

IELTS

Name :

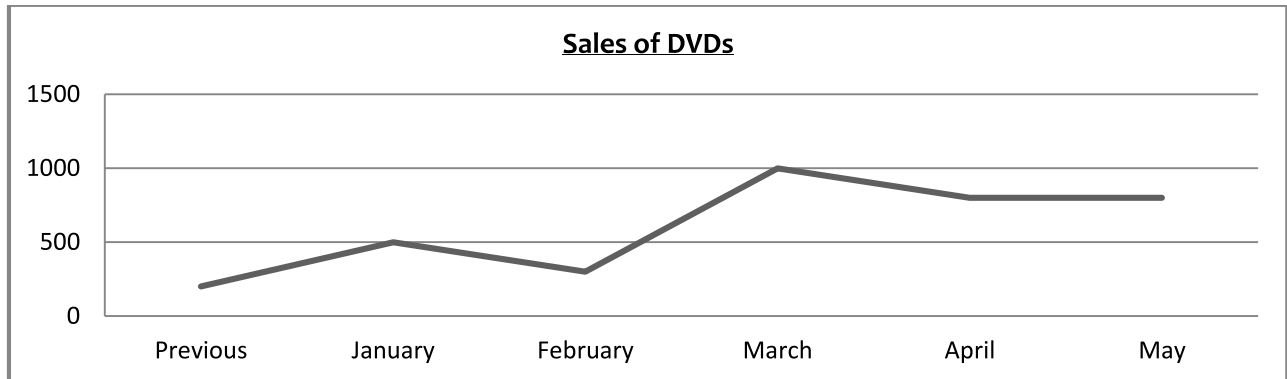
Batch:

CRASH

Writing Lecture-2

Describing Data

Describing data is generally the easier part of interpretation. Here, the students need to identify the numerical data represented in the graphical presentation and state them in an appropriate manner.

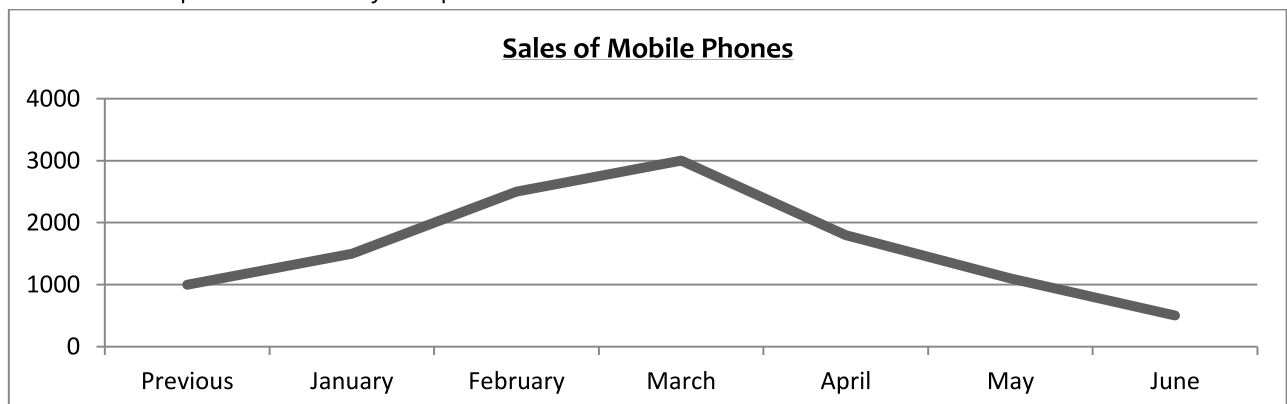


For example, the Line Graph stated above has some obvious numerical rises and falls regarding the sales of DVDs, for 6 months. If the students are to explain the data provided here, they just have to interpret the numerical facts depicted in the picture. As we can notice, the sales of DVDs before January were only 200 and went up as high as 500 in January. During February however, the sales decreased to 300. Next, in the month of March, the number of DVDs sold shot up to 1000; before falling again in April, to 800. The sales remained steady for the next month, May, at the same amount. This is the process of describing data, where **only the numerical fluctuations** are described.

Describing Trends

Identifying the trends is much more complicated and requires great deal of understanding from the students' side. Normally, the **Line Graphs, Tables** (only if periods are mentioned) and in some cases, the **Bar Diagrams** consist of certain trends. **A trend is something that keeps on occurring for a particular period of time- for example, a rise in sales for three consecutive weeks or a decline in student attendance for four successive months. It is worth noting here that for trends to be evident there has to be more than one period- more than one month, one week or even one day.**

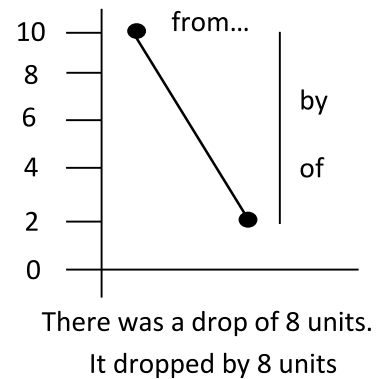
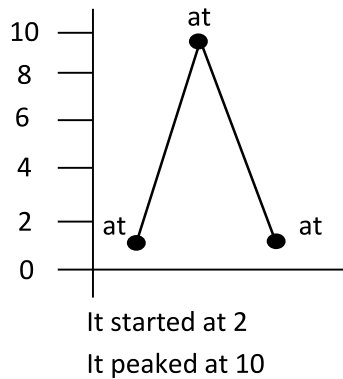
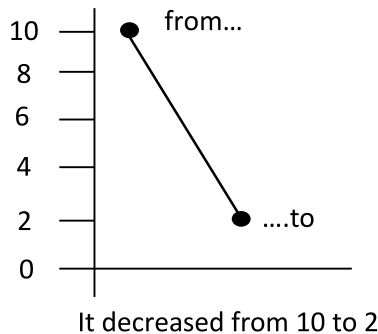
For example, if the graph stated above shows that there was an increase in sales of DVDs during January, a fall in February, again an increase in March, followed by a decrease in April- this does not follow a particular trend for the overall period of January to April.



