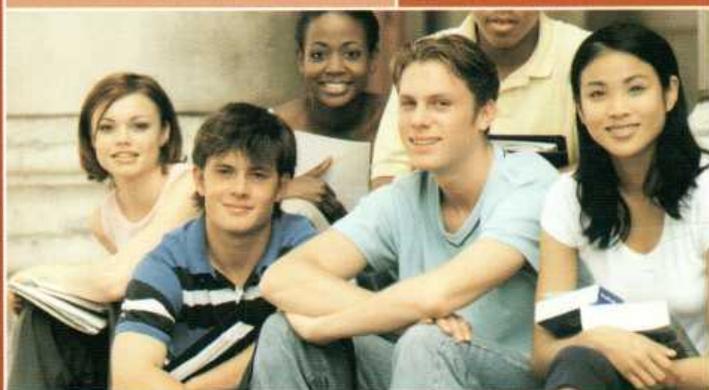


Intensive IELTS

Writing

New Oriental Education & Technology Group
IELTS Research Institute



These two pie charts show the sources for supply of water to and subsequent water losses in the human body on a daily basis. The total losses equal the total inputs to maintain a balance within the body.



It is not uncommon these days for high school or college freshmen to feel lonely on their first day at school. They get lost on campus, fail to catch sight of any familiar face or have nobody to turn to for help.



NTV

Công ty TNHH
Nhân Trí Việt



NHÀ XUẤT BẢN TỔNG HỢP
THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH

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IELTS OVERVIEW

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Intensive IELTS Writing – 5 

Score processing, reporting, and interpretation

All IELTS marking takes place at the test centre by trained markers and examiners. Markers are trained to understand the IELTS marking policy and are required to demonstrate that they are marking to standard before they are allowed to mark Listening and Reading tests. Markers are retested every two years to ensure that their marking remains up to standard. Systematic monitoring and double marking of a proportion of answer sheets are carried out at each administration.

Examiners for the Writing and Speaking tests are recruited and trained in line with agreed standards. They are required to demonstrate that they are marking to standard every two years in addition to ongoing monitoring of their performance.

Candidates receive scores on a Band Scale from 1 to 9. A score is reported for each subtest. The four individual subtest scores are averaged and rounded to produce an Overall Band Score. The Overall Band Score and the four individual subtest scores are reported in whole or half band, e.g. 6.5, 7.0, 7.5, 8.0.

Overall Band Score

Candidates receive a Test Report Form setting out their Overall Band Score and their scores on each of the four subtests: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. Each of the subtest scores is equally weighted. The Overall Band Score is calculated by taking the mean of the total of the four individual subtest scores.

As mentioned earlier, the Overall Band Score is reported in whole or half band. For the avoidance of doubt, the following rounding convention applies: if the average across the four subtests ends in .25 or above, it is rounded up to the next half band; if it ends in .75 or above, it is rounded up to the next whole band; if it ends in .125, it is rounded down to the previous whole band; if it ends in .625, it is rounded down to the previous half band.

Thus, a candidate achieving 6.5 for Listening, 6.5 for Reading, 5.0 for Writing, and 7.0 for Speaking will be awarded an Overall Band Score of 6.5 ($25 \div 4 = 6.25 = \text{Band } 6.5$).

Likewise, a candidate achieving 4.0 for Listening, 3.5 for Reading, 4.0 for Writing, and 4.0 for Speaking will be awarded an Overall Band Score of 4.0 ($15.5 \div 4 = 3.875 = \text{Band } 4.0$).

Similarly, a candidate achieving 6.5 for Listening, 6.0 for Reading, 6.0 for Writing, and 6.0 for Speaking will be awarded an Overall Band Score of 6.0 ($24.5 \div 4 = 6.125 = \text{Band } 6.0$).



Listening and Reading

The IELTS Listening and Reading tests contain 40 questions, and each correct answer is awarded one mark; the maximum raw score a candidate can achieve on a test is 40. Band scores ranging from Band 1 to Band 9 are awarded to candidates on the basis of their raw scores.

Although all IELTS test materials are pretested and trialled before being released as actual tests, there are inevitably minor differences in the difficulty level across tests. In order to equate different test versions, the band score boundaries are set so that all candidates' results relate to the same scale of achievement. This means, for example, that the Band 6 boundary may be set at a slightly different raw score across versions.

The table below indicates the mean raw scores achieved by candidates at various levels in each of the Listening, Academic Reading, and General Training Reading tests, and it provides an indication of the number of marks required to achieve a particular band score.

Listening		Academic Reading		General Training Reading	
Band Score	Raw Score out of 40	Band Score	Raw Score out of 40	Band Score	Raw Score out of 40
5	16	5	15	4	15
6	23	6	23	5	23
7	30	7	30	6	30
8	35	8	35	7	34

The Academic and General Training modules are graded to the same scale. The distinction between the two modules is about genre or discourse types. The Academic module may contain source texts featuring more difficult vocabulary or greater complexity of style. It is usual that, to secure a given band score, a greater number of questions must be answered correctly on a General Training Reading test.

Writing and Speaking

When marking the Writing and Speaking tests, examiners use detailed performance descriptors which describe written and spoken performance at each of the 9 IELTS bands.



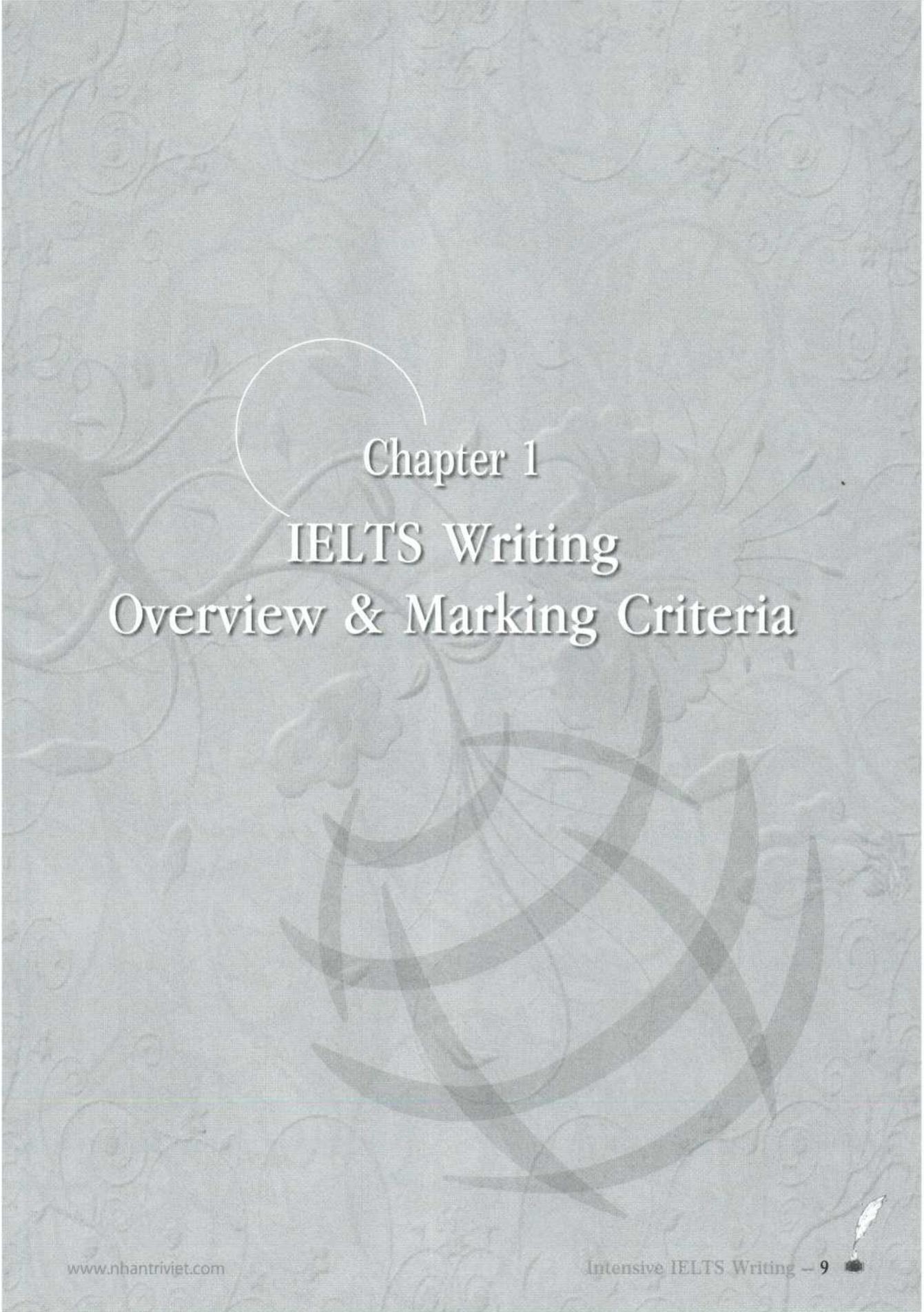
Writing

Examiners award a band score for each of the four criteria: Task Achievement (for Task 1) or Task Response (for Task 2), Coherence and Cohesion, Lexical Resource, and Grammatical Range and Accuracy. The four criteria are equally weighted.

Speaking

Examiners award a band score for each of the four criteria: Fluency and Coherence, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Range and Accuracy, and Pronunciation. The four criteria are equally weighted.





Chapter 1
IELTS Writing
Overview & Marking Criteria



I. Overview

The Writing test of both the Academic and General Training modules consists of two tasks, and candidates are given one hour to complete the test.

For the Academic Writing test, in Task 1, candidates are given a title based on some graphic or pictorial information, and they are expected to write a descriptive report of at least 150 words on the information provided. In Task 2, candidates are expected to produce an essay of at least 250 words on a given title whose topics are of general interest to and suitable for anyone entering undergraduate or postgraduate studies or seeking professional registration. Importantly, responses to both tasks must be written in a formal style.

For the General Training Writing test, candidates have to complete two tasks of at least 150 words and 250 words respectively. Task 1 is always a letter, while Task 2, which is similar to that of the Academic module, is an essay based on a given title.

II. Marking Criteria

The writing tasks assess whether a candidate meets the requirements based on his or her ultimate goal of taking the test. However, the Academic module expects the more formal requirements of a higher education establishment as is generally demanded in an academic context.

IELTS Writing tasks are scored based on how the candidate responds on the four marking criteria: Task Achievement (for Task 1) or Task Response (for Task 2), Coherence and Cohesion, Lexical Resource, and Grammatical Range and Accuracy.

Generally, candidates' tasks will be marked from band 1 to 9 on the four criteria mentioned above. Task 2 is more important than Task 1. Hence, for the final mark, more weight is assigned to Task 2 than to Task 1.

On the next pages are the tables of detailed band descriptors for the two writing tasks.





IELTS Task 1 Writing band descriptors (public version)

Band	Task Achievement	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully satisfies all the requirements of the task clearly presents a fully developed response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention skillfully manages paragraphing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> covers all requirements of the task sufficiently presents, highlights and illustrates key features / bullet points clearly and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequences information and ideas logically manages all aspects of cohesion well uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings skillfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation produces rare errors in spelling and / or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures the majority of sentences are error-free makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> covers the requirements of the task (Academic) presents a clear overview of main trends, differences or stages (General Training) presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate clearly presents and highlights key features / bullet points but could be more fully extended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and / or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of complex structures produces frequent error-free sentences has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses the requirements of the task (Academic) presents an overview with information appropriately selected (General Training) presents a purpose that is generally clear, there may be inconsistencies in tone presents and adequately highlights key features / bullet points but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and / or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy makes some errors in spelling and / or word formation, but they do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication



<p>5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally addresses the task; the format may be inappropriate in places (Academic) recounts detail mechanically with no clear overview; there may be no data to support the description (General Training) may present a purpose for the letter that is unclear at times; the tone may be variable and sometimes inappropriate presents, but inadequately covers, key features / bullet points; there may be a tendency to focus on details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a limited range of structures attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
<p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts to address the task but does not cover all key features / bullet points; the format may be inappropriate (General Training) fails to clearly explain the purpose of the letter; the tone may be inappropriate may confuse key features / bullet points with detail; parts may be unclear, irrelevant, repetitive or inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
<p>3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fails to address the task, which may have been completely misunderstood presents limited ideas which may be largely irrelevant/repetitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not organise ideas logically may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling errors may severely distort the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
<p>2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer is barely related to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> has very little control of organisational features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
<p>1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> answer is completely unrelated to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fails to communicate any message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can only use a few isolated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot use sentence forms at all
<p>0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not attend does not attempt the task in any way writes a totally memorised response 			



IELTS Task 2 Writing band descriptors (public version)

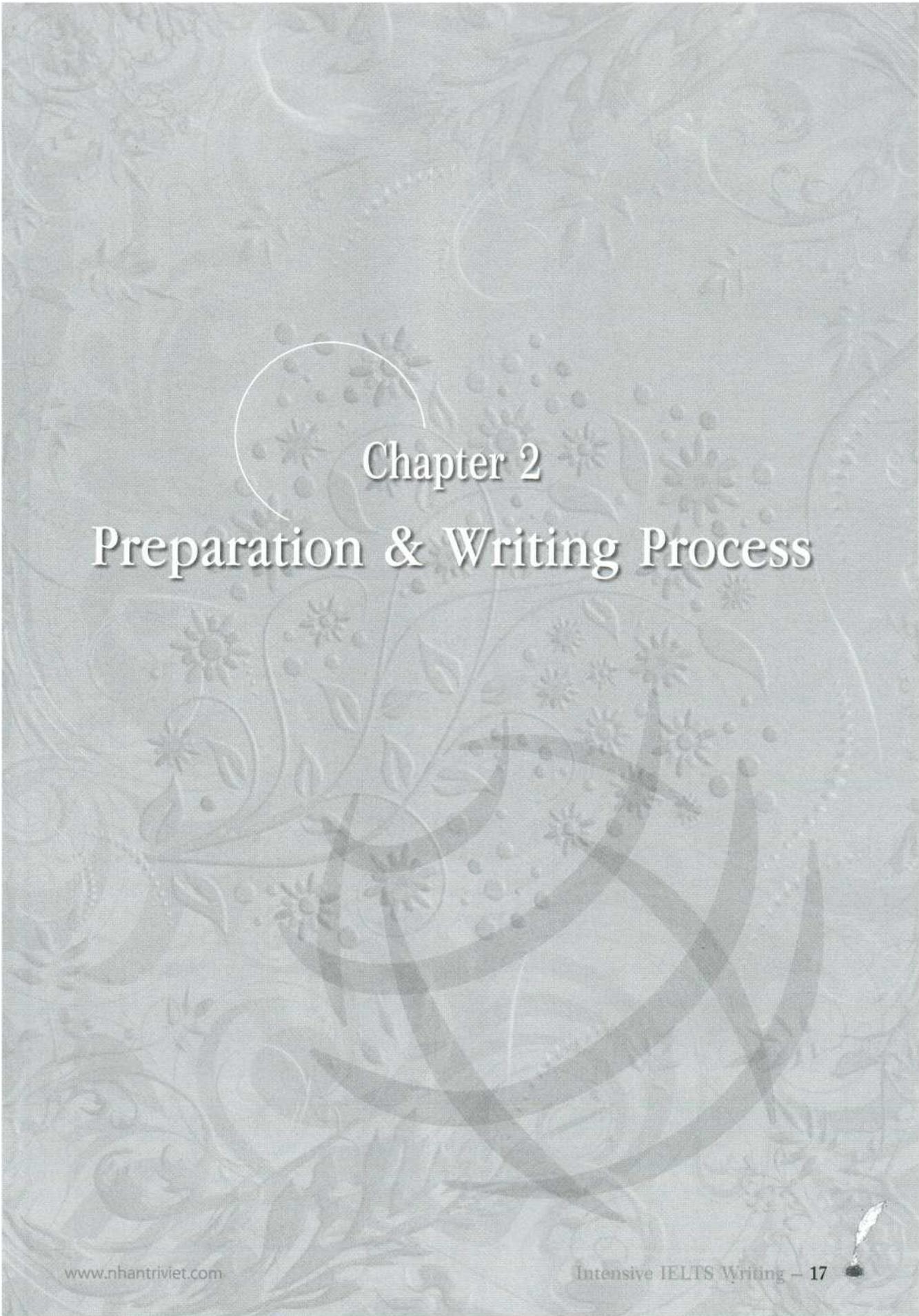
Band	Task Response	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully addresses all parts of the task presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well-supported ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention skilfully manages paragraphing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sufficiently addresses all parts of the task presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequences information and ideas logically manages all aspects of cohesion well uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation produces rare errors in spelling and /or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of structures the majority of sentences are error-free makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task presents a clear position throughout the response presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to over-generalise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use presents a clear central topic within each paragraph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and /or word formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a variety of complex structures produces frequent error-free sentences has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed / unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately uses paragraphing, but not always logically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy makes some errors in spelling and /or word formation, but they do not impede communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication



<p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places ■ expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no conclusions drawn ■ presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression ■ makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices ■ may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution ■ may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task ■ may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uses only a limited range of structures ■ attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences ■ may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ responds to the task only in a minimal way or the answer is tangential; the format may be inappropriate ■ presents a position but this is unclear ■ presents some main ideas but these are difficult to identify and may be repetitive, irrelevant or not well supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response ■ uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive ■ may not write in paragraphs or their use may be confusing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task ■ has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses ■ some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ does not adequately address any part of the task ■ does not express a clear position ■ presents few ideas, which are largely undeveloped or irrelevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ does not organise ideas logically ■ may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling ■ errors may severely distort the message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ barely responds to the task ■ does not express a position ■ may attempt to present one or two ideas but there is no development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ has very little control of organisational features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ answer is completely unrelated to the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ fails to communicate any message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ can only use a few isolated words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ cannot use sentence forms at all
<p>0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ does not attend ■ does not attempt the task in any way ■ writes a totally memorised response 			







Chapter 2
Preparation & Writing Process



I. Preparation

Preparation for your IELTS Writing test may take various forms. Some learners like to study with peers, while others prefer to study alone. Some like to attend structured courses, whereas others prefer to plan their own study schedule. How you prepare for the IELTS test depends on your own situation and preferences.

For your writing skill, you should refer to a number of books on the market, which are designed to be used for self-study. They include practice material, sample tests, vocabulary learning, various exercises, hints and tips, etc. Ideally, it is a good idea for you to rely on an expert or a teacher of English to correct your pieces of writing. It will certainly be a great challenge if you study writing on your own as you have no way of receiving feedback on your errors so that you will be able to improve your writing ability both rapidly and effectively.

II. Writing Process

Step 1: Preparation (Analysing the question → Brainstorming → Outlining)

Step 2: Writing

Step 3: Checking and Editing

The first step in writing involves preparation. Specifically, you first have to read and analyse the question or title. It is essential that you have a complete understanding of this. Then, you should brainstorm and make notes of ideas based on the question or title. Last, you must plan a detailed outline which helps you to organise your ideas before writing to make sure that everything stays on track.

The longest and most important step is writing your report passage or essay. For each task, you should always have a well-organised piece of writing with an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

The last step which lasts about 2 minutes will be spent on checking to correct mistakes of spelling, grammar, and punctuation.



Look at the following essay title and a sample answer.

Some people believe that money spent on space research benefits all of humanity. Others take the opposite view and say that money for this type of research is wasted. Discuss these positions, using specific examples of both. Tell which one you agree with and explain why.

Sample Answer

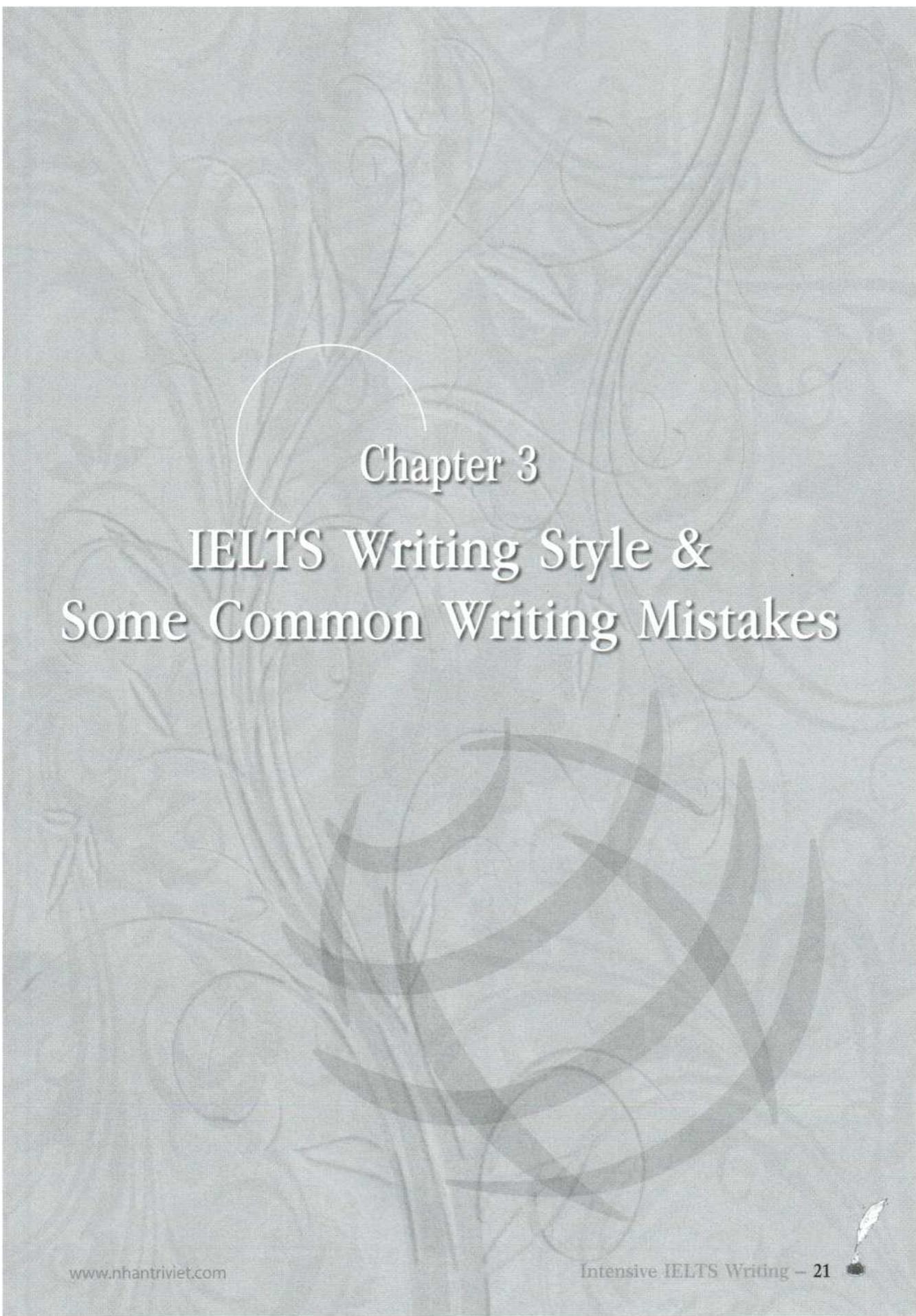
For over fifty years, a number of nations have been involved in the exploration of outer space. This research has been very costly, of course. Has this money been well spent or wasted?

Some people believe that all or most space research should be eliminated because of its incredible expense, not only in terms of money, but also in terms of scientific and human resources. These people point out the fact that it cost billions of dollars to send astronauts to the moon, but all they brought back were some worthless rocks. These people say that the money and effort now being wasted in outer space could be spent on more important projects right here on earth, such as providing housing for homeless people, improving the education system, saving the environment, and finding cures for diseases.

