

The IELTS Teacher presents...

Lecture 1

Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 1

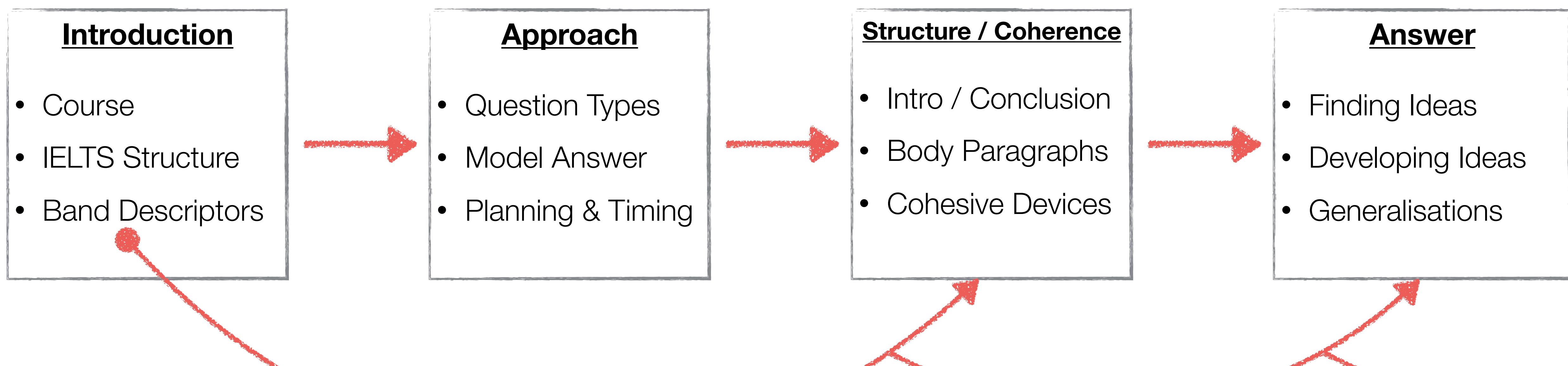
Welcome to the course!



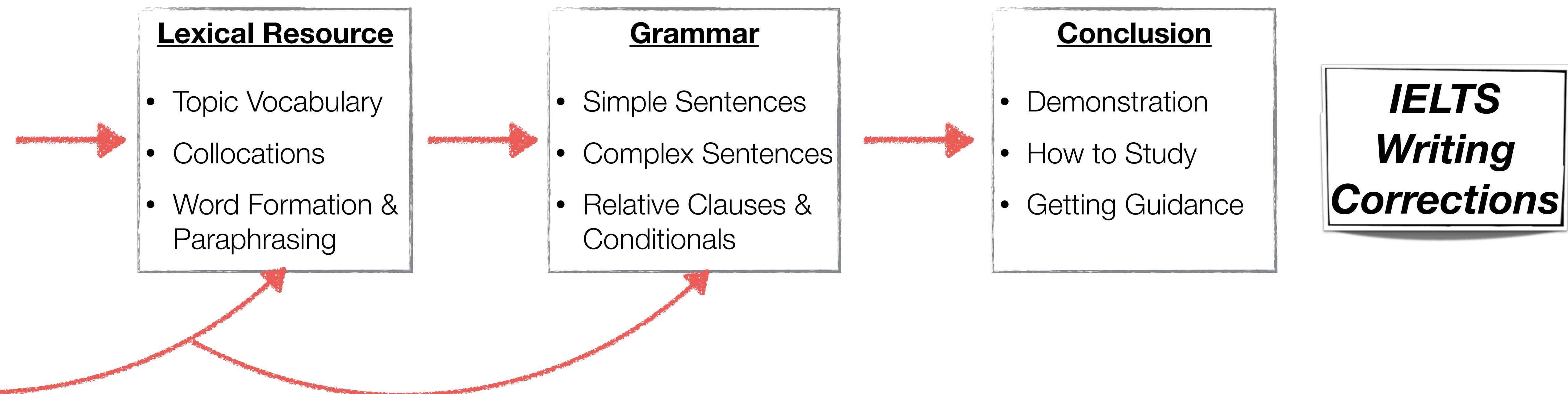
An introduction to the course

- **Who this course is for:** If you're aiming to achieve a Band 7 or above in IELTS Writing, this course is for you.
- **How the course is structured:** 7 sections designed to ease you into writing and help you master the Task 2 essay.
- **Why this course works:** This course works because it covers everything. Every paragraph, every sentence, every tip, every technique, every band descriptor. Everything!

How the course is structured



How the course is structured



How to approach this course

Recommendation: Complete within **4 weeks**. However, if you have responsibilities, take your time.

To make the most of this course, you should:

- Bring a hard-working attitude to every lecture
- Apply what you have learnt to self-study practice
- Read at least 2 articles/book chapters in English *every day*
- Find an IELTS Writing tutor to check your work
- Install Freedom: bit.ly/2gyuICl
- Try to enjoy the writing process!

Contact:

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or suggestions. I read everything you send!

You can contact me via:

- Udemy. Just use the comment function at the side of the page.
- Email: matt@theieltsteacher.com
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/theieltsteacher
- Skype: [the.ielts.teacher](skype:the.ielts.teacher)
- My website: www.theieltsteacher.com



Lecture 2

An Introduction to IELTS

Walking you through the
exam.



What is IELTS?

- IELTS is the International English Language Testing System. **IELTS**.
- It is the world's **most popular** English language proficiency test.
- Over 2 million tests taken per year.
- Assesses all skills - Listening, Reading, Writing & Speaking.
- Accepted by schools, universities, employers, and immigration authorities.

How IELTS is structured: Walkthrough

Academic

Universities / Academic Careers

Academic Reading

- Each section = 1 long text
- Books, journals, magazines
- Non-specialist - academic

Academic Writing

- Task 1: Graph / Diagram
- Task 2: Essay

2 modules

Skill	Time	Sections/questions	Important Points
Listening	30 mins (+10 for transferring answers)	4 sections x 10 questions = 40 questions	Pencil only. Audio played once only.
Reading	1 hour (save 10 mins for transferring answers)	3 sections / 40 questions	Pencil only.
Writing	1 hour (20 mins Task 1 / 40 mins Task 2)	2 Tasks, 2 questions	Task 1 word min = 150 Task 2 word min = 250
Speaking	11-14 minutes	3 parts - no set number of questions	Part 1 = interview Part 2 = talk Part 3 = discussion

General Training

Visa Applications / Non-academic Careers

General Reading

- Section 1+2 = 2-3 short texts
- Section 3 = 1 long text
- Notices, magazines, newspapers, books, official/company docs

General Writing

- Task 1: Letter
- Task 2: Essay

How IELTS is scored

- There is no ‘pass’ or ‘fail’ in IELTS
- You are graded in each component, and the average gives you your score
- L = 6 / R = 7 / W = 6 / S = 7:
Overall score = 6.5
- IELTS scores are valid for 2 years after certification

IELTS Band Score	CEFR Score	Ability Level
9	C2	Expert user
8	C1/C2	Very good user
7	C1	Good user
6	B2	Competent User
5	B1/B2	Modest User
4	B1	Limited User
3	A2/B1	Extremely Limited User
2	A2	Intermittent User
1	A1	Non-user

IELTS score requirements

- **5.5 - 6.0** = Entry to a university Foundation course
- **6.0 - 6.5** = Entry to a Bachelor's degree course
- **6.5 - 7.0** = Entry to a Master's degree course
- **7.0+** = Typically required to work in English-speaking countries in professions such as medicine, law, accounting and academic research
- **7.0+** = Visa for Australia

Lecture 3

Understanding Writing Task 2

An in-depth look at the
IELTS Writing Task 2 test.



Task 2: Key points

- 250 words minimum
- 40 minutes
- Worth 2x as many points as Task 1
- 4 different question types
- Pen or pencil
- General Training can be less formal in style than Academic

A few Task 2 examples

1. Some experts believe that it is better for children to begin learning a foreign language at primary school rather than secondary school.

Do the advantages of this outweigh the disadvantages?

2. Some people believe that unpaid community service should be a compulsory part of high school programmes (for example, working for a charity, improving the neighbourhood, or teaching sports to younger children).

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

A few more Task 2 examples

3. Some people say that the best way to improve public health is by increasing the number of sports facilities. Others, however, say that this would have little effect on public health and other measures are required.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

4. Some people think that the teenage years are the happiest times of most people's lives. Others think that adult life brings more happiness, in spite of greater responsibilities.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.*

* Note that this final question is from the General Training module, so the question types are not very different at all!

Lecture 4

What Do You Want From Me?

How to impress the IELTS
examiner.



How IELTS Writing is assessed

IELTS examiners assess your Writing Task 2 essay by looking at **4** things...

Task Response

Coherence and Cohesion

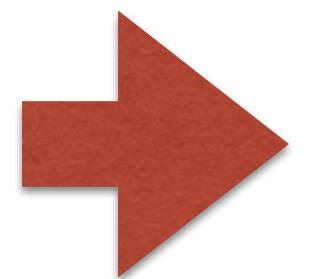
Lexical Resource

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Task Response

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “address all parts of the task”
- “present a clear position throughout the response”
- “present, extend, and support main ideas”



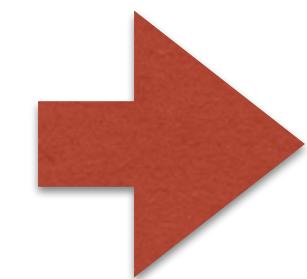
In other words:

- write about everything in the question
- make it clear what your opinion is, even if you are not sure
- develop your ideas and arguments; explain your point, say why it matters, and give an example to help the reader understand

Coherence and Cohesion

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “logically organise information and ideas... clear progression throughout”
- “use a range of cohesive devices appropriately”
- “present a clear central topic within each paragraph”



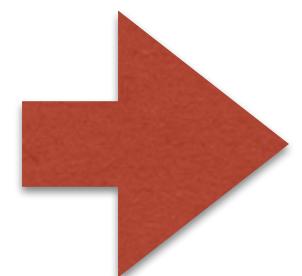
In other words:

- your essay should be in logical order
e.g. intro -> pro -> con -> conclusion;
also applies to sentences within paras
- link sentences and paragraphs with
words like *however*, *therefore*,
furthermore etc.
- one topic per paragraph; stay focused

Lexical Resource

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “use a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision”
- “use less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation”
- “may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling, word formation”



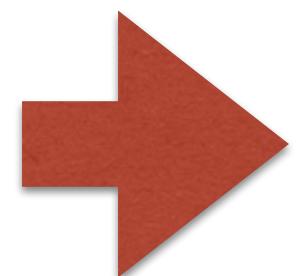
In other words:

- show a wide/flexible range of vocabulary (synonyms/paraphrase) and be precise (no words like *nice!*)
- use less common words and phrases, and show that you know how these words fit together (collocation)
- you can make a few mistakes with vocabulary, but try your best to be accurate!

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “use a variety of complex structures”
- “produce frequent error-free sentences”
- “have good control of grammar and punctuation (but may make a few errors)”



In other words:

- use a range of sentence types and word orders (but use some simple sentences too!)
- avoid making mistakes in the majority of your sentences (more than 50%)
- use commas and colons appropriately; demonstrate that you are comfortable with grammar

Band descriptors: A summary

Task Response

- Address all parts of the task
- Show your opinion clearly
- Develop your ideas; explain and support them
- Use examples to help the reader understand

Coherence and Cohesion

- Order your essay logically
- Link sentences and paragraphs together with ‘cohesive devices’
- Write about one topic only in each body paragraph
- Stay focused

Lexical Resource

- Show a wide range of vocab
- Be precise with language
- Use less common words/phrases; show collocations
- Aim for accurate spelling and word formation

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

- Show a range of grammar, simple and complex
- Don’t make too many grammatical mistakes
- Use punctuation accurately
- +50% sentence accuracy

Lecture 5

The 4 Different Question Types

In IELTS Writing Task 2.



The 4 different question types

OPINION

DISCUSSION

OPINION/
DISCUSSION

SITUATION

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

What are the problems? What solutions can you suggest?

What are the benefits and drawbacks?

Is this a positive or negative development?

Which factors contribute to this? Is it realistic to expect these factors?

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages.

Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?



▶ II
PAUSE
NOW!

The 4 different question types

OPINION

To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Is this a positive or negative development?

DISCUSSION

What are the benefits and drawbacks?

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages.

OPINION/ DISCUSSION

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

SITUATION

What are the problems? What solutions can you suggest?

Which factors contribute to this? Is it realistic to expect these factors?

A formula for each question type

OPINION

DISCUSSION

OPINION/
DISCUSSION

SITUATION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your opinion and plan.

BODY

Para 2: Discuss the side you disagree with

Para 3: Discuss the side you agree with, making it clear that you agree

Conclusion: Summarize key points and restate your opinion.

A formula for each question type

OPINION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your opinion and plan.

BODY

Para 2: Support your opinion with argument and examples

Para 3: Support your opinion further with another argument and examples

Conclusion: Summarize key points and restate your opinion.

DISCUSSION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your plan.

BODY

Para 2: Discuss advantages or one side of the argument

Para 3: Discuss disadvantages or the other side of the argument

Conclusion: Summarize key points. You do not need to give the reader your opinion.

OPINION/ DISCUSSION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your opinion and plan.

BODY

Para 2: Discuss the side you disagree with

Para 3: Discuss the side you agree with, making it clear that you agree

Conclusion: Summarize key points and restate your opinion.

SITUATION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your plan.

BODY

Para 2: One problem and solution / factor and cause etc.

Para 3: Another problem and solution / factor and cause etc.

Conclusion: Summarize key points and state who should solve problems / consider solutions.

OPINION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your opinion and plan.

BODY

Para 2: Support your opinion with argument and examples

Para 3: Support your opinion further with another argument and examples

Conclusion: Summarize key points and restate your opinion.

DISCUSSION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your plan.

BODY

Para 2: Discuss advantages or one side of the argument

Para 3: Discuss disadvantages or the other side of the argument

Conclusion: Summarize key points. You do not need to give the reader your opinion.

OPINION/ DISCUSSION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your opinion and plan.

BODY

Para 2: Discuss the side you disagree with

Para 3: Discuss the side you agree with, making it clear that you agree

Conclusion: Summarize key points and restate your opinion.

SITUATION

Introduction: Rephrase the question. Tell the reader your plan.

BODY

Para 2: One problem and solution / factor and cause etc.

Para 3: Another problem and solution / factor and cause etc.

Conclusion: Summarize key points and state who should solve problems / consider solutions.

Some people believe that there should be fixed punishments for each crime. Others, however, argue that the circumstances of an individual crime, and the motivation for committing it, should always be taken into account when deciding on the punishment.

Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Although there is no doubt that crime must be punished, it is important to consider which type of penal system is most appropriate. While some believe that a system of fixed sentences should be adopted, I support the view that punishments should be based on motives and circumstances.

Those who advocate implementing a judicial process of set punishments may argue that this would make criminal trials more efficient. For example, once a jury has decided a particular defendant is guilty of murder, the judge need only refer to the ‘punishment for murder’ to sentence that person to life imprisonment. The benefit of this is that a huge amount of time would be saved in court, thus leading to significant financial savings. As a result, more money could be spent on healthcare, education and welfare.

However, I would argue that the above system is too rigid, and a process of ‘flexible’ punishments is much fairer. The latter punishment system, which many countries use, leaves more room for compassion toward offenders who have been blackmailed or manipulated. For instance, under this system, if a thief is able to prove that he had been bullied into committing his crime, he should be sentenced to less prison time than a thief who had been motivated by greed. If, instead, fixed punishments were implemented, this sense of fairness and morality would be lost.

In conclusion, while a legal system of fixed punishments might be more cost-effective and efficient, a procedure of assessing crimes based on circumstances and motives is more just, and justice, in my view, is paramount.

264 words

PLEASE SEE LECTURE 6 IN UDEMY COURSE FOR AN ANALYSIS OF THIS MODEL ANSWER.

Lecture 7

Planning Your Essay

A Blueprint for Success.



Why is planning so important?

There are many benefits to planning.

Reduce anxiety

Stay focused

Save time

Topic-related vocabulary

Organize thoughts

Improve coherence

Boost cohesion

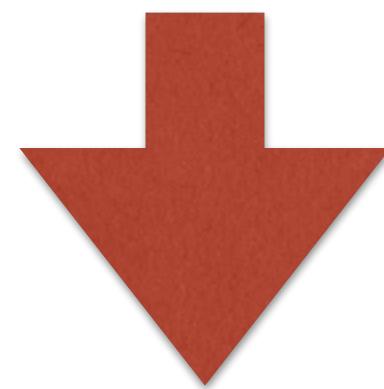
Find errors

Part 1: Identify the question

Some experts believe it is better for children to start learning a foreign language at primary school rather than secondary school.

Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

What type of question is this?



Discussion/Opinion

Part 2: Underline key words

Some experts believe it is better for children to start learning a foreign language at primary school rather than secondary school.

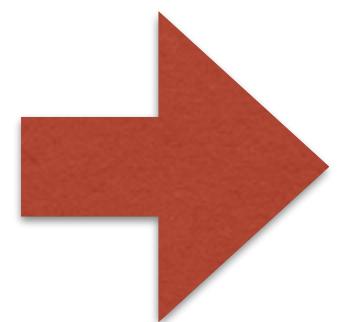
Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

better

start learning a foreign language

primary school rather than secondary school

advantages outweigh the disadvantages?



Task

Achievement:
“Addresses all parts
of the task”

Part 3: Plan the essay (Method 1)

Some experts believe it is better for children to start learning a foreign language at primary school rather than secondary school.

Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

Introduction:

Rephrase question. Opinion: yes. State plan.

Paragraph 2:

Dis - still learning own language - too much pressure - other subjects more important - maths, science, sport - explain

Paragraph 3:

Adv - critical learning period - child brain forming connections - earlier start, more vocabulary - fluent faster - successful future

Conclusion:

Summarize key points, restate opinion

Part 3: Plan the essay (Method 2)

Some experts believe it is better for children to start learning a foreign language at primary school rather than secondary school.

Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

Body

Para 1: T: too much pressure

disadvantages

S: learning a lot already

E: own language, plus maths, science etc.

S₂: other subjects more important

E₂: maths essential for everyone

Para 2: T: critical learning period

advantages

S: neural connections in child's brain

S₂: earlier start, more chance of success

E₂: more vocab, grammar etc.

R: 4 years more than secondary school pupils

Lecture 8

Time Constraints and Word Counts

Managing the limits.



Time Constraints

You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

- Planning (5 minutes)
- Introduction (5 minutes)
- Body Paragraph 1 (10 minutes)
- Body Paragraph 2 (10 minutes)
- Conclusion (5 minutes)
- Checking (5 minutes)



$$5 + 5 + 10 + 10 + 5 + 5 =$$

40 minutes

Word Counts

Write at least 250 words.

- Introduction - 40 words
- Body Paragraph 1 - 90 words
- Body Paragraph 2 - 90 words
- Conclusion - 30 words

You can score a band 9 with just 250 words.
Improve the quality of the writing, not the quantity.



Leave yourself time at the end for checking your work. Instant quality improvement.

Handling Anxiety

Many IELTS candidates are very anxious about the time constraints and word counts of the IELTS Writing test. Here's a few tips for overcoming this anxiety:

- Practice both with and without time constraints
- Practice regularly
- Practice with and without a clock by your side
- Do not worry about perfection

Lecture 9

Some Common Misconceptions

3 harmful myths about how to approach the Task 2 essay.



Myth #1: You must write at least 300 words to score Band 7-9

TIME is your most crucial resource in the IELTS Writing test. If you waste it, you will not get the score you need.

Writing more than 300 words is a **waste of time**. You do not need to write that many words to score a Band 7, Band 8, or even Band 9. **You can score a Band 9 with just 250 words.**



Once you reach 250 words, **quality** is much more important than quantity.

Aim for 250-280 words. Time left over? **Check your work.**

Myth #2: Always include your opinion

Although you are **often** required to give your opinion in Task 2, there are some essays in which you **should not give your opinion**.

These days, more and more people are going to other countries for significant periods of time, either to find a job or to study. There are clearly many benefits to doing this, but people who live abroad can also face some difficulties.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living and working in a foreign country.

In the question above, where are you asked to give your opinion?

Nowhere! Therefore, **do not include an opinion**. If you do include an opinion, only put it in the conclusion, or you will **lose marks** for Task Response.

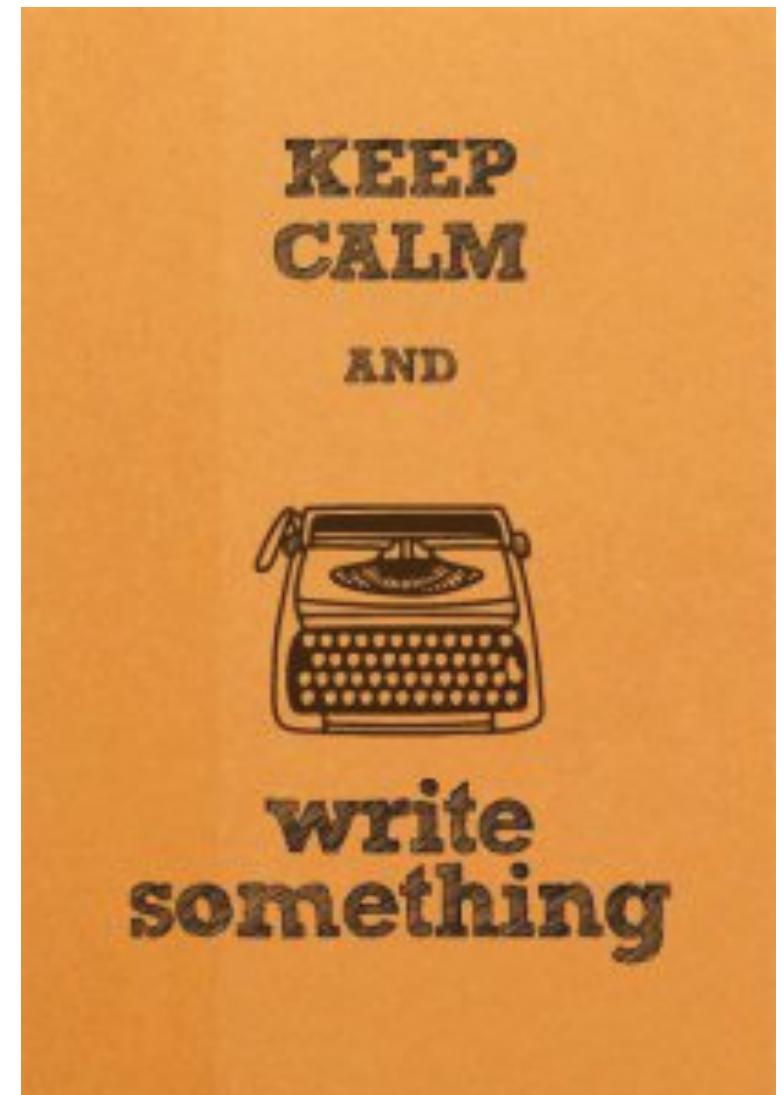
Myth #3: The introduction is the most important paragraph

First impressions are crucial. Strong start = impressed examiner.

But the introduction is not the most important paragraph, and you **must not** waste time trying to create the ‘perfect’ introduction.

As soon as you finish your plan, start on your introduction.
In Lecture 10, we will learn how to write **incredibly fast introductions**. (Fast does not mean sloppy or inaccurate!)

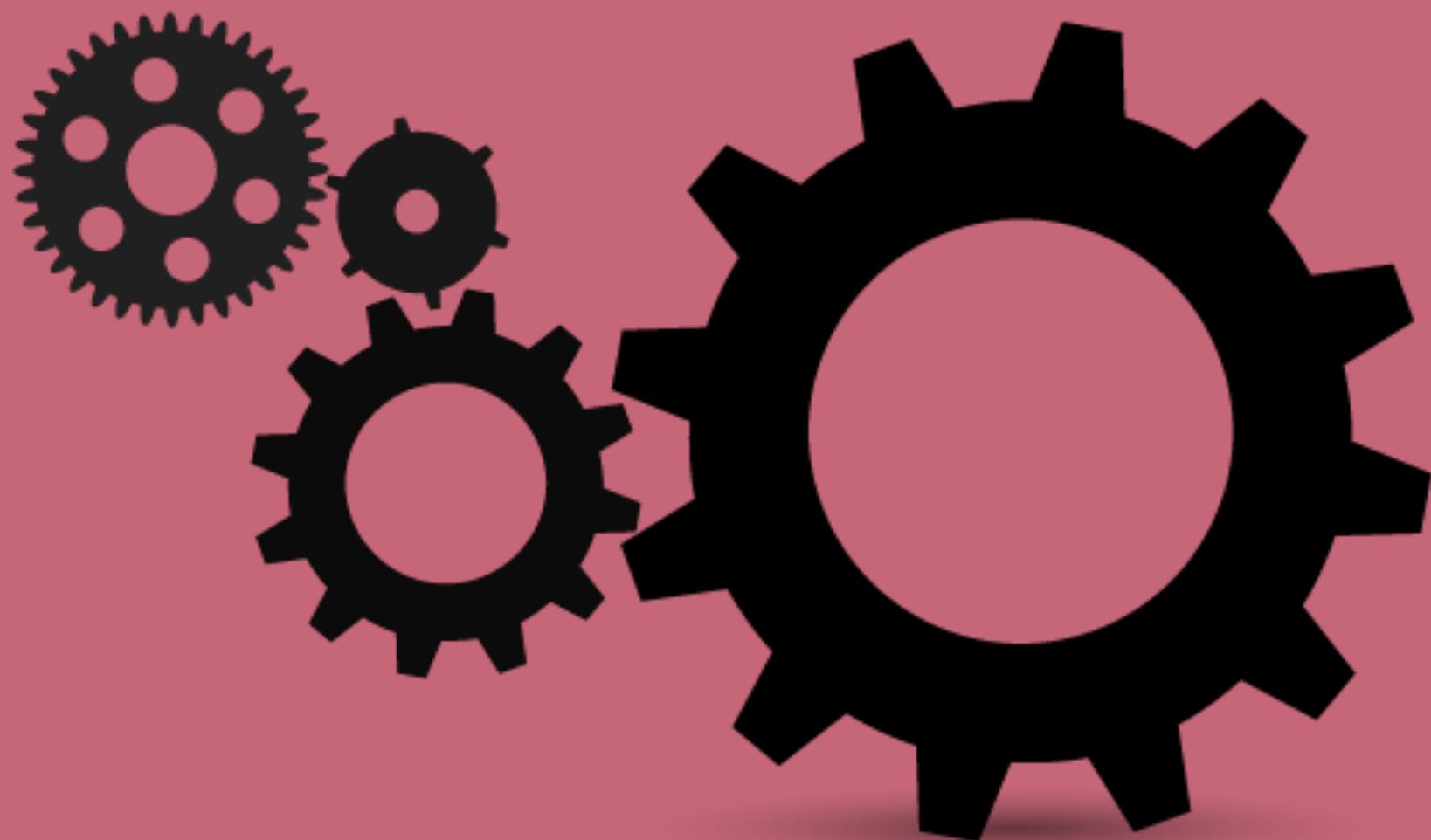
We learn this because the **body** of the essay - the place where you develop your ideas - is **far more important**.



Lecture 10

Incredibly Fast Introductions

Formula for a good first
impression.



An example Task 2 question

“ Some people think that climate change is happening because of the way humans live their lives. Others think that these changes are natural, and that human activity does not have an influence.

”

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

An example introduction

Read this introduction to the Task 2 Writing question and match each sentence (1-3) to its purpose (a-c).

¹There is no doubt that the Earth's climate is changing. ²While some people believe that these changes are due to human activity, others argue that they are the result of natural processes. ³In this essay, I will discuss both sides of the argument and explain my support for the latter view.

- a) Tell the reader your plan (*and give the reader your opinion*)
- b) Give a general statement about the topic (*What is undeniably true?*)
- c) Paraphrase the statement in the question

3-step formula for introductions

1 There is no doubt that the Earth's climate is changing.

b) Give a general statement about the topic (what is undeniably true?)

2 While some people believe that these changes are due to human activity, others argue that they are the result of natural processes.

c) Paraphrase the statement in the question

3 In this essay, I will discuss both sides of the argument and explain my support for the latter view.

a) Tell the reader your plan (*and give the reader your opinion*)

Introductions, now shorter!

The ‘plan’ sentence is optional. It can be nice to include it if you feel confident about time, but it is not strictly necessary.

¹There is no doubt that the Earth’s climate is changing. ²While some people believe that these changes are due to human activity, others argue that they are the result of natural processes. ³In this essay, I will discuss both sides of the argument and explain my support for the latter view.



51 words

Introductions, now shorter!

The ‘general statement’ sentence is optional. It can be nice to include it if you feel confident about time, but it is not strictly necessary.

¹There is no doubt that the Earth’s climate is changing. ²While some people believe that these changes are due to human activity, **I would** argue that they are the result of natural processes.

Introductions, now shorter!

The ‘general statement’ sentence is optional. It can be nice to include it if you feel confident about time, but it is not strictly necessary.

¹There is no doubt that the Earth’s climate is changing. ²While some people believe that these changes are due to human activity, **I would** argue that they are the result of natural processes.



33 words

Useful expressions for introductions

General statement sentence

- There is no doubt that / It is clear that ...
- Nowadays, ... / These days, ... (+ present simple or continuous)
- In recent years, ... / Over the last few years, ... (+ present perfect)
- It is important to consider ... (+ question word e.g. *how* / *whether* / *why*)

Paraphrase the question sentence

- While some people believe ..., others argue that
- There are many people who think ...
- While there are many benefits to ..., there are also some drawbacks to consider.

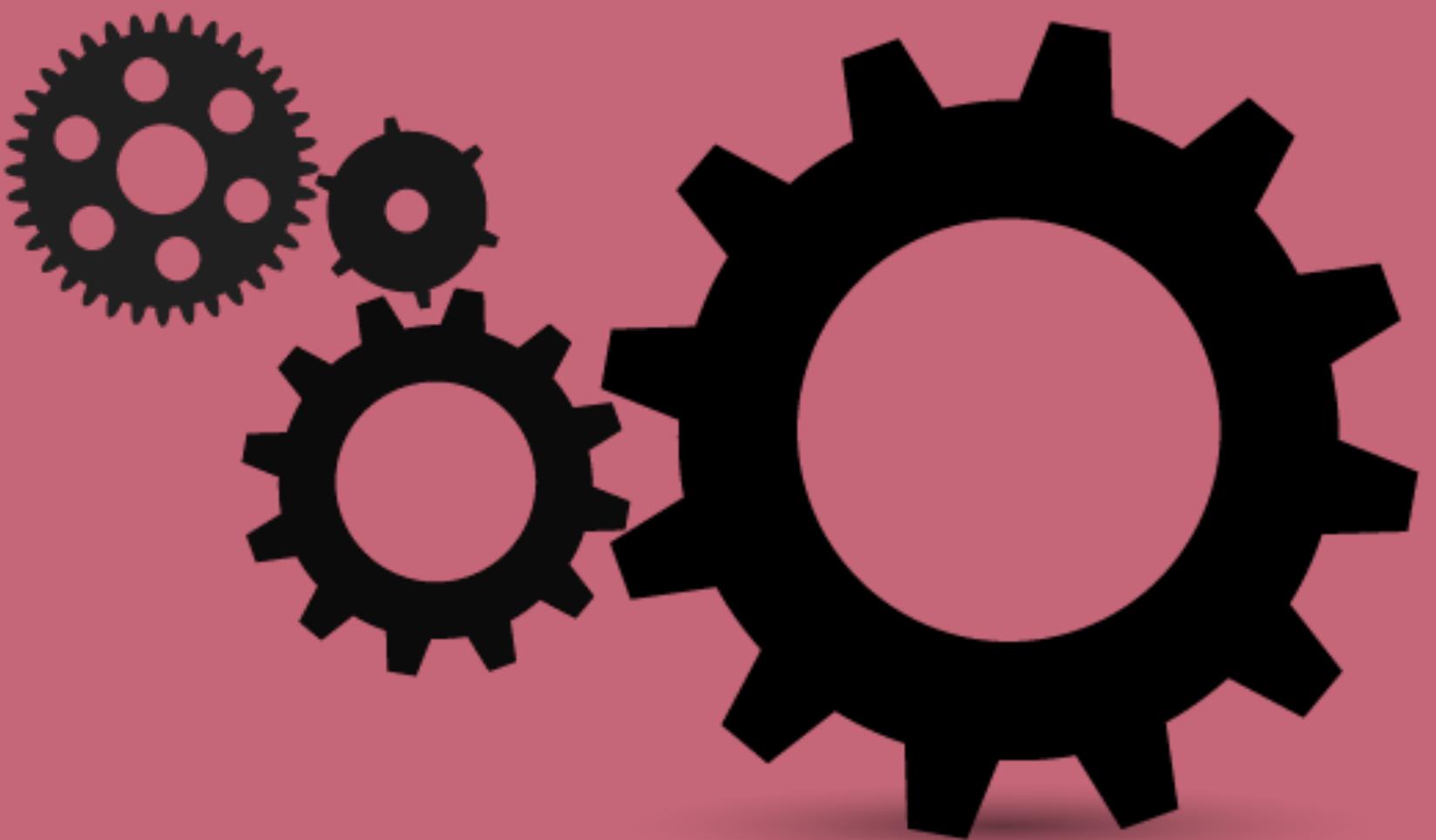
Opinion and plan sentence

- I completely agree/disagree with this statement ...
- I tend to agree/disagree with the former/latter argument ...
- ..., and in this essay I will support my view with examples
- In this essay, I will discuss both sides of the argument/topic ...
- In this essay, I will explore/discuss some of the problems associated with ... and propose/suggest some solutions.

