

IELTS

Name :

Batch:

CRASH

Writing Lecture-1

Writing Test Overview

In the Academic Module of the IELTS Test, students are required to carry out **two writing tasks**. These are denoted as "**Task 1**" and "**Task 2**". Abiding by certain specific instructions can improve the examinees' writing skills and their writing effectiveness. One thing has to be remembered though- these instructions, by no means, are concrete procedures. These are just the prerequisites to accomplishing a successful piece of writing. Students have total freedom to design their tasks according to their choice. But it should always be remembered that students must make the examiners realize that they have thought out and analyzed the topics well enough.

The Writing Test- an overview

The Writing test of the IELTS exam lasts 60 minutes. There are 2 tasks which have to be finished within the stipulated time. It is generally advised to spend about 20 minutes on Writing Task 1 and about 40 minutes on Writing Task 2.

Task 1: The examinee has to write at least 150 words.

Task 2: The examinee has to write at least 250 words.

The type of task depends on whether the examinee is sitting for the Academic Module or the General Training Module.

In the Academic Module of the IELTS exam, the candidate has to complete Tasks 1 and 2 in the form of-

Task 1: here the candidates may be asked to describe facts or figures presented in one or more graphs, charts or tables on a related topic; or they may be given a diagram of a machine, a device or a process and asked to explain how it works. Candidates should make sure to include the most important and the most relevant points in the diagram. Some minor points or details may be left out. They should write in an academic or semi-formal/ neutral style. Candidates are asked not to spend more than 20 minutes on this task. While they are asked to write at least 150 words and will not be penalized for writing more than 150 words, they should remember that a longer Task 1 answer may mean that they have less time to spend on Task 2, which contributes twice as much to the Writing band score.

Candidates should also note that they will be penalized for irrelevance if the response is off-topic or is not written as full, connected text (e.g. using bullet points in any part of the response, or note form etc.). They will be severely penalized if their writing is plagiarized (i.e. copied from another source).

The task assesses the candidate's ability to identify the most important and relevant information and trends in a graph, chart, table or diagram, and to give a well-organized overview of it using language accurately in an academic register or style. The task, in essence, will involve the candidate writing a report on one or more of the following illustrations-

↔ Bar graphs

↔ Pie charts

↔ Line diagrams

↔ Tables

↔ Flowcharts

↔ Picture descriptions

↔ Maps.

Task 2: writing an essay in response to a point of view, argument or problem.

Typically, the question for Writing Task 1 will read:

WRITING TASK 1

You should spend 20 minutes on this task.

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

Write at least 150 words.

