

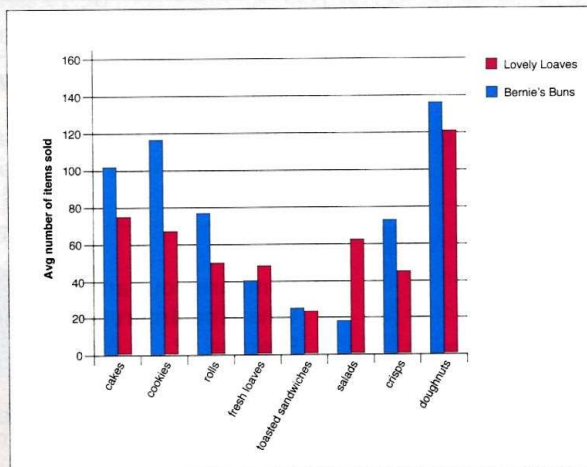
Try it first!

Task 1 Writing: How to write about comparative graphs

In this unit, you will look at how to write about a graph or table without a trend. The information given in this type of chart does not change over time.

The graph shows data about the average Saturday sales of two bakeries in London in 2010.

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



1 Try writing an answer for the Task 1 question above. You will need to:

- write an introduction to the topic of the graph in your own words (paragraph 1);
- give an overview of the main ideas in the graph (paragraph 2);
- describe the most important details, including numbers (paragraphs 3 and 4);
- write a minimum of 150 words.

In the exam, you have 20 minutes for Task 1.

2 Think about these questions before you start.

- 1 What will you write in the introduction?
- 2 What are the main differences between the sales from the two bakeries?
- 3 How could you group the data?
- 4 What grammar and vocabulary will you need to use?

Understanding and interpreting the graph

3 Decide whether these statements about the graph are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false ones.

- 1 On a typical Saturday, Bernie's Buns is **generally busier than** Lovely Loaves.
- 2 Doughnuts are **by far the most popular item** among customers in both stores.
- 3 The **second-best selling item** in Bernie's Buns is cookies.
- 4 Fresh loaves are **the least popular snack** overall.
- 5 Toasted sandwiches are **as popular as** cookies.
- 6 Lovely Loaves **sells slightly more** salads than Bernie's Buns.

4 Compare answers with a partner and discuss the meaning of the phrases in bold.



Spotlight 1

Key language for making comparisons

In Task 1, you need to compare accurately the information presented in line graphs, pie charts, tables and bar graphs in a variety of different ways. In this section you will review and develop a variety of useful ways of doing this.

- 1 Write these adjectives in their comparative and superlative forms in the correct columns of the table below.**

~~busy~~ cheap ~~comfortable~~ common crowded dangerous difficult easy
economical expensive far fast good healthy high intelligent interesting
noisy popular quiet successful tall useful well-paid

comparative		superlative	
-er	more/less	the + adjective + -est/-iest	the most / the least + adjective
busier	more comfortable	the busiest	the most comfortable

- 2 Compare your answers to Exercise 1 with a partner. What are the general rules? What spelling rules are there? What are the opposites of the adjectives in Exercise 1?**

- 3 Write sentences about these pairs using comparatives. Share ideas with a partner.**

Example: *The countryside is quieter than the city.*

- the city / the countryside ● learning grammar / learning vocabulary
- cricket / football ● travelling business class / travelling economy class
- New York / Paris ● a plane / a bicycle

- 4 Say whether these words relate to small differences or big differences.**

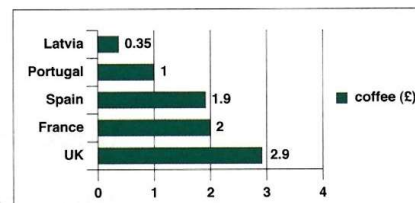
- much ● a lot ● slightly ● a bit ● considerably ● a little ● far

- 5 Finish each of these sentence starters with a comparative and your own idea. Compare with a partner.**

- 1 Travelling by train is slightly ...
- 2 A night in a hotel costs much more ...
- 3 London is considerably ...