However, other people believe that space research has provided many benefits to mankind. They point out that hundreds of useful products, from personal computers to heart pacemakers to freeze-dried foods, are the direct or indirect results of space research. They say that weather and communication satellites, which are also products of space programs, have benefited people all over the globe. In addition to these practical benefits, supporters of the space program point to the scientific knowledge that has been acquired about the sun, the moon, the planets, and even our own earth as a result of space research.

I agree with those people who support space research and wish to continue. Space research, as shown, has already brought many benefits to humanity. Perhaps it will bring even more benefits in the future, ones that we cannot even imagine now. Moreover, just as individual people need challenges to make their lives more interesting, I believe the human race itself needs a challenge, and I think that the peaceful exploration of outer space provides just such a challenge.





Chapter 3
IELTS Writing Style &
Some Common Writing Mistakes





I. IELTS Writing Style

A formal style is strictly required for the two tasks of the IELTS Academic Writing test.

To get a better understanding of the differences between formal and informal writing, you should consider the following features.

An informal writing style shows a level of familiarity and personality which can be seen through the use of colloquial, simple sentences only, contractions and abbreviations, whereas a formal writing one does not accept these. In other words, in IELTS Academic writing tasks, complex sentences are frequently used; an objective view is shown through a limited range of emotions and emotive punctuation, such as exclamation points, ellipsis; full words must be written; and the first person point of view (I or we) or second person (you) is not widely accepted.

II. Some Common Writing Mistakes

1. Tense

Fossil remains of dinosaurs *are* found recently.

(Fossil remains of dinosaurs *were / have been* found recently.)

2. Word form

The *develop* of personal computers *effect on* people's lives because small businesses can *easy* afford them and this makes their work more *efficiency*.

(The *development* of personal computers *affects* people's lives because small businesses can *easily* afford them and this makes their work more *efficient*.)

3. Subject-verb agreement

Nowadays anyone who *study* at university *need* to learn how to use computers.

(Nowadays anyone who *studies* at university *needs* to learn how to use computers.)



4. Word order

Success *only can* be achieved by hard work.
(Success *can only* be achieved by hard work.)

5. Collocation

He appears to be very *experienced with* dealing with people.
(He appears to be very *experienced in* dealing with people.)

6. Incorrect noun

Recent statistics have shown that the *distance* between the rich and the poor is increasing.
(Recent statistics have shown that the *gap* between the rich and the poor is increasing.)

7. Incorrect verb

This is a delicate matter that has *raised* considerable controversy.
(This is a delicate matter that has *aroused* considerable controversy.)
He *arised* the matter at the meeting.
(He *raised* the matter at the meeting.)

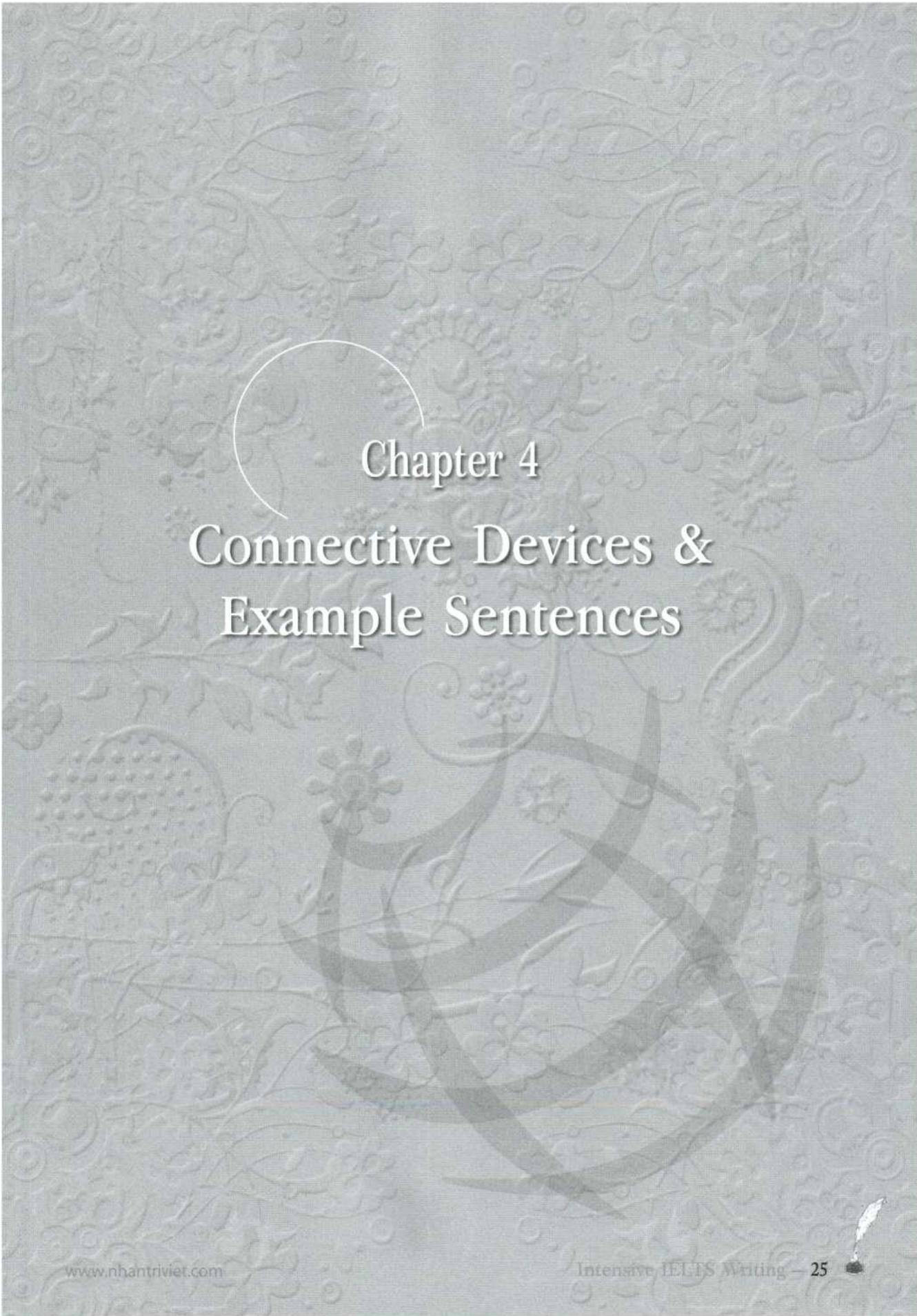
8. Parallelism

Instead, the money should be spent on improving school buildings and *to help* old people.
(Instead, the money should be spent on improving school buildings and *helping* old people.)

9. Structure

There are many people *would* agree with this statement.
(There are many people *who / that* would agree with this statement.) OR (Many people would agree with this statement.)





Chapter 4
Connective Devices &
Example Sentences



I. Common Connective Devices

1. Starting a topic sentence or the first supporting sentence

first, firstly	in the beginning
first of all, to begin with, in the first place, to start with	at first
for one thing	at present, now
on the one hand	currently
generally speaking, in general	recently, lately

2. Introducing the next point

second, secondly	for another
third, thirdly	on the other hand
besides, in addition	in the same way, similarly
furthermore, what is more, moreover	afterwards, after that
in addition to	equally important
also, too	

3. Showing contrast

but	unfortunately
yet, still	though, as, although
conversely	despite, in spite of
nevertheless, nonetheless	on the contrary
on the other hand	unlike

4. Signalling conclusion

hence	as a result
finally	so, for this reason
in conclusion	as I have said
in short, in brief	as has been noted
in summary	by and large
briefly	accordingly



II. Categorised Connective Devices & Typical Examples

1. Giving examples or explanations

a case in point, after all, as an illustration, as an example, for example, for instance, in particular, namely, specifically, that is, to illustrate, to demonstrate

- a. Many southern cities are growing above the national average – Atlanta is a case in point.
- b. The news about calcium and kidney stones is a case in point.
- c. Prisoners should be treated with respect – they are human beings after all.
- d. These are, after all, very familiar species.
- e. It is extremely expensive to live in New York. For example, I pay \$1,250 for a one-bedroom apartment.
- f. Many countries, for example Mexico and Japan, have a lot of earthquakes.
- g. Old English was in many ways similar to modern German. For instance, the nouns, adjectives, and verbs were highly inflected.
- h. We need to rethink the way we consume energy. Take, for instance, our approach to transport.
- i. Automobile prices in particular have fallen in recent months.
- j. One of the most important stages has yet to be started, namely beginning to fit the person into their new job.
- k. The issues are in two main clusters, namely the safety and the pricing and procurement of drugs.
- l. We are talking about money, specifically, the money we need to repair our schools.
- m. One solution would be to change the shape of the screen, that is, to make it wider.

2. Adding information

additionally, again, along with, also, and, and then, as well as, besides, equally, furthermore, in addition, moreover, not only ... but also ..., too, what is more

- a. They may also additionally represent much more; they may indeed have a highly integrating social function.
- b. And again, these workshops will benefit the community widely.
- c. Dunne was murdered, along with three guards.



- d. Sugar is bad for your teeth. It can also contribute to heart disease.
- e. It also assigned staff people to work with individual companies that wanted to launch a program.
- f. You need to know what rights you have and how to use them.
- g. This is a flexible and user-friendly system suitable for beginners and advanced users alike.
- h. Fry the onions gently, and then add the meat and cook for a few minutes.
- i. The organisation gives help and support to people in need, as well as raising money for local charities.
- j. Besides going to aerobics twice a week, she rides horses on Saturdays.
- k. People choose jobs for other reasons besides money.
- l. We want the economy to grow, but equally we want low inflation.
- m. It is possible to make good movies cheaply. Furthermore, “low-budget” does not have to mean “bad”.
- n. The majority of Americans increased their wealth in the past decade. Furthermore, the gains were substantial.
- o. A new security system was installed. In addition, extra guards were hired.
- p. The company provides cheap Internet access. In addition, it makes shareware freely available.
- q. Using language is a very complex enterprise. Moreover, there is more to communication than merely putting sentences together.
- r. The system was not only complicated but also ineffective.
- s. Think about what you owe, too, in terms of mortgages, credit cards, loans, or hire purchase.
- t. Gas is a very efficient fuel. And what is more, it is clean.



3. Emphasising

above all, anyway, as a matter of fact, certainly, indeed, in fact, most important, obviously, of course, surely, to be sure, truly, undoubtedly, without doubt

- a. Although it is somewhat limited in its applications, it is easy to operate and above all, it is fun.
- b. He got lost and spent hours looking for the station, and anyway, it was past midnight by the time he got home.
- c. And, as a matter of fact, the US Golf Association was delighted.
- d. Books and people certainly affected him.
- e. Most of the essays were very good indeed.
- f. Her teachers said she was a slow learner, whereas in fact, she was partially deaf.
- g. But the reverse is true when an attorney represents a person who is obviously guilty or whose guilt is widely perceived.
- h. This is very obviously the approach of someone writing exclusively and specifically for the young.
- i. Of course, there will be some difficult times ahead.
- j. If a sign were needed that the Internet has become a real market, the arrival of tax avoidance is surely it.
- k. Throwing money at the problem is surely not the way to convince people of sincerity.
- l. It was difficult, to be sure, but somehow we managed to finish the job.
- m. If we truly believe we can win, then we have a very good chance of doing it.
- n. Undoubtedly, public interest in folk music has declined.
- o. Sally was, without doubt, one of the finest swimmers in the school.

4. Contrasting

by contrast, but, conversely, however, in contrast, on the contrary, on the other hand, otherwise, unlike, whereas, while, yet

- a. The birth rate for older women has declined, but, by contrast, births to teenage mothers have increased.
- b. The purpose of the scheme is not to help the employers but to provide work for young people.



- c. American consumers prefer white eggs; conversely, British buyers like brown eggs.
- d. Scandinavian cruises are very popular in the summer; conversely, the Caribbean is most popular in the winter.
- e. an extremely unpleasant disease which is, however, easy to treat
- f. The stock lost 60 cents a share, in contrast to last year, when it gained 21 cents.
- g. It was not a good thing; on the contrary, it was a huge mistake.
- h. Nuclear power is relatively cheap. On the other hand, you could argue that it is not safe.
- i. It is equally vital that both should be mentioned, otherwise a client, particularly a buyer, could be seriously misled.
- j. Unlike most people in the office, I do not come to work by car.
- k. A bowl of instant oatmeal costs about \$0.15, whereas regular oatmeal costs only \$0.05 per bowl.
- l. The old system was fairly complicated, whereas the new system is really very simple.
- m. Schools in the north tend to be better equipped, while those in the south are relatively poor.
- n. Last summer there was a drought, yet some people were still watering their lawns every day.

5. Comparing

as, by comparison, compare to/with, equally, equally important, in comparison, in the same way, in the same manner, likewise, similarly

- a. I do not want him treating me as Jim treated me.
- b. After months of living in a tropical climate, Spain seemed cool by comparison.
- c. By comparison with other European countries, car prices in the UK are very high.
- d. Cotton production was on the increase. However, it was still a small industry compared to hemp and canvas production.
- e. Even when the correct word was given a high probability, there were many other words with an equally high probability.
- f. Many business people do not know what sexual harassment is. Equally important, they do not know how to prevent it.



- g. The deaf children of hearing parents are almost normal in comparison, having everything except language experience.
- h. There is often stronger social control evident in the socialisation of girls in comparison to boys.
- i. Good management accounts separate the well-organised from the rest but are not vital in the same way.
- j. The clams were delicious. Likewise, the eggplant was excellent.
- k. The cost of food and clothing has come down in recent years. Similarly, fuel prices have fallen quite considerably.

6. Highlighting certain ideas

admittedly, after all, certainly, clearly, even so, it is true (that), of course, still, true

- a. The technique is painful, admittedly, but it benefits the patient greatly.
- b. Printing and presentation should be as attractive as possible – after all, the library is an attractive place, isn't it?
- c. We are not especially well treated, certainly not as well as the locals.
- d. Clearly, the racial problems in America have no easy answers.
- e. The fines for speeding are large; even so, they are not always a deterrent.
- f. And it is true that after his death, she ceased to exist for the world beyond the farm.

7. Showing results

accordingly, as a result, consequently, for this reason, hence, in this way, so, therefore, thus

- a. Some of the laws were contradictory. Accordingly, measures were taken to clarify them.
- b. As many as 2,500 people died as a result of the earthquake and the ensuing tidal waves.
- c. Most computer users have never received any formal keyboard training. Consequently, their keyboard skills are inefficient.
- d. The cost of transport is a major expense for an industry. Hence, factory location is an important consideration.
- e. In this way, normal healthy people may be tested without inducing any damage in their brain.
- f. The building work is taking quite a long time; therefore, it costs us money.



- g. Most of the evidence was destroyed in the fire. Thus, it would be almost impossible to prove him guilty.

8. Showing concession

although, despite, however, in spite of, nevertheless, though, yet

- a. We decided to take rooms in Longwood House, although we knew we could not really afford the rent.
- b. You can copy down my answers, although I am not sure they are right.
- c. Despite international pressure, progress has slowed in the peace talks.
- d. This is a cheap and simple process. However, there are dangers.
- e. In spite of her success, Spencer continues to get depressed.
- f. In spite of the hardships, real efforts and progress are being made.
- g. A false belief may nevertheless be justified.
- h. Thus, we can talk of a local government system which is different from a central government system but nevertheless interacts with it.
- i. Reintroduction of food after elemental regimens must nevertheless be undertaken with the greatest of care irrespective of whether or not elimination diets are used.
- j. Though employment growth is down, the area is still attracting health care, high tech, banking and sports-related industries.
- k. The offenders were dealt with firmly though fairly.
- l. The rooms, though small, were pleasant and airy.
- m. They charge incredibly high prices, yet customers keep coming back for more.

9. Concluding

as (has been) noted / mentioned / stated, all in all, in a word, in brief, in conclusion, in short, in sum, in summary, to conclude, to sum up, to summarize

- a. An inhibition as mentioned above is rarely used.
- b. It was, all in all, more like a prison than an office.
- c. Pop, in a word, is fascination versus meaning.
- d. In brief, the president plans to cut defense spending and lower taxes.



- e. In conclusion, I want to thank all the people who have volunteered their time to our organization.
- f. In short, the report says that more money should be spent on education.
- g. In sum, we need to cut costs.
- h. In summary, do not sell your shares.
- i. To conclude, the prospects for philosophy of religion look brighter than they have done for many moons.
- j. To sum up, for a healthy heart, you must take regular exercise and stop smoking.
- k. To summarize, in most cases, the schools were achieving the standards set.

10. Listing

finally, first, firstly, further, in the first place, last, next, second, secondly, third, thirdly, to begin with, to start with

- a. And finally, I would like to thank the crew.
- b. First, I would like to thank everyone for coming.
- c. The application of the five stages to the task illustrated would involve, firstly, the definition of the task.
- d. And there is the question of the relevance of the trading of information in the first place.
- e. Connect the red wires first and the black ones last.
- f. First, you need to select the text you want to move. Next, click on the “Move” command at the top of the screen.
- g. But, second, in the vast majority of markets, efficient production can be attained with a high degree of competition.
- h. The more you practise, the better you will become at selecting historical information to suit firstly your essay and secondly your argument.
- i. To begin with, much of this new housing is not affordable.
- j. I am not going to Vegas. To start with, I do not like gambling, and I also cannot get time off work.



Exercises

1. Reorder the following sentences to make a coherent essay on the following subject.

Describe some of the problems that overcrowding in cities causes and suggest at least one possible solution.

- a. As a result, our modern-day cities face a number of serious problems which are due to overcrowding.
- b. The consequence of too dense a population is that one or all of these areas must suffer.
- c. Owing to being over-peopled, Britain's main cities all have a number of people living on the streets. Life must be extremely hard for these people and one effect of such a lifestyle is that drug abuse and crime rates rise.
- d. Cities are environmentally unfriendly places.
- e. Thus, Governments must educate people to limit the size of their family. In China, couples are penalized financially as a consequence of having more than one child. This may seem cruel, but the "one-child policy" is beginning to have an effect on the world's most populous nation.
- f. The twentieth century saw a major increase in the world's population. Yet, large parts of the globe remain uninhabitable. People, therefore, are drawn towards living in existing towns and cities.
- g. Hence, the greater the population, the more natural resources are burnt up and, consequently, the more pollution is created. A city crowded with people leads to roads crawling with cars.
- h. As a result, a lot of taxpayers' money is spent on trying to keep the effects of overcrowding under control. More housing is built; more roads are planned. This tactic might alleviate some symptomatic problems at high cost. However, it will never solve the problem of overpopulation.
- i. This is because light, heat, travel and food must all be supplied artificially as one is removed from nature.
- j. Living in a city, therefore, forces us to be part of an unhealthy consumer throwaway society, which creates illness and environmental crisis, rather than curing it.
- k. It is the Government's responsibility to find solutions for these problems.



- l. For this reason, we must look to the cause of the problem, which is simply an unchecked epidemic of people.
- m. Similar such policies may also be necessary in other overcrowded nations and this, in turn, would eventually result in solving the problem of overcrowding in cities.
- n. Cities teeming with people are put under great strain to supply housing, health care, education, jobs and a certain quality of life for the inhabitants.
- o. The effect of the consequent levels of carbon monoxide in the air is said to, in cities as crowded as Mexico City, be equivalent to smoking twenty cigarettes a day.

Key

1. f	4. b	7. i	10. j	13. l
2. a	5. c	8. g	11. k	14. e
3. n	6. d	9. o	12. h	15. m

2. Order the sentences below to make a coherent essay on the following topic.

Fatherhood is as important as motherhood. Discuss.

1. These people believe that a mother is more important for infants as she can breast feed and protect her babies with a strong maternal instinct.
2. However, in less developed countries or tribal communities, a father still holds the more traditional role of breadwinner and is more distant from the children.
3. A lot of people might argue that children should be solely the woman's domain.
4. Indeed, in western countries, it is only in the last twenty to thirty years that we have seen fatherhood being emphasized as much as motherhood.
5. Although in reality, with the stresses and demands of the modern workplace, it is a difficult, yet nonetheless worthwhile, ideal to achieve.
6. Apart from this, the father will have more emotional fulfillment from his family life, as he shares more in the joy, as well as the duties, of child-rearing.
7. For example, he needs to play with them, read to them and teach them about the world.
8. Even though a mother and father may have different and sometimes interchangeable roles, they are both seen as being of equal importance to the children.



9. However, in my opinion, this definition of fatherhood is not complete and no longer satisfies the average western male.
10. In most western countries, child-rearing is now accepted as the responsibility of both parents.
11. In the first place, instead of only fulfilling a financial responsibility towards the family, the modern father should involve himself in the everyday activities of bringing up the children.
12. Moreover, the basic responsibility of the father is to make sure the family is materially provided for, and spending time rearing the children would interfere with his ability to financially support the family.
13. Finally, I strongly believe that a father can best teach children qualities such as courage, curiosity and confidence.
14. Therefore, the more he participates in his children's development, the better they will deal with the world when they grow up.
15. All things considered, it is this second, fuller concept of fatherhood that I agree with.

Key

In most western countries, child-rearing is now accepted as the responsibility of both parents. Even though a mother and father may have different and sometimes interchangeable roles, they are both seen as being of equal importance to the children. However, in less developed countries or tribal communities, a father still holds the more traditional role of breadwinner and is more distant from the children. Indeed, in western countries, it is only in the last twenty to thirty years that we have seen fatherhood being emphasized as much as motherhood.

A lot of people might argue that children should be solely the woman's domain. These people believe that a mother is more important for infants as she can breast feed and protect her babies with a strong maternal instinct. Moreover, the basic responsibility of the father is to make sure the family is materially provided for, and spending time rearing the children would interfere with his ability to financially support the family.