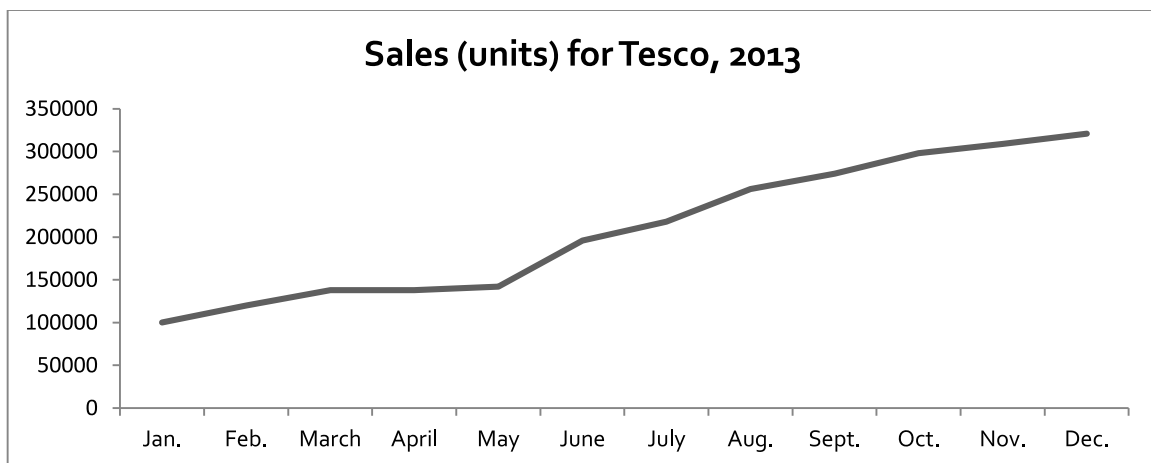
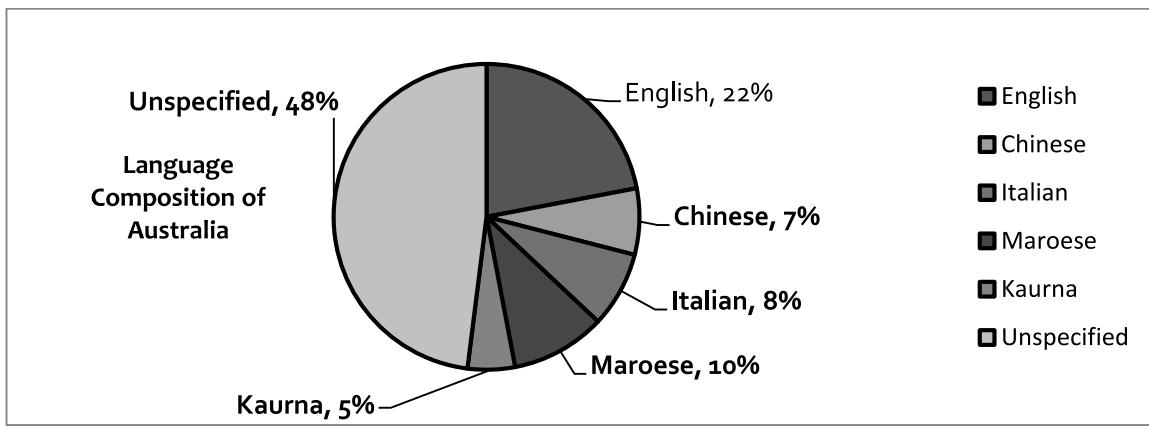
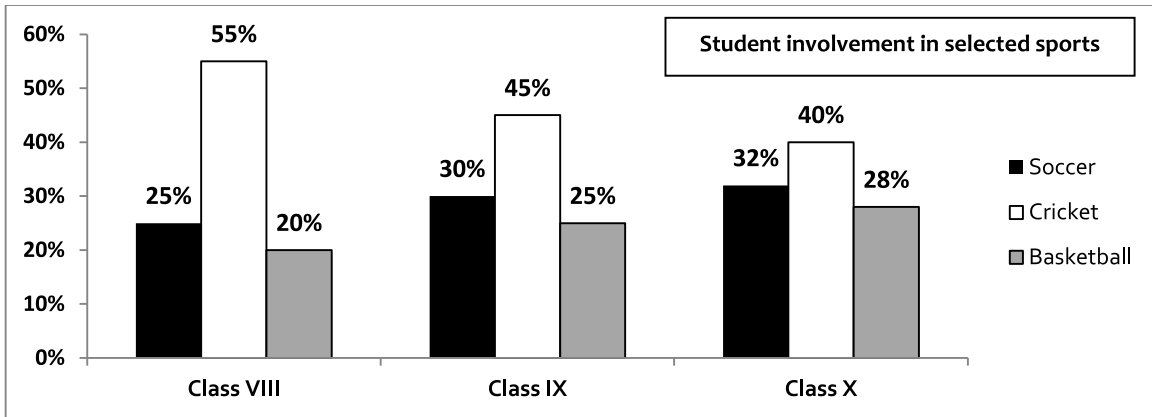
In Task 1 of the Writing exam, candidates are judged on-

Criteria	How responses are assessed
Task Achievement	how appropriately, accurately and relevantly the candidate has fulfilled task requirements
Coherence and Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → the overall clarity and fluency of the message → how well the candidate has organized and linked information and ideas → logical sequencing and appropriate use of linking devices between and within sentences
Lexical Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → range of vocabulary candidate has used → how accurate and appropriate the vocabulary is in relation to the specific task
Grammatical range and Accuracy	the range and accurate use of grammar as seen in the candidate's writing at the sentence level

So, the examiner will try to find out whether or not the examinee can:

- recognize different types of graphical representations of information
- isolate the main subjects of the graphical representations
- describe basic features of the representations
- describe, sort, and compare data within the representations
- describe trends within the representations
- draw inferences from the representations.

The following page will show the most common forms of graphs you are likely to come across in the IELTS exam. You may have one of the graphs or a combination of these, with the aim being the same all the time- to exceed 150 words.