- 6 Look at the chart and write accurate comparative sentences about the information in it using these prompts.**

- 1 Coffee in the UK / expensive / France
- 2 The cost of a coffee in Spain / cheap / France



- 7 Complete these sentences using the information in the chart in Exercise 6.**

- 1 The most expensive coffee is in, at £2.90.
- 2 The second most expensive is in, where it costs
- 3 Coffee in is the third m....., at
- 4 The next coffee is
- 5 The least

- 8 Write two more sentences about the chart.**

Tip

Before comparatives, you can use words to indicate if the difference is large or small: A Rolls Royce is **much** more expensive than a Ford.

Tip

Superlatives are also a useful way to rank and order the information you find in Task 1 graphs.



Spotlight 2

More comparative structures

Another important way to write about comparatives is to use the structure 'x is *not as* + adjective + *as* y'.

*Coffee in France is **not as expensive as** in the UK.*

Becoming confident using this structure will make your writing more flexible.

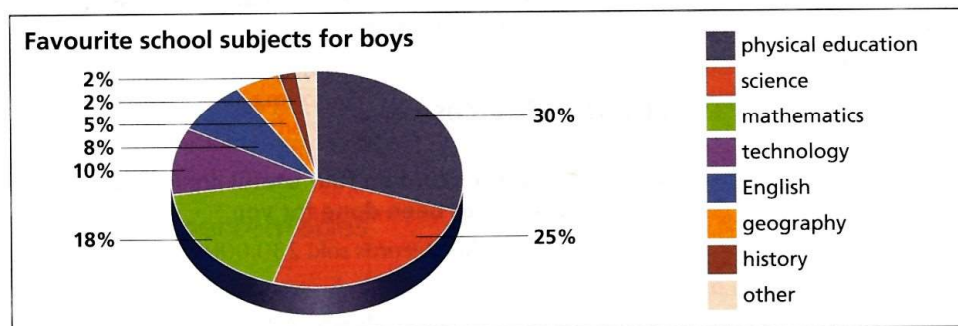
1 Use the structure above to rewrite this sentence.

The Fratton Road library was less busy than the one in Commercial Road in March.

2 Use the same structure to write sentences about these pairs of information.

- 1 hamburgers £2 / french fries £1.90
- 2 Majorca 30 degrees / Castellón 35 degrees
- 3 southern trains 125 mph / northern trains 100 mph

3 Look at this chart and write three sentences about the data using the same structure. Compare your sentences with a partner.



4 Rewrite the comparative sentences below using *not as* + adjective (from the box) + *as*.

expensive high popular successful

- 1 Monster Hits Records sold 230,000 CDs in 1990, whereas Crooners plc sold 225,000.
- 2 A hundred couples chose the name *James* in 2000, while just 20 couples opted for the name *Peter*.
- 3 It costs an average of £95 to spend a night in a hotel in Paris, as opposed to over £150 in Zurich.
- 4 The temperature in Rawai Island was much lower than in Phuket, at 15 degrees and 25 degrees respectively.

5 Look at these phrases and decide whether they express a big difference or a small one.

- 1 X is/was **nowhere near as** expensive as Y. *big difference*
- 2 X is/was **not quite as** expensive as Y.
- 3 X is/was **not nearly as** expensive as Y.
- 4 X is/was **almost as** expensive as Y.

6 Rewrite the sentences in Exercise 4 using one of the four phrases from Exercise 5 to express whether there is a small or large difference.

Example: *Crooners plc was not quite as successful as Monster Hits Records in 1990, selling 225,000 CDs compared to 230,000.*

Spotlight 3

Advanced comparatives and linking devices

A further way to increase your range of language for describing comparatives is to use 'not + verb + as + noun phrase + as'.

Crooners plc did not sell as many CDs as Monster Hits Records in 1990, with 225,000 compared to 230,000.

Coffee in France does not cost as much as in the UK, at £2 and £2.90 respectively.

**Gold Medals,
Beijing Olympics, 2008**

China	62
USA	48
Russia	47
UK	42
France	33
Australia	21
Italy	19
Ethiopia	10
Japan	9
South Korea	5

- 1 Look at the table on the left and complete these sentences with 'not + (verb) + as + noun phrase + as'. Be careful, one sentence is different.**

- Japan did not Ethiopia, taking home nine compared to Ethiopia's ten. *win as many gold medals as*
- The USA won 48 gold medals, but this was nowhere near *as many gold medals as*
- The USA was China, winning 48 medals compared to 62. *not a winner as many times as*
- Australia did not the French athletes, taking home 21 compared to France's 33. *win as many gold medals as*