But if the graph stating the sales of mobile phones depict that there was an increase in sales from the last month of the previous year to March of this year, followed by a decrease for the months after that till June, you can conclude that an increasing trend existed in the sales of phones from December to March, and a decreasing trend subsisted from April to June. It has been previously mentioned that trends have to be existent for more than one particular period, for them to be counted as trends and not 'mere' rises and falls. The graph concerning the sales of phones clearly illustrates the same point. Since sales have risen for successive periods starting from December, there was an obvious increasing trend for the period. Similarly, fall in sales for the last three months have resulted in a declining trend.

Prepositions

To incorporate information you need the following prepositions - *from, to, by, of, at*:



Exercise:

Fill in the blanks using the correct prepositions (from, to, by, of, at)

1. There was an increase _____ just over 50 thousand people.
2. In the first decade, the population remained steady _____ approximately 5 million.
3. Unemployment fell _____ just over 500000 people.
4. Violence in the city peaked _____ about 1500 deaths per 10000 people.
5. The crime rate increased rapidly _____ well over 550 incidents per night.
6. The population is expected to grow exponentially over the next few years and then peak _____ 20 billion people.
7. The production of goods is predicted to finish the year _____ 500 units per day.
8. Production began _____ 50 units per day and rose _____ about 20 units per day to end the month _____ well over 600 units.
9. Approximately five minutes after consuming cane sugar, pH levels drop _____ as little as 3.5.

10. In Australia, newspaper circulation dropped ____ 400 per thousand of population by 1992 ____ 576 per thousand.
11. A survey of Canadian prisoners revealed a literacy rate ranging ____ 15 per cent ____ 55 per cent.
12. Twenty years later, though the number of male workers remained unchanged ____ 45500, the number of female workers rose ____ 555000.
13. There was an upward trend in the number of cars produced over the next six months ____ a peak of nearly 80 cars produced in September before production slumped for the last three months.
14. There was an increase ____ 9000 immigrant in the following two years.
15. The number of people arrested for theft rose ____ 500 people.

Incorporating Data

There are two ways of incorporating data, by using :

1. Brackets ()
2. A relative clause (which + appropriate verb: is/was, makes up, constitutes, accounts for)

Example:

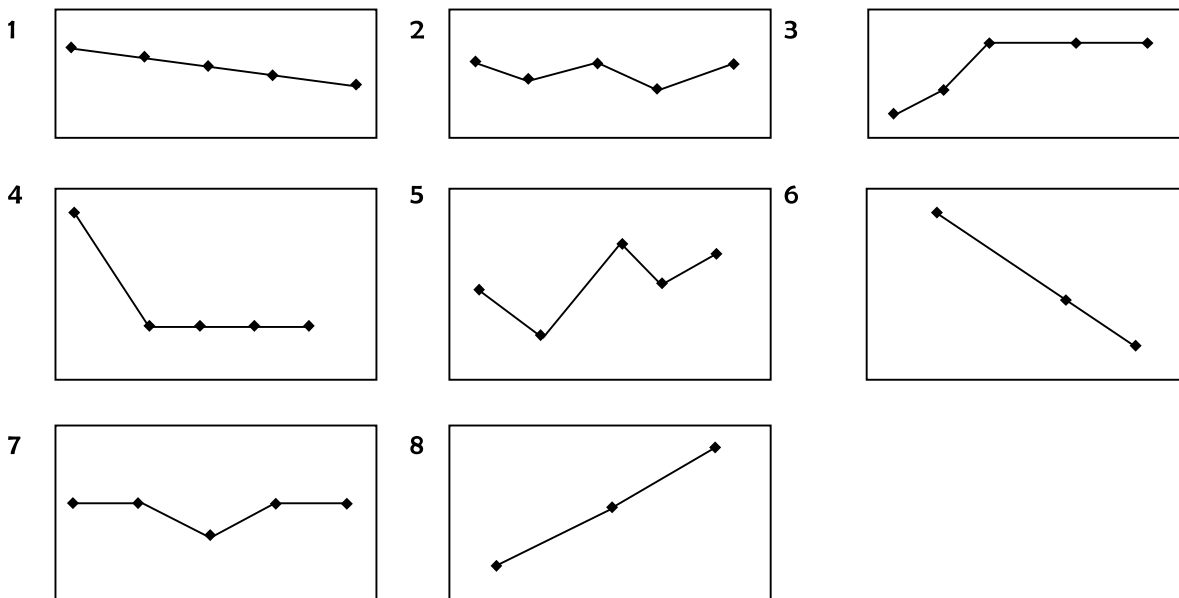
You can write.....

- In January the number of ceiling fans sold accounts for 30.
- In January the number of ceiling fans sold (60) was greater than the number of ceiling fans sold (30) in February.
- In January the number of ceiling fans sold, which accounts for 60, was greater than the number of ceiling fans sold, which accounts for only 30, in February.

Exercise:

The following practice will help you to realize the language of describing movement in graphs.

Match the statements **A-N** with the graphs **1-8** below- for example, **Statement A** matches **Graph 8**. Some graphs can be used more than once.