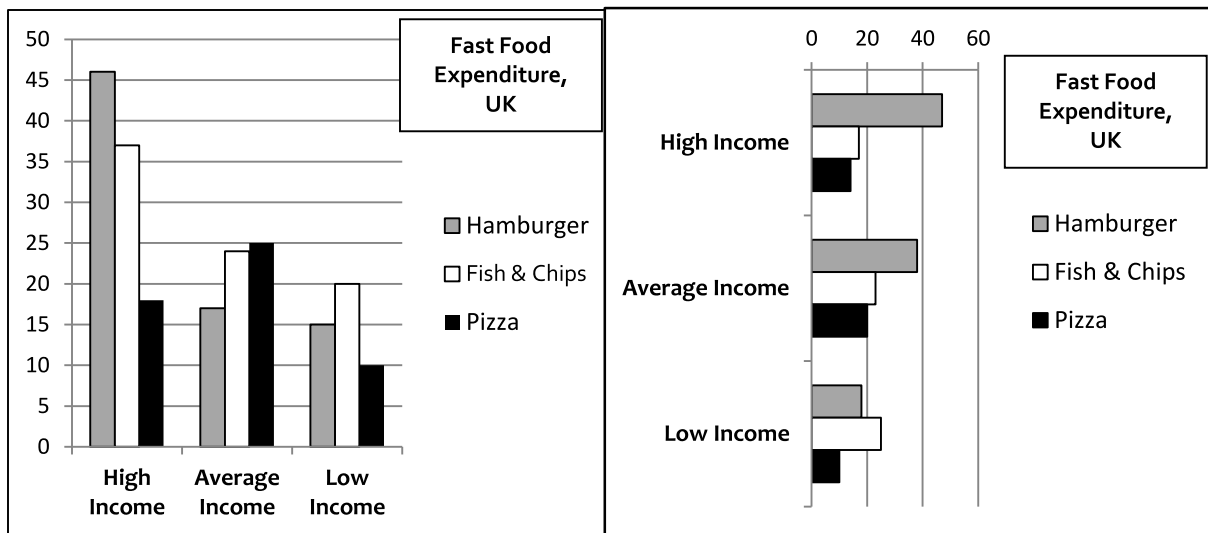
For example, the first graph in the portion above is named Column graph. The second one is named Pie chart. Finally, we can denote the last one as a Line graph. It is of utmost importance to remember their names because it is expected that the students will know the names of the different figures correctly. Also, the terms "graphs", "charts" and "diagrams" are synonymous.

⌘ Column and Bar Graphs:

A bar chart or bar graph is a chart with rectangular bars with lengths proportional to the values that they represent. The bars can be plotted vertically or horizontally. A vertical bar chart is sometimes called a column bar chart. The longer the columns/bars are, the greater the numbers. The units are commonly mentioned along the **axis of measurement*. In some cases though, they may represent percentages and are then mentioned in words or symbols. Bar charts provide a visual presentation of categorical data. Categorical data is a grouping of data into discrete groups, such as months of the year, age group, shoe sizes, and eye colors. In a column bar chart, the categories appear along the horizontal axis; the height of the bar corresponds to the value of each category.

While describing these graphs, besides expressing data, students are expected to compare between different items and categories of information. Usually, different items and categories of information are represented by the variable number and color/texture of the columns/bars.

Column and Bar graphs are equivocal (saying the same thing) and the same statistical evidence may be pictured by either of them.



For example, the graphs above depict the amount of money spent for the consumption of different fast food items by groups of people distinguished as per their income, and are denoted as High, Average and Low Income groups.

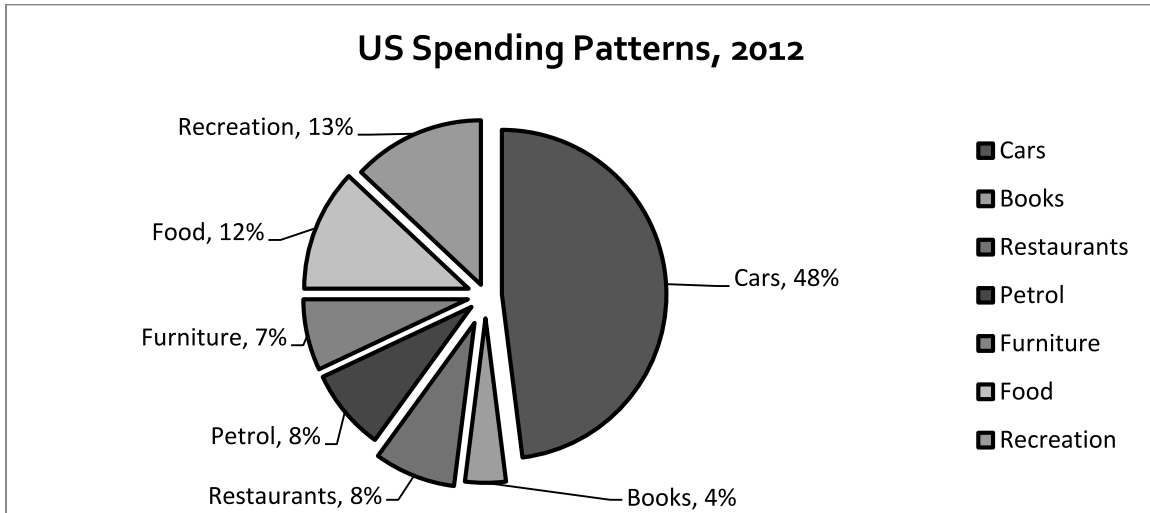
In case of columns, the *AoM is along the vertical scale and, for bars, it is along the horizontal scale.

As the diagrams suggest, people from the High Income groups spend most on Hamburgers, followed by Pizzas and Fish and Chips. It can be easily identified that the spending behaviors of the two other groups are quite different, both in terms of choice of foods and the amount of money spent for them. In this case, you can compare among the amount spent on these three food items for all the income groups, or among the income groups in terms of their expenditures on the three types of food items.

