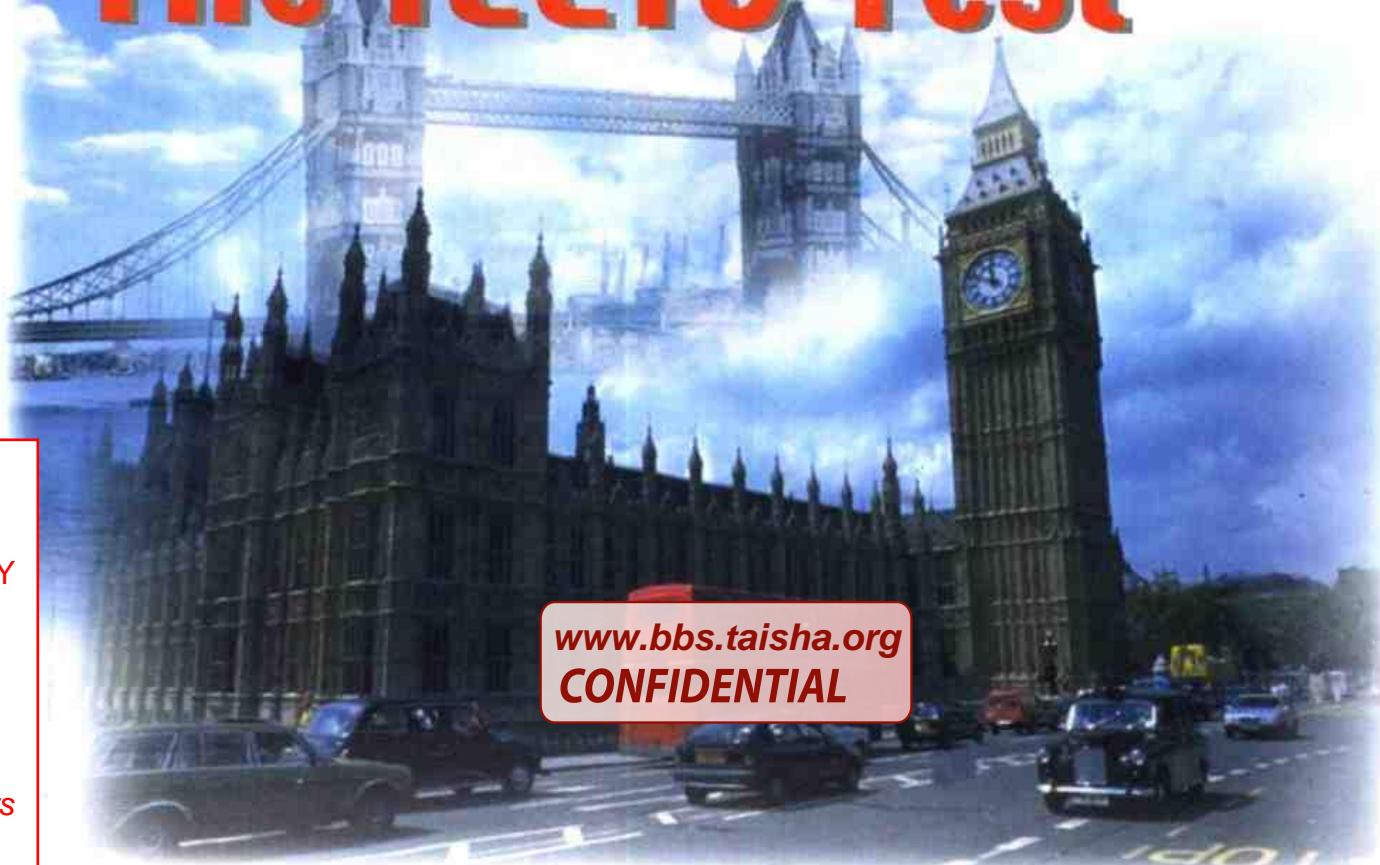


雅思考试

Mark Morgan

写作

Writing Skills For The IELTS Test



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TSers

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Contents (目录)