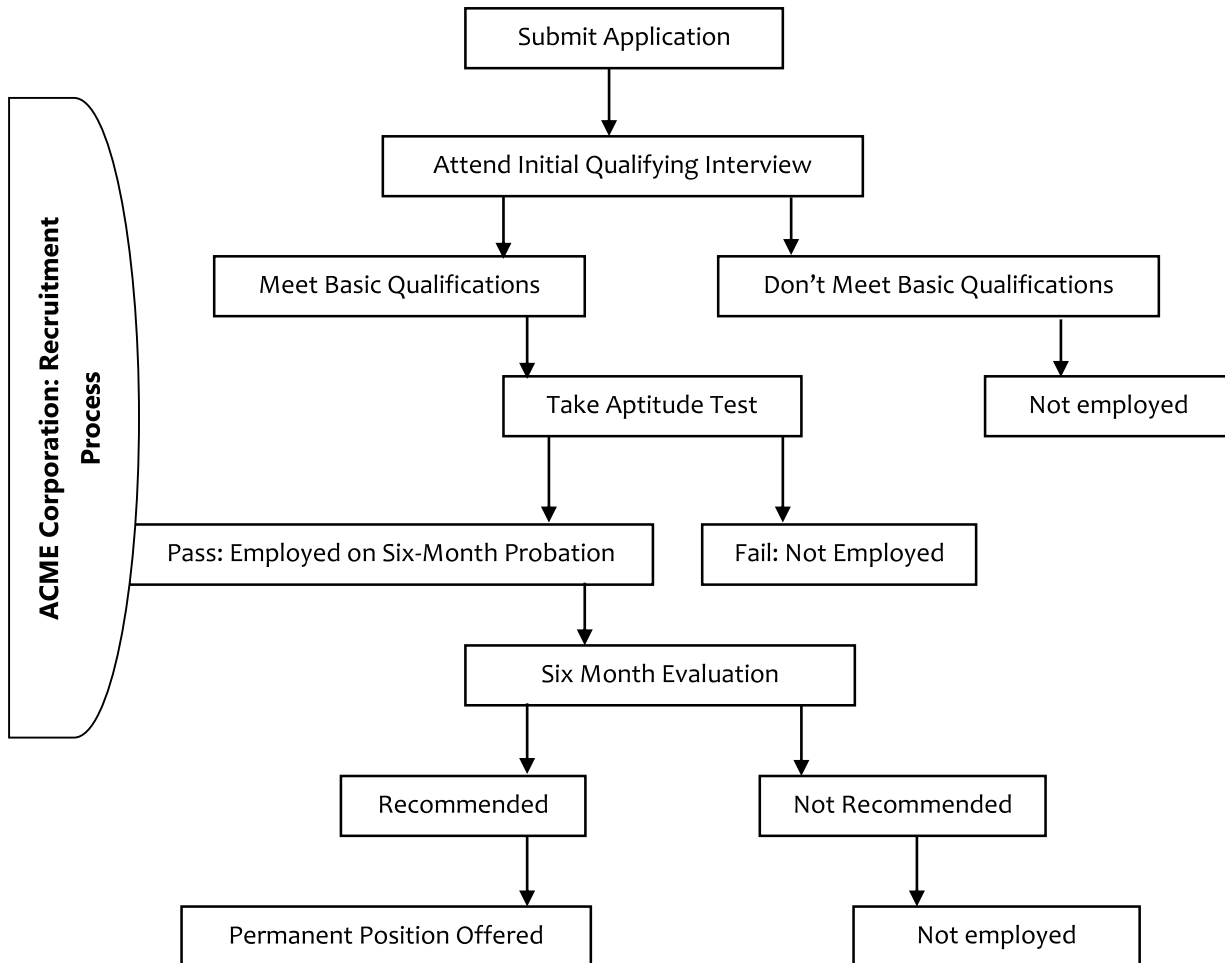


- a. Sales rocketed over the period.
- b. The purchase of furniture was rather erratic, hitting a peak in the middle of the period.
- c. The sale of fish products rose dramatically.
- d. There was a slight dip in equipment production.
- e. There was a steady increase in the amount of coal used, followed by a period of stability.
- f. There were wild fluctuations in sales, but the trend was upward.
- g. The number of people attending the weekly lectures plunged.
- h. There was rather a dramatic fall in the share price.
- i. Share prices plummeted, but then stabilized.
- j. After a dramatic fall in the number of people settling in the city, there was a period of stability.
- k. The number of houses sold dipped slightly.
- l. There was a gradual decline in the number of children visiting the zoo.
- m. The sale of DVDs was rather inconsistent.
- n. The attendance of students in the class decreased wildly and then remained steady at a particular number.

Process Diagrams, Picture Descriptions, Maps

Process Diagrams

The Process Diagrams are one of the least popular forms of question in the IELTS test. Here, the picture provides a step-by-step procedure, and the examinees simply have to describe the steps- which thing leads to what, and what leads to the following steps. The trick to interpret Flow Charts/ Process Diagrams effectively is to follow the directions of the arrows.



The process diagram shows clearly the steps that an applicant has to pass through in order to get a permanent position in ACME Corporation. The process starts when the applicant submits his/her application. The applicant is then called on for a qualifying interview, passing which leads to the aptitude test. However, failure to meet basic requirements in the interview renders the application rejected. As for the aptitude test, passing it leads to a probation period of six months. Failing the test here means that the applicant will not be employed. The six month probation and evaluation period follows and if the person is recommended, he/she will be offered a permanent position. If he/she is not recommended, he will not be offered a permanent position.

Writing Process Diagrams

- Follow the same initial steps for writing about a graph.
- In the introduction you can use: *The diagram/picture/chart shows/illustrates/describes/depicts the process of/how.....*
- Find a starting point and write the process as a series of steps.
- Useful connecting words you can use are:

Adverbs: *first/firstly/first of all, secondly, thirdly, then/next/after that/following that, following on from this/subsequently/subsequent to that, finally*