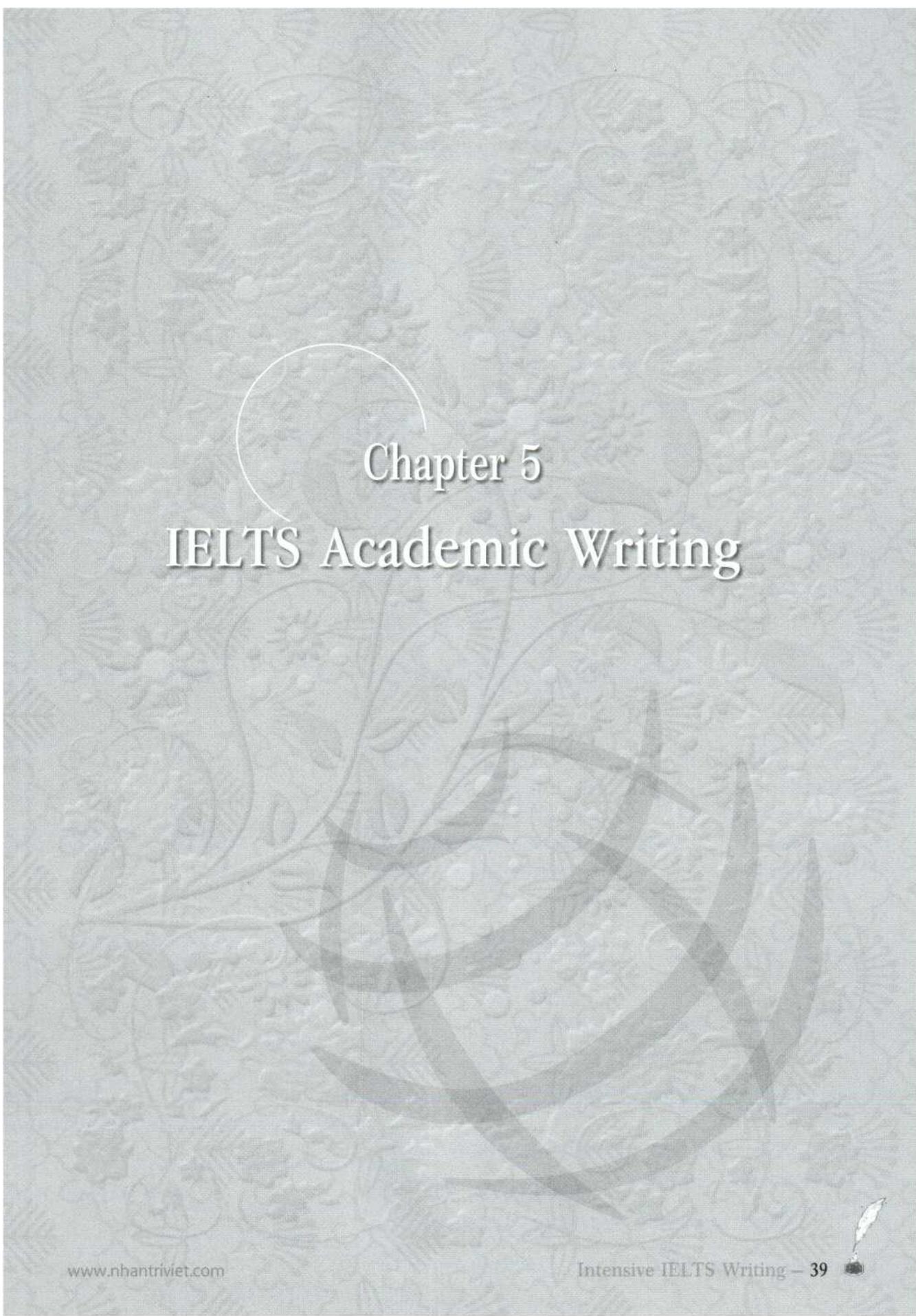
However, in my opinion, this definition of fatherhood is not complete and no longer satisfies the average western male. In the first place, instead of only fulfilling a financial responsibility towards the family, the modern father should involve himself in the everyday activities of bringing up the children. For example, he needs to play with



them, read to them and teach them about the world. Apart from this, the father will have more emotional fulfillment from his family life, as he shares more in the joy, as well as the duties, of child-rearing. Finally, I strongly believe that a father can best teach children qualities such as courage, curiosity and confidence. Therefore, the more he participates in his children's development, the better they will deal with the world when they grow up.

All things considered, it is this second, fuller concept of fatherhood that I agree with. Although in reality, with the stresses and demands of the modern workplace, it is a difficult, yet nonetheless worthwhile, ideal to achieve.





Chapter 5
IELTS Academic Writing

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Intensive IELTS Writing – 39 



Report Writing

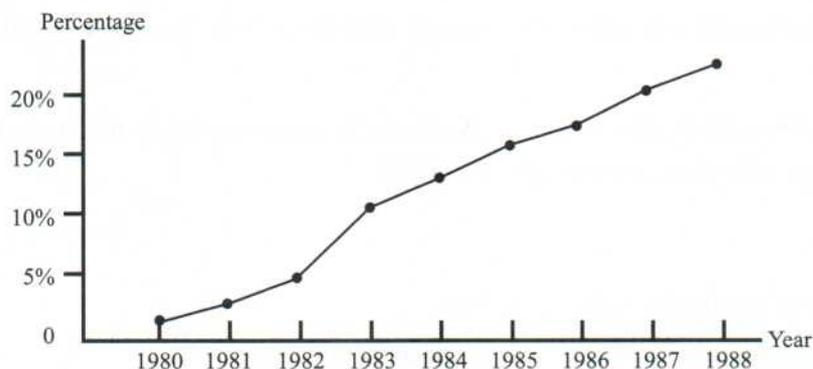
For Task 1, candidates are expected to write a descriptive report of at least 150 words on some graphic data or pictorial information in their own words, usually for a university lecturer. The task requires the ability to organise and describe the information in a logical way and possibly make comparisons or contrasts based on the information provided.

Below is a typical Task 1 question.

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

The line graph below shows the growth of households with personal computers in the US. Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the changes.

You should write at least 150 words.



I. Writing Process

There are three important steps you should follow: preparation, writing, and checking and editing. These steps will help you to write a coherent and well-organised report passage within the time limit.



Step 1: Preparation (about 3 minutes)

You need to spend 2–3 minutes working out exactly what you are going to write. You should bear the following points in mind:

1. Study the question carefully. Most Tasks 1 involve writing a report which describes the visual information given. You should note the instructions by underlining or circling them.
2. Think carefully about the question. Outline some pertinent points.
3. Note the times given for correct use of tenses.
4. Ensure that your ideas are arranged logically including appropriate connectors.

Step 2: Writing (about 15 minutes)

When writing a Task 1 report passage, you have to include:

- An introductory paragraph (1–2 sentences)
- (A) Body paragraph(s) (2–4 sentences)
- A conclusion (optional)

While writing, you should keep the following guides in mind:

1. Introduction

The introductory sentence(s) explain(s) what you are describing. Take the above question as an example:

The line graph describes (illustrates / indicates) the gradually increasing trend of households with personal computers in America from 1980 to 1988.

2. Body

Each paragraph must contain the following points:

- Complete sentences are used in describing the given information.
- Significant trends and examples that relate directly to the given information must be described.
- Verb tenses must correctly be used. Also, transition devices should be added to ensure coherence in your report.

3. Conclusion (optional)

An overall summary of the key point(s) should be written to end the report in an appropriate way.



Step 3: Checking and Editing (about 2 minutes)

For the last few minutes, you have to reread your report to be sure that you have followed the instructions carefully and to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation mistakes.

II. Commonly Used Expressions

Below are expressions that are commonly used in reports.

- **Expressing increase in figures or by percentages / fractions**

1. **increase / rise / be raised / go up / shoot up + by**

Figures

1. to increase by fifty people
2. to rise by eight hundred dollars
3. to increase (rise) by thirty thousand kilograms

Percentages / Fractions

1. to increase (rise / be raised / go up / shoot up) by one per cent
2. to increase by fifty per cent (one half)
3. to increase (rise) by four fifths

2. **increase / rise + to**

Figures

1. to increase (rise) to nine hundred persons (times)
2. to increase (rise) to one thousand sets
3. to increase (rise) to thirty hundred thousand metres

Percentages / Fractions

1. to increase (rise) to ten per cent
2. to increase (rise) to three fifths

3. **come to / reach / jump to**

Figures

1. to come to five thousand tons
2. to reach ten thousand dollars

Percentages / Fractions

1. to come to eighty per cent
2. to jump to (reach) four fifths



4. as ... as / up to

1. as many as (up to) one million kilograms
2. as high as (up to) ninety-three metres
3. as long as (up to) seven thousand kilometres

5. amount to / add up to / cover

1. to amount to five thousand persons (times)
2. to add up to one hundred million dollars
3. to cover an area of totally nine million six hundred thousand square kilometres

• **Expressing by percentages**

1. Its output of cotton went up by 20 per cent.
2. The price was reduced by 18 per cent.
3. Its total output value increased by 11.5 per cent over the previous year.
4. The total volume of state purchase in the first quarter rose by 5.2 per cent, compared with the same period of last year.
5. Its grain output was 16.5 per cent higher than in (than that of) 1976.
6. The output value of chemical fertilizer in the first quarter was 18 per cent above that of the same period in 1975.
7. The output of cars in the U.S. last year was 24 per cent less than in 1973.
8. The March figure for output value registered a 37 per cent increase over February.
9. The loss of metal has been reduced to less than 20%.
10. Australia and the UK both had 10%.
11. The profit rose to 10%.
12. The monthly profit increased from 10% to 20%.
13. The profit remained steady at 10%.
14. The profit peaked at just over 10%.
15. Thailand had the largest percentage (10%) of the students.
16. 30% of the students were from Asian countries.
17. Thailand accounted for 10% of the students.

• **Expressing by multiplication**

Their expense is as much again as what it was. (as many / much again as)

Their expense is twice (two times) as much as what it was.

Their expense is twice (two times) the amount of what it was.

Their expense is now double what it was.

Their expense has now doubled, compared with what it was.



In English, comparison structures are also used to express multiplication.

N times as many (much) as

N times more than

increase N times (-fold)

increase by (to) N times

Examples:

1. Asia is **four** times larger than Europe.
2. The **eightfold** growth in the volume of international trade since the Second World War has provided continuing evidence of GATT's success in the double role.

• **Expressing decrease**

reduce (decrease) N times as many (much) as

N times fewer (less) than

decrease N times

decrease by N times

N-fold reduction

Example:

The product cost decreased three times.

• **More examples:**

1. Our grain output is now 2.4 times that of 1970.
2. Its total industrial output value was up 5.6 times in these years.
3. Its capacity was 7.3 times as great as in 1955.
4. The output of diesel oil for farm use has more than doubled.
5. During this period its territory increased tenfold.
6. The output of chemical fiber has been increased three times as against 1975.
7. Between 1971 and 1975, production of walking tractors was up eightfold.
8. These machines increased productivity threefold.
9. Output of chemical fertilizer was more than 2.5 times greater.
10. Its total output value of industry last year was 83 times as high as that of 1949.
11. The volume of the sun is about 1,300,000 times that of the earth.
12. It is four times as big as Europe.
13. The earth is 49 times the size of the moon.
14. The output of A for 1977 was 20 times over that for 1971.
15. Wheel A turns as fast again as wheel B.
16. They made twice (three times / four times) the profit (the percentage of profit) in May than in March.
17. The profit percentage doubled (increased / decreased threefold) from March to May.
18. This year we have produced as many TV sets again as compared with last year.



• **Expressing approximation**

1. about, around, some, approximately, roughly, more or less, in the neighborhood of, or so, or thereabouts

Examples:

1. The interview lasted about an hour.
2. I had roughly 4 kilometres to go.
3. I can earn 5 dollars a day, more or less, as a milkman.
4. He paid in the neighborhood of \$5,000 or so for the car.

2. fewer than, less than, under, below, within

Examples:

1. Fewer than 20 guests attended the banquet.
2. The jar's capacity is under three quarts.
3. within ten miles of home

3. nearly, almost, towards, close on

Examples:

1. Almost a third of the freshmen said they were working during the summer vacation.
2. The expense rate is rising towards 20%.

4. more than, over, above, upwards of, odd

Examples:

1. I spent over one hundred dollars on this repair.
2. upwards of 60 years old

5. from ... to ..., (anywhere) between ... and ...

Example:

the students aged from 15 to 18

6. ... or ..., or more

Examples:

1. one or two
2. two or three
3. seven hundred or eight hundred
4. ten or more



• **Expressing measurements**

1. to weigh 100 pounds
2. to be five feet and six inches
3. to be 5 metres high (in height)
4. to be 3 metres thick
5. a bed five feet by three and a half feet
6. to measure four feet by three
7. to have a depth of 100 feet
8. to measure 2 feet through
9. to measure 30 inches round
10. to be 50 metres by 30
11. to have (cover) an area of 1,000 square kilometres
12. to have a population of 3,000
13. to have a history of 30 years
14. The length (area /volume) of X is measured in ...
15. The length (width/diameter) of X is ...
16. Readings (measurements) of the speed (temperature) should be taken ...

• **Expressing proportions**

1. five to one
2. in the ratio of about one to twenty
3. to be in direct proportion (ratio) to
4. to be in inverse proportion (ratio) to
5. in the proportion of one part of paint to two parts of water
6. to be in a ratio of X to Y
7. The ratio of A to B (between A and B) is X:Y.
8. The proportion of A to B is X to Y.
9. to be mixed in a proportion of X to Y
10. to be proportionate (proportional) to
11. to be in proportion (to)
12. to be out of proportion (to)
13. to be ill-proportioned



- **Expressing maximum / minimum / average**

1. to have the maximum (minimum) speed (pressure) of X
2. The maximum (minimum) speed (pressure) is X.
3. to have the highest (lowest) weight (density) of X
4. The upper (lower) limit of weight (density) is X.
5. to have an average of X
6. The average length (depth / width) of X is ...

- **Calculations**

1. **Addition**

- X and Y makes Z.
- X plus (added to) Y is (is equal to / equals / makes) Z.
- If you add X to Y, you get Z.
- When X is added to Y, the result (answer) is Z.

2. **Subtraction**

- Y minus X (X subtracted from Y) is (is equal to / equals / makes) Z.
- If you subtract X from (take X away from) Y, you get Z.
- When X is subtracted from (taken away from) Y, the result (answer) is Z.

3. **Multiplication**

- X times (multiplied by) Y is (is equal to / equals / makes) Z.
- If you multiply X by Y, you get Z.
- When X is multiplied by Y, the result (answer) is Z.

4. **Division**

- X divided by Y is (is equal to / equals / makes) Z.
- If you divide X by Y, you get Z.
- When X is divided by Y, the result (answer) is Z.

- **Wholes and Parts**

1. X contains (includes) ...
2. X consists of (is composed of / is made up of) ...
3. The contents of X are ...
4. The composition of X is ...
5. X forms (comprises) ...



- **Categories**

Nouns: classes, types, kinds, divisions, aspects, parts, categories, classifications, characteristics, groups

Verbs: consist of, fall into, divide into, classify as (into), put into, group into, categorize as (into)

Others: most important, less important, former, latter, primary, main, secondary

1. There are ... kinds (types/sorts/varieties) of X.
2. to be divided into ... classes
3. to be of ... kinds (types)
4. to fall into ... classes
5. X may be classified according to (on the basis of / depending on) ...
6. X may be subdivided into ...
7. The classification is based on (upon) ...
8. to be roughly classed under two headings
9. to be classed in four groups
10. to classify ... into two categories
11. to be included under this heading
12. to be streamed into five groups
13. to sort the cards into
14. to be graded according to size and quality

- **Comparisons**

1. a likeness, a similarity, be equal to, similarly, in the same way, equally, in like manner, resemble
2. a variation, dissimilar, a dissimilarity
3. all (just) the same
4. contrary to
5. conversely
6. to be a contrast to
7. by contraries
8. by contrast with
9. likewise
10. equally important
11. for the sake of comparison
12. in contrast with (to)
13. rather
14. whereas



15. on the one hand ... on the other hand
16. to compare ... with
17. to contrast ... with
18. to be superior to
19. to be inferior to
20. to outweigh ... by five pounds
21. to be a head and shoulders above
22. There is no comparison between ...
23. to dwarf
24. to tower over
25. to transcend
26. to be level with
27. to be diametrically opposed to
28. below the average
29. as compared to
30. to compare with
31. to contrast with
32. higher in price
33. low in quality
34. as against
35. X is much (a lot / a great deal / somewhat / considerably / a bit / a little / slightly / hardly / scarcely / only just) bigger (smaller) than Y.
36. X is quite (entirely / totally / completely) different from Y.
37. X is exactly (practically / just / precisely / more or less / almost / nearly / approximately / about / virtually) the same as Y.
38. X and Y are different in every way (respect).
39. X is not quite as (so) strong (big / expensive) as Y.
40. X and Y have a little (something / much / many features) in common.
41. With regard to ..., X is better than Y.
42. One of the differences between X and Y is that ...
43. On the one hand, X is (does / has) ...; on the other hand, X is (does / has) ...
44. be the more (less) ... of the two
45. In relation to (With respect to / In regard to) X, A is twice (three times) as ... as B.
46. There is a slight (slow / gradual / steady / small / sharp / rapid / sudden) increase (rise / decline / decrease / fall / drop / reduction / fluctuation) in X.
47. A comparison between A and B shows (suggests / reveals / results in / demonstrates) that ...



- **Similarities**

1. It seems to be (happens to be) basically (essentially / to some extent) the same as ...
2. to be of the same ...
3. to be similar to ...
4. to be identical in every aspect
5. X corresponds to ...
6. to be extremely alike
7. to show great resemblance
8. to resemble each other
9. to be alike each other

- **Differences**

1. X differs (be different) from Y in shape (in several aspects / in that ...)
2. X can be distinguished from Y by ...
3. X, unlike (as opposed to / as distinct from) Y, has ...
4. It is useful to distinguish (differentiate / make a distinction) between X and Y.
5. X has ... as against (as compared with / as opposed to) ...
6. In spite of (Despite) their similarities (differences) ...

- **Quantities and Amounts**

1. dozen, score, hundred, thousand, million, billion

Examples:

1. several dozen exercise books
2. some dozen (of) people
3. some dozens of people
4. I want a dozen pencils, please!
5. There were dozens of people there.
6. dozens of times
7. three score of people
8. scores of years ago
9. a hundred and one (fifty) things
10. come in thousands
11. thousands of times



2. Other expressions

1. lots and lots of things
2. a flood of letters
3. a multitude of trees
4. a quantity of old books
5. heaps of books
6. quantities of rain
7. volumes of smoke
8. a large amount of light
9. abound with rain
10. a world of difference
11. a small amount
12. few in number
13. all told
14. in all
15. add up to
16. amount to
17. total 10 metres
18. come to 100 dollars
19. 10 days or so
20. in the neighborhood of 200 dollars
21. a rough estimate of 50 metres
22. a scant 4 days ago
23. a book of 500-odd pages
24. 10 metres at the utmost
25. a maximum of 10
26. a minimum of 10
27. give 2 to every 3
28. a good (great) many
29. a great (large / good) number of
30. a great (good) deal of
31. a great (large) amount of
32. a lot of (lots of / plenty of / a large quantity of)
33. a certain (small) number of
34. a certain (small) amount of
35. a small (moderate) quantity of



- **Introductory sentences**

The chart (table / graph / diagram / figures / statistics)

show (describe / illustrate / display / unfold / reveal / compare / present) that (how) ...

According to the chart ...

As is shown in the chart ...

As can be seen from the chart ...

It can be seen from the chart that ...

We can see from the chart that ...

It is clear from the chart that ...

- **Verbs expressing no changes**

remain (stay) the same (unchanged / steady / stable / constant)

level off (out)

stabilize

III. Typical Task 1 Questions

1. Graphic data

1.1 Line graphs

There are two types of line graphs: single line and multiple line graphs.

(1) Single line graphs

a. Features

The function of a line graph is to describe a trend pictorially.

b. Strategies

You have to describe the trend in the graph(s). Your report should be structured with an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Also, tenses should be used appropriately. In the introduction, you should define what the graph(s) is / are about, that is, the date, location, what is being described, etc. The body will indicate the overall trend and describe the graph(s) in detail. You need to decide on the clearest and most logical order to describe the information. Last, the conclusion should sum up the global trend shown on the graph(s).

c. Sample questions

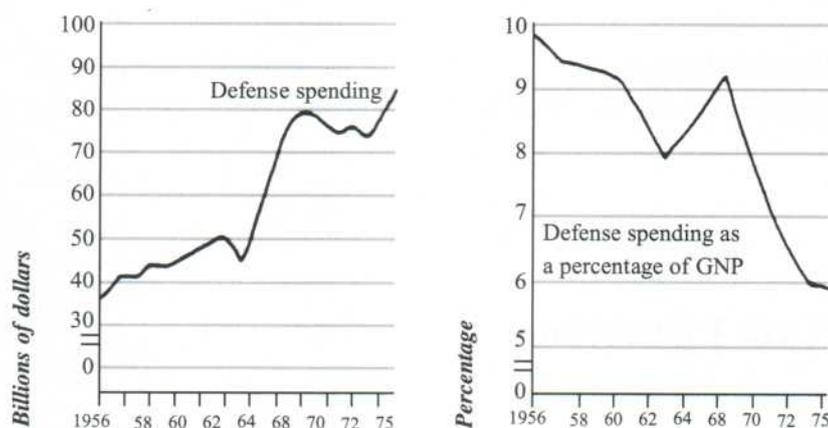


Example 1

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

The line graphs below show the growth of defense spending and its percentage of GNP in USA. Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the changes between 1956 and 1975.

You should write at least 150 words.

**Sample Answer**

The two graphs depict the same thing seen in two different ways. Both show the spending on defense by the US government between 1956 and 1975.

The first graph simply records the amount of money spent, in billions of dollars, during this period. The trend was almost uniformly upward from about \$37 billion in 1956 to around \$85 billion in 1975. The graph rose more steeply between 1964 and 1970.

The second graph throws a new light on the situation. This line expresses defense spending as a percentage of GNP. It reveals that with the exception of the 1963–1969 period, the rise in the amount of money spent on defense was matched by a fall in its value proportionate to the GNP. It declined from a figure of over 9.6% in 1956 to under 6% in 1975.

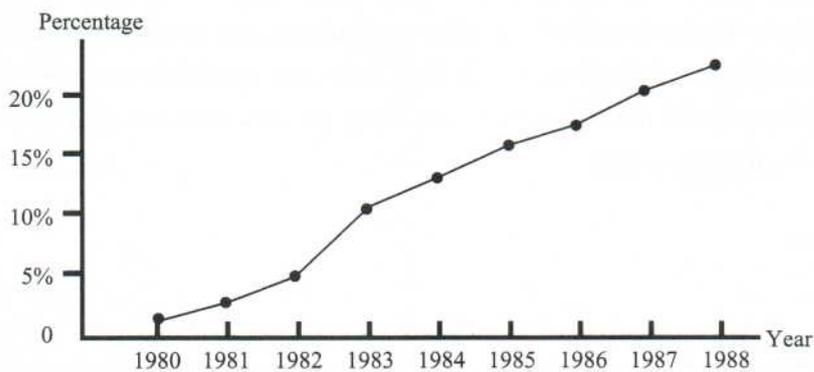


Example 2

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

The line graph below shows the growth of households with personal computers in the US. Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the changes.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The line graph illustrates the trend of households with personal computers in America from 1980 to 1988.

As can be seen from the graph, there was a steadily increasing tendency of personal computers in households in the US. In 1980, only twenty families in every one thousand families in the US possessed a personal computer. However, in 1981, there were forty families in every one thousand families in the US which possessed a computer. The figure was two times of that in 1980. From then on, the line continued to go up until 1987 when two hundred families in every one thousand families in the US had a personal computer; this was ten times of that in 1980. In 1988, the rate of family computer reached as high as two hundred and ten in every one thousand families.



(2) Multiple line graphs

a. Features

A multiple line graph displays two or more sets of data at once for easy comparison purposes.

b. Strategies

Like describing a single line graph, your report should also be structured with an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Noticeably, tenses should be used appropriately. In the introduction, you should define what the graph(s) is/are about, that is, the date, location, what is being described, etc. The body will indicate the overall trends and describe the graph(s) in detail. Especially, the rising or falling changes in data over time should be described and compared in the most logical and understandable way. Last, the conclusion should sum up the global trends shown on the graph(s).

c. Sample questions

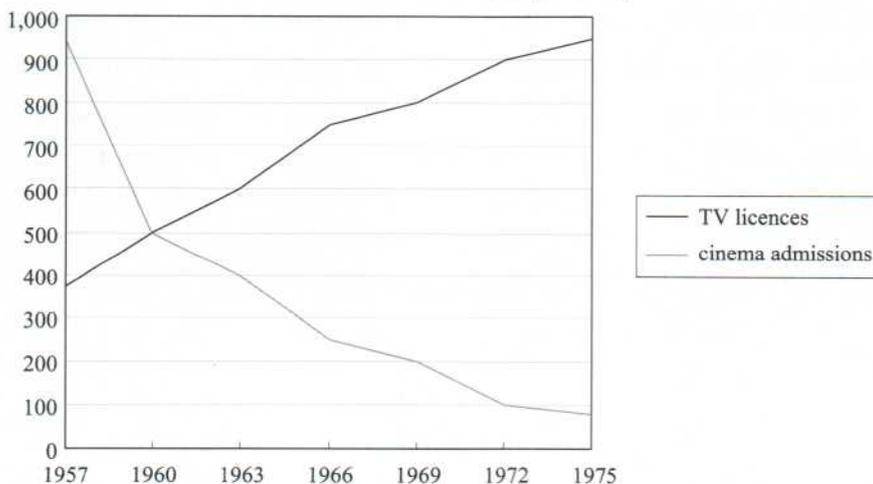
Example 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows changes in the popularity of cinema and television (1957-1975). Write a report on this topic.

