, this group see the negative effects clearly of charging a fee for museums.

In contrast, many people see that charging a fee is important for any museum or art gallery. They see that the value of the artefacts held in these places deserve to be valued by the general public. In addition, Governments generally do not have sufficient money to fund such institutions, and as a result, other priorities are made rather than art galleries and museums. For instance, by charging a fee, these places could also purchase more artefacts and maintain the services much better. For this reason, they see charging a fee is necessary.

In my opinion, it is clear that the benefits of charging a fee greatly outweigh the benefits of providing free access. Usually the entry fees are not high, or not too high for most people, which means that as long as the fees are reasonably low a high percentage of the population could still visit these institutions.

To summarize, the topic of providing access to museums and art galleries free of charge will always be a topic for intense discussion, it is important to recognise the larger and longer term benefits that these institutions bring to the world."

Essay No.2

Question (Discussion):

Many historic buildings are being destroyed or replaced. What are the reasons for this? What should be done to preserve these buildings?

Answer:

"Our world is constantly changing due to urban development and an increasing population. A result of this is the destroying or replacing of many historic buildings and once they are lost, they are lost forever. There are several reasons which cause this to occur, but more importantly, there are specific things that should be done in order to preserve these historic buildings.

There are several reasons which cause the loss of historic buildings and this is usually based on the current purpose of the individual building. Many old buildings were used for residential purposes and do not serve a huge purpose in the current day. For example, these old style residential buildings generally attract lower socio-economic groups which bring more problems and reduced safety. Buildings that are being

destroyed or replaced are done so, simply because they do not serve a good purpose in the current climate.

The preservation of historic buildings is important, however there needs to be a clear reason for preservation. Government houses and civic buildings are examples of buildings which still serve a purpose today and will do so into the future. For example, an old run-down residential block of units does not serve the purpose that a Government house would due to the current and future value it brings today and in the future. Therefore, it is important to clarify the current and future use of a historic building to determine whether it should be destroyed or not.

In conclusion, it is true that many historical buildings are being destroyed or replaced. However, in today's society, strict rules are enforced to clearly differentiate the historical buildings which do not serve a purpose moving into the future as opposed to the buildings that do. Therefore the preservation should not be implemented for every historic building."

Essay No.3

Question (Proposal):

Using a computer every day can have more negative than positive effects on children. Do you agree or disagree?

Answer:

"Since computers were invented, they have becoming more and more involved in our everyday way of living. Computers are now used for social, business and entertainment purposes. However, does the use of computers on children have more of a negative effect? In my opinion, the daily use of computers by adolescent children does have a much greater negative effect than positive for two main reasons.

Firstly, even though computers make life a lot of fun when a person is growing up, this contributes to a lack of physical exercise and subsequent fitness. As all health experts and doctors recommend, everybody should be doing some kind of exercise everyday to keep their body in shape. The problem with using a computer everyday means that their bodies are not being exercised which contradicts the recommendations of medical professionals. I personally remember when I was younger, several friends would spend hours playing computer games and subsequently were never good at school sports.

Furthermore, the impact of daily computer use also affects a young person's social ability. When a person is an adolescent, they are constantly learning about the world and a large part of this period is social awareness. Using the computer does not allow a child to socialize with other children, which in turn causes their development to slow. As an illustration, social inability affects not only a person in social situations but also for future purposes like work and adult relationships.

To summarize, I completely agree that the daily use of computers have more of a negative effect on children because in essence, a child needs physical exercise and social stimuli for positive growth and high computer use simply does not allow this to happen."