Lecture 11

Building Body Paragraphs

The bulk of the essay.



The most important paragraphs

The **body** of the essay is where you demonstrate your ability to:

- engage with a task appropriately
- construct an argument or develop a discussion
- use a range of vocabulary related to a specific topic
- use a range of grammar for specific purposes
- link ideas, explanations and examples cohesively



Building body paragraphs

T = topic sentence (idea)	One problem in big cities is the lack of green spaces.
S = support/explain	For example, in the city where I live, we only have one small park, which is itself surrounded by concrete buildings.
E = example	This is an issue because city citizens need green areas in order to relax, and the plants and trees also help to filter the air.
A = alternative	To solve this problem, city authorities must invest more in building parks and gardens.
So = solution	As a result, the people who live in cities will suffer from less stress and breathe cleaner and safer air.
R = result	

Building body paragraphs

T = topic sentence (idea)

One problem in big cities is the lack of green spaces.

S = support/explain

For example, in the city where I live, we only have one small park, which is itself surrounded by concrete buildings.

E = example

This is an issue because city citizens need green areas in order to relax, and the plants and trees also help to filter the air.

A = alternative

To solve this problem, city authorities must invest more in building parks and gardens.

So = solution

As a result, the people who live in cities will suffer from less stress and breathe cleaner and safer air.

R = result

Building body paragraphs

T = topic sentence (idea)

One problem in big cities is the lack of green spaces.

S = support/explain

For example, in the city where I live, we only have one small park, which is itself surrounded by concrete buildings.

E = example

This is an issue because city citizens need green areas in order to relax, and the plants and trees also help to filter the air.

A = alternative

To solve this problem, city authorities must invest more in building parks and gardens.

So = solution

As a result, the people who live in cities will suffer from less stress and breathe cleaner and safer air.

R = result

Building body paragraphs

T = topic sentence (idea)	One problem in big cities is the lack of green spaces.
S = support/explain	For example, in the city where I live, we only have one small park, which is itself surrounded by concrete buildings.
E = example	This is an issue because city citizens need green areas in order to relax, and the plants and trees also help to filter the air.
A = alternative	To solve this problem, city authorities must invest more in building parks and gardens.
So = solution	As a result, the people who live in cities will suffer from less stress and breathe cleaner and safer air.
R = result	

Building body paragraphs

T = topic sentence (idea)	One problem in big cities is the lack of green spaces.
S = support/explain	For example, in the city where I live, we only have one small park, which is itself surrounded by concrete buildings.
E = example	This is an issue because city citizens need green areas in order to relax, and the plants and trees also help to filter the air.
A = alternative	To solve this problem, city authorities must invest more in building parks and gardens.
So = solution	
R = result	As a result, the people who live in cities will suffer from less stress and breathe cleaner and safer air.

Building body paragraphs

T = topic sentence (idea)	One problem in big cities is the lack of green spaces.
S = support/explain	For example, in the city where I live, we only have one small park, which is itself surrounded by concrete buildings.
E = example	This is an issue because city citizens need green areas in order to relax, and the plants and trees also help to filter the air.
A = alternative	To solve this problem, city authorities must invest more in building parks and gardens.
So = solution	As a result, the people who live in cities will suffer from less stress and breathe cleaner and safer air.
R = result	

Building body paragraphs

T = topic sentence (idea)

One problem in big cities is the lack of green spaces.

S = support/explain

For example, in the city where I live, we only have one small park, which is itself surrounded by concrete buildings.

E = example

This is an issue because city citizens need green areas in order to relax, and the plants and trees also help to filter the air.

A = alternative

To solve this problem, city authorities must invest more in building parks and gardens.

So = solution

As a result, the people who live in cities will suffer from less stress and breathe cleaner and safer air.

R = result

Effective Formulas: #2

Now you know have seen one effective way of combining these body paragraph ingredients, here is another. Variety is essential!

T **T**: One of the most significant benefits of air travel is speed. S: Most aircraft nowadays are able to travel faster than any other mode of transport, and they do not have to deal with the same obstacles as on land. E: To illustrate this speed, a journey from London to New York by air takes just 10 hours. A: In contrast, travelling across the Atlantic by sea takes several days. S: Evidently, travelling by plane is far more convenient than travelling by any other means.

Effective Formulas: #3

And one more... Try experimenting with other combinations, but always put the topic sentence first!

T **T:** However, air travel does have a drawback in air pollution. S: The power required for a plane to take off and fly to its destination causes a huge amount of fuel to be burnt. E: It is believed that 13 million flights are taken each year, and this creates a huge strain on the environment. T²: Furthermore, aeroplanes require airports, and airports often cause a lot of stress for locals. E²: For example, the sound pollution airports leak can prevent local families from sleeping properly.

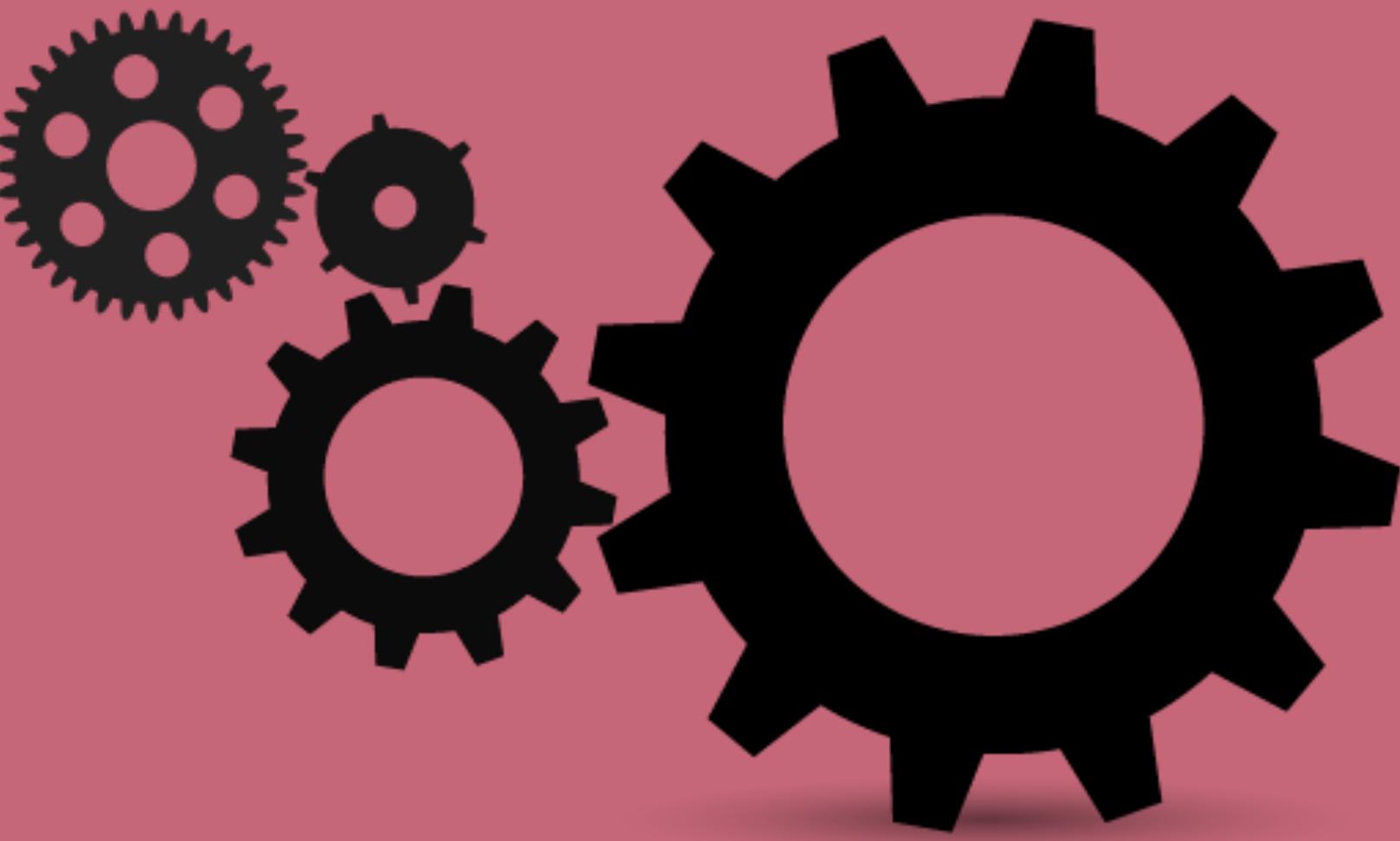
Some tips for body paragraphs

- Begin all body paragraphs with a topic sentence
- Topic sentences should be relevant to both the task itself and the para idea
- Keep paragraphs 4 - 5 sentences long
- In D&O essays, begin body with the side you disagree with
- For P&S essays, use the same formula twice (problem *then* solution)
- Keep paragraphs based on one central topic (*advantages* or *disadvantages*)

Lecture 12

Quick Conclusions

Finishing in style.



An example conclusion

Read this conclusion to a Task 2 Writing question and match each sentence (1-2) to its purpose (a-b).

1In conclusion, although renting can be useful for people who need a home on a short-term basis, this convenience comes at a high cost. **2**In my opinion, the benefits of renting are outweighed by the drawbacks, and I would prefer to buy a property rather than to rent one.

- a) Summarize the key points **1**
- b) Give your own opinion **2**

Useful words and phrases for conclusions

Introducing a conclusion	Expressing opinion	Linking devices
In conclusion, ...	In my opinion, ...	Although ...
To sum up, ...	Personally, ...	While / Whereas ...
Having looked at both sides, ...	In my view, ...	Despite ...

More example conclusions

To sum up, while there are disadvantages to handwriting, such as compromised readability and a greater time commitment, these must be weighed against the cultural and practical benefits that handwriting offers. Personally, I feel that these benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

In conclusion, despite the convenience and lower cost home schooling offers, we must take into consideration the dangers of fewer social opportunities and real-world experience. In my view, these drawbacks outweigh the advantages, and I would not want to homeschool my children.

Problem and Solution essay conclusions

Problem and Solution essays (most Situation essays) are slightly different in that you are not being asked for a specific opinion. You should **state who you think the responsibility for solving this problem lies with.**

In conclusion, although modern cities face a variety of problems, such as crime and air pollution, these problems are not insurmountable. In my view, it is the government's responsibility to tackle these issues, and they should begin by considering some of the solutions proposed above.

1. Summarize the key points
2. State who the responsibility lies with

insurmountable = impossible to overcome

Out of time?

If you're running out of time, you can just write **one** sentence (instead of two) for your conclusion. It's important that you have a few minutes left to go back and **check your essay**.

In these cases, simply combine a **summary of the key points** and **your opinion** in the same sentence. For example:

In conclusion, despite the culture shock and potential high cost of moving abroad, I believe that the prospect of broadening one's horizons is a positive which outweighs any and all negatives.

broadening one's horizons = expanding one's range of knowledge/interests/experiences etc.

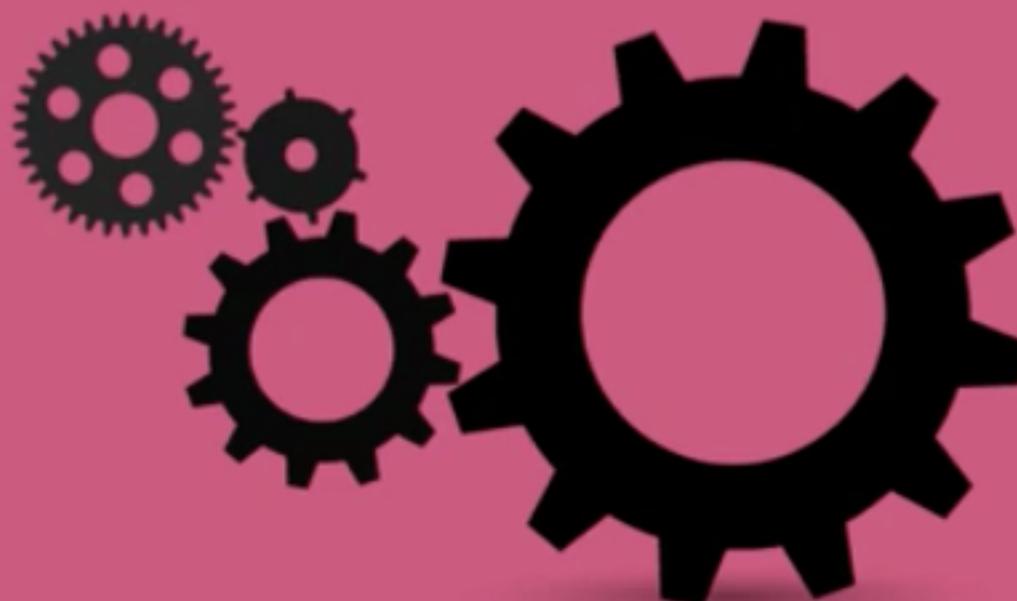
To sum up, ...

- Do not simply state that the topic has ‘benefits and drawbacks’, or that ‘each viewpoint has pros and cons’. This does nothing to summarise the main ideas, but only rephrases your introduction.
- Try to paraphrase the content of your essay. If you write ‘greater affordability’ as an advantage in your body, try something like ‘less expensive’ in your conclusion.
- Do not add any unnecessary information in your conclusion. This is a waste of time, and you should try to save as much time as possible to check for errors in your work.

Lecture 13

Cohesive Devices and Referencing

Achieving ‘flow’ in writing.



What are cohesive devices?

Cohesive devices are the words and phrases which link your sentences, and the clauses within your sentences, together. **Cohesive devices create flow.**

Read this extract from a model Task 2 essay and mark the cohesive devices.

One of the main drawbacks of driving a car is the amount of pollution it causes. This is because the fumes from car exhausts contain chemicals which pollute the atmosphere. As a result, people who live in places with many cars, like cities, may suffer from respiratory-related illnesses. Furthermore, air pollution has a negative impact on a global scale. To illustrate, the polar ice caps are melting as a consequence of global warming, to which air pollution contributes.

Useful cohesive devices

Begin an opinion	Describe result	Give reason	Give example
Firstly, ...	As a result, ...	This is because ...	For example, ...
One advantage/idea/problem is ...	As a consequence, ...	The reason for this is ...	To illustrate, ...
The most significant advantage/problem is ...	Therefore, ...	This happens because ...	For instance, ...
First and foremost, ...	The result of this is ...	This is an advantage/disadvantage/problem because ...	To illustrate this point, ...

More useful cohesive devices

Clarify a point	Link ideas	Switch argument	Make another point
In other words, ...	While	On the other hand, ...	Furthermore, ...
That is to say, ...	Although	However, ...	In addition ...
To clarify, ...	Despite	Turning to the other side of the argument, ...	What's more, ...
In short, ...	whereas	Nevertheless, ...	Moreover, ...

Cohesive devices in use

Using the cohesive devices we have looked at, try to change this paragraph to make it sound more coherent, cohesive and fluent.

Firstly, one disadvantage of prisons is their arguably luxurious conditions. **For example,** inmates are given televisions to watch, video games to play, and expensive sports facilities to use. **This is a problem because it** does nothing to deter the criminals from committing crimes once they are released.

Moreover, this pleasant environment requires a great amount of money to be maintained. **As a consequence,** the taxpayer, whose taxes pay for the upkeep of these prisons, is left out of pocket in order to keep prisoners entertained in their cells.

to be 'out of pocket' = to have lost money

Referencing

Read these two paragraphs and decide which one looks more fluent:

One reason sports stars deserve high salaries is that the sports stars set good examples for children. It is because they show children that, if the children believe in themselves, the children can achieve anything. If top athletes didn't do it, then the children would lose out on a role model. It is why successful sports professionals should earn more money than other professionals.