Prepositions: *At the beginning of..., / At the end of..*

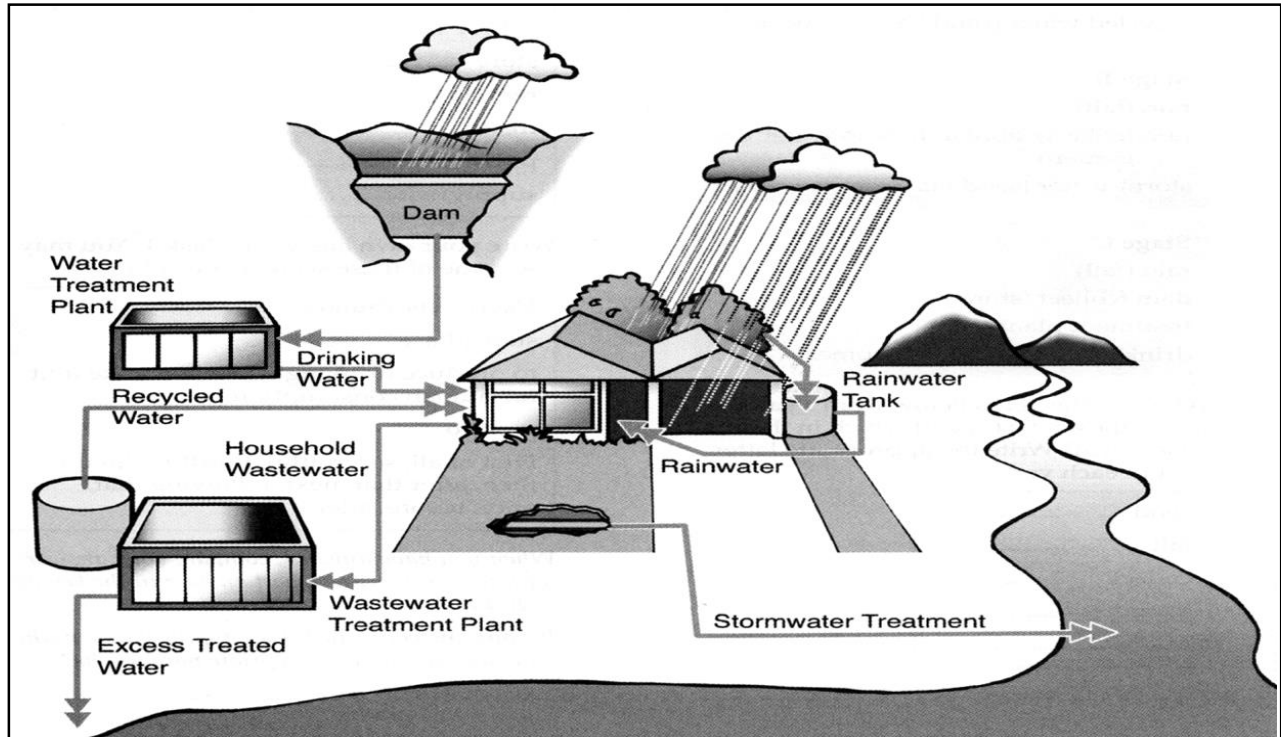
- Use the following conjunctions to make more complex sentences:
 - * *when/once/as soon as/immediately*
 - * *before + clause or gerund*
 - * *after + clause or gerund*
 - * *where/from where/after which*
- Other connecting devices you can use are:
 - * *The first/next/final step/phase/stage is/involves.....*
 - * *After this step...*
 - * *Once this stage is completed.....*
- In sequences, you can also use the gerund to show development.
- Use the present simple to describe processes.
- The agent is not usually mentioned unless a task is performed by a particular person.
- Use the passive voice if the process is describing something being made, like a book- e.g. the book is printed and then collated, after which it is bound.
- Use the active voice when you describe something which is happening: The moisture evaporates and condenses on the.....
- Be very careful with singular and plural agreement in writing processes especially if you are using the active voice.
- When describing a cycle, you can conclude: The cycle then repeats itself/is then repeated.

Picture Descriptions

Consider the following example:

The following diagram shows how rainwater is reused.

A sample answer is provided that summarizes the information by selecting and reporting the main features, and making comparisons where relevant. Complete the answer response by filling the blanks using words from the diagram.



The picture description shows the way is collected and reused for domestic purposes.

When rain pours down to earth, it increases the water in the and streams for a period of time. The water is pumped to a in order to produce water. This water is then released for consumption in homes- for use as drinking water. The houses have their own that stores, running from the roofs. This water is used for household purposes like cleaning and washing. Waste water from the households are pumped to a, wherein the excess treated water is released into rivers and the recycled water is drawn back as for use in households again.

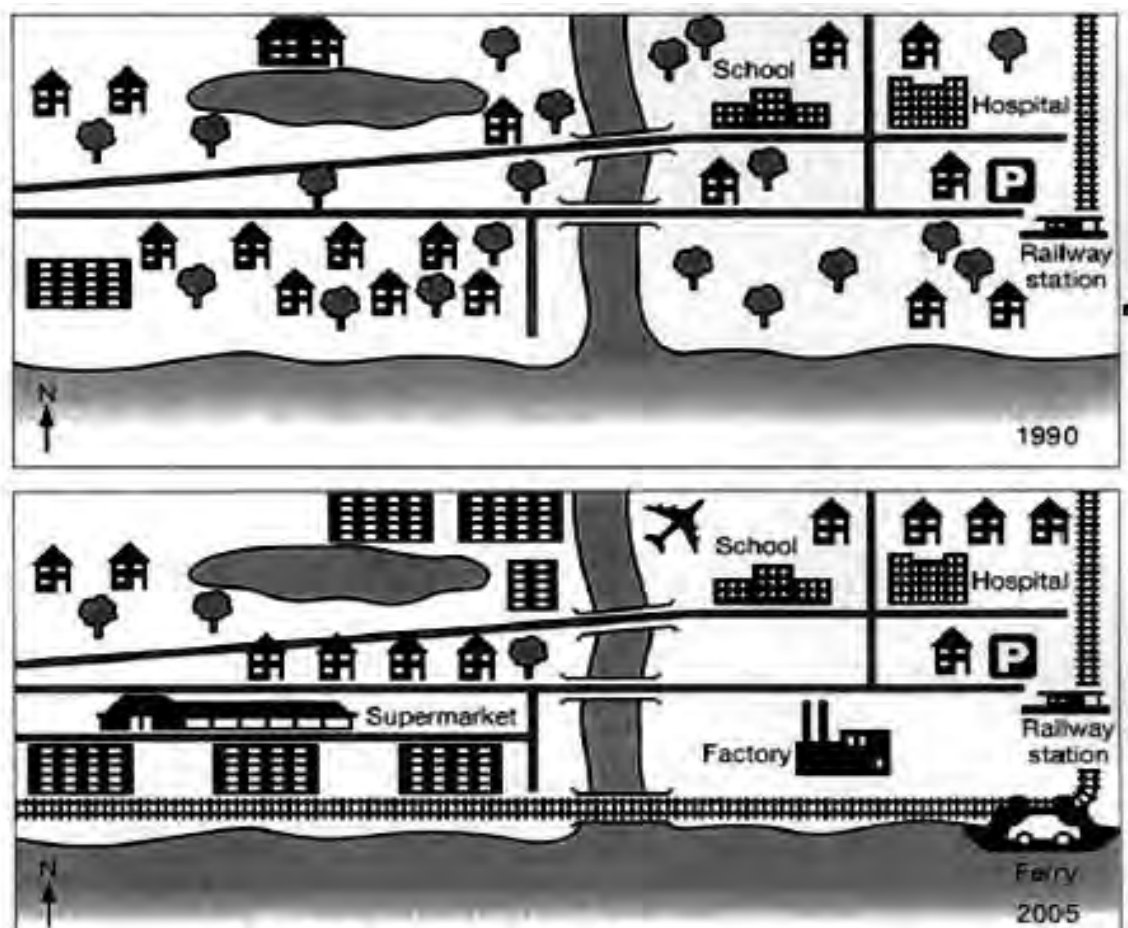
Meanwhile, surface runoffs (water that does not soak into the ground) in the form of storm water is treated and made to flow directly into waterways nearby.

Thus, rainfall is collected in different stages and after being treated through different sources, is brought back for human consumption.