You should write at least 150 words.

The changes in the popularity of cinema and television 1957-1975 (millions)



Sample Answer

The line graph describes the changes in the popularity of cinema and television between 1957 and 1975.

According to the graph, over the period from 1957 to 1975, the trend was towards a decrease in the popularity of the cinema. There was a dramatic fall in the number of cinema admissions from 1957, when about 900 million people went to cinema, to 1960, when the attendance figure was exactly 500 million. From 1960 to 1963, the rate of decline slowed down, the figure for the latter year being 400 million. From this year on, there was a more gradual reduction in the popularity of the cinema, reaching a figure of about 90 million in 1975.

In contrast, there was an upward trend in the number of TV licences issued in this period. In 1957, about 390 million licences were issued, and this figure rose steadily, reaching over 700 million in 1966, to a peak of 950 million in 1975.

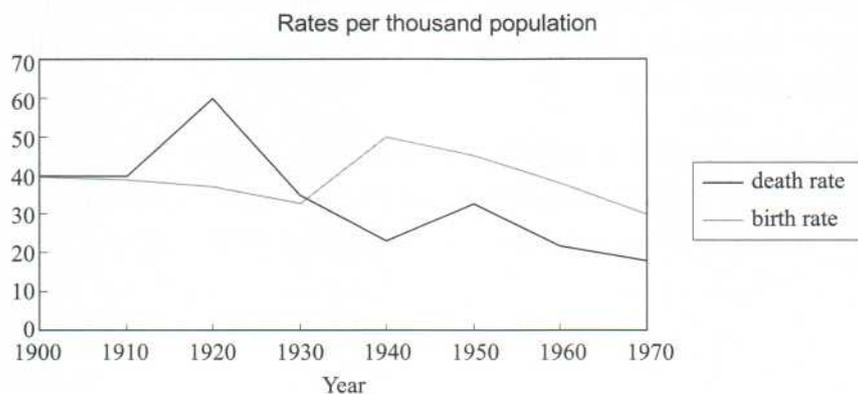


Example 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

Write a composition about the following graph representing birth and death rates in a developing country.

You should write at least 150 words.

**Sample Answer**

As can be seen from the graph, the two curves show the fluctuation of birth and death rates in the first seventy years of the twentieth century in a developing country.

Over the period from 1900 to 1910, the death rate remained constant. In 1910, however, it rose rapidly and reached the peak of 60 per thousand in 1920. From 1920 to 1940, the death rate fell down steeply. There was a slight increase between 1940 and 1950. Since 1950, it began to decline again.

On the other hand, before 1920 the birth rate almost remained level. Then in 1920, it dropped until it recorded over 30 per thousand in 1930. From 1930 to 1940, there was a significant rise, which, since 1940, has been followed by a steady fall.

From the graph, it can be seen that the death rates and birth rates had different trends. From 1900 to 1910, both rates leveled off, and since then, death rates were higher than birth rates; however, after 1930, death rates were surpassed by birth rates.



1.2 Tables

a. Features

Tables can sometimes be tricky as they provide a lot of information, and it is often awkward and difficult to describe every piece of information.

b. Strategies

In completing this task, it is important that you cover all of the information given. However, this does not mean that you should note every detail as there is usually too much information for you to mention each figure. You will, therefore, need to summarise the table in meaningful segments by describing the significant trends. To see the trends in a table, you may start by finding patterns under the horizontal and vertical headings.

c. Sample questions

Example 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below is the income statement of a company. Write a report for the company's board of directors describing the information shown in the table.

You should write at least 150 words.

The Income Statement of ABC Company for the Years 1996-2000(\$1,000)

Revenue	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Net sales	63,386	77,711	86,346	94,886	100,943
Costs and expenses					
Cost of sales	49,238	59,837	63,996	71,818	75,808
Selling expense	7,470	9,234	10,935	11,437	13,104
Administrative expense	2,684	3,867	5,795	5,795	7,308
Engineering expense	1,342	1,689	1,832	1,949	2,109
Gross income	2,652	3,084	4,093	3,887	2,884
Income taxes	1,081	1,281	1,630	1,505	1,254
Net income	1,571	1,803	2,463	2,382	1,630



Sample Answer

The table is the income statement of ABC Company for the period of 1996 to 2000. It displays figures of net sales, costs and expenses, gross income, income taxes and net income. Costs and expenses are further divided into cost of sales, selling expense, administrative expense and engineering expense.

It can be seen from the table that net sales grew steadily in the five-year period, from \$63,386,000 to \$100,943,000. The net income, however, fluctuated. It went up three years in a row till 1998, which was the most profitable year, with a dramatic rise from \$1,571,000 in 1996 to \$2,463,000 in 1998. This was a sharp increase of 56 percent.

Then the net income declined in the following years. The biggest drop of net income occurred in 2000, which saw a decrease of 31 percent, from \$2,382,000 in 1999 to \$1,630,000 in 2000.

Attention should be drawn to the continuing rise of selling and administrative expenses during this period. Though the net sales in 2000 went up by \$37,557,000 compared with the figure of 1996 (\$63,386,000), increases in expenses on sales and administration were disproportionately large.



Example 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below shows the average family income and expenses in the US in 1980 and 1985. Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the changes.

You should write at least 150 words.

Income		1980	1985
		\$12,000	\$16,000
Expenses	Food	18%	22%
	Housing	25%	32%
	Medical	10%	12%
	Entertainment	7%	7%
	Savings	5%	5%
	Others	35%	22%

Sample Answer

The table reveals the average family income and expenses in the United States in 1980 and 1985.

In 1980, the average family income was distributed in the following ways: 18% was spent on food, 25% was spent on housing, which accounted for most of the family expenditure, 10% on medical expenses, 7% on entertainment and 5% went to savings in the bank. The remaining 35% was channeled to other family expenses.

In 1985, the picture was slightly different. With the total family income increased to \$16,000, the percentages of income spent on food, housing and medical care also took an upward turn, which went up to 22%, 32%, and 12% respectively. The percentage of family income spent on entertainment and savings remained the same, while the percentage of money put to other uses dropped from 35% to 22%.

It can be concluded from the table that when people have higher income, they tend to spend more on food, housing and medical care and thus increase the standard of their lives.



Example 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below shows the information about the average length of stay and spend of overseas visitors to Australia. Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the changes.

You should write at least 150 words.

	1994	1995	1996
Length of stay (days)	9.2	10	9
Spend per visit (A\$)	487	499	630
Spend per day (A\$)	50.5	49.9	70

Sample Answer

The table reveals information about how long foreign visitors stayed in Australia. It also provides details on the amount of money those visitors spent. The table covers each of the three years from 1994 to 1996.

The most obvious trend shown by the table is that overseas visitors have spent more money each year during their visits as a whole. The figures for spend per visit rose more than A\$100, from A\$487 to A\$630 over the period.

However, the spend per day figures show some fluctuation, falling slightly in 1995 (by A\$0.6) and then rising dramatically in 1996. This final figure (A\$70) represented an increase of approximately 40% on the 1995 spend.

The other details shown on the table indicate that the length of stay of visitors to Australia varied only slightly over the period, rising from 9.2 days in 1994 to 10 days in 1995 before falling back to 9 days in 1996.



Example 4

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below presents the perceptions of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and their partners/spouses as to the main sources of stress in the CEO lifestyle.

Using the information in the table, describe and compare the ways CEOs and their partners/spouses perceive pressures in the CEO lifestyle.

You should write at least 150 words.

**Perceptions of Pressure in the CEO Lifestyle –
Top-Rated Sources of Stress (percentages)**

Factors perceived to produce stress	Perceptions of CEOs	Perceptions of spouses / partners
Time pressures and deadlines	52	60
Demands of work on private life	48	23
Demands of work on relationship with family	45	29
Work-related travel	39	57
Work overload	37	62
Interpersonal relations	25	21
Long working hours	24	62
Taking work home	24	32
Inadequately trained subordinates	24	17



Sample Answer

The information in the table shows significant differences in the perceptions of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and their spouses or partners on a number of issues.

As far as CEOs were concerned, the three main sources of stress were time pressures and deadlines (52%), demands of work on private life (48%) and demands of work on the relationship with family (45%). The four main sources of stress nominated by their spouses or partners were work overload (62%), long working hours (62%), time pressures and deadlines (60%) and work-related travel (57%). Time pressures and deadlines were tangible factors that both groups were very aware of. However, spouses tended to be more specific in identifying work overload, long working hours, and work-related travel as problems, compared to CEOs who focused on more general “demands of work”. The biggest difference was in the numbers nominating long working hours as a source of stress: 62% of spouses or partners, compared to only 24% of CEOs.

Example 5

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The table below shows social and economic indicators for four countries in 1994, according to the United Nations statistics.

Describe the information shown below in your own words.

You should write at least 150 words.

Indicators	Canada	Japan	Peru	Zaire
Annual income per person in US\$	11,100	15,760	160	130
Life expectancy at birth	76	78	51	47
Daily calorie supply per person	3,326	2,846	1,927	1,749
Adult literacy rate (%)	99	99	68	34



Sample Answer

Indicators of economic and social conditions in four countries, Canada, Japan, Peru and Zaire, in 1994, compiled by the United Nations, reflect the great differences that exist between wealthier and poorer nations.

The table shows that Japan and Canada, as wealthier countries, had annual incomes of \$15,760 and \$11,100 per person, respectively. These figures were overwhelmingly greater than the corresponding figures of \$160 in Peru and \$130 in Zaire.

Health indicators, too, reflected overall levels of affluence in the four nations. Life expectancy at birth, for example, was higher among the more economically developed countries. Japan reported the highest life expectancy, 78. This was followed by Canada, 76; Peru, 51; and Zaire, 47.

The amount of calories consumed daily per person roughly followed the same ranking. Canadians each consumed some 3,326 calories per day whilst the Japanese took 2,846 calories. The corresponding figures for Peru and Zaire were 1,927 and 1,749, respectively.

Literacy rates among adults, too, were higher in wealthier countries. Canada and Japan both reported literacy rates of 99%, while Peru claimed 68%. Zaire had a literacy rate of only 34%.

1.3 Pie charts

a. Features

Pie charts are relatively straightforward as they only usually have a few sections though this is not always the case.

b. Strategies

You need to describe the segments and their values. If there are very many, then just describe the ones that are the most significant. The values are often expressed in percentages but not always; so, be careful what scale you are using.

c. Sample questions

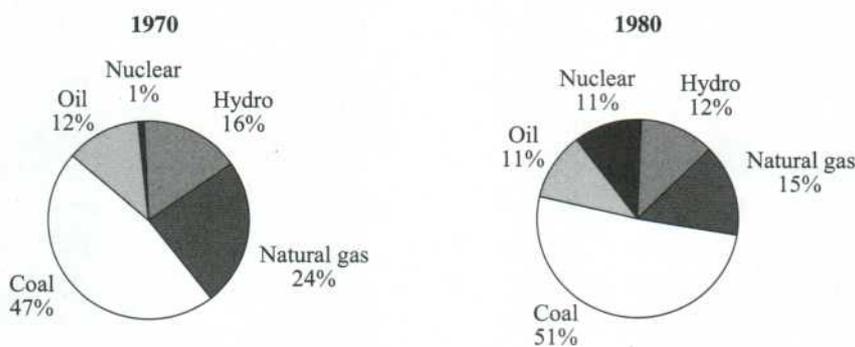


Example 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The pie charts below describe the electric energy production, a major source of energy in the US. Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the information in the charts.

You should write at least 150 words.

**Sample Answer**

The energy sources of the United States electric energy production made up percentages in 1980 different from those in 1970. Among the five major sources of energy are nuclear, coal, natural gas, hydro and oil, some increased whereas others decreased.

Nuclear energy increased greatly during these ten years: rising from only 1 percent in 1970 to 11 percent in 1980. As the biggest source of energy in the United States, coal provided 47 percent of the whole in 1970, and in 1980 it amounted to 51 percent, an increase by 4 percent.

On the other hand, the percentages of the sources of natural gas, hydro and oil decreased. Natural gas fell down from 24 percent in 1970 to 15 percent in 1980. Of the three sources that reduced, oil dropped the least, from 12 percent in 1970 to 11 percent in 1980, a slight decline by 1 percent only.

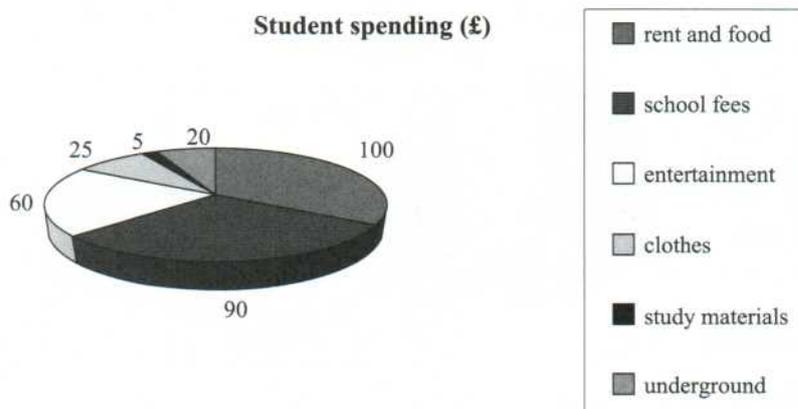


Example 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The pie chart below shows the average way in which foreign students learning English in London spend their money over the course of a week. Write a short report for a university lecturer describing the information.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The pie chart reveals typical spending patterns for foreign students taking English language courses in schools in London. The average spend can be divided very roughly into thirds – the first third being spent on rent and food, the second on school fees and the last divided between entertainment, travel, clothes and study materials. The total weekly spend for international students is shown to be £300 per week.

From the information described in the chart, it can be seen that rent and food accounts for exactly a third of the total amount spent by students, amounting to £100 per week. This is the biggest single expense for students in London.

The second greatest expense is school fees, the average being £90 per week. Entertainment makes up a fifth of the total spend for students in London, and the remaining money (£50) is used to travel on the underground and buy clothes and study materials.

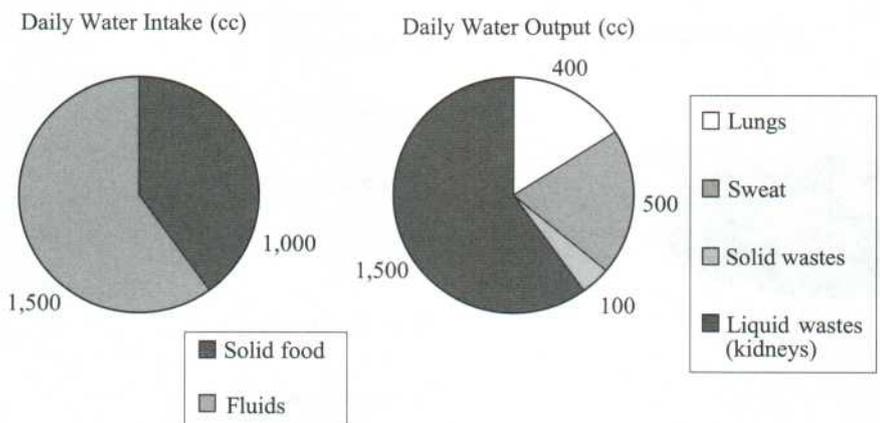


Example 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The two pie charts below show the daily water intake and output of the human body. Write a short report for a university lecturer conveying the information in the two pie charts.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

These two pie charts show the sources for supply of water to and subsequent water losses in the human body on a daily basis. The total losses equal the total inputs to maintain a balance within the body. It can be seen from the charts that this amount totals 2,500cc, both in intake and loss.

Some sixty per cent (1,500cc) of our daily water intake is in the form of fluids, the remaining forty per cent (1,000cc) extracted by the body from the solid food we eat.

Sixty per cent of our daily water losses are fluids processed by our kidneys as liquid wastes. Sixteen per cent (400cc) of our daily water output is processed as water vapor by the lungs when we exhale. An additional twenty per cent (500cc) is lost in the form of sweat, which is the second largest source of water loss in the human body. The remaining four per cent (100cc) is processed as part of solid wastes, thus water loss through solid wastes is only ten per cent of the 1,000cc of water the body extracts from solid food.



1.4 Bar / Column graphs

a. Features

A bar graph is a visual display used to compare the amounts or frequency of occurrence of different characteristics of data. This type of display allows us to compare groups of data, and to make generalisations about the data quickly.

b. Strategies

Basically, with a bar chart, you need to describe the bars and their values. When describing a bar chart, you first have to decide in what order to describe the bars, highest value to lowest value or lowest value to highest value. It may be a mixture of this. If there are very many bars, you can sometimes group together for the description of one or two or three bars which have similar or the same values. If there are very many and you cannot group them, then just describe the ones that are the most significant.

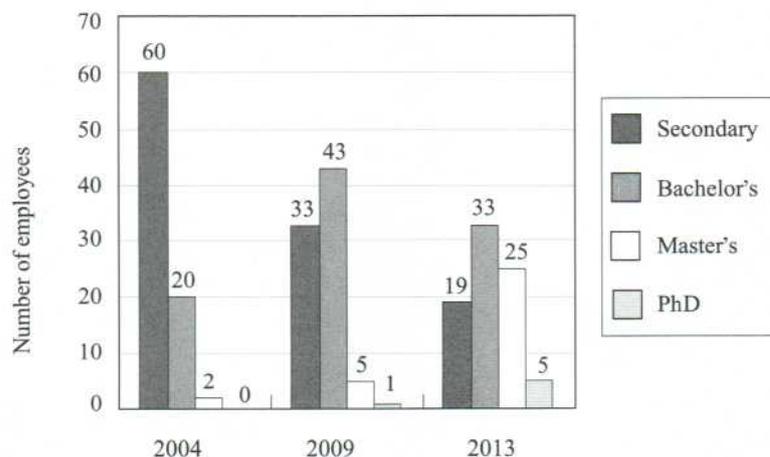
c. Sample questions

Example 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows changes of educational backgrounds of the employees of a company in 2004, 2009 and 2013. Write a report for the company's general manager describing the information shown in the graph.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The column graph shows the changes of educational levels of staff members in a company in the years 2004, 2009 and 2013.

Employees, according to the amount of education they received, are grouped into four categories. Those who completed secondary education fall into the first category. The number of staff members in this group has been falling noticeably in the last ten years, from 60 in 2004 to 19 in 2013. The second group is those with a bachelor's degree. Their number increased during the first half of the decade from 20 to 43 and then the trend reversed. Those who have a master's degree belong to group three. Their number grew all the way in the ten-year period and it can be clearly seen that the speed of increase accelerated in the second half of the decade, which led to a number of 25. People with PhD degrees are the last group. Although at the beginning of the ten-year period, there was no one in the company who had a doctorate degree, now there are five.

In conclusion, workers with higher educational levels are increasing whereas those who hold lower educational degrees are decreasing.

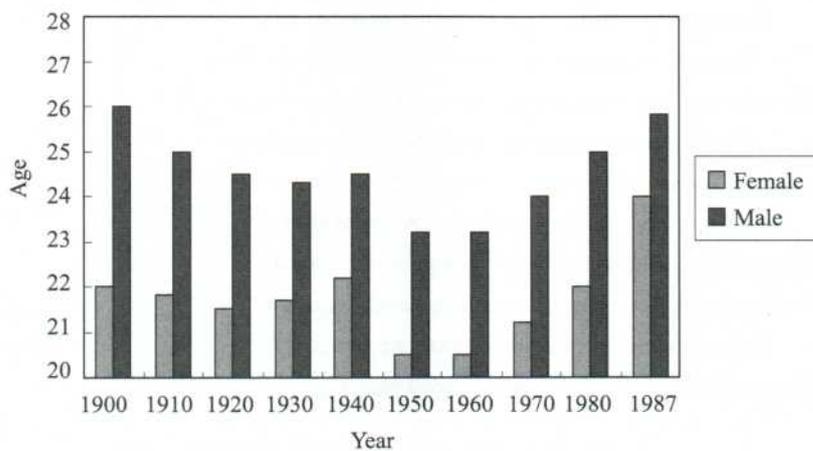


Example 2

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

This is a bar graph of the average age at first marriage of both men and women in the US. Write a report for a university lecturer conveying the information in the graph.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The graph shows the average age at first marriage of both genders in the United States. Generally, women got married at an earlier age than men in the 87 years from 1900 to 1987. The lowest age at first marriage for women occurred between 1950 and 1960, which was slightly over 20 years old. At the same time, that for men dropped to the lowest point, just above 23 years old.

There were two stages of changes in the average age at first marriage for both men and women: from 1900 to 1940 and from 1950 to 1987. During the first 40 years, there was a slow but steady downward tendency of first marriage age for men, dropping from 26 to slightly below 25. Women's age at first marriage also descended from 1900 to 1920, slightly upward from just below 22 in 1920 to just over 22 in 1940.

From 1950 to 1987, there appeared a steady delaying trend in first marriage with men reaching almost 26 in 1987, while women's age at first marriage rose from 22 in 1980 to 24 in 1987, the eldest age for women in the 87 years.

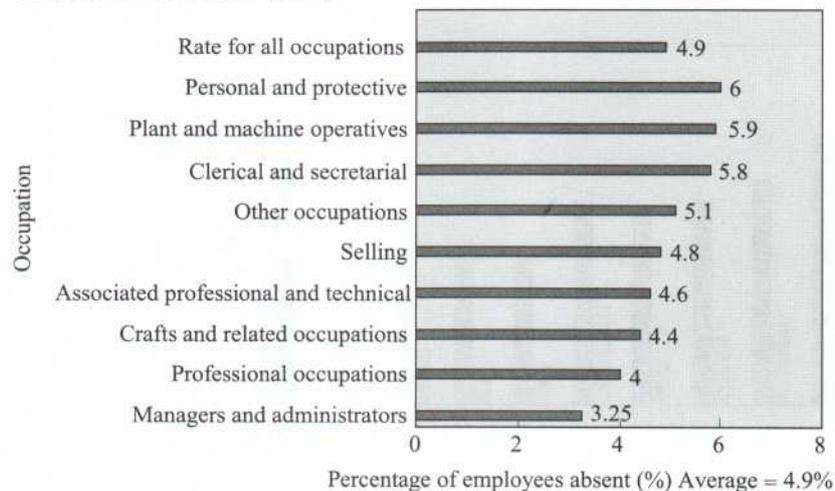


Example 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The figure shows the percentages of employees in each occupation absent from work for at least one day in a reference week in 2001 due to injury or illness. Write a report for a university lecturer conveying the information in the graph.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The bar chart illustrates the percentage of employees in different occupations absent from work because of illness or injury in a given week in 2001.

It is evident that absence rates were lowest for the best remunerated jobs, with managers and administrators recording only 3.25%. This was almost 1% lower than the next lowest rate of absence, that in professional occupations at 4%. Crafts and related occupations reported the absence of 4.4%, only 0.2% lower than that of associated professional and technical workers.

By contrast, the highest rate of absence was found in personal and protective occupations (6%), which was followed by plant and machine operatives and clerical and secretarial jobs. All of these had absence rates of around 6%, noticeably higher than the average rate for all occupations of 4.9%.