- 2 Write one false and two true comparative sentences about other information in the table in Exercise 1. Swap sentences with a partner, then check and correct the incorrect information.**

Linking devices

- 3 These sentences contain four useful linking devices. Find and underline them. The first one has been done for you.**

- a Monster Hits Records sold 230,000 CDs in 1990, while Crooners plc sold 225,000.

b Monster Hits Records sold 230,000 CDs in 1990, as opposed to Crooners plc, who sold 225,000.
- a A hundred couples chose the name *James* in 2000, whereas just 20 couples opted for the name *Peter*.

b A hundred couples chose the name *James* in 2000, compared to 20 who opted for the name *Peter*.

- 4 The linking devices *whereas* and *while* work with slightly different grammar to *compared to* and *as opposed to*. Study the pairs of sentences in Exercise 3. What is the difference?**

- 5 Correct the mistakes in these sentences.**

- Just 10% of first-time buyers said they needed a garage, as opposed to 30% said a large kitchen was necessary. *who*
- Just 10% of first-time buyers said they needed a garage, whereas 30% who said a large kitchen was necessary. *Of those*

- 6 Complete these sentences with a suitable linking device and idea. Compare your answers with a partner.**

- Five hundred people owned a dog, while ... *a few individuals have cats.*
- A meal at Rosie's costs £20, as opposed to ... *Mac's, which costed only 5 pounds.*
- Fifteen per cent of people aged between 18 and 30 said they visited Barcelona for the nightlife, compared to ... *50% who preferred to the daylife of Barcelona.*
- The majority of doctors said they found their jobs satisfying, whereas ... *a few others did not.*



Spotlight 4

Describing numbers

When writing a Task 1 answer, it is important to describe numbers and data in different ways to avoid repetition. You will be given credit for doing this, as it will show you have a wider range of vocabulary.

1 Look at the graph about Bernie's Buns and Lovely Loaves on page 91 and answer these questions.

- 1 How many doughnuts does Bernie's Buns sell on average? **nearly 140**
- 2 How many doughnuts does Lovely Loaves sell? **about 120**
- 3 What is the total number of toasted-sandwich sales in Bernie's Buns? **just above 20**

2 Compare your answers with a partner. Does your partner have the same three answers? How would you write about this data in words? Compare ideas.

3 Match these descriptions (a–d) to the questions in Exercise 1 (1–3). One is not necessary. **1** **3** **2**

- a approximately 135 b about 40 c between 20 and 30 d just over 120

4 Write a short description for this information from the chart.

- 1 cake sales at Lovely Loaves 2 rolls sold in Bernie's Buns **In 2010, Lovely Loaves sold nearly 80 cakes.**
- 3 cookies bought in Bernie's Buns **there were about 120 cookies bought in Bernie's Buns**

Rolls sold in Bernie's Buns was approximately 78 in 2010.

Describing percentages

5 Match these percentages (a–g) to the fractions (1–7).

- a 50% **2** b 25% **3** c 75% **5** d 33.3% **6** e 40% **4** f 10% **7** g 66.6% **1**
- 1 two-thirds 2 half 3 a/one quarter 4 two-fifths
5 three-quarters 6 a/one third 7 a/one tenth

6 Write a suitable percentage for each of these descriptions.

- 1 just over three-quarters **76%**
- 2 Nearly a third of girls said ... **33%**
- 3 Just under a quarter of people asked said ... **24%**
- 4 around a third of all passengers **30%**
- 5 almost half of students **49%**
- 6 Approximately two-thirds of parents said ... **66%**

7 Write these percentages in words and add an idea to create a sentence.

Use the subject in brackets to help you. Then compare your sentences with the suggested answers on page 124.

- 1 32% (smokers) **Just under a third of all smokers said they smoked fewer than 20 cigarettes a day.**
- 2 52% (teenagers) **just over a half of teenagers nowadays admit that they spend over 5 hours per in cafes.**
- 3 74% (household appliances) **nearly three quarters of household appliances are made from China.**
- 4 64% (doctors) **nearly two thirds of doctors say that physical activity is good for health.**
- 5 27% (new roads) **low-qualified.**
- 6 75% (IELTS students) **exactly three quarters of IELTS students get band 5 or higher.**

8 Look at these four different ways for writing about key percentages. **nearly a third of new roads in that city are low-qualified.**

10% a tenth of / one in ten / one out of ten / one out of every ten

Rewrite these key percentages using one of the four ways above.