Module 10 – List of Sample Questions And Practice Links

Message from Tim Dickeson

I have put this list of IELTS practice questions and links together for you so you can immediately start practicing different IELTS questions. It is important that before you start practicing IELTS questions, you go through every section of this book so you have a comprehensive understanding of how to answer each question.
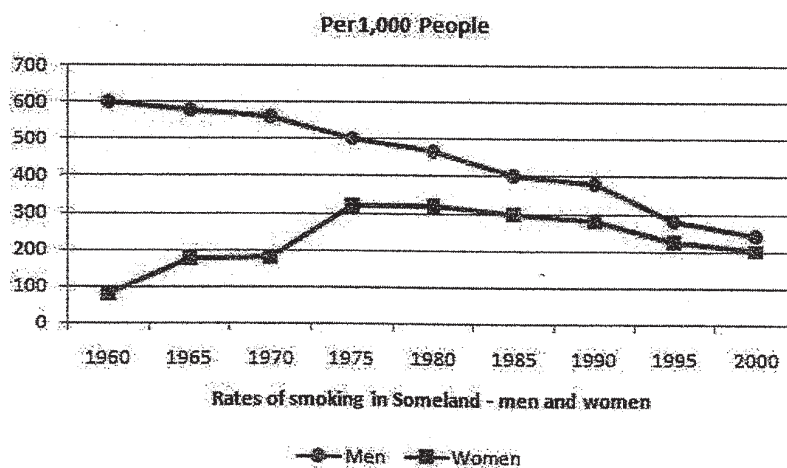
Task 1 Sample Questions

Below is a list of sample questions to practice writing reports for:

1. *You are advised to spend a maximum of 20 minutes on this task.*

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

   *You should write at least 150 words.*

Rates of smoking in Someland - men and women

—●— Men   —■— Women

2. **You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.**

   The graph and table below give information about water use worldwide and water consumption in two different countries.

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

   Write at least 150 words.

Global water use by sector
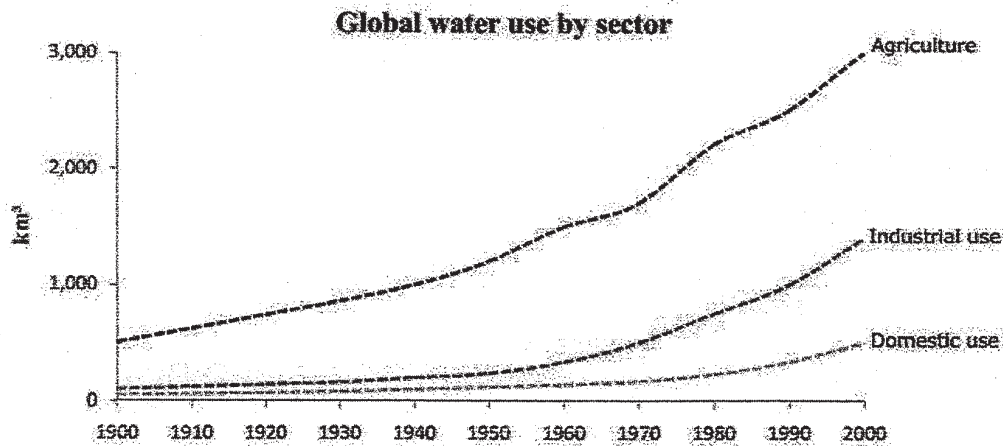
Water consumption in Brazil and Congo in 2000

Country	Population	Irrigated land	Water consumption per person
Brazil	176 million	26,500 km²	359 m³
Democratic Republic of Congo	5.2 million	100 km²	8 m³

3. You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

   The graph below shows the unemployment rates in the US and Japan between March 1993 and March 1999.

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

   Write at least 150 words.