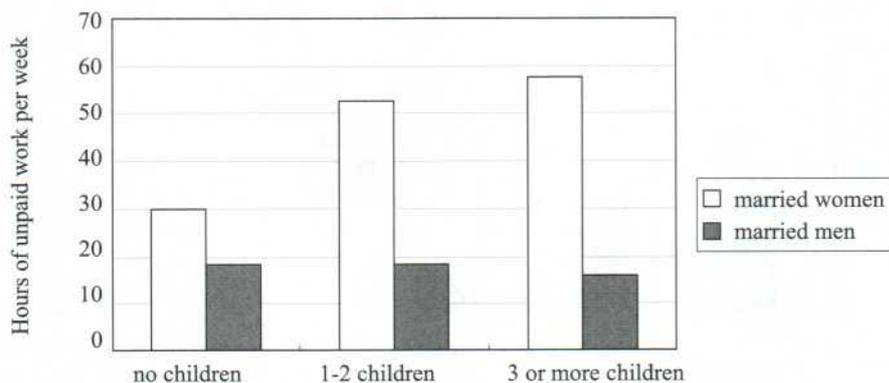
In conclusion, it appears from the data that managers and administrators are the least likely to be absent from work, whilst plant and machine operators and personal and protective staff are the most likely to be off sick.

Example 4

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The chart below shows the average hours of unpaid work per week done by people in different categories. (Unpaid work refers to such categories as childcare in the home, housework and gardening.) Describe the information presented below, comparing results for men and women in the categories shown.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The bar chart shows how the hours of voluntary work are distributed between women and men in different categories on a weekly basis.

In households where there are no children, women are reported to work some 30 hours per week in such tasks as childcare, housework and gardening. Men’s contribution to these unpaid jobs averages a considerably lower 18 hours.

When children enter the household, however, the inequality becomes even more pronounced. In families of 1-2 children, men maintain the same number of hours of unpaid work as in childless households, but the hours for which women work in the home rise to 52 per week.



Interestingly, when there are three or more children in the household, men are found to work even fewer hours around the house than before the appearance of the third child. Whereas women's unpaid hours increase to approximately 59 per week, the corresponding figure for men, 16, actually represents a decrease.

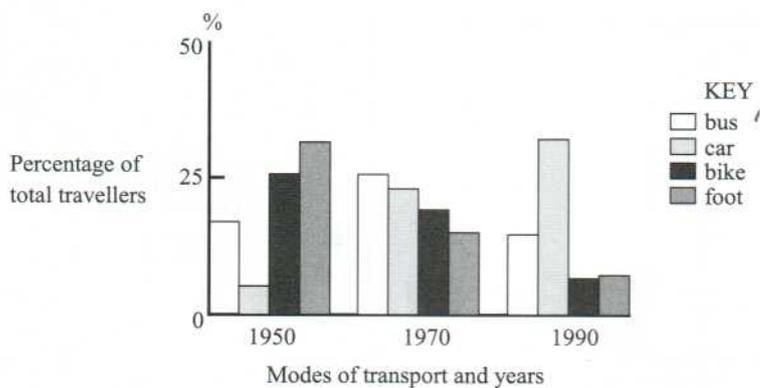
Example 5

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows the different modes of transport used to travel to and from work in one European city, in 1950, 1970 and 1990.

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

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The bar chart indicates many significant changes in means of transport used by city dwellers from 1950 to 1990.

A very noticeable trend was the steady decrease in transportation by bicycle and on foot. In 1950, more than 25% of people traveled to work on foot. However by 1990, less than 10% of travelers were cycling or walking to work.

During the same period, there was a large increase in the use of automobiles. In 1950, only a small number of people used their car. By 1970, approximately one out of every four travelers drove to work. This proportion increased again, until 1990, when one in three travelers drove to work.



The number of people taking the bus increased from 1950 to 1970 and decreased from 1970 to 1990. From 1950 to 1970, buses grew in popularity. But by 1990, traveling by car had become so popular that all other means of transport were less frequently used.

Example 6

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

June 1996, an experimental flu vaccine was trialled in a large country town on females only.

Write a report for a university tutor describing the information shown in the diagrams below.

You should write at least 150 words.

Figure 1. Deaths from Flu
(March to May, and June to August)

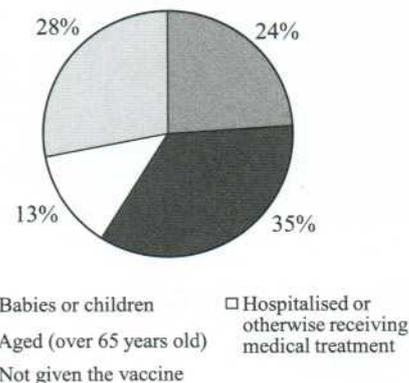
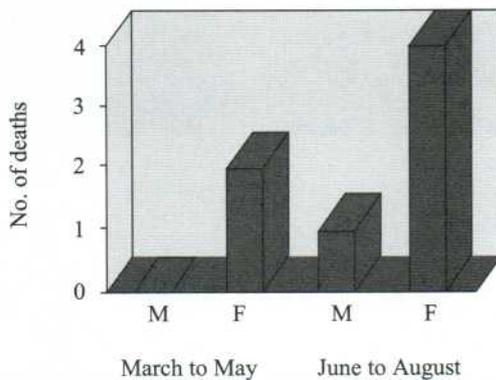
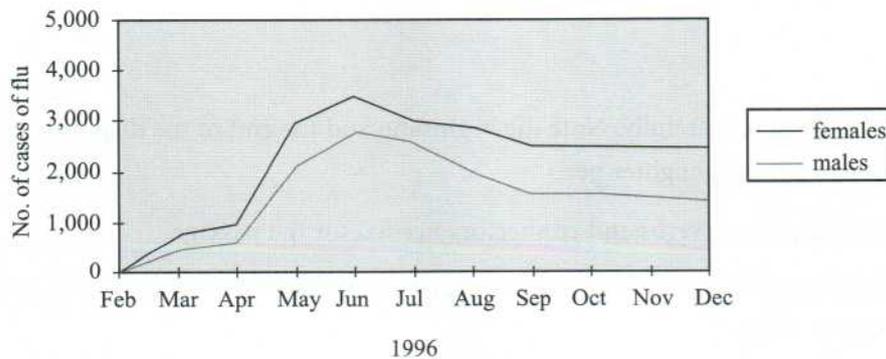


Figure 2. Female recipients of new vaccine groups most at risk

Figure 3. Flu Rates for Males and Females



Sample Answer

The diagrams show data for a flu epidemic which hit a large country town in 1996. Figure 1 gives the number of persons who died; Figure 2 shows the percentage breakdown of females who received a new flu vaccine; and Figure 3 gives the number of cases of flu before and during the epidemic.

In Figure 1, it can be seen that the flu was responsible for the deaths of 2 females but no males in the period from March to May. However, from June to August, there were 4 female deaths and 1 male death.

According to the pie chart in Figure 2, only those females most at risk were given the new flu vaccine; 28% did not take part in the trial. Of those females who took part, 35% were aged (over 65 years old); 24% were babies or children; and 13% were either hospitalised or receiving other medical attention.

From Figure 3, it is clear that the new vaccine had a positive effect on the number of new cases of flu reported in females. There were just less than 1,000 cases reported in March, climbing rapidly to a peak of 3,500 in June. Thereafter, the number of cases dropped slowly to about 2,800 in August, before levelling off at 2,500 for the rest of the year. For males, the figures were lower but showed a similar trend throughout the epidemic.

2. Pictorial information

Flow charts

a. Features

Flow charts are used in designing and documenting complex processes. Like other types of diagrams, they help visualise what is going on and thereby help the viewer to understand a process.

b. Strategies

Step 1: Study the question carefully. Note the beginning and the end of the diagram. Also, note the instructions with a highlighter pen.

Step 2: List some important verbs and connectors needed for the passage.

Step 3: Think of the right tenses to write. If the diagram is about the past, use the past tense; or else, use the present tense.

c. Sample question



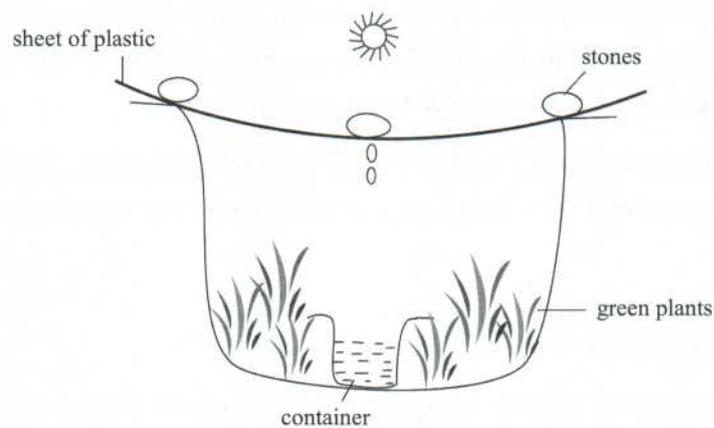
Example

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The diagram below shows the method of obtaining water outdoors.

Write a report describing the process in the diagram.

You should write at least 150 words.



Sample Answer

The diagram describes how water is obtained outdoors.

According to the figure, the first step of obtaining water outdoors is to find a hole with green plants on the bottom. Next, remove the green plants in the middle of the bottom and put a container there. Then, cover the hole with a plastic sheet and place two stones on both ends of it to secure its position. A third stone is laid in the middle of the plastic sheet so that the middle part is also the lowest part.

When the sun shines on the green plants in the hole, water evaporates from these plants. The vapor rises up and then cools down to form water drops on the plastic sheet. When there is more and more water, it flows along the sheet to accumulate on the lowest part. Finally, water falls down into the container directly under the middle stone.

Thus, water is collected successfully through evaporation from green plants.



Essay Writing

Task 2 of both the Academic and General Training modules is quite alike. Candidates are asked to write a short essay of a minimum of 250 words in about 40 minutes. The essay is usually a discussion of a subject of general interest. Candidates have to present and justify their opinion about something, offer a solution to a problem, express an opinion, or speculate about a future trend. Even when the question is related to a specialised area of knowledge, candidates do not need specialist scientific knowledge to write about it.

Task 2 is more important than Task 1 in that there is more 'weighting'. If your performance in Task 1 is not as good as it is in Task 2, you can still receive a good writing score.

I. Writing Process

In this task, you need to write an academic-style essay on the single title given. You have no choices here – you must write only about the one title – so prepare yourself with strategies to write a well-organised essay on a variety of subject areas. It is advisable that you take the following steps:

1. Reading the essay title carefully
2. Planning your essay
3. Writing your well-organised essay with three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion
4. Checking and editing

1. Reading the essay title

The first step in writing any essay is to read and interpret the essay title correctly. It is essential that you have a complete understanding of the title. In the Academic Task 2 Writing, candidates may be required to present an argument for or against a proposition, justify an opinion, or evaluate evidence.

Look at some typical essay titles below.

1. What's your opinion?
State your opinion on this argument.
Do you agree or disagree with the statement?



What are the advantages and disadvantages of having a pet?

Do people spend too much money on pets?

2. What are the reasons?

What are the traffic problems in your country?

How does this compare with the situation in your country?

How can parents make sure their children get enough exercise?

Describe some of the problems that overpopulation causes, and suggest at least one possible solution.

Make some recommendations.

2. Planning your essay

After having analysed the title, you must plan your essay. Planning means you begin with a detailed outline which helps you to organise your thoughts, ideas or opinions before writing to make sure that everything stays on track.

The following points should be brought into your consideration when outlining your essay:

- i. Make sure your essay has an introduction, a body with supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion to sum up the main points.
- ii. Write a thesis statement that identifies the main idea of the essay.
- iii. Make sure that all your paragraphs follow the proper paragraph format.
- iv. Utilise your lexical resource that is most expected by the examiner.
- v. Use a wide range of sentence structures, not only simple sentences, as accurate compound and complex sentences can reveal your academic writing skill.

There are no absolute rules regarding what an outline should be. It does not need to be lengthy – it is simply an organised list of ideas for your essay.

3. Writing your essay

3.1. Introduction

An introduction is the most important part of an essay as it sets the standard and attracts the reader's attention, and gives him / her an idea of the essay focus.

These are the main parts of a good introduction:

- Getting the reader's attention
- Providing background information
- Stating the central idea with a thesis statement



(The thesis statement should be written in one sentence or at most two sentences of what your overall point or argument is and of what your body paragraphs will be about.)

3.2. Body

The basic aim of the body paragraphs is to explain the thesis statement of the essay and therefore to reveal its subject. This is the part where all the arguments are presented very clearly to the reader and are proved by substantial evidence.

The body paragraphs are the core of each essay, and therefore demand special attention and profound knowledge on the matter from the side of the writer.

Every body paragraph must be written according to one general structure:

A topic sentence: Each body paragraph often starts with a topic sentence. The main idea / argument must accurately be written to appeal to the reader.

Supporting sentences: Different established facts or points support the main idea of the essay. The supporting points should not be positioned one after another, but a general discussion of the points should be included in between.

A concluding sentence: Each body paragraph should have a concluding sentence in order to make connection to the next paragraph. This link is a must-have element as this is what makes the essay logically structured.

3.3. Conclusion

The conclusion is the last paragraph of the essay. It is often the most difficult part of an essay to write, and many candidates feel that they have nothing left to say after having written the body paragraphs. You should keep in mind that the conclusion is what a reader remembers best. Your conclusion should, thus, be the best part of your paper.

A conclusion should

- stress the importance of the thesis statement,
- give the essay a sense of completeness, and
- leave a final impression on the reader.

The following approaches may be used for writing a conclusion:

- Repetition

This approach seems to be the simplest. You just restate your introduction in other words.



- **Synthesis**
You do not simply repeat points that were already presented in your essay. You need to show how the points you made and the support and examples you used were not random, but fit together.
- **Raising a rhetorical question**
You may end your essay by raising a rhetorical question to show your reader why the issue just discussed was important, meaningful, or useful.
- **Redirecting your reader**
You may end your essay by giving your reader something to think about, perhaps a way to use your ideas in the “real” world. If your introduction went from general to specific, make your conclusion go from specific to general.
- **Creating a new meaning**
You do not have to give new information to create a new meaning. By demonstrating how your ideas work together, you can create a new picture. Often the sum of the paper is worth more than its parts.
- **Challenging the reader**
By issuing a challenge to your readers, you are helping them to redirect the information in the paper, and they may apply it to their own lives.
- **Looking to the future**
Looking to the future can emphasise the importance of your essay or redirect the readers’ thought process. It may help them apply the new information to their lives or see things more globally.

4. Checking and editing

You should remember to spare some last minutes for checking and editing your essay. Before handing in your paper, you have to read it through to check for vocabulary mistakes like spelling and capitalisation as well as grammar mistakes such as punctuation, subject-verb agreement, and verb tenses.



II. Types of Essay

1. Opinion essay

For this type, you are asked to present your opinion on a social or controversial issue.

1. Key instructions

You mostly find the following key expressions in the titles:

Express your opinion about ...

How do you think about ...

What's your opinion about ...

2. How to answer

To such questions, you are being asked for your personal opinion. That is to say, you tend to present evidence and then draw a general conclusion. Opinion essays are the easiest to write and somehow give you the freedom to express your views on a certain topic.

3. Sample titles

Example 1

Does modern technology make life more convenient, or was life better when technology was simpler?

What's your opinion?

Sample Answer

Modern technology has revolutionized life in three main fields: work, transport, and communications. Although modern technology is often blamed for stress and alienation, I doubt that more than a handful of people would turn back the clock to the pre-technological age, even if that were possible, because of the enormous benefits that technology has brought.

Despite the fact that life was simpler in former times, I would prefer not to return to that lifestyle, because that simplicity represented merely a lack of choice. Before large jet airliners came into use in the 1960s, for example, air travel was beyond the reach of most people. Before electronic cash registers and calculators, one had to spend a lot of time on arithmetic to carry out daily transactions. Furthermore, our knowledge of the world around us, especially foreign countries, was vague and sketchy before television brought



us the vivid images of documentaries. Of course, life is more complex when there are more choices available, but what counts from my point of view is not the supposed complexity of modern decision-making but the value of the results we are able to obtain through modern technology and the ease and speed with which we are able to obtain them. British TV viewers lap up heritage TV series such as 'Upstairs Downstairs' but they tend to forget that that era antedated the washing machine, vacuum cleaner, all labor-saving devices without which modern family life would be unthinkable. Modern technology has brought liberation from much exhausting, boring labor and has set us free to enjoy more interesting work and leisure.

It is not even always true that modern technology is more complex to use than it was to perform household chores manually. Lighting a fire with paper or kindling the wood is a more complex skill than flicking a switch to put on the artificial logs in the grate. Similarly, caring for a horse (for those who could afford it) was a far more complicated and time-consuming affair than starting up a 'horseless carriage' (car) and taking it to the petrol station for its 5,000-mile service. Thirdly, one has only to read novels and diaries from former times to realize the anxiety and frustration which resulted from communication systems limited to the speed of a horse. By contrast, I was recently able to organize a party for people from two other countries within days using emails from Vietnam.

The examples I have given are but a few of the many that could illustrate the case that modern technology makes life more convenient. Probably what makes some people yearn for the good old simple days is that the availability of choices puts pressure on us to make them, and the speed of modern technology pressures us to speed up our pace of life. Sometimes these pressures cannot be resisted. But sometimes they can, when we set ourselves simple priorities and stick to them, not losing sight of the fact that technology is not an end itself but a means to an end, a richer life for the ordinary person at work and leisure.

Example 2

Some people object to governments spending taxpayers' money on the arts, such as paintings and sculptures in public places, because they believe there are higher priorities for public spending.

What's your opinion?



Sample Answer

It is a striking fact that every modern city boasts not only of its prosperity but also of its culture. Cities are showcases for the artistic achievement of their citizens. Yet the erection of paintings and sculptures in public places is an expensive business and sometimes controversial when there are other priorities pressing on the public purse. In principle, however, I approve wholeheartedly of such spending even when the works exhibited are not ones that I would have chosen.

My first consideration is that the so-called higher priorities, whatever they may be in any particular case, do not necessarily command a consensus. Vague approval of this priority or that often dissolves into acrimonious debate when the costs come to be calculated and real commitment called for. Environmental protection, for instance, would be at or near the top of most people's list of priorities, but there is frequently debate about just how far to go. Secondly, even priorities which are universally agreed, such as healthcare, cannot ultimately be satisfied because demand is limitless. Targets have to be set which represent compromises over what can be provided.

For these reasons, I am unpersuaded by arguments about priorities, for these seem to beg the question. Therefore, I would put more weight on the actual value of artistic displays, which, in my opinion, have a number of merits that fall into two categories, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic. By "extrinsic merits" I mean functions which the works of art perform quite apart from their inherent value as works of art. The chief of these, I suppose, is to provide memorials, such as statues of leaders, soldiers and scientists. These serve to remind people of the debt of gratitude we owe to these figures and to make the onlookers feel a sense of pride in being connected with them. By "intrinsic merits" I mean both the artistic value of the works (even though people may have different opinions about these) and the witness that such productions bear to the vitality of our culture. As already mentioned, it seems to be a human instinct to associate culture with cities. Perhaps that is recognition that there is more to life than making money and works of art testify to human aspirations for all-round fulfillment as well as material prosperity.

My opinion, then, is that the promotion of works of art is as much a priority as any other, because art is a basic human achievement; it is unnatural to live without. Naturally, we all wish to avoid the unfortunate precedent set in the Netherlands in the 1970s when public subsidies for the arts produced too many works that the government ran out of storage space. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the public display of works of art is a rational and humane dimension of city planning.



2. Balanced-argument essay

For this type, you are usually given two different views on a social issue. Then, you have to discuss them, and finally offer your own view.

1. Key instructions

You mostly find this key word in the titles: Discuss ...

2. How to answer

The title asks you to discuss both sides of the issue. Therefore, you may start the introduction by presenting the two views. Then, the first body paragraph will discuss the first view with some justifications. Next, the second body paragraph will talk about the second view, also expanding it with some arguments. Last, the conclusion will present your own view, either supporting a certain view or combining both views based on the arguments in the body.

3. Sample title

Example

The costs of medical health care are increasing all the time. Governments are finding it difficult to balance the health care budget.

Should citizens be totally responsible for their own health care costs and take out private health insurance, or is it better to have a comprehensive health care system which provides free health services for all? Discuss.

Sample Answer

A much debated issue these days is whether citizens should take out private health insurance or not. The cost of providing free medical care for both the wealthy and the poor is far too great for any government, and most people agree that if you can pay for insurance, you should. In this essay, I will argue that all who can afford it should be insured, but free medical care must be made available for those too poor to do so.

The most important reason for encouraging people to take out private health insurance is the cost to the government of health care. Free health cover for people who are able to pay for it is a waste of public money. Of course, people will only pay health insurance premiums if they know that they are getting good value for their



money. If they get sick, they should pay very little or nothing at all. In addition, the privately insured are entitled to special benefits such as having the choice of their own doctors, and being able to avoid long waiting lists for hospital beds.

On the other hand, those who really cannot afford to pay private insurance premiums, which are often very high, are still entitled as citizens to the best medical care available – they cannot be expected to pay their own medical bills. However, if they are working, they should still pay a percentage of their wage (say 1 to 2%) as a tax which pays towards the cost of providing ‘free’ medical services.

In conclusion, most people should privately insure their health, but it is unreasonable to suppose that all citizens can afford it. Therefore, a safety net in the form of a basic free health care system must exist for the very poor and the unemployed.

3. Enumerative essay

The third type is the enumerative essay. This is usually given when the title is about a phenomenon. Your task is to suggest some solutions to the identified phenomenon.

1. Key instructions

You mostly find the following key expressions in the titles:

- Give your opinions and give some recommendations.
- Give reasons and make some suggestions.

2. How to answer

The way you develop these titles into an essay is similar to that of the previously learnt types. A slight difference is you do not have to discuss the issue but just present some suggestions or solutions to the question.

3. Sample title

Example

Many young people find their first day at high school or college difficult, because they feel very alone. What do you think are the other difficulties they face on their first day? What can schools and colleges do to make them feel more comfortable?



Sample Answer

It is not uncommon these days for high school or college freshmen to feel lonely on their first day at school. They get lost on campus, fail to catch sight of any familiar face or have nobody to turn to for help. In my view, this increasingly common and serious issue is an indication of the wide gap between these students' unrealistic vision of school life and disappointing reality.

Some of the difficulties students encounter concern logistics. For example, they are puzzled as to the location of the students' cafeterias, where to register, or how they can retrieve information from the school library. To tackle these problems, a well-organized orientation session starting from the very first day would seem helpful. Students feel more at home if they have a detailed campus map, with every place they need to go marked on it.

More often, students' sense of alienation arises from their own assumption of inadequacy as they face the new period of an independent life. This is natural enough after long years of childhood, when they were completely under their parents' control. On their first day in the new environment, they are frustrated to find that what they aspired – a brave new world – turns out to be a strange and alien one, and they are afraid that they may become even more disillusioned in the days to come.

Yet, with efforts from the schools, the prospect of the gap being bridged is far from dim. Schools and colleges can invite prospective students for a brief campus tour before the new semester starts. Junior or senior students can be organized to share their own experiences of campus life with freshmen. Students should also be encouraged to recognize the fact that they are now beginning to be responsible for themselves. In this way, students will develop a confident feeling about themselves as capable people.

4. Discussion essay

For this type of essay, you are first given an opinion and then asked to agree or disagree with it.

1. Key instructions

You mostly find the following questions in the titles:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the point of view?

Do you agree or disagree?

To what extent do you support this statement?



2. How to answer

There are four or five paragraphs for this type of essay. It begins with an introduction, where you will state the argument in the title and express the side you are taking in the argument (either agree or disagree). Then, in the body, the first idea is discussed to support your opinion. The second and third paragraphs continue with the second and third ideas to expand more on your opinion. The conclusion ends by repeating your view.