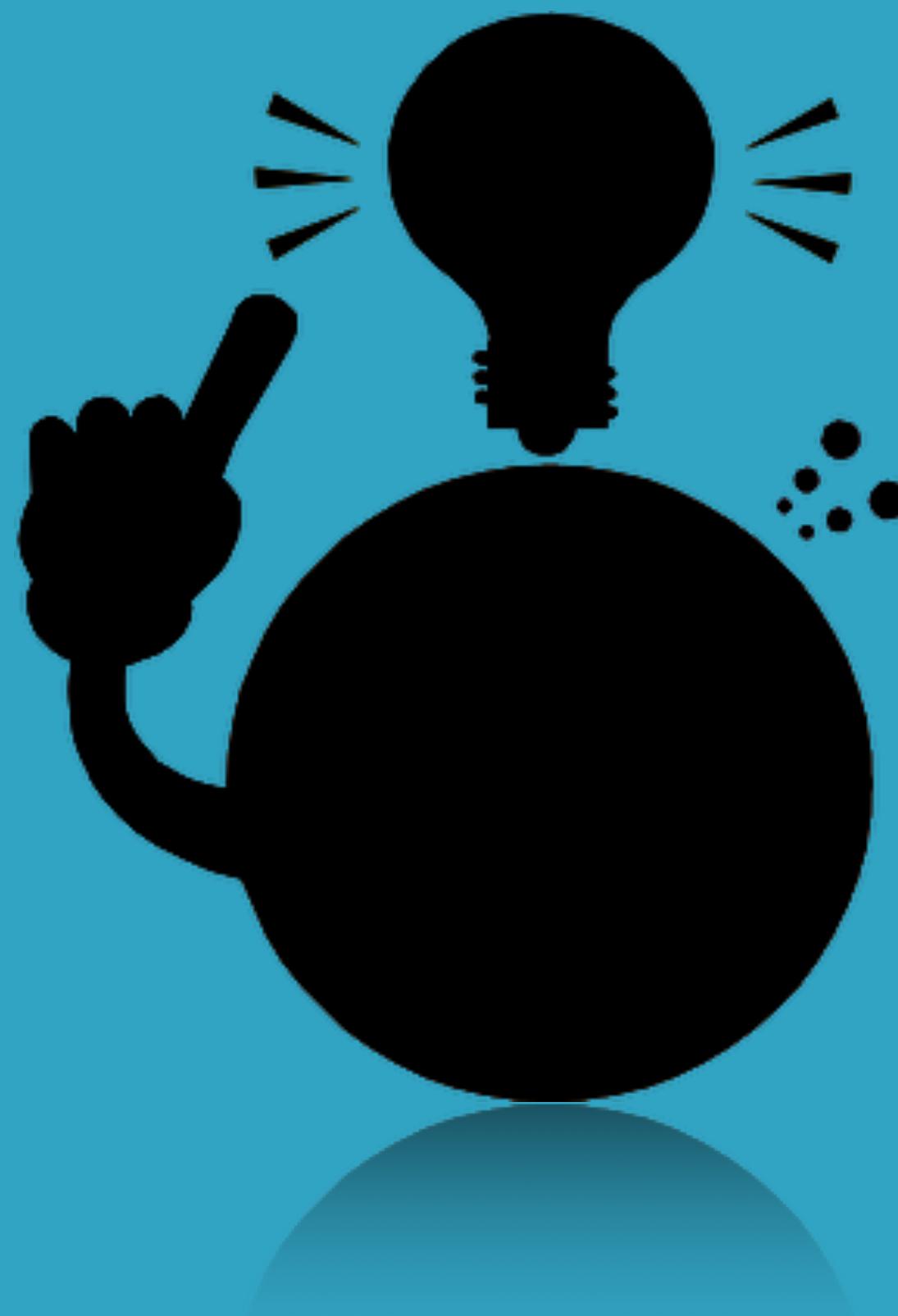
*One reason sports stars deserve high salaries is that **they** set good examples for children. **This** is because they show children that, if **they** believe in themselves, **they** can achieve anything. If top athletes didn't **encourage this idea**, then **these** children would lose out on a role model. **This** is why successful sports professionals should earn more money than other professionals.*

Section 4: Answering the question

Lecture 14

Finding Ideas

The content of the essay.



A common anxiety

One of the most common worries my students have is that they struggle to think of ideas.

However, there are two important things to remember when it comes to thinking of ideas:

1. The **quality** of ideas is much more important than the quantity. If you are developing your ideas sufficiently, you should not need many ideas.
2. Each essay only needs **2-3** ideas each. That's not many! Once you have found your idea, you can then **develop** it, which is much easier.

How to come up with ideas

IELTS is an essay which aims to challenge you on a variety of topics. As a result, it's impossible to know which topic you will have to write about.

The solution? **Form an opinion on everything.**

Imagine you're waiting for a train. Think:

- *What could be done to make my experience more enjoyable? What could the transport company or government do to improve the quality of public transport? What are the pros and cons of taking the underground?*



Ask yourself questions

Ask yourself questions throughout your day so that you can form ideas and opinions on a variety of topics.



You're reading the news over your morning coffee... Are you using the internet, newspapers or television? Why? What are the pros and cons of each? What will happen to the news in the future? How important is the media in creating public opinion? What could be done to prevent media bias?



You're checking your phone during your lunch break... What did you use to do during your lunch break? How have phones become so addictive? How has phone use changed over the last few decades? What could be done to prevent phone addiction? Why are some people so concerned about having the latest model?

Newspapers

Read a variety of different materials and explore a number of different topics. Newspapers are a great way to learn about the opinions of others on lots of different topics, and the arguments they have for those opinions. They are therefore very useful at helping you to think of ideas.

The website www.newsinlevels.com presents news articles in language which meets three different ability levels: beginner (Level 1), intermediate (Level 2), and advanced (Level 3).

Once you are comfortable at Level 3 on News In Levels, you may want to try moving to real newspapers. Here are some newspapers which focus on various different topics:

The Guardian

The Independent

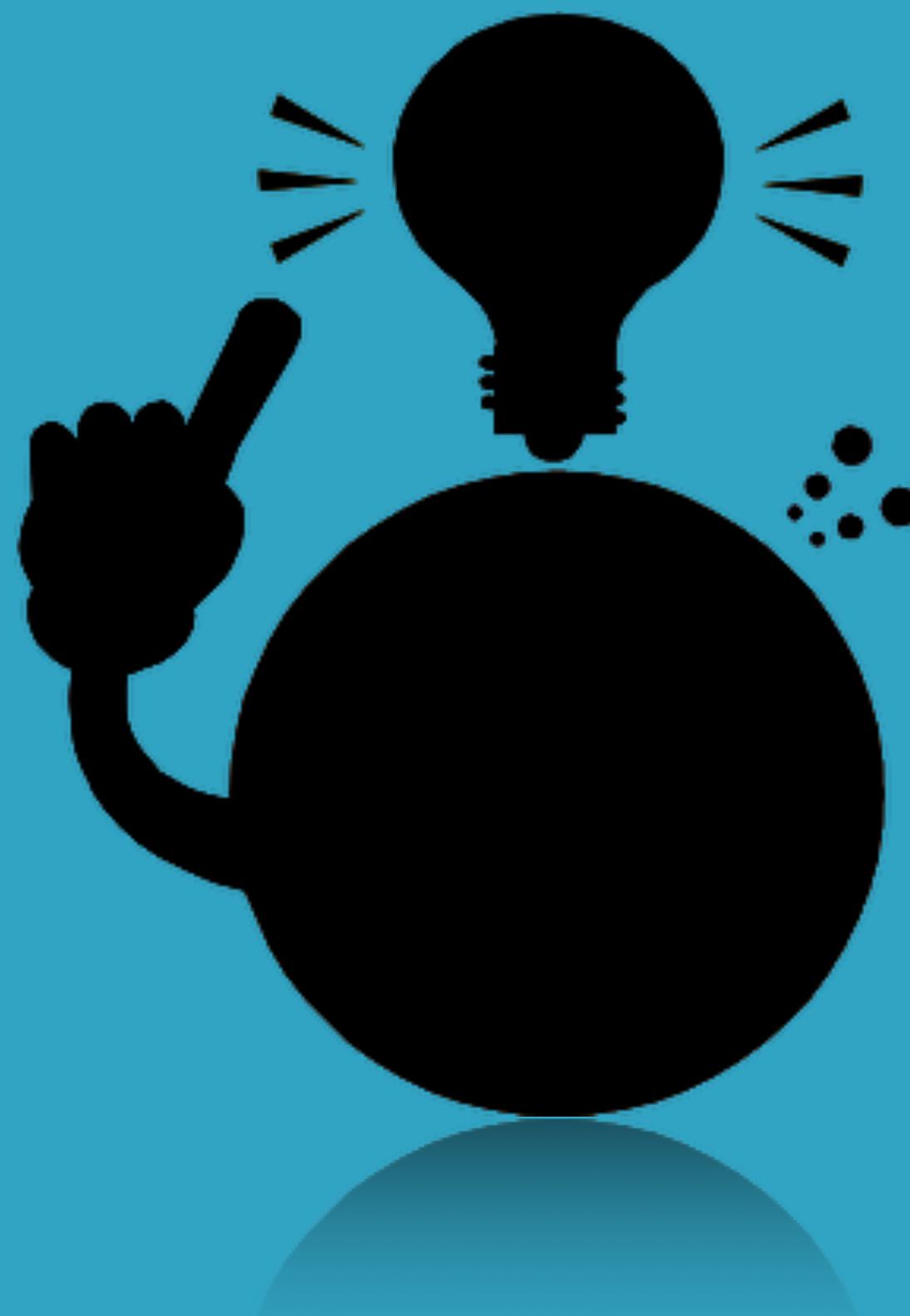
The Times

Section 4: Answering the question

Lecture 15

Developing Ideas, Using Examples

Building your answer
appropriately.



Quality over quantity

Again, we must return to the maxim: **quality is more important than quantity.**

It is much more important to **develop one idea fully** than to write about lots of ideas without developing any of them.

Doing so enables us to address key criteria for Task Achievement:

Band 7: *Presents, extends and supports main ideas ...*

Band 8: *Presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas ...*

maxim = a short statement which expresses a general truth or rule

How to develop your ideas

The lesson on ‘Building Body Paragraphs’ offers a good template for how to develop a single idea. But how do you come up with each sentence?

Just like with finding ideas, the solution is to ask yourself three questions. But these questions are more specific:

Why? support

What kind? example

What if? alternative situation

The three questions in practice

Idea: *The function of a university should be to prepare students for work.*

Why? *This is because many professions need employees who are equipped with comprehensive theoretical and practical knowledge, which universities can provide.*

What kind of professions? *For example, medical students must be given rigorous lessons on anatomy before they become doctors, so that they can make decisions which save people's lives.*

What if this weren't the function of universities? *If universities were more concerned with education for its own sake, rather than giving students the necessary training to become competent professionals, there would be a serious shortage of doctors, lawyers and other essential professionals in society.*

94

words

Try it yourself

Idea: Sending all criminals to prison would be a terrible idea.

Why?

What kind of criminals shouldn't go to prison?

What would happen if all criminals went to prison?

Try it yourself

Idea: Sending all criminals to prison would be a terrible idea.

Why?

This is because the purpose of prison is to deter and incarcerate criminals, but some types of crime can be deterred with less expensive and more productive measures.

What kind of criminals shouldn't go to prison?

What would happen if all criminals went to prison?

Try it yourself

Idea: Sending all criminals to prison would be a terrible idea.

Why?

This is because the purpose of prison is to deter and incarcerate criminals, but some types of crime can be deterred with less expensive and more productive measures.

What kind of criminals shouldn't go to prison?

For example, those who commit petty crimes like pickpocketing, shoplifting and speeding would contribute much more to society by undergoing community service or paying a fine.

What would happen if all criminals went to prison?

Try it yourself

Idea: Sending all criminals to prison would be a terrible idea.

Why?

This is because the purpose of prison is to deter and incarcerate criminals, but some types of crime can be deterred with less expensive and more productive measures.

What kind of criminals shouldn't go to prison?

For example, those who commit petty crimes like pickpocketing, shoplifting and speeding would contribute much more to society by undergoing community service or paying a fine.

What would happen if all criminals went to prison?

If, in contrast, every crime was sentenced with prison time, prisons would be full to bursting, law-abiding citizens would be faced with a huge tax burden, and the criminals themselves would learn nothing about their crimes.

Develop these ideas

Use the same technique of **why?**, **what kind?**, and **what if?** to develop the ideas below.

Conflict between parents and their children is necessary because it helps the latter to develop.

Dropping foreign languages from school curriculums would be unnecessary and shortsighted.

One of the main advantages of moving abroad is that it enables people to broaden their horizons.

Lecture 16

Creating and Maintaining a Position

When and how to express
yourself.



Band descriptors

Stating and maintaining a position is one of the most important factors in achieving a high Task Response band score.

Band 7: *Presents a clear position throughout the response*

With some tasks, this requirement is fairly simple to meet. With others, it can cause some difficulty.

However, remember that we do not need to give an opinion if the task does not ask us to give one. This is the case with ~~Discussion~~ essays and most ~~Situation~~ essays.

Approaching the task

Consider the following question:

Government investment in the arts, such as music and theatre, is a waste of money. Governments must invest this money in public services instead.

To what extent do you agree with this statement?

What are the key words here?

What is your opinion on the statements?

Deciding on your opinion

Let's break down the task:

Government investment in the arts, such as music and theatre, is a waste of money.

Do you agree or disagree? Let's say: **disagree**.

Governments must invest this money in public services instead.

Do you agree or disagree? Let's say: **partly agree**.

Notice that you can both *agree* **and** *disagree* and still have a coherent opinion. This is even easier to do in a 2-statement question, like the one we are looking at.

Opinion in the introduction

Stating our opinion in the introduction is important, as we need to ‘present a clear position **throughout** the response’.

In the lecture *Incredibly Quick Introductions*, we took a brief look at how we might introduce our opinion to the reader. Here’s the introduction formula:

1. General statement.
2. Paraphrase the task language.
3. **Opinion** (+ plan).

It is important to consider how government should spend its money. Some believe investing this money in the arts is wasteful, and that all these funds should be diverted to public services. While I disagree that the arts are a waste of money, I do feel that some of this funding should go to public services.

A closer look

It is important to consider how government should spend its money. Some believe investing this money in the arts is wasteful, and that all these funds should be diverted to public services. While I disagree that the arts are a waste of money, I do feel that some of this funding should go to public services.

Three things are very clear from this introduction...

1. We understand, *in full*, what the task opinion is.
2. We are stating a clear view (disagree & agree with different parts).
3. Our view is 100% relevant to every part of the task opinion.

Opinion in the body

In *Opinion / Discussion* and *Opinion* essays, your opinion must be clear within the body of the essay, and it must be consistent with the opinion in the introduction.

Discussion / Opinion essays

Those who believe education should be free argue that ...

However, I would argue that tuition should be self-funded as ...

Opinion essays

To begin with, ...

Furthermore, ...

Unless you explicitly state otherwise,
the body of an Opinion essay will be
deemed to be your own view.

Qualifying your opinion

Sometimes, you will not fully agree/disagree with a statement.

Sometimes, you will only partly agree/disagree, or be split for and against.

In these cases, **do not** just side with one view because it's 'easier' (except in extreme circumstances). You need to be developing your English for genuine purposes, not just IELTS!

In these cases, you can **qualify** your opinion with specific phrases.

Qualifying your opinion

In these cases, you can **qualify** your opinion with specific phrases.

... it depends on / it is dependent on ...

... make an exception for / an exception should be made for ...

... (only) to an extent / (only) up to a point ...

... (only) in some cases ...

... should take into account / should be taken into account ...

Qualifying your opinion

Can you put the expressions from the previous slide into the correct gaps on this slide?

However, I believe the arts should only be funded _____, because there needs to be enough money to support public services.

While it is important for university students to receive financial assistance, I believe their family background _____. This is because ...

Although I am mostly against taxing unhealthy foods, I believe _____ foods which contain harmful chemicals. The reason for this is ...

I believe the government should offer financial incentives to the public for recycling, but _____ what is being recycled. For example, ...

The argument for requiring all criminals to undergo community service is one I am in favour of, but _____. To clarify, ...

Qualifying your opinion

Can you put the expressions from the previous slide into the correct gaps on this slide?

However, I believe the arts should only be funded **up to a point / to an extent**, because there needs to be enough money to support public services.

While it is important for university students to receive financial assistance, I believe their family background **should be taken into account**. This is because ...

Although I am mostly against taxing unhealthy foods, I believe **an exception should be made for** foods which contain artificial preservatives. The reason for this is ...

I believe the government should offer financial incentives to the public for recycling, but **it depends on** what is being recycled. For example, ...

The argument for requiring all criminals to undergo community service is one I am in favour of, but **only in some cases**. To clarify, ...

Opinion in the conclusion

How to write a conclusion is covered in the lecture ‘Quick Conclusions’, but here are some important points:

Discussion/Opinion essays

Make sure you cover the alternate viewpoint and its arguments, as well as your own.

In conclusion, although *as* *, I believe*
 because

Opinion essays

Summarise your viewpoint/s and supporting arguments, and make sure your opinion is as clear as possible

In conclusion, due to *and* *, I believe that*

Opinion in the conclusion

How to write a conclusion is covered in the lecture ‘Quick Conclusions’, but here are some important points:

Discussion/Opinion essays

Make sure you cover the alternate viewpoint and its arguments, as well as your own.

