

## The key skill – paragraphing

The key skill is to make sure that you write in organised **paragraphs** – just as you would in an essay. This is so important because it will not just improve your coherence and cohesion band scores, but it will also make the report easier to write.

To do this, we need to identify **key features** that will make the topics of the paragraphs. When we have done that, we can look for the **details** that explain those features.

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### Bar Chart Answer Structure

1. Introduction (Paragraph 1)
  2. Overview (Paragraph 1 – 2nd sentence of 1st parg.)
  3. Specific features/details (Paragraphs 2&3)
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1. Introduction (Paraphrase the title – keep the meaning the same, use different words)

***This bar chart shows the** different reasons for making journeys in the UK **in 2006** and how males and females differed in this.*

2. Overview

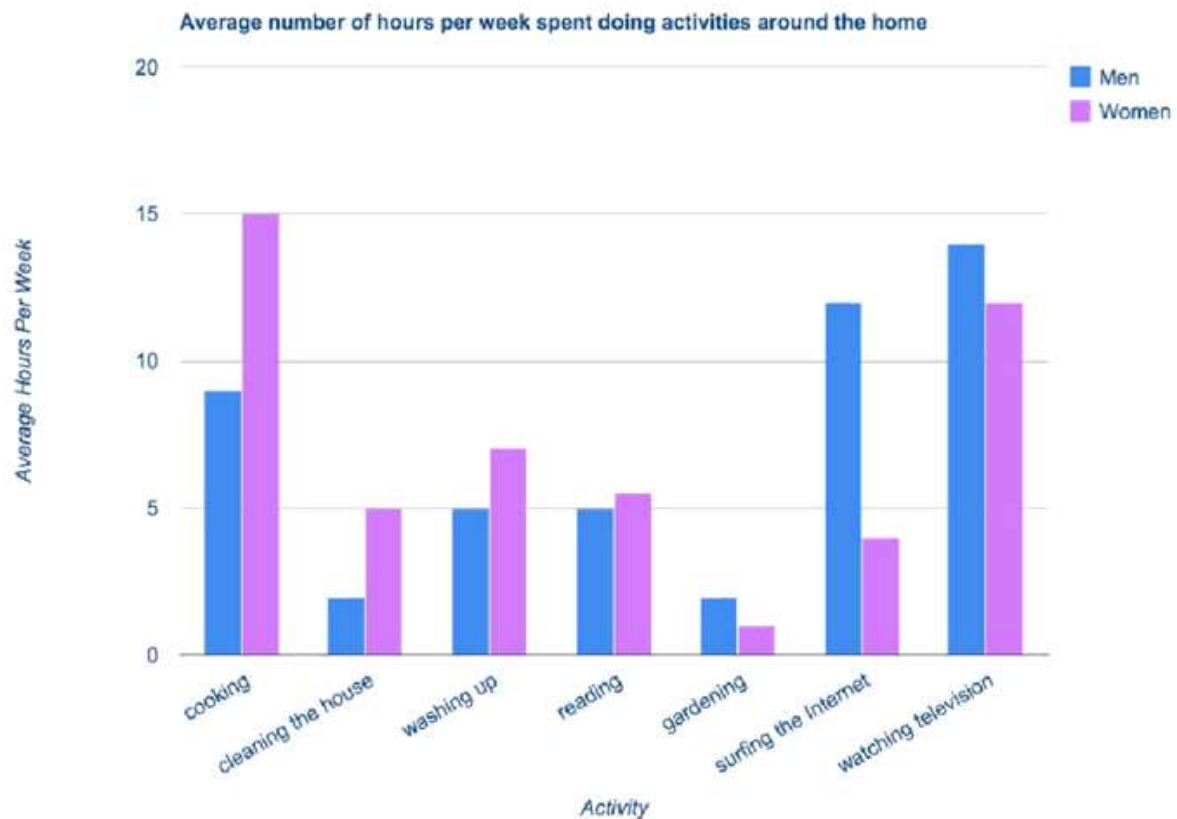
***Overall, it can be seen that** there were few differences between men and women when it came to the purpose of their journeys, with some minor exceptions.*