3. Sample title

Example

Disruptive school students have a negative influence on others. Students who are noisy and disobedient should be grouped together and taught separately.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this point of view?

Sample Answer

It is an inescapable fact that a small, but troublesome minority of school students behave badly, some only occasionally but others regularly. Their behavior presents problems both for the teachers and their fellow students and ultimately for themselves. Disruptive pupils distract their classmates and may either introduce a note of hostility and an atmosphere of fear into the classroom or turn the lesson time into a comedy show centered on themselves. They may terrorize their classmates or become their heroes. In either case, they damage the learning environment and destroy the authority of the teacher. It has been suggested that disruptive students should be grouped together and taught separately. Personally, I am against this suggestion for a number of reasons and justifications.

One solution is to segregate these students in a “sin bin” where they are taught on their own. However, although this may seem a logical solution, taking this easy way out may cause as many problems as it solves. First, the segregated students will in practice receive fewer educational opportunities than peers when in fact they need more. Secondly, the experience of being excluded within the society of school may embitter them against society in general and they may go on to a career of crime and anti-social behavior.

Before we take such drastic action as exclusion, we should consider alternatives. Old-fashioned as it may seem, I believe that for disruptive students below age 14, the short,



sharp shock of corporal punishment, like we used to get if we played up in class at my school, is often effective in enforcing authority. But for older pupils, experienced teachers generally agreed that corporal punishment is ineffective. Secondly, we should look into the underlying cause of disruptive behavior. A weak, incompetent or unfair teacher can bring such difficulties upon themselves. In that case, it is the teacher who needs counseling and support. Indeed, it may simply be that the lessons are boring and fail to give the students a sense of achievement, progress and pride in their development. Such students may need more challenging, more imaginatively planned lessons and the chance, for example, to do some project work without constant direct supervision. To some extent, of course it is unrealistic to expect all lessons to be exciting and fun: education, like the rest of life, can be a hard grind and learning how to cope with it can be a useful lesson in itself. Only a handful of students who cannot respond positively to attempts to improve the quality of their school life should be segregated.

Therefore, before we condemn disruptive students to a special class or school, we should look at factors such as the teaching because once these students have been separated, it is unlikely they will be brought back and they may find themselves set on a lifetime of anti-social behavior.

5. Advantage-Disadvantage essay

An advantage-disadvantage essay is the one which is based on facts and weighs the options to come to a conclusion. It is somewhat similar to a comparison essay.

1. Key instructions

You mostly find these key phrases in the titles:

- advantages and disadvantages
- benefits and dangers
- strengths and weaknesses
- merits and drawbacks
- positive and negative

2. How to answer

When you write an essay about advantages and disadvantages, remember that you are not going to persuade the reader but simply provide a simple analysis of both sides of an issue and give due consideration.

3. Sample title



Example

Advertisement plays a major role on TV in developed market economies. Despite the benefits of such information, many people are critical of the role of TV advertising. Write an essay analyzing the positive and negative effects of TV advertisement.

Sample Answer

Although our main TV channels come into our living rooms free, the price of watching TV is the time we spend watching the advertisements. Unlike on the Internet, where we can often disable pop-up advertising windows, we cannot screen TV advertisements out of our lives. The question is, is the price worth paying?

Obviously, these advertisements can be distracting and have other bad effects, but before we jump on the bandwagon to write them off, let us consider some of the points that may be made in their defense. In the first place, advertisements provide information, and information is essential to a modern economy because it brings those who have products and services to sell into contact with those who want to buy. Indeed, advertisements are the most efficient means of such communication and arguably help to keep the price of consumer goods down. (There is, of course, another category of advertisement: public service announcements about jobs, college courses, health and so forth. But these are not generally called in question.) In the second place, the advertising industry is in itself a significant source of employment. Thirdly, to take another tack, advertisements are often witty, charming and well filmed, a source of entertainment in themselves. Finally, we should not overlook the fact that advertisements make most TV possible in the first place, through the revenue they generate for the broadcasters. Thus, TV advertisements provide a range of economic and cultural benefits.

Clearly, however, TV advertisements present a number of objectionable features. Most obviously, they interrupt the programs, distract our attention and may spoil our enjoyment or learning. More seriously, TV advertisements accustom us to viewing and listening in snatches, shortening our attention span and encouraging us to listen only to sound bites rather than consider issues carefully. Then there is the question of the messages the advertisements convey. These are not only information but also a whole host of subtle and not-so-subtle suggestions. Advertisements do not simply give us information about products we may want to buy, they also arouse in us desires to buy new products and leave us dissatisfied until we have bought them. At a deeper level, advertisements often present us with an alluring fantasy world that makes us false promises of



happiness, wealth, intelligence, popularity and so forth, if we will only buy the product on offer. Advertisements thus threaten to turn our culture into a collection of commodities and create wasteful consumption: throwaway products mean throwaway lifestyles.

Given the practical realities of the modern economy, we cannot avoid advertisements on TV. But at least we can evaluate their messages and their ultimate effect. That is the way to keep our feet on the ground and not be overly swayed by them.

III. Well-written Sample Essays

WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Present a written argument or case to an educated reader with no specialist knowledge of the following topic.

1.

Some people think that animals should be treated as friends. Yet, others only consider animals as sources of food and clothing.

What is your opinion?

You should use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your arguments with examples and relevant evidence.

You should write at least 250 words.



Sample Answer

There is a growing tendency nowadays for some people to treat animals as living meat and walking fur. This leads to the cruel slaughter of animals all over the world every year. Yet, in my opinion, instead of killing animals, human beings should treat them as their friends.

It is an undeniable fact that animals play a vital role in maintaining the subtle balance of the earth's ecological system. The lack of this essential part will bring about the destruction of the whole world. Therefore, to some extent, killing animals is equal to digging our own graves.

For thousands of years, many animals have given loyal service to humans. Pigeons convey messages in wartime, and dogs help to detect crime. Even pigs, which many people think are the most stupid animals, are used in the battle against drugs. There is no doubt that our lives would be far less convenient without a little help from our animal friends.

Animals also help humans in a spiritual way. There is nothing better than keeping a cat or a dog if you want your kids to be more independent and responsible. It is also noted that senior citizens live longer if they keep pets after their retirement.

To sum up, animals are human beings' friends. Those who regard animals as merely a source of food and clothing should at least bear one thing in mind: Being kind to animals is being kind to ourselves. Therefore, for our own future benefit, please treat animals with love and care.



2.

Computers are widely used in education, and some people think teachers will not play an important role in the classroom. To what extent do you agree?

Sample Answer

With the present wide use of computers, in the course of teaching, more and more teachers are in favour of using computers as an aid in teaching their students or in appropriating the latest information from the Internet. However, I am not a believer in the argument that computers may in the future take the place of teachers in teaching students.

Firstly, the creators of any education programme and software need to be teachers or workers in the education system, or programmers who had previously worked in education. Therefore, although students may learn knowledge by computer, the skills and ideas ultimately emanate from the teaching staff.

Secondly, while the computer may offer a correct answer or explanation to students, the comprehension capability of every student varies from student to student, making it impossible for the computer to offer an explanation catered to a student's particular level of understanding. However, the teacher is able to undertake this task, as he or she possesses expertise in teaching. For example, when a teacher discovers that many students cannot understand professional knowledge, he or she may offer explanatory examples. The computer, however, may only analyse a question in terms of a simple right or wrong response.

Finally, teachers are invariably responsible for carrying a dual role. Most teachers act as not only an educator, but also a kind of father or mother – figure in taking care of students in school. The teacher is able to assist parents in solving a child's mental problems other than imparting daily knowledge. The computer, which is purely an algorithmic electronic device, cannot hope to assist in this regard.

In summary, the computer may not play a major role in education in comparison to the benefits that a teacher actually provides. However, it is critical that teachers improve their old teaching modes by using computers at some level of educational teaching.



3.

After birth, what will play a major role in one's personality and development? Nature or nurture?

Sample Answer

While many individuals complain that they are not sufficiently clever to succeed in life, I firmly believe that personality and development are decided more by environment and education after birth than any given gene.

To begin with, environment is a determining factor of one's personality. One may think that personality is already shaped once a baby is born, but in fact, there are many contributing factors. The baby, for instance, would most likely be pessimistic if he or she lived in a poor family, where the baby always received punishment from his parents. His view of life would be very different from another individual who lived happily in a perfect nurturing family with encouragement and psychological support from his parents.

Further, education after birth plays a significant role in one's development. Education, which helps children develop their thinking and accumulate their knowledge, is a deciding factor of one's success. For example, a high-school level person commonly may not succeed to the extent of a person who has received a university education. This is not only because of the greater breadth of knowledge acquired, but also due to a more critical and focused way of thinking that is imparted and refined during one's senior education. A wolf child, to offer another instance, due to a deficiency of education by contact with human beings, could hardly live in our society or self-develop.

Admittedly, nature, decided by the genes given by one's parents, also affects one's personality and development. One can clearly find differences among younger kids in their learning ability, which could prove the importance of genes in this regard. However, when compared with other factors after birth, the role genes play in one's personality and development may not be particularly significant. Not all genius will inevitably be successful, and similarly, not all great men are genius in their childhood. Therefore, I hold that environment and education after birth weigh heavier than nature in regard to one's personality and development.



4.

In Britain, when someone gets old, they often go to live with other old people in a house where there are nurses to look after them. Sometimes the government has to pay for this care.

Who should be responsible for our old people?

Give reasons for your answer.

Sample Answer

One of the most challenging problems of today's society is the question of who should be responsible for our elderly. It is not only a financial problem but also a question of system we want for our society. I would like to discuss four possible models.

First, the employer could be responsible for its retired employees. To make this possible, a special fund may be established. The advantage of this model is that it should be the least expensive solution provided. But one possible problem does emerge. When a company must take lifelong responsibility for its employees, it may suffer from a competitive disadvantage due to higher employee costs.

Second, the government may take responsibility for the care of the elderly. This may be financed through tax revenues. This has often been an integral part of a community. In this model, each person can receive equal treatment. Unfortunately, as the present situation in some developing countries shows, this is not a truly viable solution. The governments can seldom afford to care for the elderly, particularly when they are busy trying to care for the young.

Another way of solving the problem is to return the responsibility to the individual. This means each person must save during his working years to pay for his years of retirement. This does not seem a very fair model since some people have enough trouble paying for their daily life without trying to earn an extra to cover their retirement years. This means the government might have to step in to care for the needy.

One further solution is a return to the old social system based on the extended family. In this model, the family cares for its elderly members. However, this system does not seem to fit the modern social structure in which families are more mobile and based on a nuclear setup.



In fact, I must admit that I have no definite solution for this problem. Each of the models I have presented has both advantages and disadvantages. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that some combination of these models may be needed to provide the care we hope to give to our elderly generations.

5.

It is often said that the subjects taught in schools are too academic in orientation and that it would be more useful for children to learn about practical matters such as home management, work and interpersonal skills. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

A criticism often heard these days is that the subjects taught in schools tend to be too academic and contribute little to preparing a young person for the real-life tasks he or she will have to perform after graduation. They say that academic subjects are rooted in the past and are not useful for solving modern problems. I disagree with this point of view for three reasons.

My first reason is that it is the duty of parents, not teachers, to prepare their children to deal with the practical affairs of life. The home, not the classroom, is the ideal place to learn about home management and interpersonal skills. As for work abilities and attitudes, they are best learned “on the job” and under the supervision of an experienced older worker.

My second reason is that academic subjects have withstood the test of time. They represent the accumulated wisdom of our ancestors down through the ages, and, far from being impractical, they equip us with the knowledge and confidence to make sound judgements about any problems which may crop up. In addition, academic subjects are good for training us in mental discipline, while practical subjects are weak in this regard.

My third reason is based on the saying “Man does not live by bread alone.” Schooldays devoted solely to instruction in down-to-earth practical matters would be dull indeed. Lessons in the best literature of the world and the epoch-making scientific and geographical discoveries of the past enrich our lives and make us feel that we are part of the great family of mankind.

All in all, the teaching of academic subjects in schools is entirely appropriate. It is my firmly held view that practical subjects have no place in the classroom. On the contrary, the curriculum should be more academic.



6.

At present it is hard for college graduates to find jobs. Many people claim that college teachers should give priority to practical courses like computer science and business over such traditional ones as history and geography. What do you think?

Sample Answer

These days there is a growing tendency for college students to have difficulties in finding jobs when they graduate. A large number of people hold the opinion that lack of practical knowledge, among other things, contributes to this situation. In light of this, they contend that college teachers should lay more stress on practical courses than on traditional ones. For my part, I am in favour of their viewpoint.

In the first place, emphasis on practical courses is demanded by our ever-developing society. As society has entered the information age and commercialization is sweeping across the world, computer science and business courses are geared to the social demand. Conversely, if a student has little knowledge of computer science or business, he will lag behind the times. In addition, it seems that traditional courses are out of date. They are either too theoretical or too academic, so they cannot be directly applied to the tasks of real life.

In the second place, practical knowledge has a direct bearing on future job prospects. There is no denying the fact that the students better equipped with practical knowledge are more competitive in job-hunting, while those majoring in history, geography and the like have few job opportunities. It turns out that many of them have to take jobs below their abilities. Harsh reality confirms that traditional courses have lost much ground.

When all the factors are examined, we may safely come to the conclusion that the balance should be tipped toward practical courses in school curriculums. College education, in my opinion, should become more attuned to the demands of employers.



7.

Nowadays, the quality of education is very low. Some people think that we should encourage our students to evaluate and criticize their teachers; others believe that this would result in a loss of respect and discipline in the classroom. Discuss.

Sample Answer

The normal practice at school is that the students take the teachers as they are, accept what they are taught and do what they are told to do. Could the students be a little more active? Some concerned people believe that some change is needed and that students should be encouraged to evaluate or even criticize their teachers so as to improve the quality of education, whereas others fear that such a practice might give rise to indiscipline and disrespect for teachers.

Proponents of such a change hold that, by encouraging students to form and voice their own opinions of their teachers and what they teach, the teachers would be able to gain a better view of how what they teach is received and perceived. The teachers would be able to find out for themselves whether or not they should slow down, speak louder, be a little more demonstrative and patient, or even switch to a more suitable teaching method. More importantly, the supporters of such a change contend that this practice would further encourage students to have original ideas, gain a deeper understanding of their lessons and learn the art of disagreeing. Furthermore, feedback from the students may also help to eliminate unqualified or irresponsible teachers. Hence, proponents come to the happy conclusion that in this way students and teachers would have better communication with each other, and thus the quality of education as a whole would be greatly raised.

Opponents of such a practice argue that by adopting this “critical” method, students might be encouraged to argue, to disagree and to criticize. They might even take advantage of this well-meant attempt to achieve their own petty purposes (such as having less homework), to make fun of the teacher, and so on. In that case, the goal of teaching students to be well behaved and polite would be only a dream. At the end of the day, the opponents maintain that, as formal education is a serious matter, such a practice, though well intended, should not be allowed.

Although both sides of the argument have their strong points, I personally agree with the former view. As “to err is human,” so it is the case with teachers. If the students have the chance to voice their opinions, not only will there be a cozy and liberal



atmosphere in class, but both parties will benefit from the stimulus-response process. Of course, all criticism and disagreement should be offered in a proper way and without ill intentions.

8.

Happiness is difficult to define. Why? What factors are necessary to achieve happiness?

Sample Answer 1

Happiness is a must in life. But what on earth is happiness? Some people are happy when they have made money, while others are happy when they have found their true love. As for me, I find bliss when I am reading an interesting book in a warm and pretty room. Evidently, a thousand people will have a thousand different definitions of happiness. Why is it difficult to define, or rather discover and achieve, happiness? I think the major determinant lies in a person's attitude.

In my opinion, there is little correlation between the circumstances of people's lives and how happy they are. A moment's reflection should make this obvious. We all know people who have a relatively easy and comfortable life, and yet are essentially unhappy. And we also know people who have suffered a great deal but generally remain happy. Therefore, happiness is actually of one's own making. If you have a positive attitude and are determined to find the little happiness of life, you are destined to be jolly.

In the second place, happiness lies in the struggle to be happy. People sometimes go to extremes and frantically pursue money, power, high social status, and so on, which are all symbols of success – but never of happiness. Perhaps if they shifted their life's goal from ultimate success to unswerving efforts and to a confidence that they will be successful one day, they would be a great deal happier.

Besides defining it, how do people achieve happiness? No doubt, different people have different ways of going about this task. The following is mine: The first secret is gratitude. All happy people are grateful. Ungrateful people cannot be happy. We tend to think that being unhappy leads people to complain, but it is truer to say that complaining leads to people becoming unhappy. The second secret is realizing that happiness is a by-product of something else. The most obvious sources are those pursuits that give our lives a purpose. These can be anything from playing tennis to studying insects. The more passions we have, the more happiness we are likely to experience.



Sample Answer 2

There is no denying that each and every one of us is longing for happiness. However, we may find it difficult to find a universal definition of the concept of happiness. Diverse reasons can be identified as contributing to this situation. The following represents my view on how to obtain happiness.

The most immediate reason for it being difficult for us to define the concept of happiness is the multitude of attitudes among average people. For example, a sick person is likely to deem health the thing that will most likely bring him or her happiness; a lonely heart tends to regard genuine love from other human beings as the greatest happiness; and a man confined to a wheelchair will have no other wish than to walk like a normal person.

An equally important reason that makes it difficult for one to clarify the idea of happiness lies in the ever-changing requirements of individuals. It goes without saying that a high school graduate may consider admission to a key university the happiest moment of his or her life. But soon, the excitement gives way to the fascination of studying overseas. Then he or she maintains that the greatest happiness is to have the dream of going abroad realized overnight.

An additional reason that makes it difficult for average people to understand the true meaning of happiness rests with the subtle distinction between “taking” and “giving”. For some people, the thought of “taking” gives them a thrill, while many others insist that true happiness can only be derived from generous “giving”. For the former, profit gained in business, help offered by a neighbor or a diploma granted by a school is sufficient to excite them, while the latter consider the chance to offer help and the opportunity to live on one’s own to be the happiest thing in life.

In view of the above reasoning, I am convinced that it is difficult to define the word “happiness” and that it is advisable for every person to adjust his or her understanding of happiness to reality. It is also clear to me that, despite the lack of a universal definition, true happiness is probably derived from “giving”.



9.

Scientists are doing experiments on live animals for the purpose of research nowadays. Some people believe that this is not only cruel but also unnecessary; others think it is in the interest of mankind as a whole. Discuss.

Sample Answer

There is no denying that experiments on live animals have become controversial, not only for professionals but also for the public as a whole. Some say that such experiments are cruel and would like to put an end to them, while others maintain that they are beneficial for mankind. I would like to discuss this issue from both perspectives.

For the people who lend their support to such experiments, the gaining of first-hand knowledge and information about certain species provides adequate justification for continuing the killing of animals in laboratories. Moreover, the protection of human beings from certain epidemics at the cost of the lives of some animals justifies the work of researchers, according to this way of thinking. In addition, they cite the accumulated knowledge about those animals as contributing to their survival. Therefore, they argue for the necessity of such experiments.

For the people who wish to see the legal prohibition of such experiments, animal rights, especially the right to exist on the same planet with human beings, are always top of their list of arguments. Moreover, they worry about species that are already on the verge of extinction. Above all, they have confidence that advances in science and technology will eventually produce ways to replace the killing of animals in the laboratory.

From the above discussion, we can easily conclude that both proponents and opponents of animal experiments have their respective reasons and justifications. However, as a supporter of animal rights, I would like to apply myself to finding ways for the outright banning of animal slaughter in the laboratories on the excuse of scientific research. Furthermore, it is my sincere wish that more people will join me in this sacred effort to save animals, the friends of mankind.



10.

Many people believe that zoos should be closed because it is cruel to keep animals locked up. Moreover, zoos do not have a positive role to play in society.

Write an essay expressing your point of view.

Sample Answer

There are two sides to every story, and that includes zoos. We must admit that to imprison animals in such small spaces is something that goes against their nature. We can also say that zoos, unlike big shopping malls that can make large amounts of cash flow all the time, are burning money every day. But can you imagine a decent city without a zoo?

On the one hand, zoos provide recreation and refreshment for fatigued urban dwellers. People relax when appreciating an elegant swan or a playful chimpanzee. This kind of relaxation is something that cannot be obtained through modern entertainment means, such as karaoke or discos. It is a purely natural sensation.

On the other hand, zoos are important to small children. If zoos are places of recreation for adults, then they must be an educational place for small children. Do you remember the first time you were taken to a zoo? I am sure it was something you will remember all your life. Small children learn how to protect animals through observing them and this will also add to their knowledge something they will never acquire in the classroom.

Finally, viewed from the scientific aspect, zoos are crucial for protecting certain rare species from extinction. For instance, the survival rate of babies of giant pandas increases when they are raised in advanced facilities in zoos. Zoos also assist research facilities to carry out harmless scientific research on animals' living patterns.

In a word, we should pay more attention to our zoos instead of closing them. This will be beneficial for our planet, our descendants and ourselves.



11.

A great number of people think that those with university education should get higher pay than those without, for they believe that the former have sweated and sacrificed more.

To what extent do you agree with this point of view?

Sample Answer

Many people believe that those who have received higher education should earn far more than those who have not, because the former have exerted more efforts than the latter. Personally I do not agree with this opinion for the following reasons.

To begin with, one's individual income does not wholly reflect the extent to which one's self-value and social value are realized. A person who has received higher education may offer more social value than one who has not. Economists and merchants may serve as perfect examples to verify this point for both are engaged in the economic sphere. Nevertheless, the former might create more economic returns for society, while the latter might bring himself more economic profits. In fact, both have gained what is deserving of their capabilities.

In the second place, some people who have admirable capabilities have not had the opportunity to receive higher education. Then, after years of exertions and hard struggle, they secure a proper place for themselves in society and realize their own self-value. Such people have received no college education. However, they deserve what they have earned.

All in all, it is ridiculous to rack one's brains about who, a man with a higher education or another one without it, should earn more money than the other. One's earnings cannot be solely determined by his or her educational background. We should observe what kind of effort a person has made and decide how we are to define "personal income" before finally judging who should earn more.



12.

Some people regard traditional clothes as out of date and no longer suitable. But others advocate that we should encourage more and more people to wear traditional clothes. Write an essay to state your opinion and reasons.

Sample Answer

With the recent rapid economic development, the pace of life is becoming faster and faster. Consequently, few people nowadays like traditional clothes. On the other hand, there are still people who consider traditional clothes an inalienable part of our cultural tradition, and suggest that appropriate measures be taken to promote the wearing of our traditional garments. In my view, whether to wear traditional clothes or not is not a very critical matter, and personal tastes should be respected.

As long as they keep us warm and comfortable, we have the right to choose whatever clothes we like. Clothing might be a part of our traditional culture, but we certainly need not be oversensitive to new things. Compared with those old-fashioned ones, Western-style clothes are more comfortable, and the material they use is more environmentally friendly. In some cases, modern clothes are even cheaper and more convenient to wear.

In addition, clothing may change with time and according to circumstances. A glorious civilization can be illustrated in many different ways, and some of them are vanishing. For example, in my country, the Tet holiday used to be always accompanied by the sound of firecrackers. But now, they have been banned. Tradition, including clothing, is changing.

On the other hand, it might be appropriate to wear traditional clothes on special occasions. In fact, they are now preferred by some people during festivals and ceremonies. As a consequence, certain types of traditional clothes have become popular in recent years. Of course, this is also a matter of personal choice.