In conclusion, although building accommodation is important as it combats homelessness, I believe we should invest more in green spaces because doing so provides a better quality of life for citizens.

Opinion essays

Summarise your viewpoint/s and supporting arguments, and make sure your opinion is as clear as possible

In conclusion, due to the importance of individual cultures and the danger of war, I believe that under no circumstances should minority languages be allowed to perish.

Strong opinion language

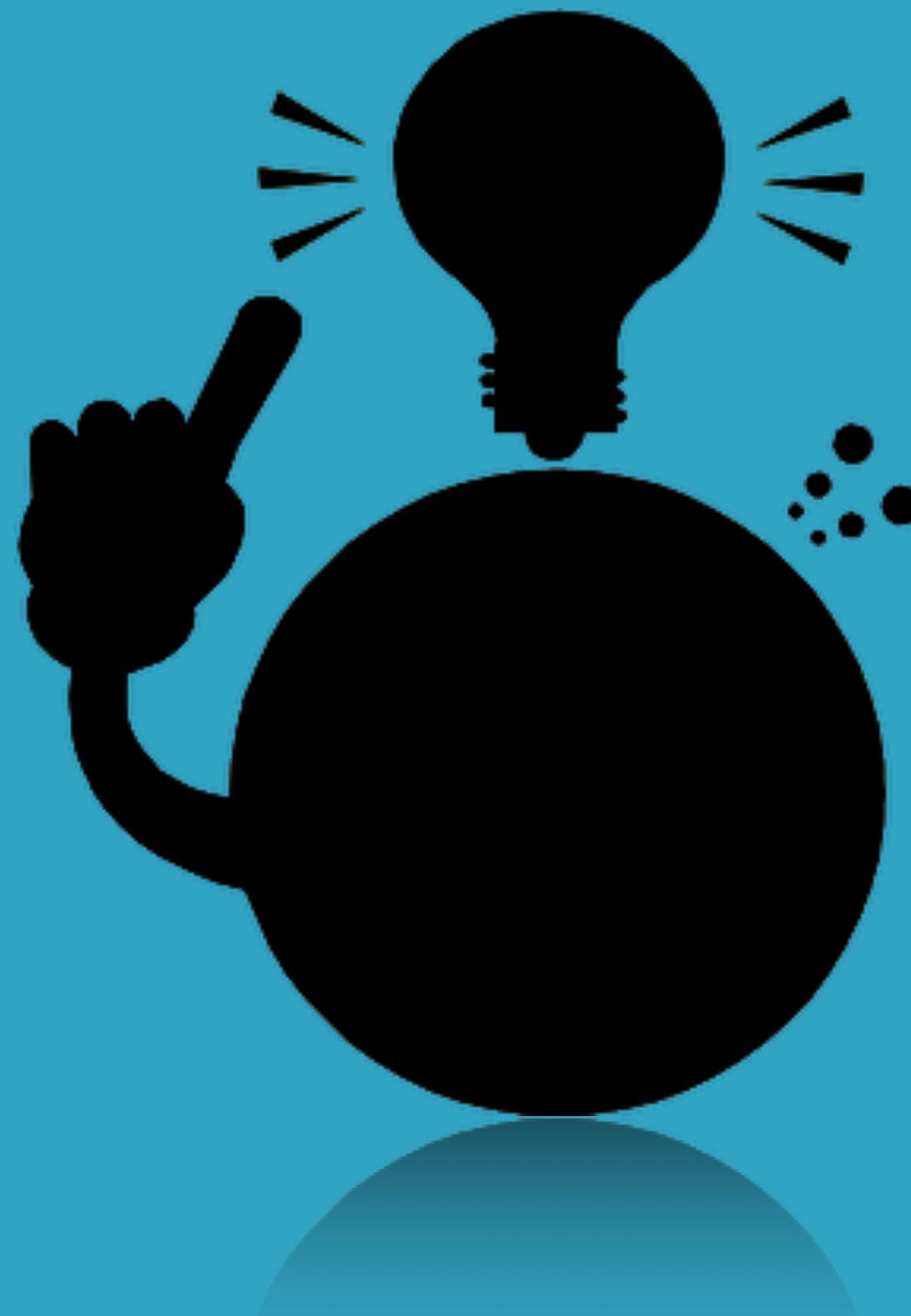
- I wholeheartedly believe ...
- I am strongly for/against ...
- Under no circumstances should ... / On no account should ...
- I am a vehement/ardent/staunch supporter of ...
- There are no viable/credible alternatives...
- It can hardly be denied that ...

Section 4: Answering the question

Lecture 17

How To Stop Overgeneralising

Language to avoid making
generalisations.



What are generalisations?

A generalisation is a statement about all members of a particular group which may be true in some or many situations, but not all.

Example: One reason why teenagers and their parents have poor relationships with one another is that...

Is this true for *all* parents and teenagers? **No.** Besides, this would be impossible to verify.

Generalisations can also be made about situations, as well as people.

Example: When employees feel a strong sense of job satisfaction, company profits rise.

Can we know that this is *always* the case? **No.**

Why avoiding generalisations is important

Let's return to the band descriptors.

Task Achievement

Band 7: *“... but there may be a tendency to overgeneralise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus.”*

You **can** score a Band 7, even with generalisations. But why not avoid the generalisations and shoot for an 8?

This gives you more room for error in the other band descriptor categories.

How to avoid overgeneralising

To avoid overgeneralising, we must **soften** our statements with appropriate language. Think of these as **generalising softeners**.

Modal verbs (*may, might, could, can*)

Frequency language (*often, tend to, usually, occasionally*)

Non-specific quantifiers (*many, some, a number of, a lot of*)

These can all be used to soften the **broadness** of our statements.

Try to use the language above to ‘soften’ the following sentence.

Politicians are influenced by the media, which is a problem because this has a negative effect on social equality in the country.

How to avoid overgeneralising

To avoid overgeneralising, we must **soften** our statements with appropriate language. Think of these as **generalising softeners**.

Modal verbs (*may, might, could, can*)

Frequency language (*often, tend to, usually, occasionally*)

Non-specific quantifiers (*many, some, a number of, a lot of*)

These can all be used to soften the **broadness** of our statements.

Try to use the language above to ‘soften’ the following sentence.

Many politicians are influenced by the media, which is often a problem because this can have a negative effect on social equality in the country.

Lecture 18

What's Your Topic?

The need for topic-related vocabulary.



‘Museums’ and ‘Schools’

Museums and Schools are two topics (among many others) which might appear in your Task 2 essay.

The obvious: these topics are very different, but have similarities.

The not-so-obvious: these topics each have a set of vocabulary which relates to them individually. E.g. *curators* for museums, *teachers* for schools.

Your task: Demonstrate to the examiner your knowledge of these ‘sets of vocabulary’. Limit the use of *general* language, or language which could be used for more than one topic (e.g. *staff*).

The importance of topic-related vocabulary

Read this pair of sentences and decide which sentence in the pair is better:

Museums, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their curators, their well-preserved artefacts from previous time eras, and their enlightening exhibitions and galleries.

Museums, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their staff, their well cared-for things, and their rooms full of interesting items and pictures.

The importance of topic-related vocabulary

Read this pair of sentences and decide which sentence in the pair is better:

Museums, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their curators, their well-preserved artefacts from previous time eras, and their enlightening exhibitions and galleries.

Museums, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their staff, their well cared-for things, and their rooms full of interesting items and pictures.

The importance of topic-related vocabulary

Read this pair of sentences and decide which sentence in the pair is better:

Museums, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their curators, their well-preserved artefacts from previous time eras, and their enlightening exhibitions and galleries.

Schools, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their staff, their well cared-for things, and their rooms full of interesting items and pictures.

The importance of topic-related vocabulary

Read this pair of sentences and decide which sentence in the pair is better:

Museums, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their curators, their well-preserved artefacts from previous time eras, and their enlightening exhibitions and galleries.

Schools, most people would agree, are great places of education thanks to the knowledge of their staff, their well cared-for things, and their rooms full of interesting items and pictures.

Make ‘vocabulary tables’ for topics

To improve your topic-related vocabulary, make tables for the topics, and remember to include the form/s of the words/expressions you find.

Museums

curator (n) curate (v)
artefact (n)
well-preserved (adj)
exhibition (n) exhibit (v and n)*
gallery (n)
collect (v) collection (n)
archive (v and n)

Schools

teacher / student (n)
teacher-student ratio (n.p)
class / classroom (n)
head teacher (n)
star pupil (n.p)
attend (v) attendance (n)
cram for an exam (exp)

Public Health

obese (adj) obesity (n)
health-related issues (n.p)
sports facilities (n.p)
healthcare system (n.p)
spread of viruses (coll)
threats to health (coll)
healthy choice (n.p)

* an ‘exhibit’ (noun) is like a smaller version of an ‘exhibition’. An exhibit would take up one room in a museum, while an exhibition may take up an entire wing.

Be selective, use common sense

While it is important to use topic-related vocabulary, don't get carried away. Make sure you also use some general vocabulary so that the essay can 'breathe'. Consider these two sentences:

Curators of museums and art galleries archive every artefact and painting discovered so they may later exhibit these works of art and historical relics to museum-enthusiasts and historians in exhibition halls.

Museum curators often store the artefacts they find in an archive, so that they can later be presented to the public in exhibitions.

Be selective, use common sense

While it is important to use topic-related vocabulary, don't get carried away. Make sure you also use some general vocabulary so that the essay can 'breathe'. Consider these two sentences:

Curators of museums and art galleries archive every artefact and painting discovered so they may later exhibit these works of art and historical relics to museum-enthusiasts and historians in exhibition halls.

Museum curators often store the artefacts they find in an archive, so that they can later be presented to the public in exhibitions.

Never use words you aren't confident using! Find a tutor to experiment with new words and check your understanding.

Lecture 19

The Importance of Collocations

Fluency via vocabulary.



What is a collocation?

Let's return to the band descriptors for a moment, and look at Band 7 for Lexical Resource:

- *uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and **collocation**.*

What does this mean?

A collocation is a set of 2 or more words which are commonly used together.

For example, the phrase *make an effort* is a collocation because these words are **often seen together** and they **express a particular meaning**.

Why are collocations important?

Collocations are important for a number of reasons:

1. They make language fluent, precise, expressive, and natural. Compare *He's **making** a tattoo* and *He's **getting** a tattoo*. The wrong version will instantly expose you as having weak English. (Note: *getting* is correct.)
2. They allow you to express lengthy ideas with just a few words, saving you precious time during the test. Compare *He **has decided what he is going to do*** with *He **has made up his mind***. The latter example - a collocation - is both more natural and more concise.
3. When grouped together, collocations demonstrate your language command.

Collocations in use

When grouped together, collocations demonstrate your language command.

Which of these paragraphs shows a strong command, and which shows a weak command?

One of the heavy problems about transport in public places is the expensive prices of tickets which people pay. This might happen due to the absence of competition between bus and train companies, which means that solitary companies can control the transport choices in an entire area, and can therefore put their fees to be as expensive as they want.

One of the most pressing problems with public transport is the extortionate ticket prices which customers are required to pay. This might happen due to the lack of competition within the public transport industry, allowing one company to have a monopoly over transport options and charges in a particular town or city.

Collocations in use

When grouped together, collocations demonstrate your language command.

Which of these paragraphs shows a strong command, and which shows a weak command?

Weak command

One of the heavy problems about transport in public places is the expensive prices of tickets which people pay. This might happen due to the absence of competition between bus and train companies, which means that solitary companies can control the transport choices in an entire area, and can therefore put their fees to be as expensive as they want.

Strong command

One of the most pressing problems with public transport is the extortionate ticket prices which customers are required to pay. This might happen due to the lack of competition within the public transport industry, allowing one company to have a monopoly over transport options and charges in a particular town or city.

Spotlight: Weak collocation command

Weak command

One of the heavy problems about transport in public places is the expensive prices of tickets which people pay. This might happen due to the absence of competition between bus and train companies, which means that solitary companies can control the transport choices in an entire area, and can therefore put their fees to be as expensive as they want.

Good:

- Less common/advanced vocabulary shown (absence, solitary, fees)
- Plenty of topic-related vocabulary (tickets, bus and train, fees, public places)

Bad:

- The above ‘good’ vocabulary is almost completely compromised due to the fact that it is not used correctly with collocation.

How to improve collocation skill

The number one way to improve your collocation ability is to ***immerse yourself in English.***

- *Read books.* Young Adult novels are particularly useful because they feature lots of natural dialogue and not too much difficult vocabulary.
- *Listen to audiobooks.* Audiobooks are far better than music for studying. Justin Bieber won't help you in IELTS!
- *Have conversations with native speakers.* There are websites online which offer you the possibility to speak to natives for free. By speaking to natives, you can learn new expressions, ask what they mean, and practice them yourself.

Lecture 20

Focus on Word Formation

Success - Successful -
Successfully - Succeed.



Word Classes

Success. Successful. Successfully. Succeed.

These four words all have something in common - their root (success) - but they vary in their form.

Success = **Noun**

Successful = **Adjective**

Successfully = **Adverb**

Succeed = **Verb**

*In order to be **successful** in IELTS, you need to **succeed** in using word formation. Only then will you find **success!** Can you **successfully** modify these words?*

Word Formation: Prefixes

Word formation is the modification of base words by way of **prefixes**, **suffixes**, and **compounds**.

Prefixes

Prefixes are added **before** the base (or ‘stem’) of the word:

Unsuccessful (*un-* = remove, reverse, not)

Underperform (*under-* = less than, beneath)

Overestimate (*over-* = too much)

Research prefixes and use these to boost your score in Lexical Resource:

Teenagers who do not agree with their parents ... → *Teenagers who **dis**agree with their parents ...*

Word Formation: Suffixes

Suffixes

Suffixes are added **after** the base of a word, usually to change the **class** of word. Remember success?

Success**ful**. Forget**ful**. (-*ful* can form an **adjective**).

Successfully. Crucially. (ly can form an **adverb**).

Widen. Lengthen. Simplify. Clarify (en- and -ify can form **verbs**).

Terrorism. Sexism. (-*ism* can be used to form **nouns**).

Research suffixes and use these to boost your score in Lexical Resource:

One advantage of exercise is that it makes your body stronger --> One advantage of exercise is that it strength**ens** your body.

Word Formation: Compounds

Compounds

Compounding is the linking of two or more base words to create a new word e.g. *heartbreaking*. Often, the first word identifies a key feature of the second word.

Compounds are found in all word classes, but are most common in nouns.

Nouns: air conditioning, blackboard, full moon

Adjectives: full-fat, spine-chilling, seasick

Verbs: baby-sit, colour-code, proofread

Adverbs: nevertheless, thereby, good-naturedly

Note! Sadly, there are no specific rules regarding when to use hyphens in words. When in doubt, consult a good learner's dictionary.

Lecture 21

Paraphrasing and Synonyms

How to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary.



A reminder of the band descriptors

To achieve a **Band 7** in *Lexical Resource*, you must:

“use a **sufficient range** of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision.

To achieve a **Band 8** in *Lexical Resource*, you must:

“use a **wide range** of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings.

The **greater your range**, the **higher your score**.

Paraphrasing Tip #1: Synonyms

It's important to remember: there are **many** ways that we can paraphrase language.

Synonyms (similar words) are very useful, and this is why a **thesaurus** can be helpful when you are practicing.

If you don't own a thesaurus, you can use an online one. Try it now. Look up the word: *range*. What do you find?

array, assortment, collection, diversity, mixture, and variety are just a few of the words that appear under *range**.

* make sure you are researching the appropriate context of the word!

Paraphrasing with synonyms

Introductions require us to paraphrase the language given to us in the task. Synonyms can be useful here:

Some people **believe that **visitors** to other countries should **follow** local **customs** and behaviour. Others **disagree** and think that the host country should **welcome** cultural **differences**.**

Some people **think** that **tourists** to other countries should **abide by** local **rules** and behaviour. Others **dispute this** and think that the host country should **embrace** cultural **diversity**.

CAREFUL! The above introduction is okay, but is clearly dependent on a thesaurus. This can easily make language sound unnatural. Check out Joey from *Friends*' letter (link in the resources) to get an idea of how thesauruses can be misused!

Paraphrasing Tip #2: Word Order

The best way to paraphrase is to mix different paraphrasing skills together. Don't overuse synonyms, but mix them with other techniques, like **changing word order**.

Some people believe that visitors to other countries should follow local customs and behaviour.

Some people think that local customs and characteristics should be followed by tourists when they go to other countries.

What we have here is a mix of **synonyms** (*think, characteristics, tourists*) and **different word order** (moving part of the sentence into the passive voice).