Maps

You may also be asked to produce a description for a map. The maps in question will not obviously be the usual ones, that is, depicting places and borders but they will only be regarding one particular area- showing its development for a certain number of years. You will only be expected to provide a detailed description of the different sections of the map and the changes that took place over the entire period.

For example, **the map below shows an area named Palm Grove, and depicts its development over a 15 year period.**



Writing Maps

- Follow the initial steps for analyzing graphs and processes.
- If you are describing changes over a number of years, check the key carefully.
- Familiarize yourself with words showing location on the points of the compass: was constructed in the north/northwest; constructed north/northwest of the city/to the north/northwest of the city etc.
- Be careful with time phrases and tenses. With 'in', use the past simple passive:
The stadium was constructed in the year 2000.

With 'by', use the past perfect passive:

The stadium had been constructed by the year 2000.

- Try to vary the structure of your sentences by putting the time phrase at the beginning and the end of the sentence. The same applies to the locations.
- Some useful words and phrases :
 - in the centre of/next to/adjacent to
 - built/erected/replaced
 - situated/located
 - changed into/added/gave way to /became/made way for/converted
 - saw/witnessed considerable changes/developments
- Use adverbs like moreover/in addition etc.
- The use of while is common: while in 1995

Identification of Main Features

To summarize, you must select the main features from what is shown. The data may show differences or changes over time, between places or between groups of people. Try to identify significant contrasts, relevant comparisons, similarities or trends. **Avoid repetition and do not try to give reasons.** The question behind the graph is "**What is the fact?**" You are expected to **Report** or **Exhibit**- but **NOT to Justify**. Writing unnecessary and irrelevant stuffs will hurt the overall standard of the writing, and you will lose marks on the grounds of irrelevancy. So, always focus only on what the graph says- anything brought in from outside will only impair your chances of a good score.

Writing the main part of the text

- Divide your text into 3-4 paragraphs, including the introduction.
- Divide the information into **broad/general groups/categories trends.**
- Describe the **main or most striking/ significant/ noticeable/ outstanding/ remarkable feature(s)/characteristics differences/trends/changes.**
- Avoid writing lists of detail. Write about general trends and support what you say with specific data.
- Describe the three general trends: **is/was upwards/downwards/flat or say what happened..... (sales) rose/fell remained flat/fluctuated.**
- Use linking phrase to introduce details: **Turning to the details/As can be seen from the graph/ At the onset it is clear/At first glance it is clear.....**

Writing a Conclusion

- Make a general statement.
- You can use the following phrases:
Generally, / Generally speaking, / All in all, / On average,

MORE ABOUT TASK 1- HOW TO DO IT

Task 1 is about describing information given in the form of a pie chart/ bar diagram/ line graph or process diagram/ picture descriptions/ maps. The differences are outlined below. In the report your main task is to summarize and describe. Often a task 1 will combine two types of diagrams. Write about both and show the relationship between them.

THINK FIRST

Analyze the task

Pie charts/ graphs/ tables

- ✓ Highlight key words. Note all headings, rates and measurements.
- ✓ Select the most important trends.
- ✓ Choose the best examples and summarize.

Process diagrams/ maps/ descriptions

- ✓ Highlight key words from task description.
- ✓ Note all labels and order of steps.
- ✓ Describe step by step from start to end.
- ✓ Leave nothing out.

Ask Questions

- ✓ What is the purpose of this graph?
- ✓ What changes have occurred over time?
- ✓ What are the significant trends?
- ✓ What is the most interesting feature?

- ✓ What is the purpose of this process?
- ✓ How does it work?
- ✓ How to include alternative steps?
- ✓ What is the end result?

THEN WRITE

INTRODUCTION

- ✓ Paraphrase the task description in 1 or 2 sentences.
- ✓ Don't copy it.

- ✓ Paraphrase the task description in 1 / 2 sentences.
- ✓ Include the purpose/ end of the process.

DESCRIPTION

- ✓ Focus on trends and interesting points.
- ✓ Describe the most significant data first.
- ✓ Give examples to support trends.
- ✓ Use statistics accurately.

- ✓ Follow each step in sequence.
- ✓ Include every step.
- ✓ Expand headings into sentences.
- ✓ Use connective words to link steps.

CONCLUSION

- ✓ Does not have to be a separate paragraph.
- ✓ A single, summarizing sentence can round off your report.

- ✓ Does not have to be a separate paragraph.
- ✓ A single, summarizing sentence can round off your report.

Task 1

Golden rules

- ✓ **ALWAYS** do Task 1 first. There is a reason why it is Task 1! From the psychological point of view, it does give you a sense of accomplishment when you are done with it.
- ✓ A common feature of the writing process is the concept of getting oneself going. With the shorter Task, you will only get into your stride while writing. By the time you are done with Task 1, you will be much more alert and start writing Task 2 much more efficiently since you are now in the flow.
- ✓ Spend **20 minutes** on this Task. A common mistake that candidates do is to spend more time on Task 2, and leave themselves 15 minutes or even less to finish Task 1.
- ✓ Take Task 1 seriously, even though Task 2 carries double marks.
- ✓ **Skim** the instructions and **study** the diagram. Use the general statement about the data to help you interpret the graph.
- ✓ Try and spend the recommended 20 minutes as follows:
 - **2-3 minutes** analyzing and planning
 - **14-15 minutes** writing
 - **2-3 minutes** checking.
- ✓ Check the values and numbers on the vertical and horizontal axes.
- ✓ Work out how many lines cover 150 words for you in your handwriting. Aim to write **no more than 180-200 words**.
- ✓ Check that you have written at least 150 words. Writing less will deduct marks and hence affect your score.
- ✓ **Compare general trends, differences etc. and support this with information from the diagram. Avoid focusing too closely on the details.**
- ✓ If you have more than one graph or chart of mixture, **link the information**.
- ✓ Make sure you write in paragraphs: **an introduction, one or two paragraphs for the body** of the text. Then write a **brief conclusion**.

Sample Topic

The table below shows personal savings as a percentage of personal income for selected countries in 1990, 2000 and 2010.

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
Canada	5.6	11.5	1.9
France	18.7	12.5	13.6
Germany	13.8	13.8	11.8
Italy	29.5	17.6	11.4
Japan	17.6	12.1	13.6
UK	9.2	8.2	11.1
USA	8.2	5.5	4.0

Sample Response-

The table shows the percentage of personal income devoted to savings in seven countries in 1990, 2000 and 2010.