3. Specific details

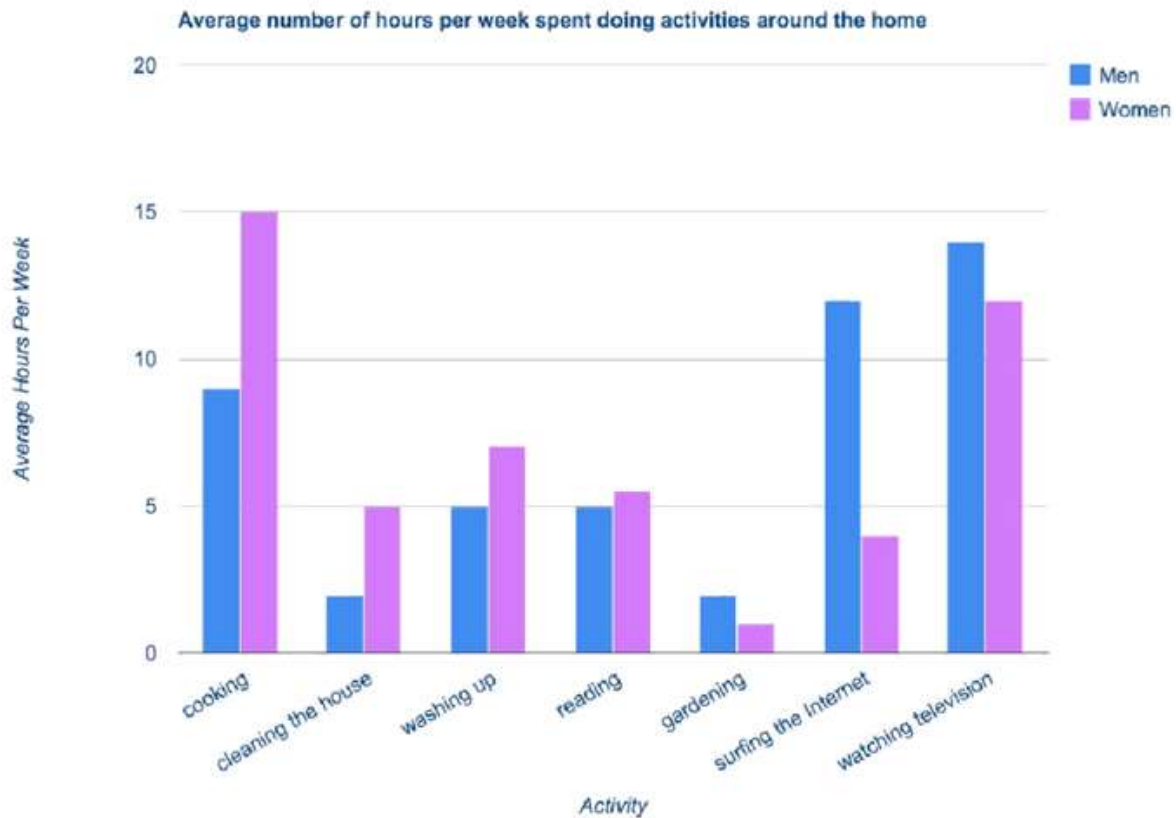
*Travelling for sport and entertainment (7%) **was only just more common than** journeys for educational purposes (6%).*

Tip:

When you have many different categories, it is a good idea to group them together under a few headings



|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Paragraph 1 | Household chores  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cooking</li><li>• Cleaning the house</li><li>• Washing up</li></ul>                         |
| Paragraph 2 | Leisure activities  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading</li><li>• Gardening*</li><li>• Surfing the internet</li><li>• Watching TV</li></ul> |