Paraphrasing Tip #3: Word Formation

Another way we can find greater vocabulary range is to modify word formation. As discussed in a previous lecture, there are often a number of different word formations for a single word.

Others disagree and think that the host country should welcome cultural differences.

Others dispute this and think that a variety of cultures should be welcomed by host countries.

This paraphrased sentence combines synonyms (*dispute*, *variety*), a change in word order (passive voice), AND a change in word formation (*cultural* (adj) → *culture* (noun)).

Paraphrasing Tip #4: Antonyms

Can't think of a synonym, or struggling to change word order/formation? Consider the **opposite** of the word you're trying to change. This is called an 'antonym'.

Others disagree and think that the host country should welcome cultural differences.

Others dispute this and think that the host nation should not reject cultural variety.

This paraphrased sentence combines synonyms (*dispute*, *variety*) as well as an antonym (*reject*) preceded by a negation (*not*). However, this is not quite as precise as using a synonym or changing word order/formation.

Paraphrasing Tip #5: Think Outside the Box

Synonyms, sentence reconstruction and changes in word formation are all excellent ways of paraphrasing, but sometimes it is useful to just **completely change** the way an idea is communicated, while not changing the meaning.

These days, more and more people are going to other countries for significant periods of time, either to find a job or to study.

In recent years, the number of people choosing to move abroad, either for work or education, has increased substantially.

Here, we have synonyms (*work, education, abroad*), a change in word order, a tense switch (*present continuous –> present perfect*) and a complete change in the communication of an idea (*more and more –> the number of ... has increased*).

Advice on paraphrasing

Although paraphrasing is an important part of achieving Band 7+, it is just **one** important part. Do not spend too long thinking about paraphrasing.

If you cannot think of a way to paraphrase within 10-20 seconds, just use the original wording, underline the expression, then come back to it later if you have time.

Read, read, read in English. Paraphrasing is not as easy as simply ‘change a few words around’. Reading English articles and books will allow you to see how *natural* paraphrasing works. Don’t be like Joey!

Finally, be **selective** with paraphrase. There are only so many ways to say ‘parents’, for instance. Trying to paraphrase this word will lead to unnatural language.

Lecture 22

Simple Sentences & Common Errors

Achieving accuracy and
avoiding typical mistakes.



Constructing Simple Sentences

If you're taking this course, you should know how to construct a simple sentence in English.

A simple sentence is made up the most basic sentence elements: **Subject** + **Verb** (+ **Completed thought / Object**).

The police catch criminals.

Teachers in some countries are not paid very well.

The government should invest in the promotion of health education.

As you can see, other word types, like modal verbs, prepositions and articles, can all be part of a simple sentence.

Common Error #1: Subject-verb agreement

So, simple sentences... easy, right? Not so fast. Despite the ‘simple’ nature of these sentences, I often see mistakes in their construction.

Subject-verb agreement

What is wrong with these sentences?

Teachers and parents has to work together to find a solution.

Everyone know education is of vital importance.

The number of people who live abroad are rising all the time.

Common Error #1: Subject-verb agreement

So, simple sentences... easy, right? Not so fast. Despite the ‘simple’ nature of these sentences, I often see mistakes in their construction.

Subject-verb agreement

What is wrong with these sentences?

Teachers and parents have to work together to find a solution.

*Everyone know**s** education is of vital importance.*

*The number of people who live abroad **is** rising all the time.*

Always check what your subject is, and make sure that your verb ‘agrees’ with the subject.

Common Error #2: Article usage

There are a number of rules behind articles, more than can be covered quickly here. However, here are the most common mistakes I see, and the most relevant for essay writing:

Definite article ('the')

We use this article when we believe the reader **knows exactly** to whom or what we are referring.

- with superlative adjectives: **The** biggest problem in big cities is pollution.
- when mentioning something again. *People's buying habits can be influenced by a particular celebrity. The celebrity has such an effect because ...*
- when saying something about all things referred to by a noun: **The** laptop was a major breakthrough.
- when talking about groups of people: **the** elderly, **the** poor, **the** rich, **the** unemployed
- when the figure is the important part of the noun phrase: **the** number of people who smoke is worryingly high.

Common Error #2: Article usage

Indefinite article ('a/an')

We use this article with singular countable nouns

- when the reader **does not know exactly** to whom or what we are referring:
- When showing someone/something is part of a group: *There is a reason why crime rates are continuing to rise* (one reason out of several).
- When we want to say something about all things of that kind: *A student cannot be expected to be well-behaved all the time* (not a specific student).
- We **do not** use articles when referring to plurals or uncountable nouns: *There are many reasons why ... / Information on the internet can sometimes be unreliable...*

Common Error #2: Article usage

Can you find the article errors in these sentences?

Some people argue that the teenagers spend too much time on an internet.

This is the problem because if they do not get enough exercise, they can end up suffering from an obesity.

As the result, these children often struggle with the health issues, and these issues can affect them throughout a life.

As the studies show, a rate of obesity is rising all the time.

Common Error #2: Article usage

Can you find the article errors in these sentences?

*Some people argue that ~~the~~ teenagers spend too much time on **the** internet.*

*This is **a** problem because if they do not get enough exercise, they can end up suffering from ~~an~~ obesity.*

*As **a** result, these children often struggle with ~~the~~ health issues, and these issues can affect them throughout ~~a~~ life.*

*As ~~the~~ studies show, **the** rate of obesity is rising all the time.*

Common Error #3: Tenses

The majority of your essay will need to be written in the present simple, as this tense is often used to give opinions (*I think investment is good*) and facts/beliefs (*Education leads to a competent workforce*). However, you need to be careful to realise when other tenses are necessary.

Can you spot the mistakes in these sentences?

The best way to improve the economy will be to lower taxes.

Three years ago the government has decided to invest in healthcare. This leads to a huge improvement in public health.

Sports facilities would be important because they would offer people an opportunity to exercise, ...

To solve this problem, the government should give teachers a pay-rise. As a result, the levels of job satisfaction rise and work performance improves.

Common Error #3: Tenses

The majority of your essay will need to be written in the present simple, as this tense is often used to give opinions (*I think investment is good*) and facts/beliefs (*Education leads to a competent workforce*). However, you need to be careful to realise when other tenses are necessary.

Can you spot the mistakes in these sentences?

*The best way to improve the economy **is** to lower taxes.*

*Three years ago the government **has** decided to invest in healthcare. This **led** to a huge improvement in public health.*

*Sports facilities **are** important because they **would** offer people an opportunity to exercise, ...*

*To solve this problem, the government should give teachers a pay-rise. As a result, the levels of job satisfaction **would** rise and work performance **would** improves.*

Lecture 23

Complex Sentences

How to use the type of sentences
which will improve your score.



'A Variety of Complex Structures'

The above title is an extract from the IELTS Task 2 Writing band descriptors under the criteria for Grammatical Range and Accuracy:

Band 6: Uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms

Band 7: *Uses a variety of complex structures*

Band 8: Uses a wide range of structures

The greater your variety of grammatical complexity, the higher your score in the exam. As long as your accuracy is high!

Dependent Clauses

One of the best ways to improve your complexity of grammar is to use dependent clauses with independent clauses. This creates a ‘complex sentence’. **What are these?**

I have a dog = one independent clause. The idea is complete.

I have a dog and you have a cat = two independent clauses linked by a coordinating conjunction (*and*). Each idea would make sense alone.

Although I have a dog = one dependent clause. This idea is incomplete. It requires the addition of another clause for it to be complete:

Although I have a dog, you have a cat = one dependent clause linked with an independent clause by use of a subordinating conjunction (*although*). Now the idea is complete.

Subordinating Conjunctions

To create a complex sentence (a sentence with at least one dependent clause), you need to use subordinating conjunctions. There are many more of these conjunctions than you can see here.

When: when teachers gave more discipline.

In order to: In order to keep children from eating unhealthy food

Although: Although people who live abroad face some difficulties

Unless: unless the government imposes a congestion charge.

Even if: Even if the government invested in tourism

Before: before moving abroad.

Subordinating Conjunctions

To create a complex sentence (a sentence with at least one dependent clause), you need to use subordinating conjunctions. There are many more of these conjunctions than you can see here.

When: Grades improved when teachers gave more discipline.

In order to: In order to keep children from eating unhealthy food, advertising should be more strongly regulated.

Although: Although people who live abroad face some difficulties, they can also benefit from a broader perspective and improved job prospects

Unless: Traffic problems in big cities will continue unless the government imposes a congestion charge.

Even if: Even if the government invested in tourism, the essential problems would remain.

Before: People should think long and hard about the consequences before moving abroad.

Subordinating Conjunctions

To create a complex sentence (a sentence with at least one dependent clause), you need to use subordinating conjunctions. There are many more of these conjunctions than you can see here.

When: Grades improved when teachers gave more discipline.

In order to: In order to keep children from eating unhealthy food, advertising should be more strongly regulated.

Although: Although people who live abroad face some difficulties, they can also benefit from a broader perspective and improved job prospects

Unless: Traffic problems in big cities will continue unless the government imposes a congestion charge.

Even if: Even if the government invested in tourism, the essential problems would remain.

Before: People should think long and hard about the consequences before moving abroad.

Combining Conjunctions

To increase the complexity of your sentences even more, you can combine **subordinating** and **coordinating** conjunctions.

In order to reduce crime rates, the government should provide greater funding for the police *and* punishments should be made stricter.

Lecture

26!

Unless emergency services are given more financial support, the number of fatalities will continue to rise, *even if* other measures are adopted.

Fatty and sugary foods need to be taxed *or* regulated *so that* children are not tempted by these unhealthy options.

So as to protect children, *who* may be influenced by the powers of peer pressure, the government must educate children about the danger of drugs *and* clamp down on drug abuse by minors.

Lecture 24

Using Punctuation Correctly

A neglected but crucial
component of accurate writing.



Why is punctuation important?

Punctuation can help the reader to understand how a particular sentence should be read. It also helps to clarify meaning.

With incorrect or missing punctuation, problems can arise...

**Let's eat grandpa.
Let's eat, grandpa.**

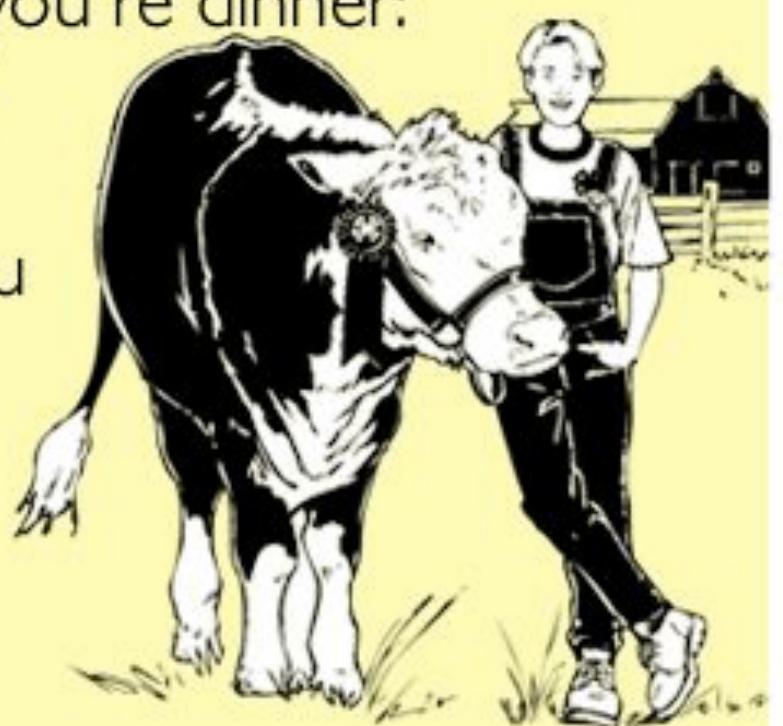
**correct punctuation can
save a person's life.**

**I like
cooking my family
and my pets.**

**Use commas.
Don't be a psycho.**



Your dinner v. you're dinner:
one leaves you nourished, the
other leaves you dead. Correct
grammar:
it saves lives.



someecards
user card

Using commas

Commas in English are notoriously difficult to use. However, there are some rules which make comma usage simpler. For essay writing, the following four are the most relevant.

1. Use a comma after a dependent clause that starts a sentence.

To avoid overpopulation in cities, the countryside must be developed.

2. Use a comma before any co-ordinating conjunction that links two independent clauses.

The government must give doctors a higher salary, and they must also provide quality facilities.

3. Use commas to separate items in a list.

*Teachers have to prepare classes, mark homework, and attend many meetings.**

4. Use a comma after introductory cohesive devices.

For example, ... To begin with, ... Finally, ... As a consequence, ... (NOT There is no doubt / This is because...)

* The final comma here is called an 'oxford comma'. It is an optional addition, but it can help to avoid confusion at times.

Using apostrophes

There are two instances where apostrophes are commonly used: **possessives** (Mary's pen) and **contractions** (Mary's here). However, we must not use contractions in essay writing, so we will only focus on the former usage.

Using apostrophes

There are two instances where apostrophes are commonly used: **possessives** (Mary's pen) and **contractions** (~~Mary's here~~). However, we must not use contractions in essay writing, so we will only focus on the former usage.

For a singular noun, add an apostrophe + s to form the possessive.
It is the government's responsibility.

For singular and plural nouns which ends in s, only use an apostrophe, not another s.
Employee happiness is the boss' responsibility.
The behaviour of children is their parents' responsibility.

For irregular plural nouns, add an apostrophe + s at the end of the plural noun to form a possessive.
Children's backgrounds determine their success. NOT Childrens' backgrounds ...

Do not use an apostrophe to pluralise a regular noun.
The world contains many different culture's. The world contains many different cultures.

Using capital letters

Capital letters are always used at the beginning of a sentence and when referring to proper nouns (e.g. geographical places, names, institutions etc.)

The latter of these usages tends to cause the most difficulty. Where would you place capital letters in these sentences?

welcome to oxford university.

many people go to oxford to see the university there.

it is the government's responsibility.

it is the responsibility of the uk government.

Using capital letters

Capital letters are always used at the beginning of a sentence and when referring to proper nouns (e.g. geographical places, names, institutions etc.)

The latter of these usages tends to cause the most difficulty. Where would you place capital letters in these sentences?

Welcome to Oxford University.

Many people go to Oxford to see the university there.

It is the government's responsibility.

It is the responsibility of the UK Government.

Find the errors



The following paragraph contains **eleven** punctuation errors. Can you find them?

One of the main causes of the problem, is that cities are often overpopulated which can result in a lower quality of life. Many people move from the countryside to city's because of their abundance of Universities and job prospect's. As a consequence the level of pollution rises due to the higher frequency of cars on the road. to tackle this problem the Government should aim to stimulate the economy outside of cities. The result of this, would be a huge improvement in peoples quality of life.

Find the errors

The following paragraph contains **eleven** punctuation errors. Can you find them?

One of the main causes of the problem, is that cities are often overpopulated which can result in a lower quality of life. Many people move from the countryside to city's because of their abundance of Universities and job prospect's. As a consequence the level of pollution rises due to the higher frequency of cars on the road. to tackle this problem the Government should aim to stimulate the economy outside of cities. The result of this, would be a huge improvement in peoples quality of life.

Find the errors

The following paragraph contains **eleven** punctuation errors. Can you find them?

One of the main causes of the problem is that cities are often overpopulated, which can result in a lower quality of life. Many people move from the countryside to cities because of their abundance of universities and job prospects. As a consequence, the level of pollution rises due to the higher frequency of cars on the road. To tackle this problem, the government should aim to stimulate the economy outside of cities. The result of this would be a huge improvement in people's quality of life.

Lecture 26

Improving Range: Relative Clauses

Boosting your range of
grammar.



What are relative clauses?

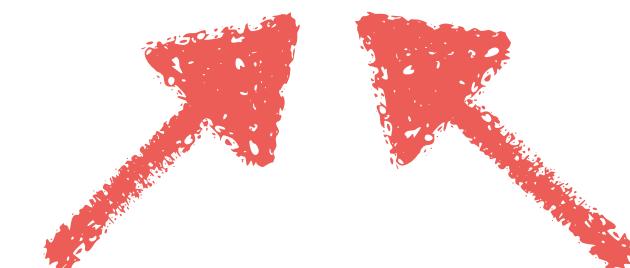
We use **relative clauses** to clarify who or what we are talking about (**defining**), or to give more information about something without writing another sentence (**non-defining**).

Defining relative clauses do not need a comma before the **relative pronoun**.

*The students **who** work hard are more likely to do well in their exams.*

Non-defining relative clauses do need a comma before the **relative pronoun**.

*The government will cut the price of train tickets, **which** will make transport more affordable for the public.*



Matching exercise

Can you match these sentences with their non-defining relative clauses?