The most dramatic changes are evident in Italy, Japan, France and Canada. In 1990, Italy had the highest savings rate of 29.5%, followed by France with 18.7% and Japan with 17.6%. Canada had the lowest rate- a meager 5.6%.

By 2000, Italy was still the leading country, though its savings rate had dropped to 17.6%. Germany was next with 13.8% (same as 1990) and the rates in France and Japan were close behind. In Canada, the savings rate had almost doubled to 11.5%. The UK and the USA had the lowest rates- 8.2% and 5.5% respectively.

By 2010, the savings rate had leveled out considerably across the seven countries. France and Japan led with 13.6, followed by Germany, Italy and the UK at around 11%. Personal savings in North America dropped sharply, with the USA at 4% and Canada at a very low 1.9%.

The overall trend shows a reduction in savings over this twenty year period.

[Approx. 176 words]

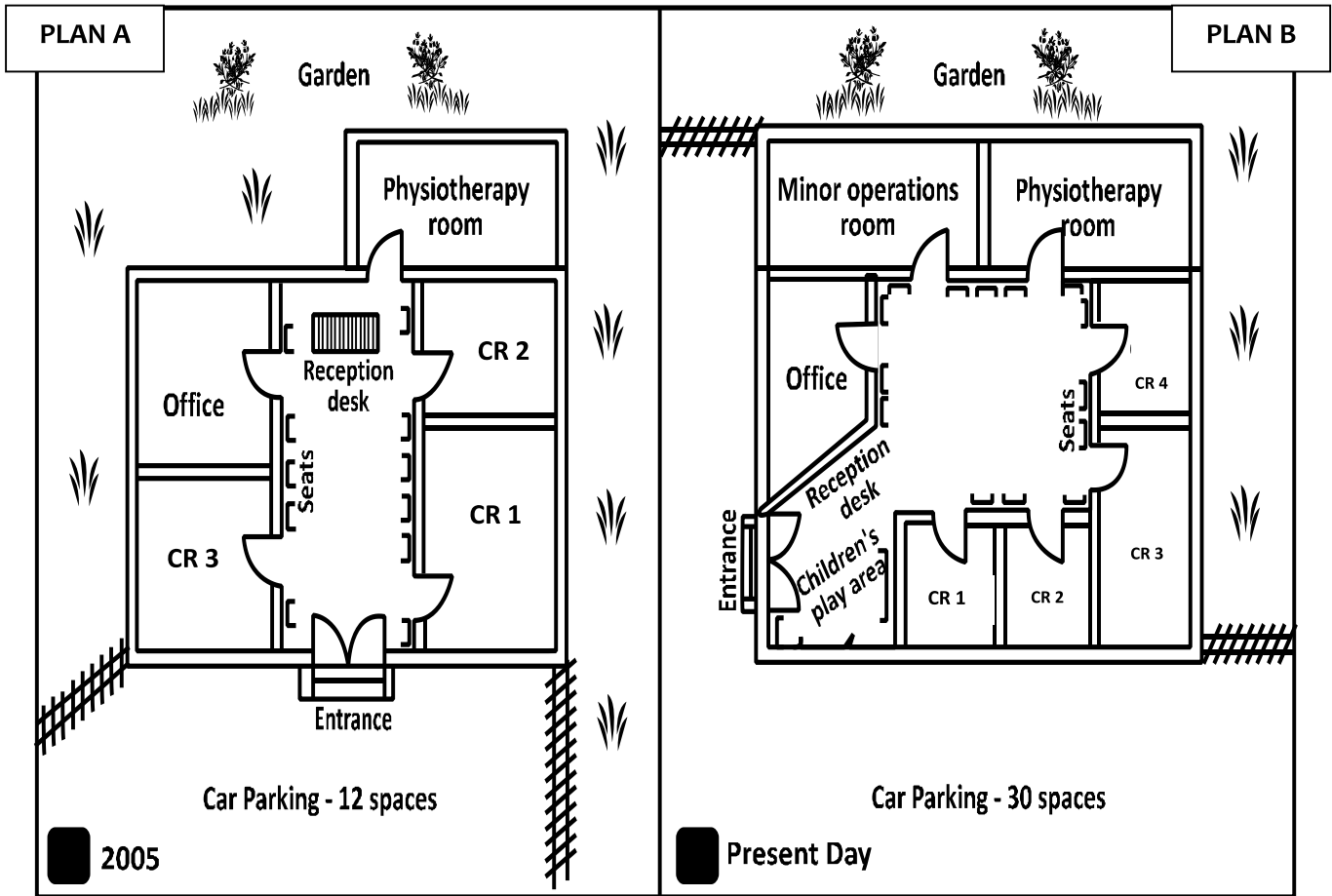
Exercise:

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

Plan A shows a health centre in 2005. Plan B shows the same place in the present day.

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

Write at least 150 words.