***Axis of Measurement/AoM- the scale which contains the measuring units.**

⌘ Pie Charts

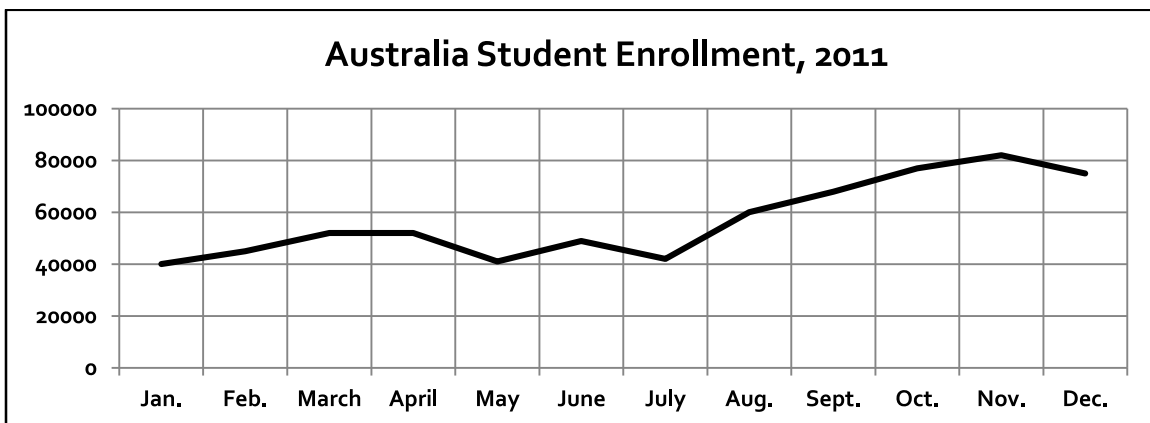
It is a circular chart divided into sectors each of whose length (consequently its central angle and area), is proportional to the quantity it represents. It is named for its resemblance to a pie which has been sliced. Pie charts can be an effective way of displaying information in some cases, in particular if the intent is to compare the size of a slice with the whole pie, rather than comparing the slices among them.



The pie chart above deals with the pattern of expenditure of US citizens on certain commodities. Students should bring about some comparisons among the proportion of expenditures on different commodities. For example, you can compare the spending patterns between two or three specific commodities, i.e. - Cars and Furniture, or any other combination; or can bring about comparisons among all the commodities, considering the whole pie chart at a time.

⌘ Line Graphs

A line chart or line graph is a type of chart which displays information as a series of data points connected by straight line segments. It is a basic type of chart common in many fields. It is created by connecting a series of points that represent individual measurements with line segments. A line chart is often used to visualize a trend in data over intervals of time – a time series – thus the line is often drawn chronologically.



The given line graph shows the student enrollment in Australia and how the number changes with respect to time (months in this particular case). If you have a careful look at the graph, you will see that the number of students rise and fall at different points of time. At certain points, the number of students reaches a peak (high point) / trough (low point) and varies all throughout. Hence, the students are required to explain these data, as well as their variations.

Tables

In the tables, students need not take the pain of finding out the data, rather the data are precisely provided. Hence, students just have to interpret the data as those are given. Moreover, the provided data can often present some situations where making comparisons will be necessary. In fact, when tables are to be described, comparative descriptions are required in almost all cases, because the question pattern will be as such.

Distribution of Students at York University, U of T and Monash

<u>Department</u>	<u>Students at York</u>	<u>Students at U of T</u>	<u>Students at Monash</u>
BBA	800	600	550
Economics	350	200	200
English	280	150	150
Architecture	120	200	150
Pharmacy	65	220	200

The table above states the number of students at **York University, U of T and Monash**, with respect to their different departments. Here, it is quite obvious that the number of students is not evenly distributed over the different departments of the universities. So, the students can make comparisons among the number of students according to the departments and even according to the universities, subsequently coming to a logical conclusion about the data provided above.

Points to remember:

- ✓ Describing table is similar to describing charts. The same structures of comparison and contrast are used. The most challenging aspect is dealing with the considerable amount of data.
- ✓ Do not describe all the data presented. Instead, first focus on the most significant amounts first- thereby making sure that you don't miss out on them.
- ✓ Look for significant data- e.g. the highest, the lowest, etc.
- ✓ Try to group the data. This may require you to use some general knowledge.

Aside from these particular forms of graphs, students are required to interpret and explain flow charts or process diagrams, and maps which are described at a later period of this course.