- 1 20% 2 25% 3 50%

a fifth of/ two in ten/ two out of ten/ two out of every ten

a quarter of/one in four/one out of four/ one out of every four

a half of/ one in two/ one out of two/ one out of every two

Tip
Often in Task 1, you will need to write about percentages. It is important to be able to express these in different ways.

Model answer: Comparative graphs

This bar graph compares the most popular items sold by two bakeries in London on a typical Saturday in 2010. The graph shows average sales of eight items, including cakes, rolls and toasted sandwiches, in Bernie's Buns and Lovely Loaves.

Overall, it can be seen that Bernie's Buns is generally the busiest bakery, outselling Lovely Loaves in six out of eight items. On the whole, savoury foods such as toasted sandwiches, salads and rolls are not as popular as sweet items like cakes and cookies.

In terms of sales at Bernie's Buns, doughnuts come top of the list, with an average of around 135 sold on a Saturday. Cookies and cakes are the next best sellers, with around 115 and 100 of these snacks sold

respectively. Savoury foods are less popular. Bernie's Buns sells slightly more rolls than crisps, with roughly 75 of each leaving the shelves. Toasted sandwiches and salads are not nearly as popular, with just 25 and 18 sold in turn.

Doughnuts are also the number-one purchase in Lovely Loaves, with just over 120 sold on a Saturday. Cookies are third, at around 65 sales. Salads come next, with just over 60, three times as many as are sold in Bernie's Buns. Rolls and fresh loaves are joint fifth, with 50 sales apiece, followed by crisps at approximately 45. The least popular item in Lovely Loaves is toasted sandwiches, with around 25 sales.

(236 words)

Tip

Studying the language in model answers is an important way to improve your writing. Find other pieces of useful language and vocabulary in the answer above to use in your next piece of Task 1 writing.

1 Read the model answer. How is it organized?

2 Read it again and list examples of:

- 1 comparatives **as many as, are not nearly as, as popular as**
- 2 linking devices **followed by, in terms of**
- 3 superlatives **the least, best, the number-one**
- 4 ways numbers are described **with around, just over, approximately, at around**
- 5 *not as + adjective + as* **not as popular as**

The word *respectively* is useful in Task 1 for placing data in the order that you write about it.

Cookies and cakes are the next best sellers, with around 115 and 100 of these snacks sold respectively.
This means: *cookie sales 115; cake sales 100*

3 Read these sentences and complete the gaps with the correct numbers.

- 1 The temperature in Rawai Island was much lower than in Phuket, at 15 degrees and 25 degrees respectively.
Temperature in Rawai Island: 15 degrees Temperature in Phuket: 25 degrees
- 2 The number of visitors to Portugal was twice as high as those who went to Greece, at 500 and 250 respectively.
Visitors to Portugal: 500 people Visitors to Greece: 250 people

4 You can also use the expression *in turn* in the same way as *respectively*. Find an example in the model answer above.

House in Notting was not as much as in Sloane Square, with average 500,000 pounds and 620,000 pounds in turn.

5 Write a sentence using *respectively* or *in turn* about each of these pairs of data.

People aged 20-30 who like jazz is nearly a third as many as who like hip-hop, with 11% and 35% respectively.

- 1 house in Notting Hill average £500,000 / house in Sloane Square average £620,000
- 2 people aged 20-30 who like jazz 11% / people same age who like hip-hop 35%
- 3 JFK Airport (March) 2.9 million users / Newark Airport (March) 1.9 million users

In March, the users of JFK Airport were one and a half as many as of Newark Airport, with 2.9 million members and 1.9 member

6 Choose another chart or table from this unit and write three more sentences using *respectively*.

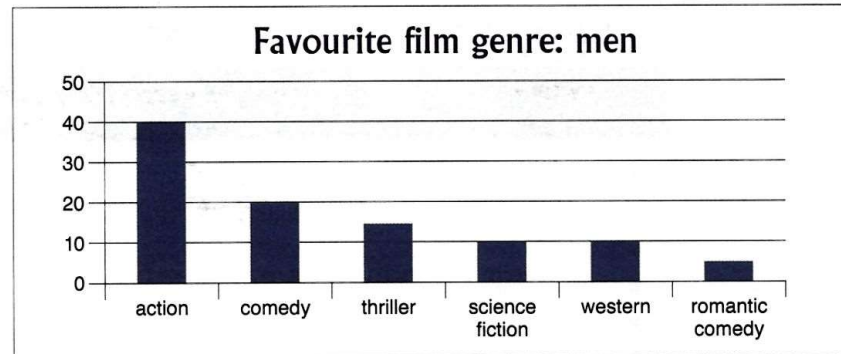
Exam skills 1: Numerical comparatives

Tip

To add style and flexibility to the way you write about and compare information in Task 1, you can also start sentences using a numerical comparative.