CR- Consulting Rooms

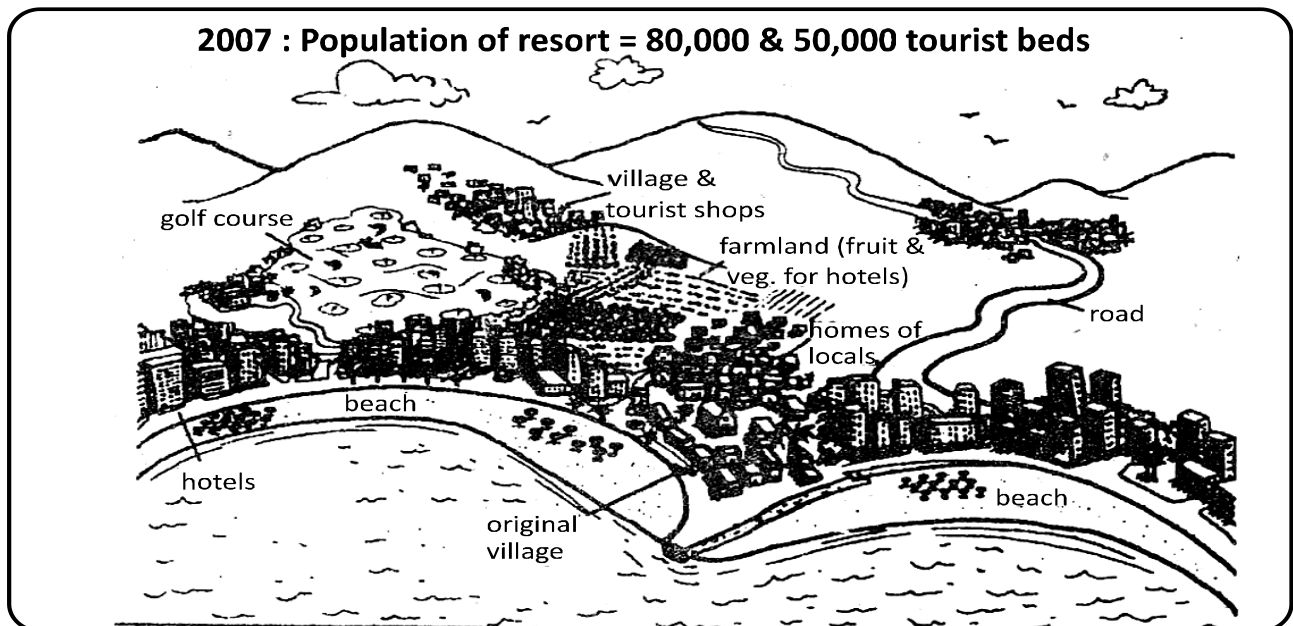
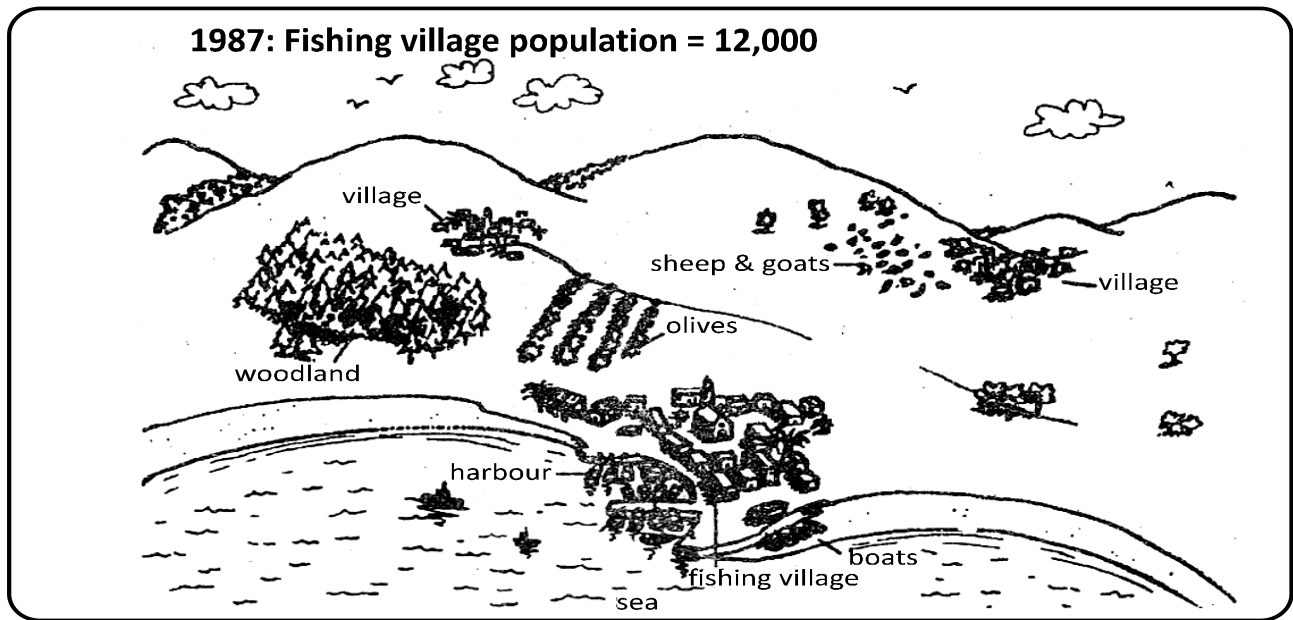
Exercise:

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The diagrams below show the development of a small fishing village and its surrounding area into a large European tourist resort.

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

Write at least 150 words.