1. School holidays in the UK are 6 weeks long, _____
a. which must be worn in most British schools
2. Sports coaching, _____, needs more government funding.
b. which gives students a chance to relax
3. Skype language lessons are becoming more common, _____
c. which are becoming bigger and bigger
4. School uniforms, _____, can improve behaviour.
d. which has been proven to reduce obesity
5. The government is cutting employment benefits, _____
e. which will make it harder for job searchers to make ends meet
6. Mobile phone screens, _____, are a big drain on battery life.
f. which may be due to their affordability

Matching exercise

Can you match these sentences with their non-defining relative clauses?

1. School holidays in the UK are 6 weeks long, **which gives students a chance to relax.** (b)
2. Sports coaching, **which has been proven to reduce obesity**, needs more government funding. (d)
3. Skype language lessons are becoming more common, **which may be due to their affordability.** (f)
4. School uniforms, **which must be worn in most British schools**, can improve behaviour. (a)
5. The government is cutting employment benefits, **which will make it harder for job searchers to make ends meet.** (e)
6. Mobile phone screens, **which are becoming bigger and bigger**, are a big drain on battery life. (c)

How to use relative clauses in IELTS

Relative clauses are especially useful in supporting sentences in body paragraphs. They can be used to give more information about an example or to further justify a supporting point.

Arguing for the subsidisation of sports facilities

*... For example, swimming pools, **which are available at most sports centres**, give people the opportunity to work on their cardiovascular health.*

Arguing against single-sex schools

*... This is because mixed schools offer realistic environments, **which means that their students will find it easier to integrate into adult life**.*

Lecture 25

Conditional Sentences

Essential grammar to use in
your IELTS Writing essay.



Why you should use conditionals

Conditionals are used to talk about certain situations and their effects.

There are two main reasons why you should use conditional sentences in your essay.

1. Conditional sentences will improve the range of your grammar, thus boosting your score in **Grammatical Range and Accuracy**.
2. Conditional sentences are an impressive way to develop and support your arguments in your body paragraphs, thus boosting your score in **Task Achievement**.

The four conditionals

In English, we have the **zero** conditional, the **first** conditional, the **second** conditional, and the **third** conditional*.

The **zero** conditional expresses what *always* happens when a particular action or event takes place.

If water reaches 100 degrees celsius, it boils. (**present simple + present simple**)

The **first** conditional expresses what *is likely* to happen as a result of an event.

If it rains tomorrow, we won't go camping. (**present simple + will (not) + inf**)

* We also have **mixed** conditionals, but due to their complexity we will not look into these today.

The four conditionals

The **second** conditional is used to talk about the results of impossible, imaginary or unlikely events in the present or future.

*If I won the lottery, I would be rich. (**past simple + would (not) + inf.**)*

The **third** conditional is used to talk about an imaginary result of a situation in the past which did not happen.

*If I hadn't eaten, I would have starved. (**past perfect + would (not) + have + past participle**)*

When to use conditional sentences

One of the best times to use conditional sentences is towards the end of a body paragraph, in the **alternative situation** sentence.

One of the main reasons education should receive more government funding is that it results in a stronger economy. This is because quality education produces a capable workforce, which is an essential component of a functional and successful society. For example, medical schools have given us competent doctors and nurses, helping us to recover from illness and return to work. (A.S) If the government had not invested in these educational institutes, people would not have recovered so quickly, leading to a fall in productivity and thus fewer tax contributions.

Two more examples

Arguing for pay rises for teachers

... If the government does not raise the salary for teachers, this will make them feel undervalued and thus diminish their sense of job satisfaction. This, in turn, will have a negative effect on teachers' students.

Arguing against investment in the arts

... If the government refused to invest any money in the arts, there would be much more money left over for public service funding, leading to improvements in education, healthcare and welfare.

Two more examples

Arguing for pay rises for teachers

... If the government does not raise the salary for teachers, this is likely to make them feel undervalued and thus decrease their sense of job satisfaction. This, in turn, may have a negative effect on teachers' students.

Arguing against investment in the arts

... If the government refused to invest any money in the arts, there would be much more money left over for public service funding, leading to improvements in education, healthcare and welfare.

Lecture 27

Checking the Essay

The fastest way to improve
your score in Writing Task 2.



The importance of review time

Back in the second section of the course, we discussed timing.

How much time for checking? **5 minutes.**

The difference between a Band 6 and a Band 7?

“However, each job have different characteristics and the factors which people make feel content are also different.”

The importance of review time

Back in the second section of the course, we discussed timing.

How much time for checking? **5 minutes.**

The difference between a Band 6 and a Band 7?

“However, each job have different characteristics and the factors which people make feel content are also different.”

*“However, each job has different characteristics, and the factors which **make people** feel content are also different.”*

What not to check when checking

- ‘Natural’ English
- Synonyms and paraphrasing (unless underlined)
- The structure of your response
- How strong your arguments are
- Tenses (mostly future)

The above elements usually take too long to find and fix. If you think you can fix them instantly, go ahead, but otherwise accept them as they are.

Spend this time checking **small, easily fixable** grammar/punctuation errors.

What to check when checking

- Article usage (a/an / the / ‘zero’ article)
- Singular/plural / countable/uncountable forms
- Prepositions
- Punctuation (apostrophes, missing/unnecessary commas, capital letters)
- Subject-verb agreements
- Spelling mistakes
- Word class / word formation issues
- Word order / missing word issues

The above elements can usually be **very quickly fixed**, meaning you can fix many things in a short amount of time. This is much more likely to boost your score than dwelling on long mistakes.

Checking exercise

Read the following body paragraph and see if you can find all the mistakes (every mistake is of the type listed on the previous slide).

On the one hand those who believe teenage conflict is damaging would argue that it can break the relationship between parents and children. This happen because during conflicts, hurtful words can be thrown about, which can cause tention, animosity and distrust. For example, if adolescents want get tattoos, most parents would not agree in this, and inevitable conflict might lead teenage to get the tattoos made their behind parents backs. In contrast, this lies might be avoided if parents is willing to have discussions with their childrens. As a result, family members will feel satisfied and a trust will be built.

Checking exercise

Read the following body paragraph and see if you can find all the mistakes (every mistake is of the type listed on the previous slide).

On the one hand those who believe teenage conflict is damaging would argue that it can break the relationship between parents and children. This happen because during conflicts, hurtful words can be thrown about, which can cause tention, animosity and distrust. For example, if adolescents want get tattoos, most parents would not agree in this, and inevitable conflict might lead teenage to get the tattoos made their behind parents backs. In contrast, this lies might be avoided if parents is willing to have discussions with their childrens. As a result, family members will feel satisfied and a trust will be built.

Firstly, notice what is **not** being checked...

Checking exercise

Read the following body paragraph and see if you can find all the mistakes (every mistake is of the type listed on the previous slide).

On the one hand those who believe teenage conflict is damaging would argue that it can break the relationship between parents and children. This happen because during conflicts, hurtful words can be thrown about, which can cause tention, animosity and distrust. For example, if adolescents want get tattoos, most parents would not agree in this, and inevitable conflict might lead teenage to get the tattoos made their behind parents backs. In contrast, this lies might be avoided if parents is willing to have discussions with their childrens. As a result, family members will feel satisfied and a trust will be built.

Now notice what **is** being checked ... and see if you have the same!

Checking exercise

Read the following body paragraph and see if you can find all the mistakes (every mistake is of the type listed on the previous slide).

On the one hand, those who believe teenage conflict is damaging would argue that it can break the relationship between parents and children. This happens because during **conflict**s, hurtful words can be thrown about, which can cause tension, animosity and distrust. For example, if adolescents want **to** get tattoos, most parents would not agree **with** this, and **the** inevitable conflict might lead teenagers to get the tattoos made **behind their** parents' backs. In contrast, **these** lies might be avoided if parents **are** willing to have discussions with their **children**s. As a result, family members will feel satisfied and a **trust** will be built.

Now notice what **is** being checked ... and see if you have the same!

Some people view teenage conflict with their parents as a necessary part of growing up, whilst others see it as something negative which should be avoided.

Discuss both views and give your own opinion.

There is no doubt that adolescence can be a difficult period for both youngsters and their parents. Although some people believe that conflict at this time does more harm than good, I would argue that it is an essential stage of teenagers' development.

On the one hand, those who believe teenage conflict is harmful might argue that it can damage relationships between parents and their children. This is because such disputes can create tension in the family. For example, it is quite common for young people to begin smoking at their age to impress their peers, but the resulting confrontations with parents can lead to difficulties with communication afterwards. In contrast, if there is no conflict between parents and teenagers, there will be a much greater sense of happiness among family members.

On the other hand, my view is that this conflict is important because it can help teenagers to mature. The reason for this is that by having disagreements adolescents can form and develop their own opinions. For instance, a child may grow up in a family of meat-eaters but feel very strongly about not eating meat. If this child does not voice their opinion, they will be going against their principles. However, if they are willing to engage in conflict with their parents, their conscience will be much clearer despite the agony of the argument.

In conclusion, despite the danger of damaging relationships which teenage conflict can create, it is my firm belief that this time of friction is a vital step on the path to teenagers becoming mature and independently-minded adults.

266 words

Lecture 29

Answering from Start to Finish

A full demonstration of a
model Task 2 answer



Secret #1: Finish the essay (in style)

One of the worst things you can do is not finish the essay.

If 35 minutes have passed and you have still not reached the conclusion, finish that sentence and move to the conclusion.

It may not be *complete*, but at least it will be *completed*.

Even if your body paragraph is not the strongest, Quick Conclusions will show you how you leave the examiner with a strong impression.



Secret #2: Underline things

Underlining can help you to both save time and respond with accuracy in the essay.



- Underline key words in the task
- Underline repeated words
- Underline uncertain grammar
- Underline uncertain spelling

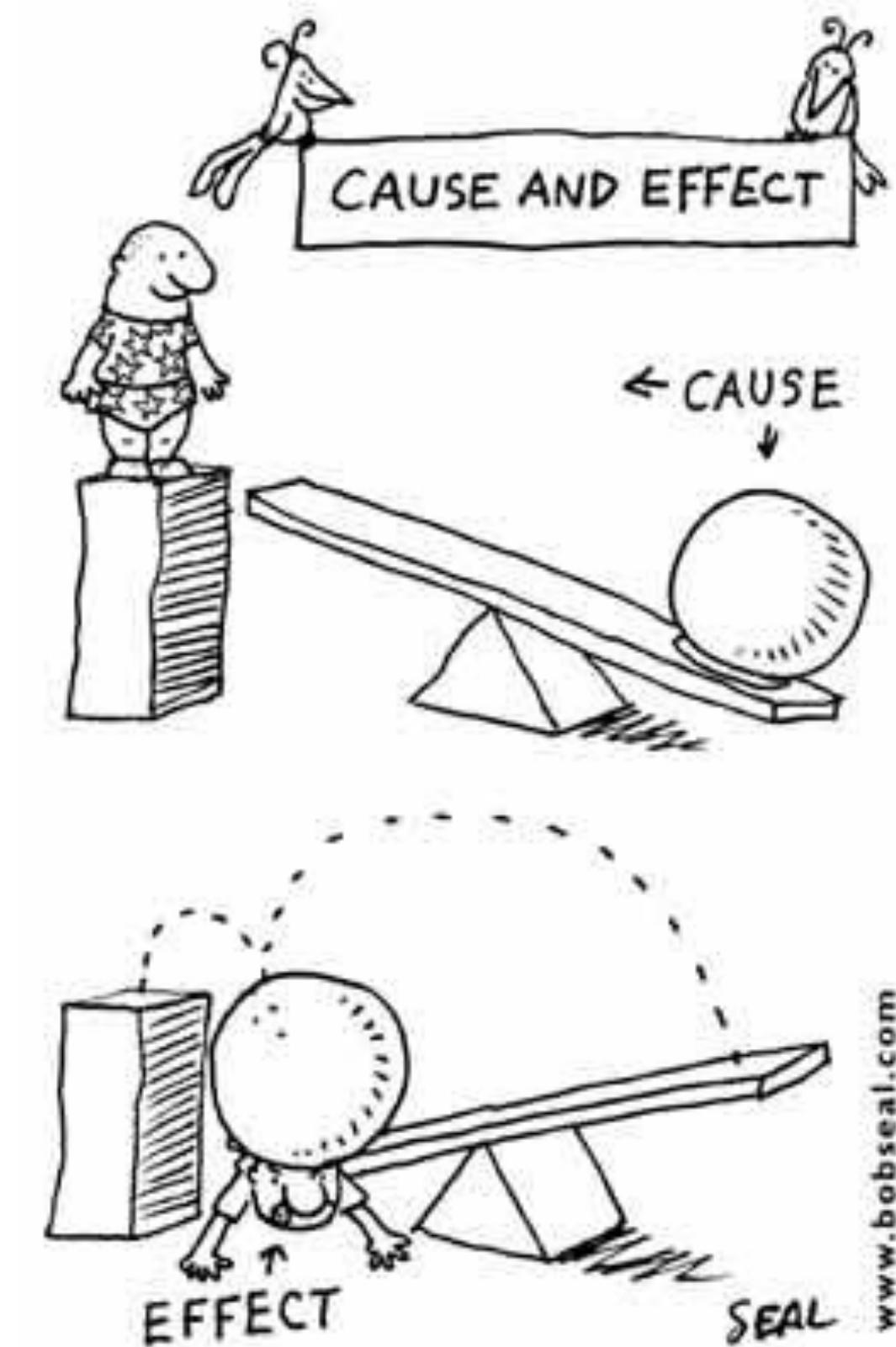
Underline lightly in pencil and return if you have time.

Secret #3: Remember conditionals

In Section 6, we looked at how to use conditionals.

If used accurately, these grammatical structures are like superpowers for your essay. Why?

- They expand your range of complex grammatical constructions
- They extend the development of your ideas appropriately
- They improve the coherence and cohesion of your ideas
- They give you an easy way to support and strengthen your ideas without much original thought



Secret #4: Plan effectively



A good plan is imperative in Writing Task 2. Not only will it organise your thoughts coherently (C&C), but it will also help save you time (TA).

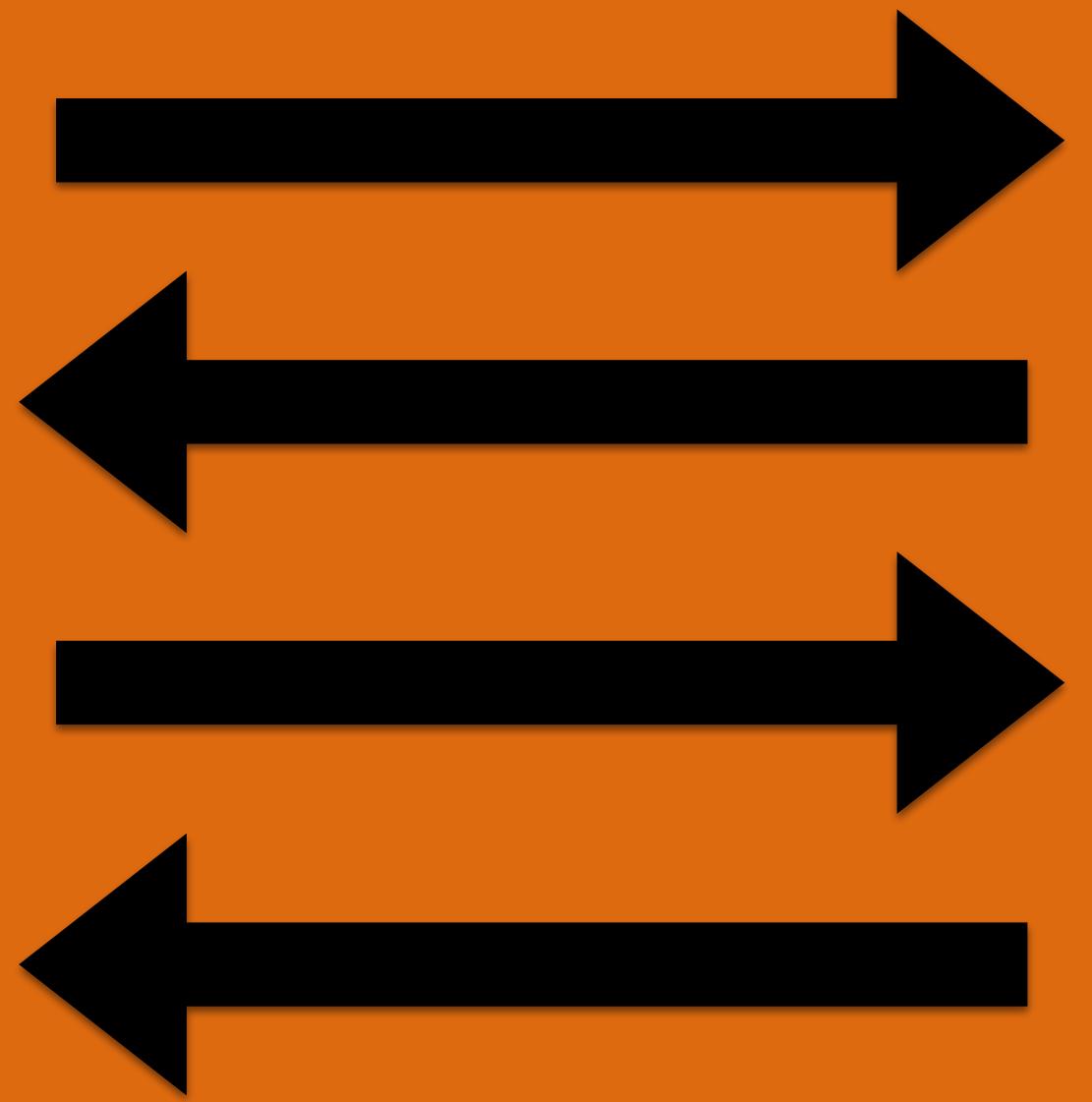
Check out the lecture in Section 2 on planning and the lecture in Section 3 on Building Body Paragraphs.