1 Discuss these questions with a partner.

- What are your three favourite types of film? Why?
- Are there differences between the kinds of films that men and women like?



2 Look at the bar chart in Exercise 1 and complete the sentences below using the words in the box. Then study the grammar structure in each one.

three times half twice

- Action movies are **twice** as popular as comedies for men.
- Thrillers are **three times** as popular as romantic comedies.
- Science-fiction films and westerns are only **half** as popular as comedies among men.

3 Use the same structures to write sentences to compare these pairs.

- comedies / action movies comedies are only half as popular as action movies
- westerns / romantic comedies westerns are twice as popular as romantic comedy
- comedies / science fiction science fiction are half as popular as comedies

4 The same word is missing in these three sentences. Is it *as*, *than* or *for*?

- Twice as many men said they liked action movies **than** comedies.
- Three times as many men said they enjoy watching thrillers **as** romantic comedies.
- Four times as many men prefer watching action films **as** both westerns and science-fiction movies.

5 Use the structure from Exercise 4 to write three sentences about the most popular film genres for women.

Favourite movies by genre
Survey of 100 women

action	comedy	thriller	sci-fi	western	romantic comedy
25	20	10	5	10	30

These two sentences contain more useful structures you can use in Task 1.

The number of elementary students is three times higher than the number of students in the beginner's classes, at 90 and 30 respectively.

There are twice as many students in the upper-intermediate level as students in the advanced classes.

6 Choose one of the structures above to write two more sentences about the table in Exercise 5.

Exam skills 2: Ranking information

**Most popular leisure activities
London, December 2008**
Percentage of people who
did this activity in the month
of December

Sport/fitness activities: 62%

Play a team sport: 54%

Listen to music: 53%

Read: 46%

Use a computer/Internet: 38%

Travelling: 23%

Socializing: 20%

Shopping: 10%

Eating out: 8%

Play music: 2%

Tip

In order to write a good Task 1 answer, you will need a wide range of language to help you to rank and order information given in charts and tables.

1 Look at the table on the left. How could you rank these activities, starting with *sport/fitness activities*? Discuss with a partner and note some useful language.

Example: *Sport was the most popular leisure activity.*

2 Complete the gaps in the list below using the words in the box.

list list one place place

- In first/second/last 1 is/was ...
- Top/Bottom of the 2 was ...
- The number-3 activity is/was ...
- ... was ranked second with ...
- First/Last on the 4 was ...
- ... headed the list with ...
- Ranked in third 5 was ...
- The most / second most / next most / least popular is/was ...
- Next came ...
- This was followed by ...

3 Write a short paragraph about the information in the table in Exercise 1 using the language in Exercise 2. Compare with a partner.

4 Invent a table about what people do at weekends in the city/town where you are studying and add the percentages. Use the language for ranking information to write a paragraph about it.

Dealing with surveys and questionnaires

Often in Task 1 you will be asked to write about the results of a survey or questionnaire.

5 Listed below are some useful ways to write about the results of a survey. Rewrite the phrases in *italic* in the correct order.

- 1 Forty-five people *prefer / said / they ...* *said they prefer*
- 2 Just 10% of the *said / people / asked / who / were ...*
- 3 More than 30% of the people *completed / said / the / survey / who ...*
- 4 Over half of the *said / respondents ...*
- 5 Around a third of the *the / in / participants / said / questionnaire ...*

6 Use the language in Exercise 5 to write about this survey.

The table below shows the results of an online survey of 1,000 people about their first-choice holiday accommodation.

holiday accommodation	total number of people
hotel	340
with friends	100
campsite	50
hostel	80
bed and breakfast	170
motor home / caravan	160
cottage	45
rented apartment	15
other	40