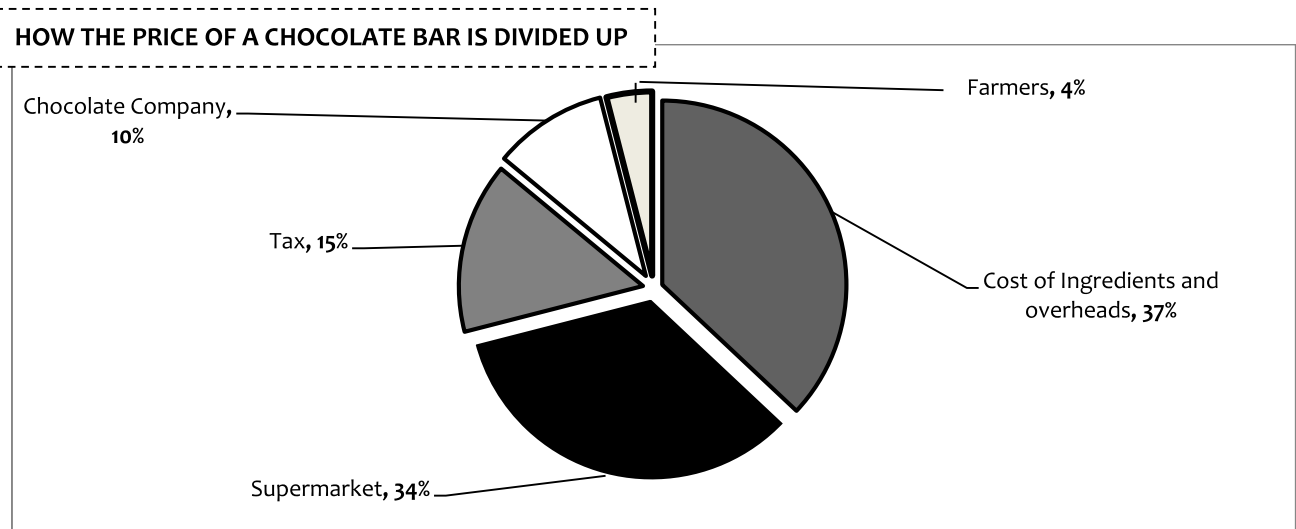
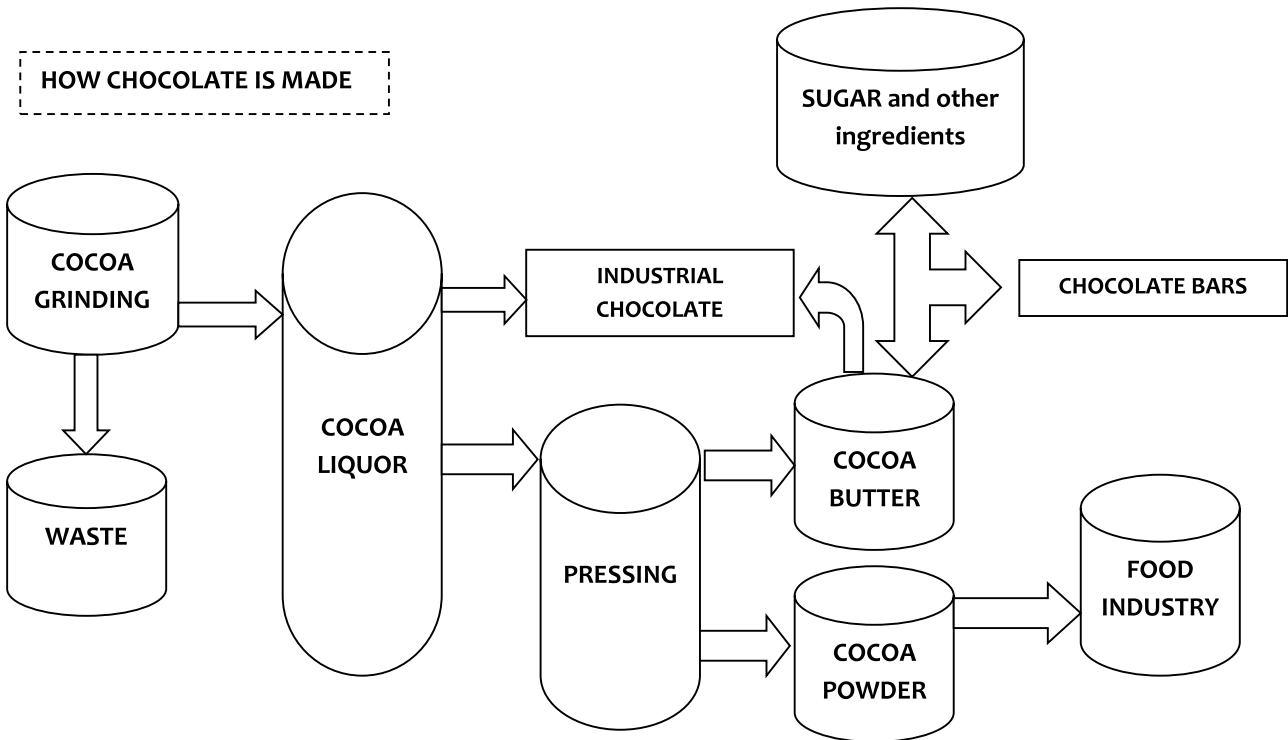
Exercise:

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The diagrams below show how chocolate is made and how the price of a chocolate bar is divided up among those involved in the process.

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

Write at least 150 words.



Exercise:

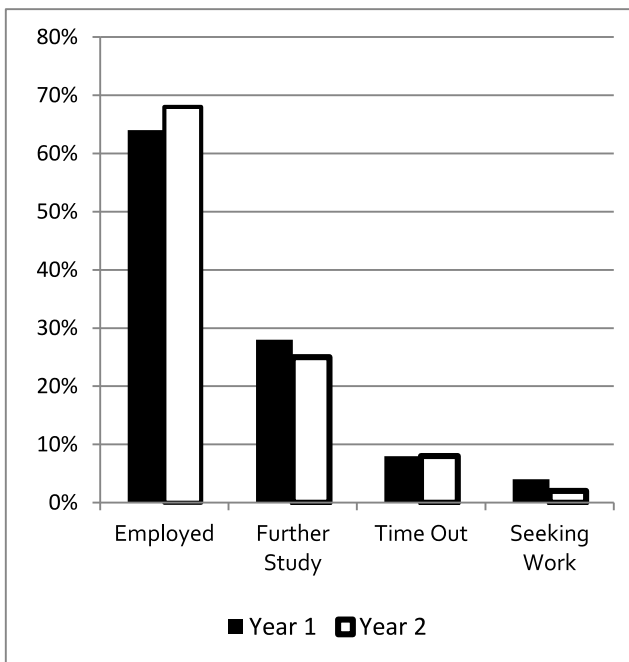
You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The charts below show what the business and engineering graduates of a particular university were doing six months after graduating. The figures cover a two-year period.

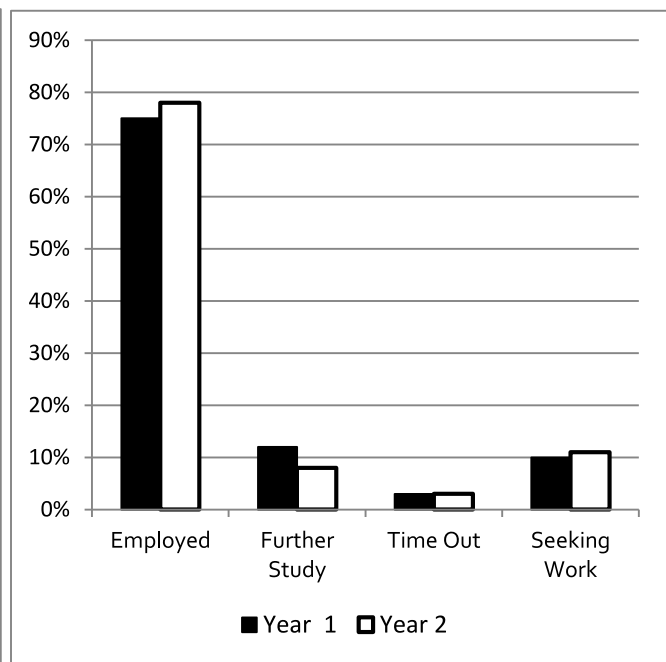
Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features and make comparisons where relevant.

Write at least 150 words.

Business Graduates



Engineering Graduates



Exercise:

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The line graph and bar chart below show the average monthly rainfall and temperature for one region in East Africa.

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

You should write at least 150 words.

Average monthly rainfall and temperature