In a word, everybody has the right to choose his or her clothes. If you do not like traditional clothes, just wear jeans, T-shirts, sweaters or suits; if you like traditional ones, go ahead.



13.

Some people think that old people should not be forced by law to retire at a certain age if they wish to continue working. Do you agree with this point of view?

Sample Answer

There has long been a debate about whether old people should be forced to retire from work at the age of around sixty regardless of their own wishes. People in favor of this say that old people, having worked for over thirty or forty years, should not go on working. Personally, I do not feel that old people should be forced to retire simply because they are not as strong as they used to be physically and mentally.

It seems to me that no one should be forced to change his or her lifestyle unless he or she has committed a crime. People, whether they are old or young, should have the right to decide their own way of life. Just as young people can choose to stop working and enjoy their leisure time as long as they can make ends meet, old people should also be allowed to continue working, provided that they are still qualified for their jobs.

Although old people are unlikely to face physically challenging tasks, there are many jobs that are especially suitable for them, such as jobs that call for more experience and wisdom than physical power. With their rich experience in both work and life, many old people would make good consultants, instructors, coaches, doctors and psychologists, to mention just a few.

Unlike young people who are burdened with the financial pressure of making a living, for old people, there is more to work than just making money. They simply enjoy working as an indispensable part of their lives. Some of them even develop various mental and physical problems after retiring from work, and it seems that the best way to keep them in good health and high spirits is to allow them to keep working.

All in all, I believe that not only should old people's physical conditions be taken into consideration but also their psychological needs should be respected. Therefore, letting them do whatever they are fond and capable of doing will make them much happier than forcing them to stay isolated from society and endure loneliness in their twilight years.



14.

Some people think that children should be taught to compete, but others think that children should be taught to co-operate to become more useful adults. State some reasons for both views and give your own opinions.

Sample Answer

Both competition and cooperation play a large role in the advancement of society, both in business and non-business areas. Competition forces people to improve their products or services, and hence benefits the recipients of these products or services. Cooperation, however, plays an even more important role in the development of individuals and the society as a whole, because it drastically increases the scale of these improvements. Working in groups and teams far increases the productivity of individuals. Thus, I firmly believe children should be taught to cooperate rather than to compete.

First of all, cooperation is an important skill in the future life of all children. They will need to live with other people throughout their life, since they will not study alone, work alone, nor spend their leisure time alone. If they do not know how to cooperate with their classmates, their colleagues, and other family members, then they will lose the chance to live happily. Thus, cooperation skills should be taught before they grow up to face serious problems living with others.

Furthermore, cooperation is a significant contributing factor to the development of society. While competition generally ends in a win-lose result, cooperation advocates that one plus one is larger than two, three or even a larger number. For example, the competition of two business firms would ultimately lead to the result that one becomes stronger and the other fails and goes out of business. However, if they cooperate with each other successfully, they may group together to form an enterprise larger than the mere sum of the two. The more successful cooperation there is, the better the society develops. Thus, cooperation should be taught to children, because eventually they will be the executives of important corporations.

Admittedly, competition also plays a significant role in many areas. Stressed by the competition, individuals and organizations have to struggle to survive, and so they are forced to make improvements and develop.



However, in comparison, cooperation is more effective in helping individuals and societies to develop, because it benefits not only individuals, but also society as a whole. The reality is that children should be taught both, but if forced to choose only one, parents should undoubtedly teach their kids to cooperate rather than compete.

15.

If a five-year-old commits a crime, should the parents be held responsible and punished? What is the age of the child do you think parents should not take the responsibility?

Sample Answer

Some people argue that if a child aged five perpetrates a crime, his or her parents should be held accountable and be punished accordingly. Others dispute this. My personal opinion sides with the former.

First of all, it is stipulated in law that parents, as the sole guardians of their children, are responsible for all their children's misconduct. That is quite reasonable actually because almost all the notions of children in their early age are either inherited from or learned from their parents. In other words, the youngsters' misdeeds are mainly the consequence of replicating their parents' transgressions.

Also, even if some children commit a crime and try to imitate some violent scenes on television, their parents should never shun their responsibilities either. The reason lies in the fact that adults are supposed to decide which television programmes their children could have access to. And if parents fail to perform this task, they should be responsible for explaining the context of violence in TV shows to their children. Furthermore, it is believed that before the children are going to commit a crime, their behaviors seem to be somehow eccentric. And it is the parents who can notice these signs in time and take some precautionary measures.

In conclusion, parents should be held responsible for the offenses of their children regardless of whether the adults influence the young to do so. However, after the young have passed their adolescence, specifically on their 18th birthday, they should be developed well enough both mentally and physically. Hence, they, rather than their parents, should take responsibility for their own actions.



16.

It is right that college graduates earn higher salaries than the less well-educated in the community. So they should also pay the full cost of their study. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

It is commonly recognized that wages are the appropriate compensation for tasks completed or jobs successfully performed. Yet it is often the case that people with higher education have been offered more money than those without. I find it justifiable but do not share the opinion that college graduates should be fully responsible for their educational expenses.

It can be argued that some successful people do not have a college degree, yet they are very wealthy. In actual fact, the success of many Hollywood movie stars as well as sports professionals can testify to this argument. However, people who have received college education can generally make a greater contribution to their employers and their country. As a result, compared with most high school graduates, they have higher salaries on average. Indeed, people without a college degree are usually insufficiently prepared or not well trained to fit for the positions normally held by college graduates. Many high school leavers are thus restrained to menial jobs.

Besides, college graduates have made more sacrifices and spend more years studying than high school graduates. And a higher income is the ideal compensation for their efforts made and sweat shed. If the highly educated does not have a higher, not to mention a lower, income, then people would be discouraged from entering the tertiary institution and so it may do harm to the national economy.

Some people would argue that since society gives college graduates more money, they need to pay their full cost of education as a return. Yet we should not ignore that many students come from average or even disadvantaged families. Without the financial aid from the university or the country, they may not be able to support themselves to complete their education. In addition, the attraction of a partly or fully funded college education can act as a driving force for students to aspire for higher education.

In summary, it is quite reasonable for the highly educated to have a more handsome pay than the less well-educated and they should be financed in their college study.



17.

Young people are important resources to their country. But governments may ignore some problems faced by young people in running the country. In your experience, what does the government need to do to support young people? Show these problems and give your ideas or suggestions to solve this issue.

Sample Answer

Young people are the future of a country, and therefore indispensable to a nation. Yet governments overlook some problems confronting the young while busying themselves in the daily business of governance. The following paragraphs will consider some of these problems before some tackling approaches are being ventured.

First of all, the young generation spends too much time in front of computer screens, primarily surfing online and playing computer games, which are detrimental to their physique. Therefore, governments should encourage young people to use their time in more constructive ways. They should utilize all means possible to emphasize young people's obligations to society and make them see that they have to be both mentally and physically prepared in order to maximize their own value to humanity.

That X-rated films or books available on TV or the Internet exert great negative impacts on the innocent minds of the young is another issue to which the government should give adequate heed. Tighter control of the information young people can access is a must. Censorship standards of the press, TV, and the Internet should be stipulated and set forth so that the interests of the young can be protected.

Moreover, some youngsters are haunted by the lack of parental love in families, and this is one reason some youngsters resort to crime. Governments should establish specific organizations to help bridge the gap between parents and their children and recruit charitable specialists to work toward this endeavor.

In summary, young people face a lot of problems. Governments should do much to help them stick to the right path in life, realize their dreams and leave a legacy for coming generations.



18.

Unlike most other countries, the police in the UK do not commonly carry guns. Some people think this practice leaves citizens unprotected; others believe it could reduce the overall violence in the society. Discuss both sides of the view and give your own opinion.

Sample Answer

It would be unusual if a policeman in the UK could carry a gun when he is on duty. Different people hold different opinions on such a policy. The following passage will present the pros and cons of it, along with my personal views.

The strengths of policemen's carrying a gun while on duty lie principally in the fact that potential criminals could be deterred by firearms in the hands of the police. It would make criminals reconsider the risks involved if the police have guns, and sometimes they might quit before any real damage was done.

However, its strengths are dwarfed by its weaknesses. Firstly, there is this possibility of a policeman's accidentally shooting an ordinary citizen while trying to capture a criminal. Secondly, gun control and regulation would become more difficult if the police forces were equipped with guns since both their family members and those who are close to them have easy access to their weapons. Thirdly, policemen carrying guns on duty might imply that the city they are living in is flooded with illicit activities, and their lives are so unsafe that the policemen have to bring guns with them to work in order to protect themselves. That would certainly not be good for social stability.

In brief, the UK practice of police officers not carrying guns on duty seems to be a much more appealing option.



19.

Traffic and housing problems in major cities would be solved by moving big companies, factories and their employees to the countryside. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

In major cities, problems with transportation and living conditions are problems most people have to face every day. Some people hold that the principal reason for these problems lies with the big companies and factories located in the city proper. They believe that these companies, factories and even their employees should be moved to the countryside. This is not a satisfactory solution, though.

Like anyone else, people engaged by big companies and factories do cause some traffic jams if they drive cars on their way to and from work, and some of them also have difficulty finding an ideal house to dwell in. Great as the number of such employees is, they only constitute a small proportion of the entire population, which consists of more people living in the cities and working in other sectors, such as small firms and schools. In consequence, moving those in big companies and factories to the countryside may ease the transportation and living conditions to a certain extent, but it will not lead to a radical change of the already existing situation.

Moreover, the real cause of traffic and housing problems is that the infrastructure at the moment cannot meet the demand of the rapid development of the cities. Moving companies and employees out only brings about a temporary solution, but does not effect a long-lasting cure. Policies should be made to allow more roads, overpasses, and skyscrapers to be built so as to accommodate the increasing number of automobiles and citizens.

In conclusion, actions to implement the improvement of the current traffic and housing problems should await the participation of governments, big and small companies and factories, and people from all walks of life rather than that of a small portion of employees.



20.

Nowadays men are becoming more and more greedy and selfish. We should return to older, traditional values and show respect for family and local community. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

The modern world is one brimming over with vigor and energy. People endeavor to pursue personal success, which causes them to become increasingly self-centered and their demands more far-reaching. Some suggest that we should abide by traditional values and care more for groups like the family and local community. I agree with this idea.

The pursuit of individual happiness is widely advocated, and there are a great many people who have some of the material conditions of happiness, that is, a desirable income, a decent house, and so on. But it is the very same group of people who are profoundly unhappy. Their fault lies with a wrong theory of how to achieve success. In order to maintain their lifestyle, they have to make more money and only have time to mind their own business. They can seldom spare time to exercise, have dinner with their family, and take part in their neighborhood activities. This kind of life is fashionable and modern, but devoid of what makes life worth living.

Traditional values attach more importance to the function of family and community, where people may receive something beyond just individual success. From society, they obtain encouragement when they are in difficulty and win praise when they overcome an obstacle. When they receive help from someone, they feel the need to help another in return. In this case, the whole of society functions as a unit in which people give and take equally.

For those so-called successful but unhappy people, going all out to satisfy their greed does not yield real pleasure. On the contrary, if they observe traditional values and show respect for their family and neighborhood, they will enjoy true success.



21.

Some people who have been successful in society do not attribute their success to the theoretical knowledge they learned from their university. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

Each person's road to success is different. Some successful people believe their eventual success has nothing to do with the theoretical knowledge they learned in university. I vote for this opinion as well.

First of all, we must admit that there are quite a lot of successful people who make their fortune with the knowledge they acquire in college, but there are also cases where there is no connection. We can see no relation between university studies and his success in someone who used to be majored in steel forging but later becomes a famous singer, and in another one who used to choose environmental protection as his specialty and later turns out to be a renowned writer.

Even for those whose occupations are closely related to their university studies, sometimes what they learned at the university is out of fashion when they graduate due to the fast-changing technology. The updating of theoretical knowledge often exceeds the pace of learning. More ridiculously, the textbooks in some universities are too obsolete to guide the students on to the right way. Therefore, the disparity between theoretical knowledge and practical application forces some college graduates to break away from what they learned in school.

At university, students should not only learn theoretical knowledge itself, but also study the skills of how to acquire the knowledge and apply it in the real practice. With those skills, even a school leaver who has not completed the university education can make his mark and contribute to the society.



22.

Nowadays, international tourism is the biggest industry in the world. Unfortunately, international tourism creates tension rather than understanding between people from different cultures. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

Traveling around the world is not only an effective way for people to ease tension in daily life and work, but also is a direct way to explore the wonder of the world and other cultures. Nowadays, international tourism has become a very large industry. However, many people maintain that traveling to other parts of the world creates tension rather than understanding between people from different cultures. I think there are some valid points in this argument.

The difference in language, culture, customs, and lifestyle often results in conflicts between tourists and local residents. People from various countries and regions often have different attitudes towards the same thing or behavior, thus causing further misunderstanding. For example, a traveler knowing nothing about giving tips may feel quite puzzled when a waiter stands by and stares at him after the bill of the meal is paid in an American restaurant, while that waiter may feel insulted.

Traveling in a developing country, tourists from industrialized countries may feel separated from local inhabitants. They may make the latter feel more miserable by the sharp contrast between them. The increase in international tourists will directly lead to the rise in prices, which means nothing to the travelers but imposes physical and economic pressure on the local residents. At this stage, the local citizens may attribute all this to the international travelers, who are unaware of what they have caused and are subject to disrespect.

Wonderful as it seems to be, the negative aspects of international tourism cannot be overlooked. Anyone going to another country should be taught to observe local customs and understand the conventional wisdom of that country. Otherwise a well-intentioned vacation may turn out to be a nightmare.



23.

The government should control the amount of violence in films and on television in order to decrease the level of violent crimes in the society. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

Nowadays, the amount of violence in films and on television seems to have climbed at an unprecedented rate. Some people argue that this is closely related to the increase of violent crimes in society. As a result, they suggest that the government should take some actions to control violence in the entertainment industry, which is of course welcomed by me.

Being interviewed, a good many criminals claim that when they were in their childhood, they took the heroes of violent films and television programs as role models. Every now and then they can watch the films or television programs with pictures of violence, murder, rape, kidnapping, terrorism, and so on. Sometimes even to their surprise, the evil guys do not get punished at the end of the films or TV programs. Young people are curious about new experiences, and they hardly have the sense to distinguish between right and wrong. Quite often they follow the example of their heroes, and commit crimes without even realizing what they are doing.

On the other hand, a certain amount of violence and its miserable consequences can warn people and guard them from crimes in the real world. To control the amount of violence in films and on television does not necessarily mean to eradicate it. What the government should do is to regulate the proportion of violent pictures and carefully examine them before they are shown. Another way is to limit the broadcast times of these kinds of programs.

As entertainment for people in their spare time, violent programs can attract the attention of many people. But if the amount of violence in films and on television constitutes a threat to society, the government should definitely take the above-mentioned actions to control it and purify the screens and souls of people as well.



24.

Computers do not help children learn more efficiently; on the contrary, computers used in schools have negative effects on children's physical and mental development. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

Some people hold the view that computers used to teach children fail to enhance youngsters' learning while exerting undesirable effects on the development of their mind and physique. I agree with this idea.

Computers negatively impact children's minds. General features of children determine that they are not keen on using computers as a way of acquiring knowledge and accumulating information. Rather, they are mainly into diverse computer games and the illusive but intriguing world in the game. Thus, it is imaginable that if teenagers are immersed in an "academic" environment like that, a comprehensive mental education is not the direction where computers point children to.

Children's obsession with the Internet serves as another example of computers' bad influence on the young mind. Hordes of pornographic entertainment materials are available for consumption by innocent minds. A premature contact with such information will definitely trouble children a lot and might, in some cases, lead them astray.

On the basis of children's infatuation with computer games and the Internet, it can be concluded that computer using can be addictive. One immediate aftermath of such an addiction is children's sacrificing their time of playing outside for sitting in front of the computer screen for hours on end. Under such circumstances, no one is entitled to pronounce that such a practice is beneficial to the advancement of children's physique.

In short, the incorporation of computers into children's school education does not bear the pleasant results preconceived by some people. Quite the opposite, it has fathered many disagreeable outcomes.



25.

It is not necessary for students to go to school, because more information is accessible on the Internet. Instead, children can study at home. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

Presently there is a prevalent viewpoint that students need not accept school education. They can study at home for the Internet could provide them with more information. Unfortunately, I do not find my agreement in this regard.

First of all, one of the primary missions of school education is to endow students with an ability of studying and self-teaching which will benefit them for their entire life. It is true that the Internet, a convergence of knowledge of all disciplines, could provide far more information than any individual educational institution. However, students with no capability of studying by themselves will never be able to employ the omnipotent cyberspace to cater to their own study.

Further, schools could also serve as a venue where students make friends with one other and improve their communication skills step by step. Nevertheless, students' being insulated from their peers and studying at home obviously do not help to materialize their value as a social person. Besides, if they were left growing up all by themselves, even though they might be equipped with an enormous amount of information in all the conceivable fields of studies, they would find it difficult to voice their opinions and convey their feelings effectively simply due to their lack of such experiences.

The previous two arguments are based on the assumption that the Internet is flooded with useful information that is helpful to students' learning. However, the fact is that the World Wide Web is also swarmed with much detrimental information. Students with no prominent ability of differentiation might be easily misled. When they are studying at school under the guidance of teachers, the situation will be more appealing.

The English poet John Donne once said, "No man is an island, entire of itself". It goes without exception as to students. Their studying at home through the Internet is not a pleasant option when improving their ability of self-learning and of communication is taken into account.



26.

Differences between countries are becoming less evident nowadays. People tend to have the same films, music, brands, TV channels, and so on. To what extent do you think the disadvantages outweigh the advantages?

Sample Answer 1

A prevailing phenomenon nowadays is that countries on the earth are becoming more and more assimilated. People at every corner of the globe incline to share and enjoy the same spiritual as well as material life together. Such a trend has both merits and demerits. As for me, the former prevails over the latter.

The drawbacks of such a global village are multifarious. Some people are really concerned about the loss of their national identity. Others feel upset at the prospect of cultural and economic globalization, which will endanger the jobs of people in many industries. In the upcoming future, they are afraid cultural diversity will be a historical term.

On the contrary, optimists come up with many novel ideas countering the opinions mentioned above. They feel that globalization spells more opportunities for the world. The conformity of all the countries in the fields of fashion and entertainment, among many others, will eventually lead to greater harmony. If that were realized, peace might dominate the planet. Appreciation of the same films, music and clothing, to name just a few, will not murder man's creativity and innovation. The creative spirit in the industries highlighting innovation will only be rejuvenated, not stifled. Besides, improved communications along with globalization will inject more and more momentum to the education industry, with the aspect of language education in particular. This is another aspect of how globalization benefits the world.

All in all, the fact that globalization has blurred the boundaries among various nations and ethnic groups is a general trend. It has both upsides and downsides. But it is my firm belief that its benefits outweigh the negatives.



Sample Answer 2

Globalization creates conditions for widening international exchanges, strengthening mutual understanding between nations, expanding cultural, educational, and scientific cooperation between nations and countries, enjoying the cultural achievements of people around the world, which encourages the process of modernization and the enrichment of national culture.

However, these conditions also create the possible danger of diminishing the national culture with a negative impact on the preservation of national identity. Through globalization and an open-door policy, erroneous concepts and a lowering of ethical standards, a selfish and individualistic lifestyle and harmful cultural products can easily be imported into the country. At present, modern information technology which, in the main, is controlled by the US is hourly and intensively disseminating US ideology, way of life, culture and films across the world. Even US food is promoted so that some people consider globalization as global Americanization.

During the process of economic globalization, inequality between developed and developing countries has been increasing and the gap between the rich and the poor has become wider; most of the results of globalization go to assist developed countries. Globalization does not pose equal interests and risks to all nations. With an overwhelming advantage compared to most of the developing countries in terms of finance and the level of science and technology, developed countries control the situation of economic globalization.

For these reasons, globalization is a fierce and complicated struggle in both cultural and ideological fields. We take the initiative in international economic integration, but we also have to take the initiative in fighting to keep our distinct culture resisting pro-foreign and cross-bred phenomena, and overcoming the psychology of preferring money over ethical values.



27.

Recently, a newspaper article reports that in Australia, a boy who damaged his school seriously was made to clean the streets as a punishment. Do you think that young criminals should be sent to jail or should be punished in this way?

Sample Answer

A recent newspaper article reveals that a boy who brought about severe impairments to his school in Australia was disciplined by being ordered to clean streets. Personally, I am not for such a way of punishment. Instead, young wrongdoers should be sent to prison.

First of all, the punishment of cleaning streets is not to give young criminals either time or space to look back upon and feel regretful for their previous misbehavior. On the contrary, the young will feel ashamed and hence bear much hatred for the school authorities who made them clean the streets in public. If the punishment is not to serve the purpose it was supposed to, another approach should be considered adopting.

While cleaning streets is not a delightful choice to amend the young's misconduct, putting the juvenile delinquents in jail will, to a larger extent, serve to enlighten them to learn from their past delinquencies and give them much time and independent room to repent. In addition, when in prison, the young criminals could have a glimpse of the real ferocious lawbreakers there and foresee their own future if they keep following the wrong track, which will impel them to reflect on whether they would like to become a part of those social outcasts. Anyone with a tiny bit of conscience remnant in their mind would choose otherwise. Thus, the young's wrongdoing gets modified.

All in all, exploiting street cleaning as a way of punishment is not an effective mode of rectifying the young's bad behavior. Comparatively speaking, sending them to prison is more appropriate.



28.

Some people argue that teaching children of different abilities together benefits all of them. Others believe that intelligent children should be taught separately and given special treatment. Discuss both views and how do you think about it?

Sample Answer

The issue of grouping intelligent children and providing them with special education is a complex and sensitive one. One's attitude towards it would largely depend on what one perceives as the best way to achieve individual growth. As different people have different understandings on the role that special classes play, there are bound to be perennial discussions of the pros and cons of grouping.

An argument often advanced on behalf of the special education for intelligent children is that in regular classrooms these children might be hampered in their intellectual growth. For example, how a curriculum that is designed for the average child, one would ask, meets the needs of a child who is far more superior intellectually. If offered a curriculum like this, the intelligent children are very likely to get bored and lose interest in learning. A special program, however, is intellectually more demanding and can help them to graduate earlier and take their place in life sooner.

On the other hand, there are quite a few educators who argue that a heterogeneous class benefits all its members. For example, to allow the intelligent children a manageable curriculum will leave them enough room for interests other than academic ones. Moreover, the top students in a class constitute role models for the rest of the class to identify with, ultimately preventing the society from further disintegration.

Personally, I think both arguments are more emotionally appealing than scientifically convincing. Without suggesting that we dismiss our concern for the intelligent children, I believe that carefully controlled experiments are needed to provide a solid ground on which we can base while making decisions on such a crucial issue.



29.

Some people think the university education is to prepare students for employment. Others think it has other functions. Discuss and say what other functions you think it should have.

Sample Answer

As college graduates have more and more difficulty in finding a job, a large number of people have begun to question the efficiency of university education and suggested that higher education take a more employment-oriented role and be more attuned to the job market. Nevertheless, many others insist that university education ought to serve other important functions as well, claiming that it is not merely a means to economic advancement.

Proponents of the former view believe that an employment-oriented university education meets the demand of social and economic development. As the society has entered the information age and commercialization is sweeping across the world, the advent of technology makes technical and occupational knowledge more crucial than ever before. However, traditional courses do not seem to be able to keep pace. They are either too theoretical or too academic, so they cannot be directly applied to the tasks of real life, leaving college students unable to fit in the job market.

Opponents of this view argue that universities, rather than a vocational school, offer an opportunity for personal growth and general intellectual development as well. University graduates are not, and should not, simply be skilled technicians, lawyers or administrators. University education is also essential to a free, democratic society and the fostering of a common culture, especially in any ever-changing society.