Practice this planning method repeatedly until you can consistently write plans in 5 minutes or less.

Lecture 30

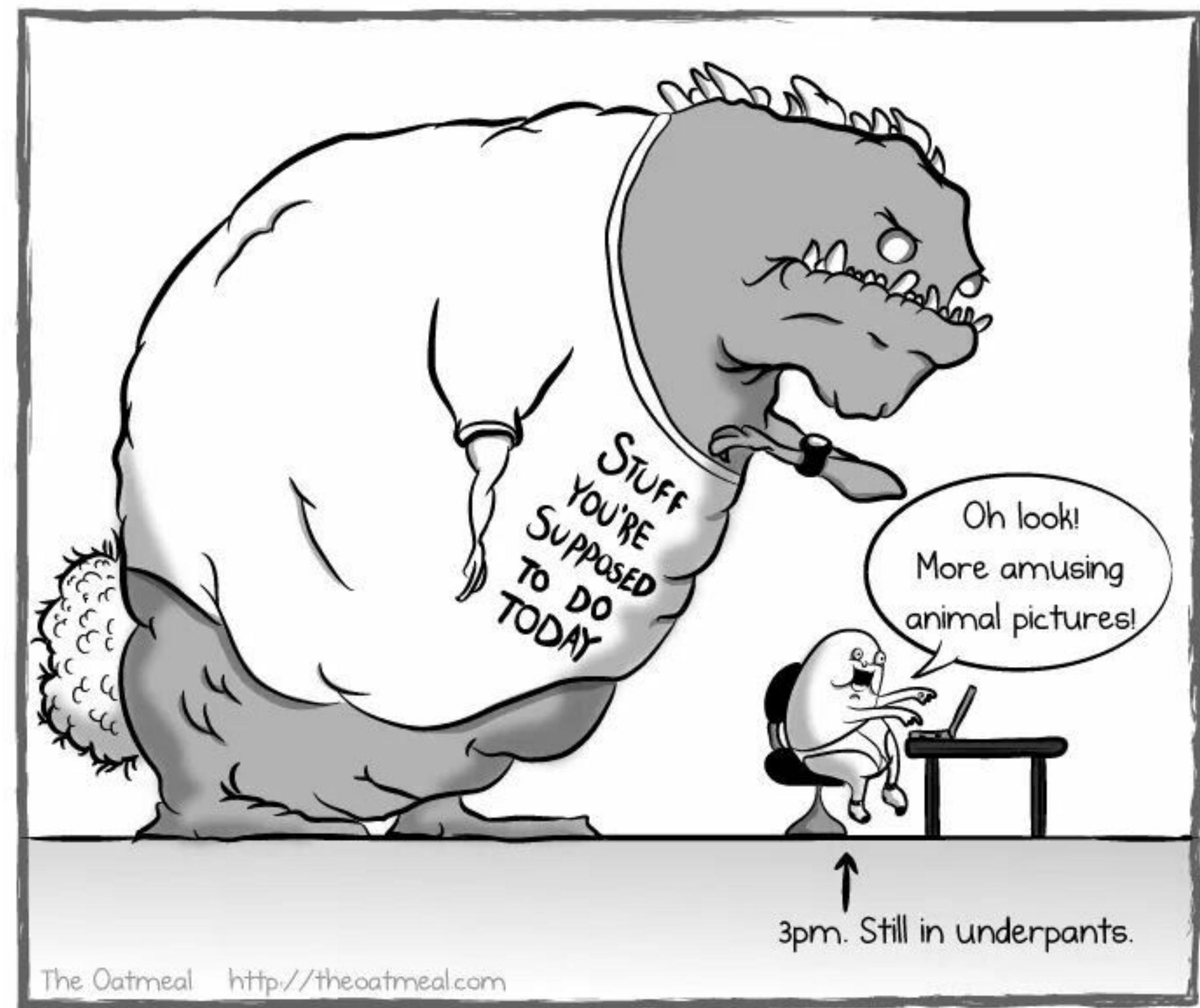
How to Practice Effectively

How to make the most of
your study time.



Do not:

- Study with distractions
- Be too self-critical
- Wait for miracles to happen
- Only study alone (if possible)
- Forget timing
- Ignore your health/sleep
- Overwork yourself



Do:

- Shut down distractions (Freedom)
- Practice in different ways
- Study alone and with a friend
- Reward yourself
- Take breaks
- Read, read, read
- Get guidance



Do:

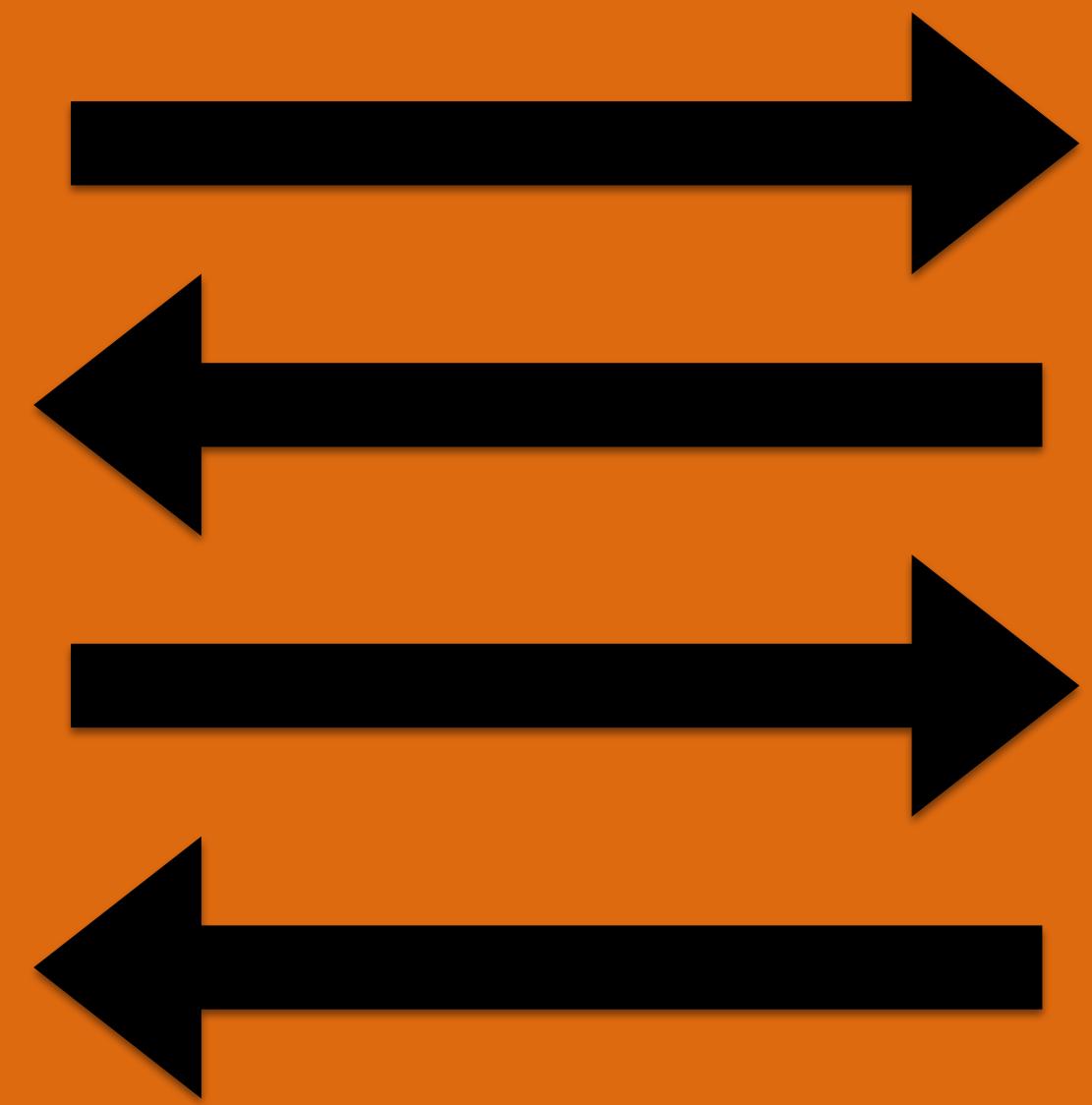
- Shut down distractions (Freedom)
- Practice in different ways
- Study alone and with a friend
- Reward yourself
- Take breaks
- Read, read, read
- Get guidance



Lecture 31

Getting Guidance

How to make sure you're
heading in the right direction.



Guidance Options

There are a number of options for those who wish to get guidance in their exam preparation.

- Language exchange sites
- Exam forums
- Exam preparation sites
- Native speakers
- Professional IELTS Tutors

Professional IELTS Tutors

For those who wish to have the best preparation possible, it is my firm belief that a professional tutor is the way to go.

There are a number of IELTS teachers online at sites like www.italki.com, www.cafetalk.com, www.testedteachers.com and more.

However, there are not many sites which **only** offer **IELTS** lessons. Not General English, not Business English, not TOEFL. Just IELTS.

www.theieltsteacher.com is one such site. Everything you have learnt about in this course has come from my experience **exclusively** teaching IELTS over the last few years.

The IELTS Teacher - Lessons

Teachers at The IELTS Teacher are happy to prepare you for each component of the exam, whether Listening, Reading, Writing or Speaking.

Each teacher uses a different method, but all have a **wealth of experience** both teaching and developing materials for IELTS preparation courses.

My Writing lessons are split into two types: *Theory* and *Guided Practice*.

Theory lessons are designed to teach you how to write for IELTS.

Guided Practice lessons give you the opportunity to **put the theory lessons into practice**, in real-time, using a programme called Screenhero.

The IELTS Teacher - Writing Corrections

The IELTS Teacher also offers a Writing Correction service.

Unlike many ‘corrections’ online, corrections with The IELTS Teacher are focused on IELTS, easy to understand, and **extremely comprehensive**.

Here are just a couple of the many comments we have received:

“Hi Matt, I wanted to thank you for helping me improve my writing skills: I gave the test and got an overall mark of 8.0, with 7.5 in Writing! That is more than I needed for applying for the masters degree I want, so I am super happy about it!” - *Francisca, Chile*

“Thank you for the correction Matt. I’m still being surprised by the thoroughness of your work every time I open a newly received correction. It’s hard to imagine something more useful than that!” - *Nikolay, Russia*

Discounts for Udemy Students!

As a thank you for your attention during this course, I would like to offer each and every one of you a **discount** on Writing Corrections, so that you can put all of the advice here into practice.

For 10% off Writing Corrections (any package), please enter:

UDEMYIELTS10

into the ‘Coupon code’ box at the checkout.

I look forward to reading all of your submissions!

Resources

- www.theieltsteacher.com
- www.theieltsteacher.com/choose-your-teacher
- www.theieltsteacher.com/writing-corrections
- www.theieltsteacher.com/video-demonstrations
- www.theieltsteacher.com/testimonials
- www.facebook.com/theieltsteacher

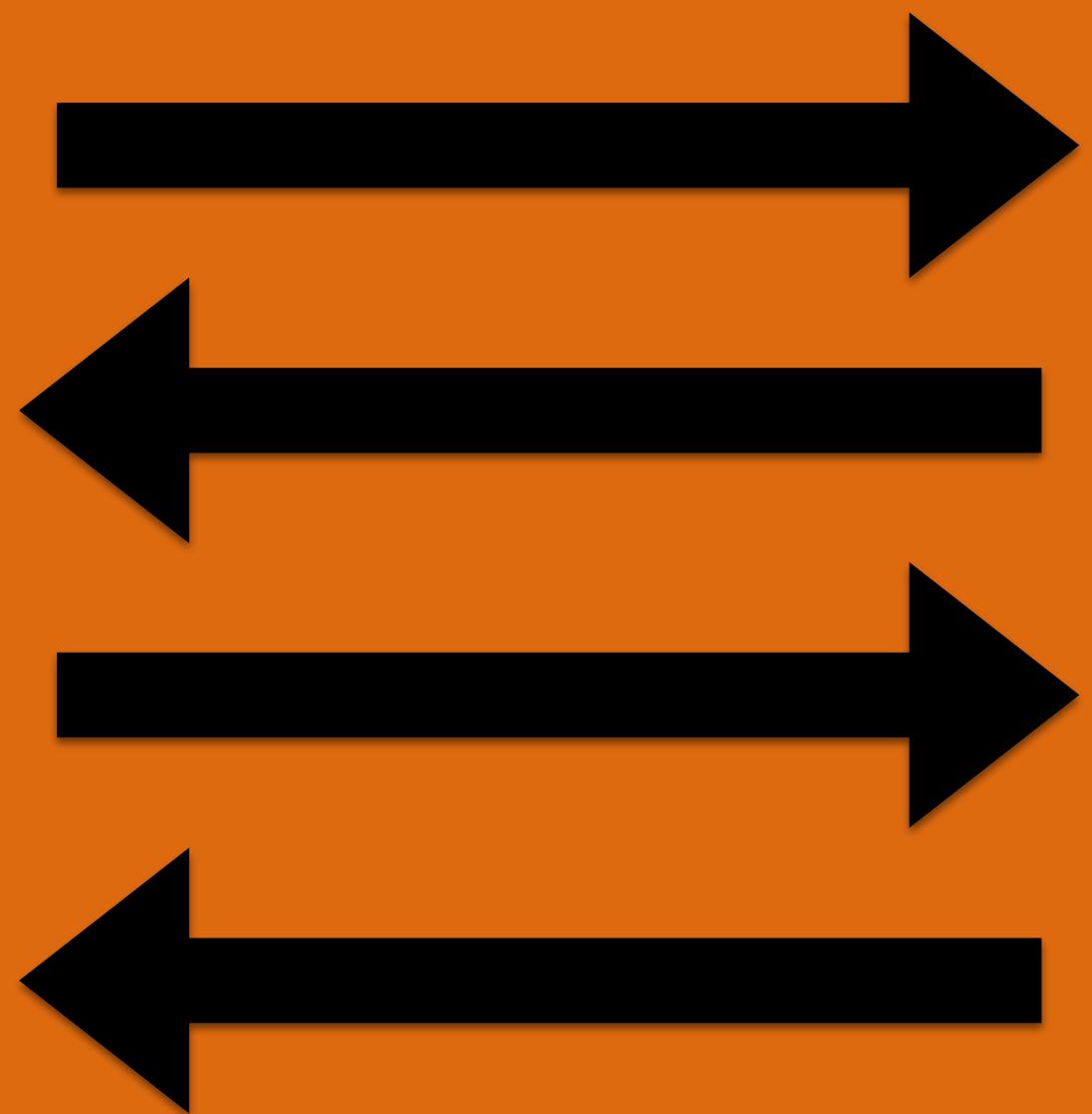


The IELTS Teacher

Lecture 32

Good Luck!

What to do once you have finished
Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 2



Before your exam

It's very important that you feel fresh and focused during the exam. Therefore, be careful with your routine leading up to the exam date.

- Watch what you eat
- Get plenty of rest
- Cold shower therapy (CST)
- Exercise
- Read, read, read
- Have fun!

Nerves

Nervousness is a big factor to consider for many candidates. If you are someone who gets very nervous before and during exams, these tips might help a little.

- Meditation
- Deep breaths
- Focus on one thing at a time
- Remember, there's always next time!

Good Luck

Congratulations! You have completed *Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 2*. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to the course.

I would like to take this final moment to say a big **GOOD LUCK** to each and every one of you.

Did you find this course helpful? Leave a review!

Do you have any constructive feedback? Please email me to let me know!

I'd love to hear about your exam experiences/scores, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with the results of your exam.