The Writing Format

Structure of a Report (IELTS Task 1):

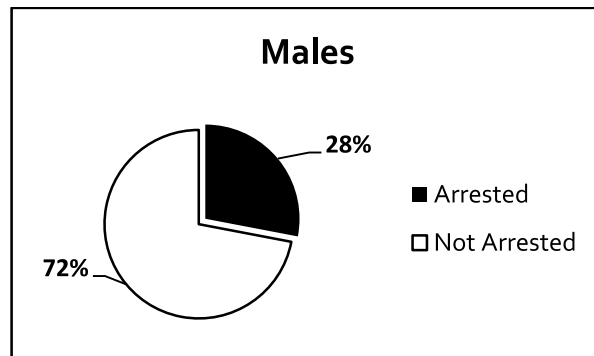
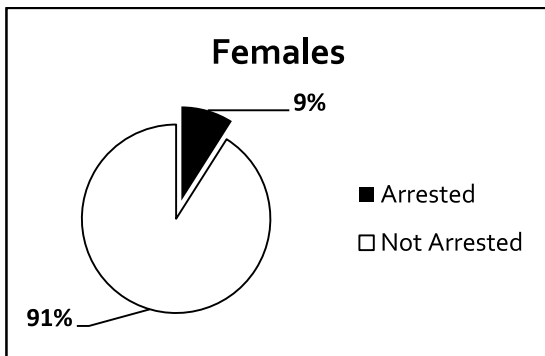
Introduction (do not copy from the question) + Overview (i.e. first glance statement)	
Main features in Details	Relevant Comparison Details
Concluding Deductions (general Statement), Implications, Significant comments	

Subject of Reporting (SoR)

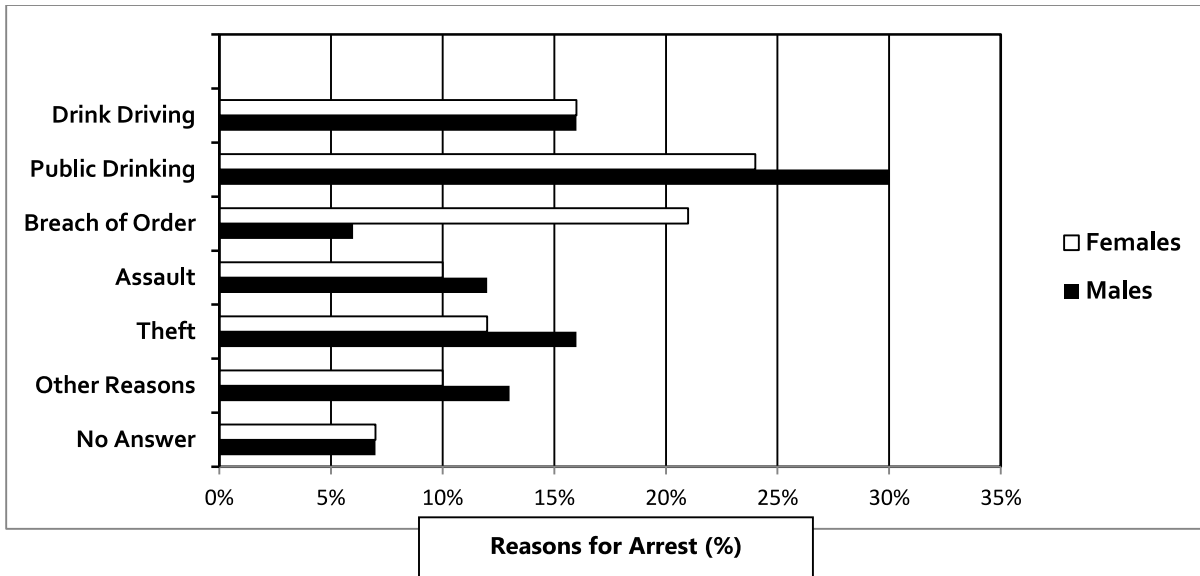
The subject condition of data plotting (the rule according to which different data points are plotted) is called the Subject of Reporting (*SoR*). Identification of the *SoR* should get the topmost priority from the examinees' perspective. Remember, the subject of your reporting is always the measurable part of the topic; in other words **the measurable topic of the graph is its SoR.**

Never copy the subject given above the graphical representation in the question paper. The examinees for the IELTS are assessed on their writing and interpreting skills. Copying from the question paper will be considered as plagiarism (literary theft!), and as a result, will render the examiner to ignore such parts of the answers.

Look at the graphs below and in the next page.



Crime situation in Astoria, 2007



Sample Response-

The two pie charts and the bar graph in combination depict a picture of the crime situation in Astoria during the year 2007.

The pie charts clearly show that while a trifling 9% of females are arrested in Astoria, the percentage of arrested males is more than three times this number, standing at 28%. The percentage of not arrested females is thus much greater than the percentage of not arrested males.

The bar graph on the other hand, delineate that the most common reason for residents of Astoria to get arrested is public drinking, at around 24% for females and 30% for males. Contrary to this, the least common cause for getting arrested is when people did not reply to any question being asked to them- around 7% for both genders. The most noticeable aspect of the graph refers to the category termed 'breach of order', which serves as the only example where females lead their male counterparts. For assault and other reasons, the percentages stand at around the 10% mark for females and 13% mark for males.

From the graphs, it is quite evident that the most plausible ground for being detained is public drinking- and this trend is common for both genders.