Unemployment Rates: US and Japan
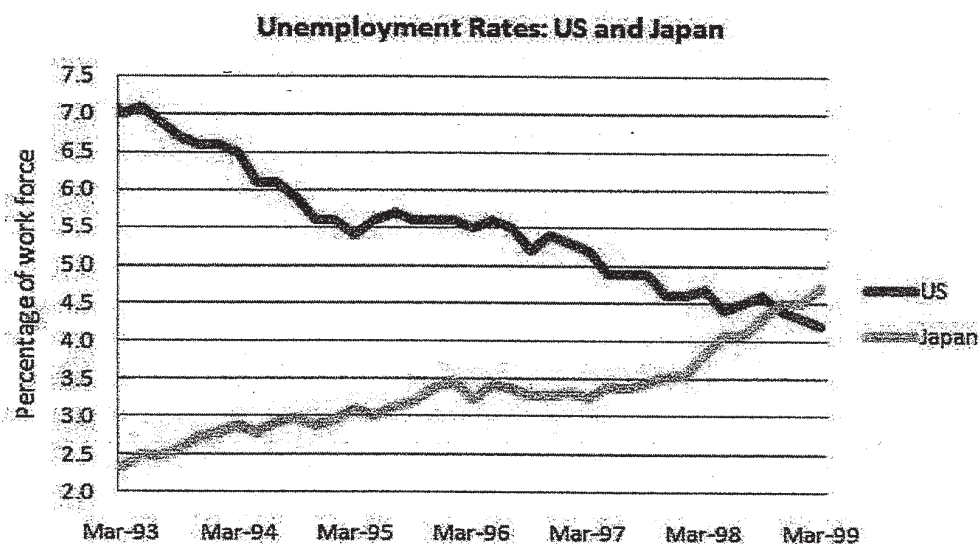
Task 2 Sample Questions

Below is a list of sample questions to practice writing essays for:

1. *"The best way to reduce crime is by building more prisons and extending prison sentences. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?"*

2. *"Some people prefer having a routine and doing the same things without change. However, others like and prefer lots of change in their life. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion."*

3. *"Many tertiary institutions charge more for foreign students. Why do they do this? Do you believe that it is fair?"*

4. *"Recent studies have indicated an increase in violent crime from people under the age of 18. Some psychology professionals argue that the main reason is that in today's society children are not learning enough emotional and social skills. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?"*

5. *"In some countries young people have little leisure time and are under a lot of pressure to work hard in their studies. What do you think are the causes of this? What solutions can you suggest?"*

6. *"Poverty is still a major issue for developing countries, even though they obtain financial assistance. Some people argue that they should receive different assistance to reduce poverty. To what extent do you agree or disagree? Provide examples and propose other ways that these countries can receive help."*

7. *"Some say that public health is important and there should be more sports facilities. Others say that they have small impact on individuals. Discuss both views and give your opinion."*

8. *"Some people think that foreign visitors should be charged more than locals when they visit culture and tourist attractions in a country. To what extent do you agree or disagree?"*

9. *"Even though globalization has an impact on the world's economies in a constructive and positive way, it should not be forgotten that globalization also has a negative impact. Discuss."*

10. *"Today a lot of different cultures and ethnic groups live together in one country. Why is this so and do you think this is a positive or negative development?"*

IELTS Practice Links

Reading Practice

Details: Practice your IELTS Reading with this simulation Reading test.

Website: http://www.canadavisa.com/ielts/mod/quiz/attempt.php?id=21&username=guest

Listening Practice

Details: Practice your IELTS Listening with this simulation Listening test.

Website: http://www.canadavisa.com/ielts/mod/quiz/attempt.php?id=22&username=guest

Speaking Practice

Details: Practice your IELTS Speaking.

Website: http://www.canadavisa.com/ielts/mod/scorm/player.php?a=1&scoid=2

Writing Practice

Details: Practice the IELTS Writing section.

Website: http://www.canadavisa.com/ielts/mod/resource/view.php?id=18&username=guest

Increase Your IELTS Vocabulary

Details: Test your IELTS vocabulary.

Website: http://www.examenglish.com/IELTS/IELTS_vocabulary.htm

Practice Your IELTS Grammar

Details: Practice your IELTS grammar.

Website: http://www.examenglish.com/IELTS/ielts_grammar_test.htm

Official IELTS Website

Details: Official IELTS website.

Website: http://www.ielts.org

About The Author

Tim Dickeson

Tim is a highly sought after IELTS consultant due to his ability to "translate the complexities of the IELTS into a simple language".

His simplified but highly effective approach to IELTS preparation has proven time after time that his methods get results.

Tim is Australian born and raised and has taught English and IELTS in Australia, Europe and South America. He currently owns an IELTS preparation company in Australia and has consulted for universities and language institutions about how to correctly prepare people for the IELTS.

He has a love of teaching and helping people achieve results and his number one objective with this publication is to help as many people as possible pass the IELTS so they can continue to pursue their dreams.