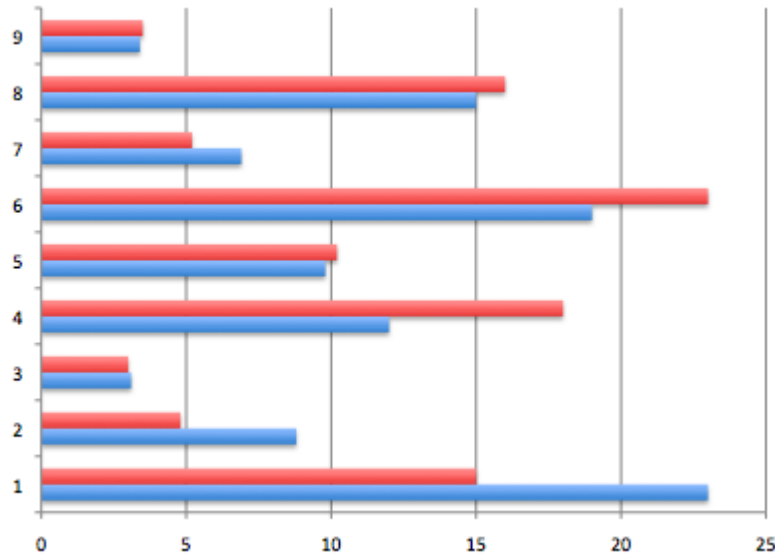


|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Paragraph 1 | <b>Big differences between the sexes</b>  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooking</li> <li>• Cleaning the house</li> <li>• Surfing the Internet</li> </ul>   |
| Paragraph 2 | <b>Similarities between the sexes</b>   |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Washing up</i></li> <li>• <i>Reading</i></li> <li>• <i>Gardening</i></li> <li>• <i>Watching Television</i></li> </ul> |

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Paragraph 1 | <b>Men spend more time than women</b>  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gardening</li> <li>• Surfing the Internet</li> <li>• Watching Television</li> </ul>       |
| Paragraph 2 | <b>Women spend more time than men</b>  |
|             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooking</li> <li>• Cleaning the house</li> <li>• Washing up</li> <li>• Reading</li> </ul> |

## What are key features? 2 main differences.

Normally, they are obvious. Never ignore the obvious. Look at the bar chart below and what do you see?

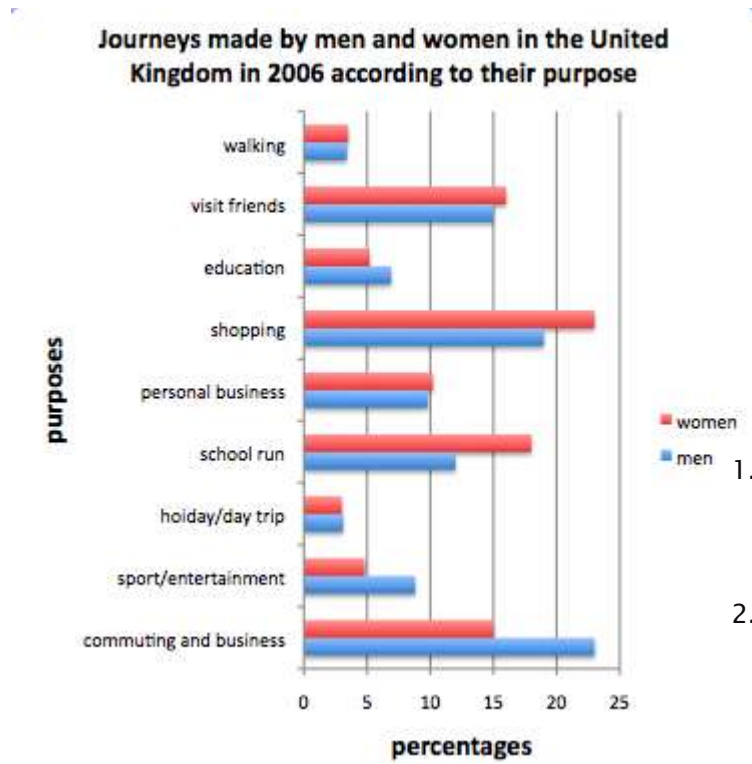


What you should see is this:

1. 2 sets of lines (one red and one blue)
2. Some lines are longer than others

Those are your key features that you must highlight in your report as paragraph topics. Everything else is detail.