Approximately 204 words

Extrinsic Features

↔ Scales and Units

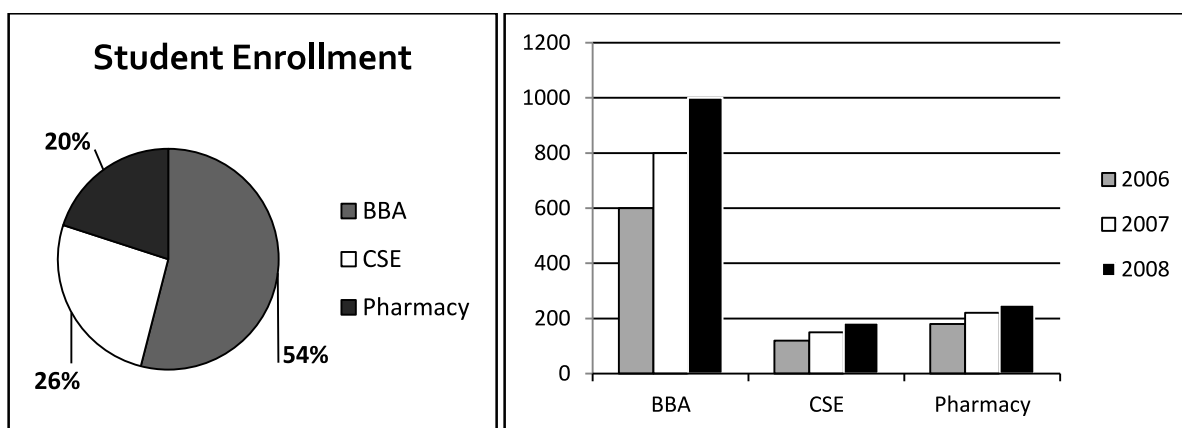
The horizontal and vertical scales of line, bar and column graphs should be explained. They may be measured in various kinds of units, understanding of which is necessary for interpreting the data presented within the graph at hand. If this comprehension is not clear, and its description not sufficient, then the report will be futile. Make sure that units are mentioned accurately. If the graph does not specify any, then just use the word "**unit**" to clarify its denotation. Remember these scales and units are not always the same and may not be present in cases. For example, pie charts and tables are not scaled horizontally or vertically, although units are commonly present. But flow charts or process diagrams commonly plot "abstracts" and may not contain units.

↔ Headers

In case of tables, the topmost row and/or leftmost column are/is called headers, because they control the nature and value of all data within the enclosed cells. So the understanding and reporting of tables should be headed by sufficient elaboration of each header. Again, act in case of units likewise.

↔ Items and Indicators

In the graphical representations, the variables or items are presented by distinct markers or indicators. These indicators are distinguished by their varied colors, shades, textures and patterns. Now consider the following examples and identify their Extrinsic Features:

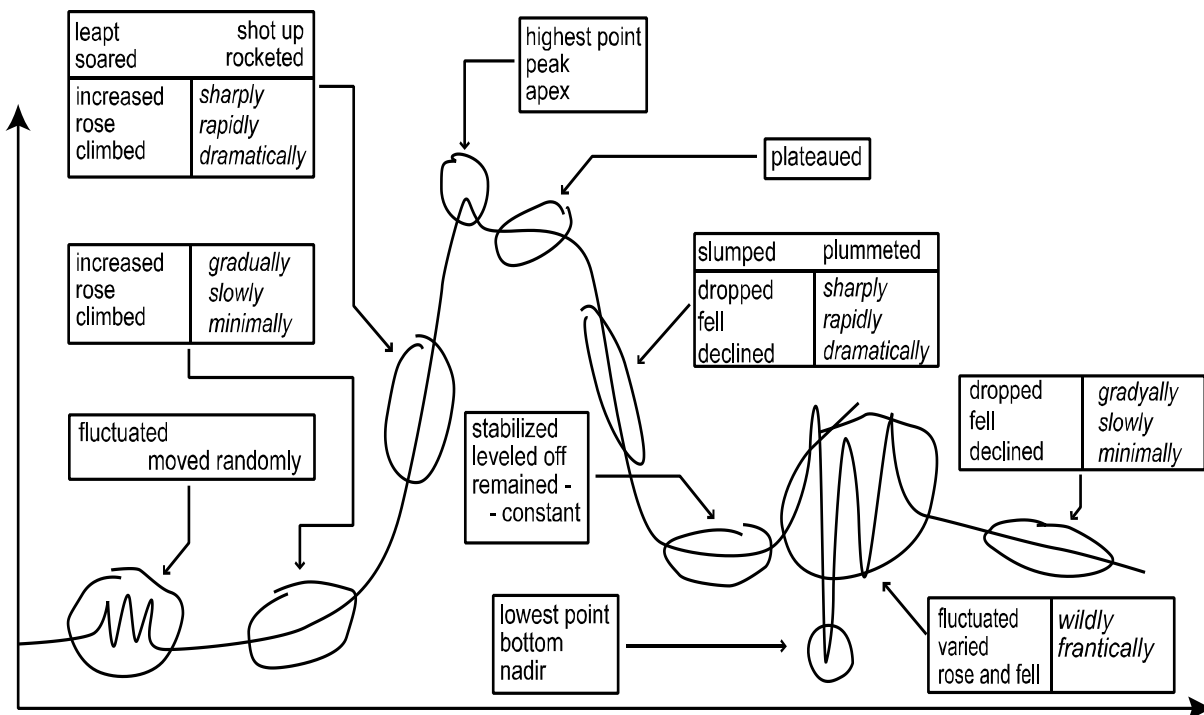


	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
BBA	600	700	850
CSE	120	156	180
Pharmacy	180	195	225