Personally, I tend to agree with the latter. I believe our concerns should go beyond industry and commerce. University education has at least two other things to offer. Firstly, university helps young adults to develop sound occupational and technical skills, such as independent thinking and flexibility, which are the source of an enlightened citizenry. Secondly, in addition to technical and occupational skills, college students should study the arts and humanities as well, in order to enrich their daily life. In a word, university education should foster both general education and professional specialization.



30.

Environmental problems are too big for individual countries and individual people to address. We have reached the stage where the only way to protect the environment is at an international level. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Sample Answer

It is certainly true that in the battle against environmental problems, cooperation at the international level is highly desirable. But I cannot fully agree with the claim that international joint efforts are the only way to protect the environment. Individual countries and individual persons also have an important part to play in combating environmental problems.

Obviously, there are different kinds of environmental problems, ranging from deforestation in a small area to global warming. It is true that a growing number of problems are no longer confined to a certain region or country. Oil spills can pollute international waters; the loss of the ozone layer may lead to the melting of ice caps and glaciers, which in turn, may raise sea levels worldwide. Both cases, of course, go far beyond individual countries. It is in such cases that international cooperation is not only desirable, but also invaluable. International committee should be set up and international standards established so that individual efforts can be coordinated and resources used to their fullest potential.

It does not necessarily mean that individual countries and individual persons no longer have anything to do with environmental problems. Firstly, it is the individual countries that finally carry out measures agreed upon at an international level. Secondly, only when individual countries have succeeded in improving their own circumstances can an international solution be achieved. Finally, individual persons also play a crucial role in that if everyone does a small part, then together we can achieve a lot. If we all start with small things such as recycling plastics and saving water and electricity, then the tasks that the country as a whole faces will be a lot easier.

Therefore, the best way, if there is one, is that we deal with environmental problems at both individual and international levels.



31.

Motorized flight is the greatest invention in the modern world. No other invention has had a more significant impact on our lives. Do you agree or disagree?

Sample Answer

It is certainly true that the invention of motorized flight has had a profound impact on both our lifestyles and society as a whole. But I feel it is unfair to downplay the role of other equally, if not more, important inventions.

In a sense, the advent of motorized flight has brought dramatic changes to public as well as cargo transportation. For one thing, it is by far the fastest means of transportation. What used to be a good ten-hour ride by car can now be easily covered in one hour and a half by air. For another, it is as safe as it is fast. The number of deaths from airplane crash is much less than that of any other means of mass transportation. On the strengths of these two advantages, motorized flight is widely used for industrial, commercial, military and other purposes, and is gradually changing the way business is conducted, travel plans are made, and wars are fought.

I am definitely not suggesting that it is the most important invention ever. It is only one of many which have greatly transformed the modern world. The invention of the Internet is a good case in point. To some degree, it is even more important than the transportation revolution in that it has reshaped the way we study, the way we entertain, the way we work, or even the way we socialize, by putting a large part of human activities online.

Of course, there are quite a few other inventions such as genetic engineering, breakthroughs in medical science, which are as important as the two inventions mentioned above. Human progress results from the combined efforts of various forces and it is improper to attribute it to any single invention.



32.

The high sales of popular consumer goods reflect the power of the advertising, not the real need of the whole society in which they sell. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Sample Answer

Although the statement sounds somewhat sweeping, there is a great deal of truth in it. Nowadays the power of advertising is so pervasive that it has boosted the sales of popular consumer goods more than any other factors.

The growth in the advertising industry seems to be the inevitable corollary of economic and technological advancement. With the advent of mass production and an improvement in living standards, there has been a greater need for advertising than ever before. The manufacturers need it to promote their products; the consumers need it to learn about the choices available in the market. We as consumers are more and more dependent on advertising for obtaining information about consumer goods and for making decisions. In addition, the advertised goods can easily become popular because the carriers of the ads – usually newspapers, TV, and recently the Internet – can reach so wide an audience. Their popularity, in turn, helps the goods become a symbol of status and fashion. Take mobile phones for example, it is not infrequent for consumers to rush to the stores and buy the advertised ones simply because they are on TV or on the billboards. The driving motive behind such consumer behaviour is not out of a real need, but rather, a desire to appear “cool” and to keep up with the Joneses.

The power of advertising has become both greater and subtler. It even affects consumer psychology and distorts the real needs of a society. As a result, an increasingly large number of consumers make their buying decisions on whether or not the goods are advertised, rather than whether they are needed or not.



Appendix 1

Sample Candidate Writing Scripts and Examiner Comments

Both the Academic and General Training Writing modules consist of two tasks, Task 1 and Task 2. Each task is assessed independently. The assessment of Task 2 carries more weight in marking than Task 1.

Detailed performance descriptors have been developed which describe written performance at the 9 IELTS bands. These descriptors are confidential and apply to both the Academic and General Training modules.

Task 1 scripts are assessed on the following criteria:

- Task Achievement
- Coherence and Cohesion
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Task 2 scripts are assessed on the following criteria:

- Task Response
- Coherence and Cohesion
- Lexical Resource
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Candidates should note that scripts will be penalised if they are a) under the minimum word length, b) partly or wholly plagiarised, c) not written as full, connected text (e.g. using bullet points in any part of the response, or note form, etc.).

Task 1

Task Achievement

This criterion assesses how appropriately, accurately and relevantly the response fulfils the requirements set out in the task, using the minimum of 150 words.

Academic Writing Task 1 is a writing task which has a defined input and a largely predictable output. It is basically an information-transfer task which relates narrowly to the factual content of an input diagram and not to speculated explanations that lie outside the given data.

General Training Writing Task 1 is also a writing task with a largely predictable output in that each task sets out the context and purpose of the letter and the functions the candidate should cover in order to achieve this purpose.

Coherence and Cohesion

This criterion is concerned with the overall clarity and fluency of the message: how the response organises and links information, ideas and language. Coherence refers to the linking of ideas through logical sequencing. Cohesion refers to the varied and appropriate use of cohesive devices (for example, logical connectors, pronouns and conjunctions) to assist in making the conceptual and referential relationships between and within sentences clear.

Lexical Resource

This criterion refers to the range of vocabulary the candidate has used and the accuracy and appropriacy of that use in terms of the specific task.

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

This criterion refers to the range and accurate use of the candidate's grammatical resource as manifested in the candidate's writing at sentence level.

Task 2

Task Response

In both Academic and General Training modules, Task 2 requires the candidates to formulate and develop a position in relation to a given prompt in the form of a question or statement. Ideas should be supported by evidence, and examples may be drawn from the candidates' own experience. Responses must be at least 250 words in length.

Writing scripts are marked by trained and certificated IELTS examiners. Scores are reported as whole bands or half bands.

On the next 15 pages you will find candidates' answers to two sample Writing tests. There are two answers for each Writing task. Each answer has been awarded a band score and is accompanied by an examiner comment on the candidate's performance for that task.

The examiners' guidelines for marking the Writing scripts are very detailed. There are many different ways a candidate may achieve a particular band score. The candidates' answers that follow should not be regarded as definitive examples of any particular band score.

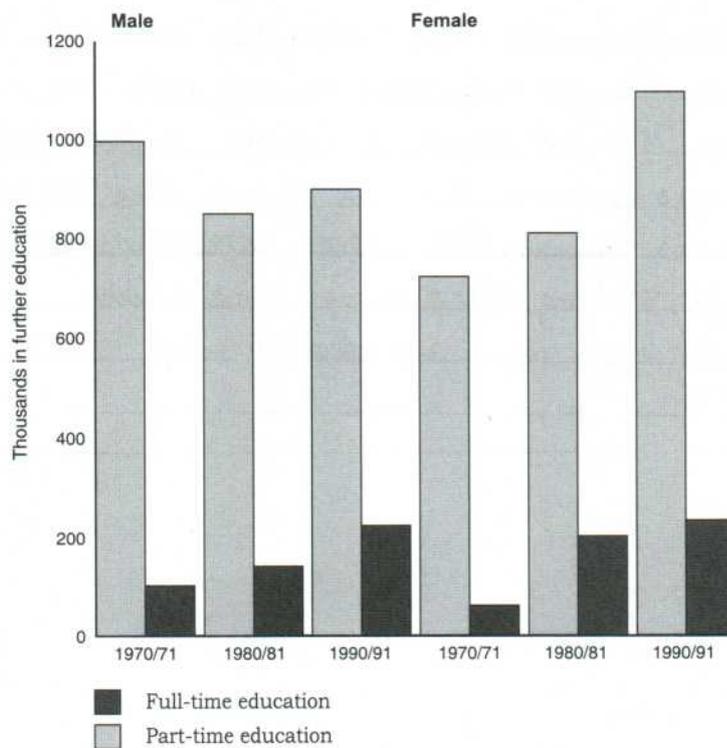


WRITING TASK 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The chart below shows the number of men and women in further education in Britain in three periods and whether they were studying full-time or part-time. Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information shown below.

You should write at least 150 words.



Academic Writing Sample Task 1A

Sample Script A

This is a bar chart of the number of men and women in further education in Britain in three periods. In 1970 most of men were studying part-time but from 1980, studying part-time was decreased and studying full-time was increased and in 1990, it was twice as many students as in 1970. On the other hand, women studying full-time were increased and not only full-time, part-time also were increased. In 1990, studying full-time was three times as many students as in 1970. If compare men and women, as you see, in 1970, men were studying more than women full-time or part-time but it changed from 1980 and then in 1990, women were studying part-time more than men and studying full-time was same number. It shows you women has a high education now.

Examiner comment

Band 5

The length of the answer is just acceptable. There is a good attempt to describe the overall trends but the content would have been greatly improved if the candidate had included some reference to the figures given on the graph. Without these, the reader is lacking some important information. The answer is quite difficult to follow and there are some punctuation errors that cause confusion. The structures are fairly simple and efforts to produce more complex sentences are not successful.



Academic Writing Sample Task 1A

Sample Script B

According to this graph, the number of men and women in further education in Britain shows the following pattern.

In the case of male, the number of male has declined slightly from about 1000 thousands in 1970/71 to about 850 thousands in 1990/91. However, this figure rose back to about 850 thousands in 1990/91 from about 820 thousands in 1980/81. The proportion of full-time education has declined during this period. However, the proportion of part-time education has increased dramatically.

On the other hand, in the case of female, the number of both full-time education and part-time education has increased during this period.

From about 700 thousands in 1970/71, these figures rose to about 820 thousands in 1980/81, to about 1100 thousands in 1990/91.

In terms of full-time education, this figure rose by about 260 to about 900 in 1990/91.

On the other hand, with respect to part-time education, this figure rose dramatically between 1980/81 and 1990/91. However this figure rose slightly between 1980/81 and 1990/91.

Examiner comment

Band 6

The candidate has made a good attempt to describe the graph looking at global trends and more detailed figures. There is, however, some information missing and the information is inaccurate in minor areas. The answer flows quite smoothly although connectives are overused or inappropriate, and some of the points do not link up well. The grammatical accuracy is quite good and the language used to describe the trends is well handled. However, there are problems with expression and the appropriate choice of words and whilst there is good structural control, the complexity and variation in the sentences are limited.



WRITING TASK 1

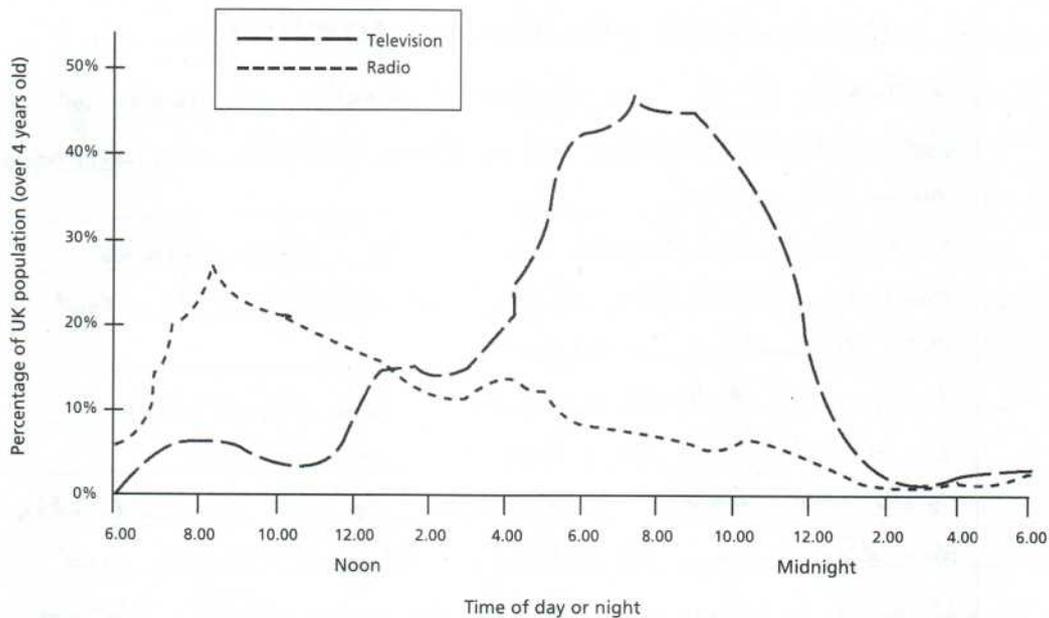
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The graph below shows radio and television audiences throughout the day in 1992.

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

You should write at least 150 words.

Radio and television audiences in UK, October – December 1992



Academic Writing Sample Task 1B

Sample Script A

The graph shows the percentage of audiences over 4 years old of UK follows the radio and television throughout the day during the period October-December 1992. It has been observed from the graph that less than 10% audiences follows the radio at 6:00 am and the percentage raised to a peak around 30% at 8:00 AM and decline gradually ~~and~~ to around 10% during the period 2:00 to 4:00 PM and again raised a bit to around 12% between 4:00 to 6:00 PM. ~~and~~ ^{It has} again dropped ^{to} below 10% at ~~and~~ around 10:00 PM. The rate again raised to a bit between 10:00 PM to 12:00 PM and then dropped slowly by 4:00 AM. On the other hand, the rate of ~~television~~ television audiences raises 0-10% during the period 6:00 to 8:00 am and remain ~~steady~~ ^{steady} up to 10:00 AM and then gradually goes down by 12:00 AM. The percentage raised dramatically to ~~and~~ around 15% by 2:00 PM which again raised to a peak above 40% between 6:00-8:00 PM and then gradually dropped between the period 12:00 PM to 4:00 AM.

Examiner comment

Band 6

The answer has a good introduction in which the candidate has attempted to incorporate his/her own words. There is good coverage of the data and a brief reference to contrasting trends. The answer can be followed although it is rather repetitive and cohesive devices are overused. In order to gain a higher mark for content, the candidate would be expected to select the salient features of the graph and comment primarily on these. Sentences are long but lack complexity. There are some errors in tense, verb form and spelling which interfere slightly with the flow of the answer.



Academic Writing Sample Task 1B

Sample Script B

The bold graph shows the television audiences throughout the day. It shows that the percentage of audiences is zero percent in early morning but it gradually rises upto ten percent at 8:00 am and maintains the same for the next two hours. There is a ^{slight} gradual fall in percentage in next two hours however after that it rises sharp upto twenty percent within the next two hours. After this the graph rises very fast and attains its peak at 10 pm which is about forty five percent. The the graph gradually falls down and at 2:00 am it is at five percent. The thinner graph shows the percentage of radio audiences. Unlike the television one the peak percentage of the radio one audiences is at 8:00 am which is about 30 percent. Then it gradually falls and it corresponds with the television one at two pm. After that it gradually falls but with a small increase in percentage at 4:30 to 6:00 pm. The percentage of audience then gradually goes down and at four am it is the lowest which is near 2 percentage. These graphs proves the progressive popularity of television.

Examiner comment

Band 7

The answer deals well with both the individual media trends and the overall comparison of these trends. The opening could be more fully developed with the inclusion of information relating to the groups studied and the period of time during which the study took place. There is a good variety of cohesive devices and the message can be followed quite easily although the expression is sometimes a little clumsy. Structures are complex and vocabulary is varied but there are errors in word forms, tense and voice and occasionally the text becomes incoherent.



WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Present a written argument or case to an educated reader with no specialist knowledge of the following topic.

The first car appeared on British roads in 1888. By the year 2000, there may be as many as 29 million vehicles on British roads.

Alternative forms of transport should be encouraged and international laws introduced to control car ownership and use.

What are your views?

You should use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your arguments with examples and relevant evidence.

You should write at least 250 words.



Academic Writing Sample Task 2A

Sample Script A

THE SOLUTION OF OVERCROWDED TRAFFIC

Nowadays, there are a lot of cars on British road and they have increased day to day. By the year 2000 there may be as many as 29 million vehicles on British roads. In this essay, I intend to examine about the solutions of these problems.

Firstly, the people living in Britain need to think about themselves. If they used the bus and train instead of their car, this problem would resolve a little. Because of this, the British Government should introduce to control car ownership and use. For example, the government can ban to enter the road by car in the sameday all family from a house.

Secondly, the buses and trains of government should be free for public population. Thus, the people would use these transport vehicles instead of their own car. After that, the roads in Britain would be more safer and more comfortable.

Lastly, the ~~export~~ the number of cars that are exported from another country should decrease, and the prices of car should increased. In case they aren't overcrowded. For example, the prices of cigarettes increased and the consumption of cigarettes great down.

In conclusion, If these measures put into action the problem of traffic can be decreased in the British roads.

Examiner comment

Band 5

The answer is short at just over 200 words and thus loses marks for content. There are some relevant arguments but these are not very well developed and become unclear in places. The organisation of the answer is evident through the use of fairly simple connectives but there are problems for the reader in that there are many missing words and word order is often incorrect. The structures are quite ambitious but often faulty and vocabulary is kept quite simple.



Academic Writing Sample Task 2A

Sample Script B

The transport has been one of the most important problem for the last two centuries. The problem began with the development and the growing of the cities.

Before the eight century the people lived in small villages or towns and did not have necessity to go too far. The people did not worry about the time to arrive in some where.

Nowadays the situation changed. Many cars on the streets and many people need to go to any place. The numbers of car has increased and as a result ^{there are} many problems: pollution, noise, car accident, insufficient car park and petroleum problem:

On the other hand, people use car to go anywhere: to work, to travel, to spend holiday and to amusement. Meanwhile the car is important the cities must have another solution. It is important to organize its using and to meet alternative ways.

In big cities there are some alternatives like undergrounds (metro), coach, train and bicycles. In China and Cuba ^{for example} they use a lot of bicycles for substituting the cars on coaches. /---



It would be better to think about other different kinds of transport. In Brazil the government has talked about transport on the rivers. In this country there are many rivers where it is possible to go to different places. In general they are flat rivers.

Another kind of transport is car that uses solar energy. Probably they don't have pollution problem and it is cheaper than others car.

In conclusion, the transport is a social problem in big cities but its solution depend on new technologies, others kind of energy and political aspects.

Examiner comment

Band 6

There are quite a lot of ideas and while some of these are supported better than others, there is an overall coherence to the answer. The introduction is perhaps slightly long and more time could have been devoted to answering the question. The answer is fairly easy to follow and there is good punctuation. Organisational devices are evident although some areas of the answer become unclear and would benefit from more accurate use of connectives. There are some errors in the structures but there is also evidence of the production of complex sentence forms. Grammatical errors interfere slightly with comprehension.



WRITING TASK 2

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

Present a written argument or case to an educated reader with no specialist knowledge of the following topic.

The threat of nuclear weapons maintains world peace. Nuclear power provides cheap and clean energy.

The benefits of nuclear technology far outweigh the disadvantages.

Do you agree or disagree?

You should use your own ideas, knowledge and experience and support your arguments with examples and relevant evidence.

You should write at least 250 words.



Academic Writing Sample Task 2B

Sample Script A

② Nuclear power provides cheap

Nuclear power provides cheap energy sources. Sometimes the present sources of energy like oil, gas etc. will be finished.

Arguments in favour of nuclear power: The nuclear energy produces by chemical materials. It is comparatively cheaper than other energy. To produce the power it only involve some expert people and energy plant. Where to produce other energy it needs large involvement like worker, machineries, etc. And also takes more time. The nuclear power plants are well protected and monitor. That is why there is less possibilities. The threat of nuclear weapons maintains world peace because the developed countries like U.K., U.S.A, Canada, France etc. have nuclear weapons (warhead). Each country do not 'give' threat to other country. Because they know if

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One country disturbs others, then
 other will create problems from them.
 So it is well balanced and world
 peace maintains peacefully.

Though there are sometimes creates
 problems by the nuclear technology
 but sometimes it also help the
 mankind in the field of medicine
 and engineering sectors. In the medical
 field we can say by nuclear ray
 sometimes we can treat a cancer
 patient. On the other hand in the
 field of Engineering by the
 nuclear power engineers can do
 lot of things like operate engine
 instead of electricity. In conclusion
 we can say though there are some
 problem in the nuclear power but it
 has some benefit for the mankind

Examiner comment

Band 5

Although the script contains some good arguments, these are presented using poor structures and the answer is not very coherent. The candidate has a clear point of view but not all the supporting arguments are linked together well and sometimes ideas are left unfinished. There is quite a lot of relevant vocabulary but this is not used skilfully and sentences often have words missing or lapse into different styles. The answer is spoilt by grammatical errors and poor expression.



Academic Writing Sample Task 2B

Sample Script B

Nuclear Power

Nuclear power is an alternative source of energy which is carefully being evaluated during these times of energy problems. During these years we can say that we have energy problems but in more or less 50 years, we will be facing an energy crisis.

Nuclear power is an alternative source of energy and unlike other sources such as solar energy, nuclear power is highly effective for industrial purposes. If it is handled correctly there really is no danger for the public. It is cheap, there is no threat of pollution and best of all it is limitless. It is difficult to think about nuclear power as a good source of energy for people in general. This is due to the use it has been given since its birth during the second world war. It is expressed as military power and in fact at the moment nuclear power is limited to few hands who consider themselves world powers. When and if there is a change of ideology regarding the correct use of nuclear power, then we may all benefit from all the advantages nuclear power can give us. ⇒



If we outweigh the advantages and disadvantages of nuclear technology we then have the following: As stated before, the advantages are that there is limitless supply, it is cheap, it is effective for industrial purpose and still there are many benefits which have not yet been discovered. The disadvantages are at present time that it is limited to only a few countries who regard it as safe military power. Also if mishandled, there is risk for the population around the plant to undergo contamination as we all know happened in Chernobyl. If these disadvantages can be overcome, then it is clear that nuclear energy can give us more benefits than problems. It will in the future be very important as the energy crisis is not far ahead.

In conclusion, nuclear power is good, it can be safe, and we will all benefit. It is up to our leaders to see that it is handled well so that we can all benefit from it.

Examiner comment

Band 7

The answer is well written and contains some good arguments. It does tend to repeat these arguments but the writer's point of view remains clear throughout. The message is easy to follow and ideas are arranged well with good use of cohesive devices. There are minor problems with coherence and at times the expression is clumsy and imprecise. There is a wide range of structures that are well handled with only small problems, mainly in the areas of spelling and word choice.



Appendix 2

INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TESTING SYSTEM		
 BRITISH COUNCIL	 idp IELTS AUSTRALIA	 UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE ESOL Examinations

WRITING ANSWER BOOKLET

Candidate Name: _____ Candidate Number: _____

Centre Name: _____ Date: _____

Module: Academic General Training (Tick as appropriate)

TASK 1

EXAMINER'S USE ONLY

EXAMINER 2 NUMBER: _____

CANDIDATE NUMBER: _____

EXAMINER 1 NUMBER: _____



Intensive IELTS Writing

New Oriental Education & Technology Group
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