## What are supporting details?



Let's now look at the complete chart.

### Key features

We now see what the 2 key features that need to be reported are.

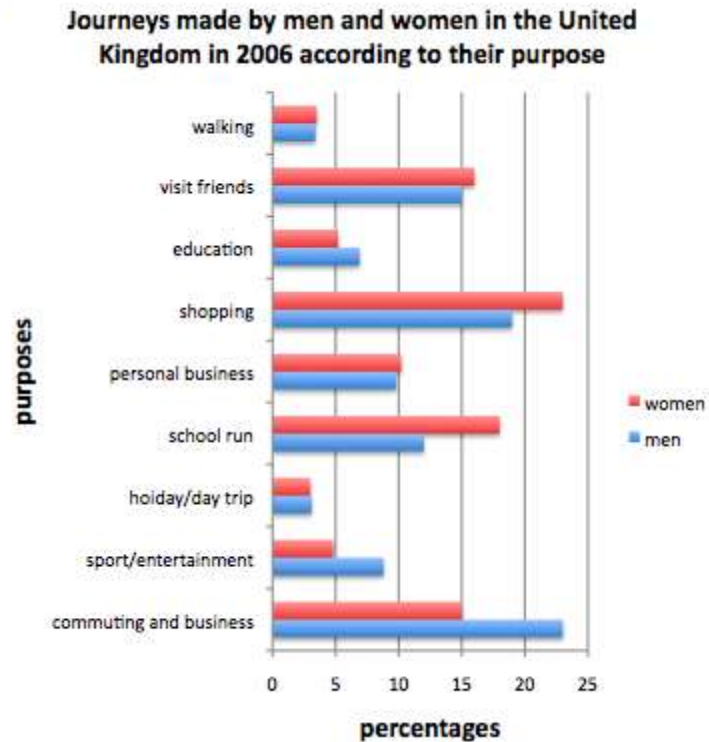
Remember these will be the topics of our 2 content paragraphs :

1. the distinction between men and women (the blue lines and the red lines)
2. how certain purposes of travel are more common than others (how long the lines are)

**Supporting detail: men and women**

Looking at the blue and red lines this is what I see and needs to be included:

1. little or no difference in “walking” “holidays” and “personal business”
2. more men in “education”, “entertainment” and “commuting”
3. more women in “school run”, “visiting friends” and “shopping”
4. many more women in “school run” (5% difference)
5. many more men in “commuting” (8% difference)



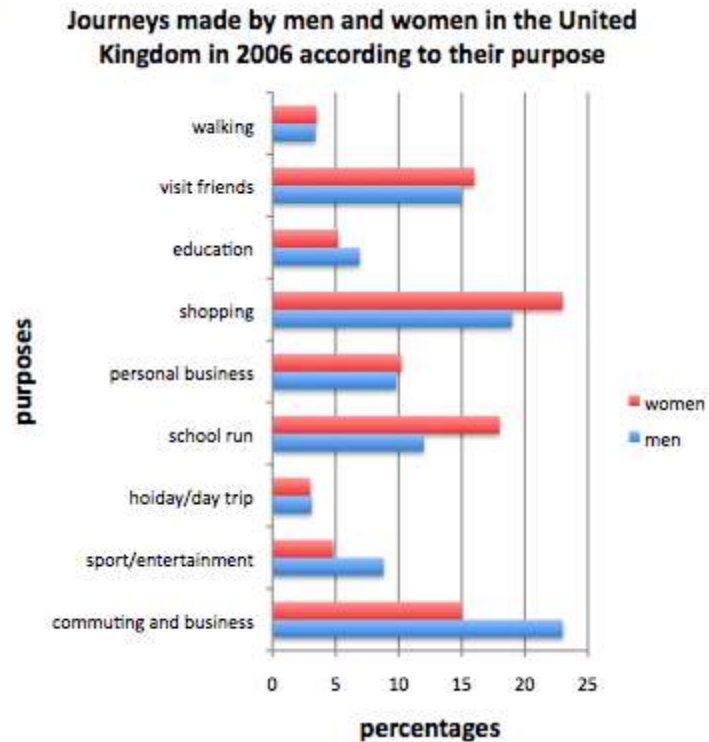
**If there is too much information, just talk about the BIGGEST DIFFERENCES (sentences above in red).**