Writing the "Opening" - i.e. Introduction

- ✓ **Make general statements.** Save the details for the later part of your report.
- ✓ **Do not copy word for word from the question.** Try to paraphrase in your own words.
- ✓ **Use one of the following four prompts to help you write an opening:**
 - The graph shows/illustrates the trends in between ... and
 - The graph gives / provides / reveals / presents information about (the differences / changes...)
 - The graph shows that (there are a number of differences between
 - The graph shows/illustrates how the sales have differed/changed.
- ✓ **Vary noun phrases (Subject of Reporting):**
 - Sales/purchases of different cars: sales/purchases of private vehicles; the number of various types of cars sold/purchased; the number of various types of cars sold/purchased; car sales/purchases.

Basic Vocabulary for Reporting



↔ Use appropriate synonyms:

✓ rise (v) —

↔ climb, go up, increase, improve, jump, leap, move upward, rocket, skyrocket, soar, shoot up, surge

✓ rise (n) —

↔ increase, climb, jump, leap, surge in

✓ fall (n) —

↔ collapse, decline, decrease, deteriorate, dip, dive, drop, fall (back), go down, plummet, plunge, reduce (only in the passive), slide, slip (back), slump, take a nosedive

✓ fall (n) —

↔ decline, decrease, deterioration, dip, drop, plunge, free-fall, slide, slip, dive, reduction, slump

✓ fluctuate (v) —

↔ be erratic, be fitful, rise and fall erratically, sporadically, irregularly, intermittently, unevenly, irregularly

✓ flat (adj.) —

↔ no change, constant

↔ Add suitable adverbs:

- dramatically, erratically, gradually, markedly, slightly, slowly, steadily, significantly, considerably, substantially, noticeably

↔ Add data ranges:

- (increasing etc.) from ...to
- between ... and
- with an increase from ... to/to ...from

↔ Use ...followed by ... to add more information

↔ Add time phrases:

- between ... and...
- from to (inclusive)
- at... /by... /in ...

- in (e.g. 1994).....
- during/over the period.....
- over the latter half of the year/ century / decade / period
- over the next / past / previous five days / weeks / months / years / decades / era

↔ Use linkers:

- however / in contrast / by comparison / meanwhile / on the other hand

↔ Use the following expressions to focus on an item in the graph:

- As regards ... (sales), ... they.....
- With regard to / Regarding / In the case of / As for / Turning to ... (sales) ... they.....
- Where... is/are concerned, they
- When it comes to ... it/they ...

↔ Use these words and phrases to describe predictions:

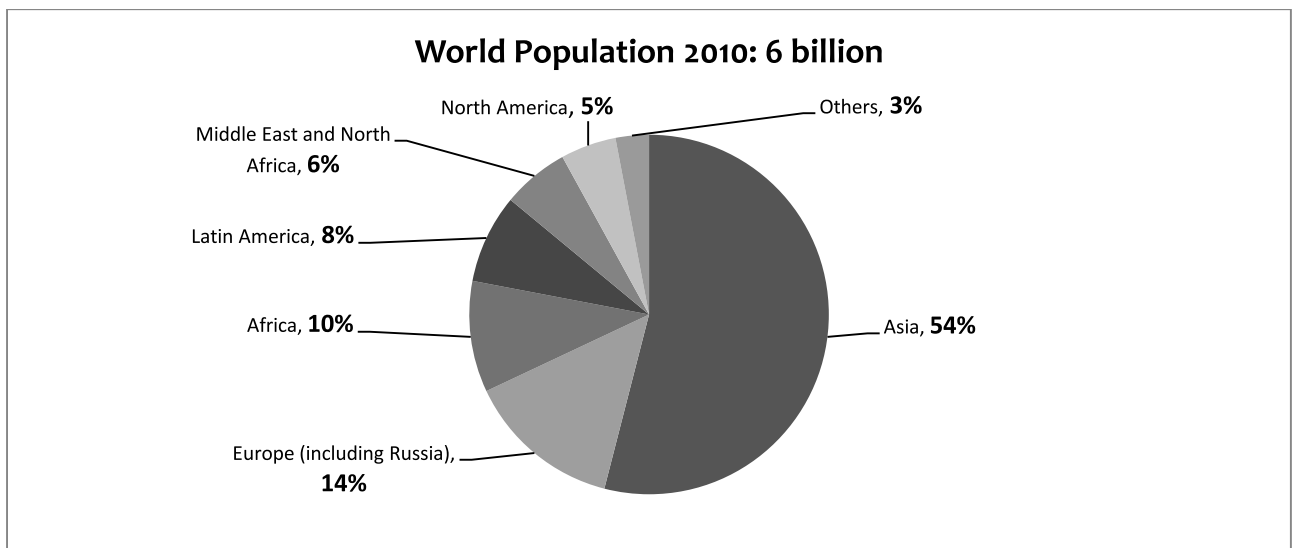
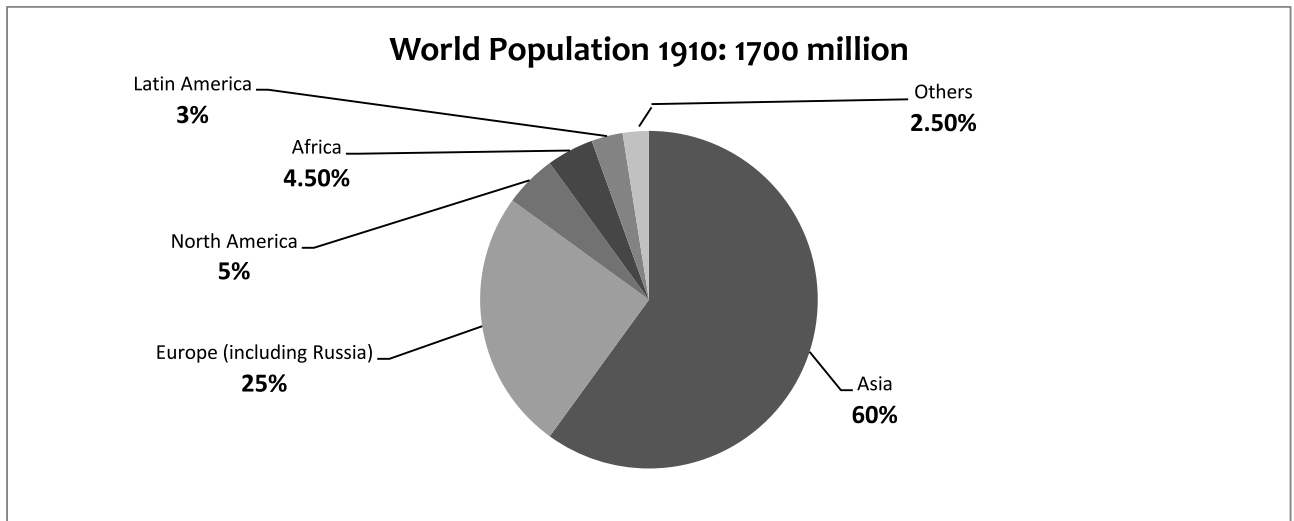
- It is predicted / forecasted / estimated / expected / projected / anticipated that will
- ... will...
- ... will have ... by...
- The projection is for... to...
- ... is / are predicted /forecasted / estimated / expected / projected/ anticipated to ...
- ...is/ are set to ...

Words of Approximation

Nearly	Approximately	Roughly	About	In the region of
Almost	Just over	Just under	Around	In the order of
Just about	More or less	A little more than	Just about	

Exercise

The two pie charts below show changes in world population by region between 1910 and 2010. Look at the graphs and complete the sentences that follow.



Introduction

What kind of diagram is it?
What do the charts show?
Over what time period?
How are the regions shown?

These pie show changes in world population 1910 and 2010. The major regions represented as percentages of the total population.

Description

Where did the most significant change occur between 1910 and 2010?

From 1910 2010, Africa's percentage of world population from 4.5% to 10% while Latin America from 3% to 8% of world population.

Which 2 areas showed the greatest decreases and by how much?

On the hand, the percentage of population Europe and Asia decreased during the period. Europe dropped 25% to 14%, while Asia's percentage declined from 60% to 54%.

Which regions stayed the same?
What about the new category?

North America however remained, staying at of world population both in 1910 and 2010. The Middle East and, representing new regions in the graph, stood for of world population.

Which about the other categories?

The percentage of in the remaining areas of the rose slightly from 2.5% to

Conclusion
What was the actual change in population?
Over what period?
What does this show?

Overall, this represents a huge in the number of humans on the, from 1700 million to 6 billion just one hundred years, a rise of around Most of this growth rate has occurred in developing

Exercise:

You should spend about 20 minutes on this task.

The tables and pie chart show in percentage terms the results of a survey of a new shopping complex in Auckland, New Zealand.

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

Write at least 150 words.

Shops

Shoppers	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	No Comment
Male	17	45	20	18
Female	34	37	20	9

Restaurants

Shoppers	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	No Comment
Male	25	55	5	15
Female	27	32	21	20

Design