### Supporting detail: **purposes of journey**

This is fairly straightforward as all you need to do is arrange the different categories into an order **showing the most common and least common purposes.**

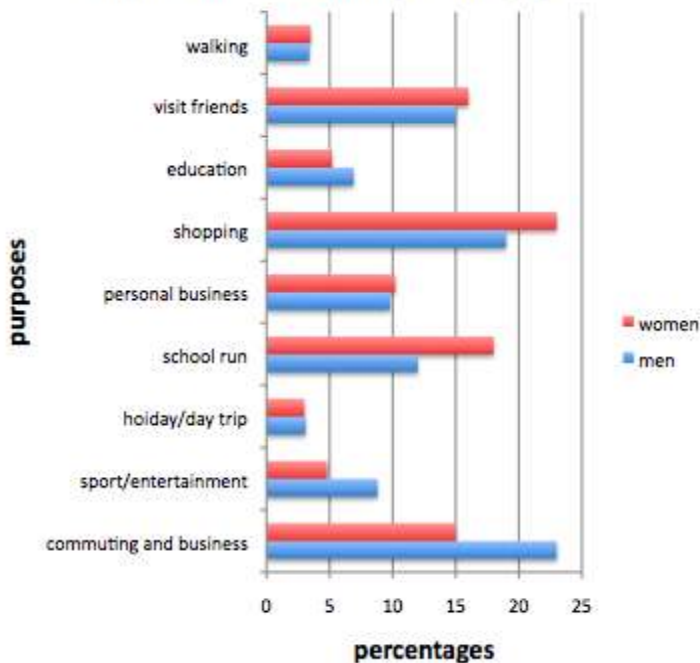
1. commuting and shopping are the most common (around 20% average)
2. visiting friends and school run both around 15% average
3. personal business just under 10% average
4. sport/entertainment around 7% average just more than education at 6%
5. least common is walking and holidays at around 3% each

Note the % figures here are averages of the male/female numbers.



## **SAMPLE ANSWER – PRINT – READ OUT LOUD**

**Journeys made by men and women in the United Kingdom in 2006 according to their purpose**



*This bar chart shows the different reasons for making journeys in the UK in 2006 and how males and females differed in this. Overall, it can be seen that there were few differences between men and women when it came to the purpose of their journeys, with some minor exceptions.*

*It is immediately apparent that the most common purposes for travelling were commuting and shopping, both being around 20 per cent of trips. The next most common reasons were visiting friends and doing the school run at 15%,*

*closely followed by personal business at around 10%. Travelling for sport and entertainment (7%) was only just more common than journeys for educational purposes (6%). Finally, the fewest number of trips were travelling for holidays and walking, both of which accounted for around 3 per cent of all journeys.*

*Typically, there were few major differences between males and females. In holidays, personal business and walking both sexes took approximately the same amount of journeys, while slightly more men travelled for educational purposes and more women visited friends. Notably, almost twice as many men as women travelled for entertainment reasons and, likewise, around 7% more men commuted to work. The two areas in which women travelled significantly more than men were shopping and the school run.*