Chapter One Introduction To The Writing Test

第一章 写作考试简介

Introduction To The Writing Test (写作考试简介)	2
Main Problems Faced By Chinese Candidates (中国考生面临的问题)	6
Frequently Asked Questions (常见的疑问)	8
Practice Tests (模拟试题)	11

Chapter Two General Training Test Task One: Letter Writing

第二章 普通培训类考试第一部分：书信写作

Introduction To Letter Writing	14
书信写作简介	14
An IELTS Letter Compared To A Real Letter	17
比较雅思书信与一般书信	17

Unit 1 Task Fulfillment

第一单元 完成要求	20
Analysing The Question (分析题目)	20
Developing Your Ideas (阐释你的观点)	23
Organising The Information (组织信息)	29
Identifying Relevant Information (理出相关信息)	32

Unit 2 Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

第二单元 导语和结尾写作	37
How To Write The Introduction And Conclusion (怎样写导语与结尾) ..	37
Formal Impersonal Letters (正式、非私人书信)	40
Formal Personal Letters (正式、私人书信)	46
Informal Letters (非正式书信)	50
Example Introduction And Conclusion (导语与结尾范文)	54

Unit 3 Types Of Letters

第三单元 书信的类型	55
Writing A Letter Of Complaint (抱怨书信写作)	55
Grammar & Language Focus (语法和语言要点)	58
Writing A Letter Of Suggestion (建议书信写作)	60
Grammar & Language Focus (语法和语言要点)	65
Writing A Letter Of Application (求职/求学申请书信写作)	67
Grammar & Language Focus (语法和语言要点)	73

Writing A Letter Asking For Information (询问书信写作)	75
Grammar & Language Focus (语法和语言要点)	80
Writing A Letter To A Friend (给朋友的书信写作)	82
Grammar & Language Focus (语法和语言要点)	86
Unit 4 Coherence And Cohesion In Letter Writing	
第四单元 书信写作中的统一性和连贯性	88
Sentence Connector Use In Letter Writing (书信写作中的关联词)	88
Unit 5 Writing A Full Letter	
第五单元 写一封完整的书信	93
Student Letter Analysis (学生书信分析)	93
Example Letter (书信范文)	98
Unit 6 Practice Tests	
第六单元 模拟试题	99
Chapter Three Academic Test Task One: Report Writing	
第三章 学术类考试的第一部分：报告写作	
Introduction To Academic Test One: Report Writing 学术类考试的第一部分简介：报告写作	104
Unit 1 Task Fulfillment	
第一单元 完成要求	107
Analysing The Data (分析数据)	107
Analysing The Data In A Table (分析表格中的数据)	113
Describing The Data (描述数据)	115
Developing Your Ideas (阐释你的观点)	120
Writing The Main Body Of The Report (报告主体部分写作)	126
How To Compare And Contrast The Data (怎样对比数据)	126
Unit 2 Writing The Introduction And Conclusion	
第二单元 导语与结尾写作	132
Writing The Introduction (导语写作)	134
Writing The Conclusion (结尾写作)	135
Example Introduction And Conclusion (导语与结尾范文)	141
Unit 3 Coherence And Cohesion In Report Writing	
第三单元 报告写作中的统一性和连贯性	142
Sentence Connector Use In Report Writing (报告写作中的关联词)	142

Unit 4 Writing A Full Report	
第四单元 写一篇完整的报告	147
Student Report Analysis (学生报告分析)	147
Example Report (报告范文)	158
Unit 5 Practice Tests	
第五单元 模拟试题	159
Chapter Four General Training & Academic Test Task Two: Essay Writing	
第四章 普通培训类考试和学术类考试的第二部分：小论文写作	
Introduction To Essay Writing (General Training & Academic)	
小论文写作简介 (普通培训类和学术类)	164
Unit 1 Arguments, Ideas And Evidence (General Training & Academic)	
第一单元 讨论、论点和论据 (普通培训类和学术类)	166
Analysing The Question (分析题目)	166
Finding The Issues (理出观点)	169
Coming Up With Ideas: Brainstorming (列出尽可能多的观点)	171
Organising Your Ideas (组织观点)	177
Writing An Essay Plan (写出论文大纲)	181
Writing A Thesis Statement (写出论文的中心思想)	187
Writing A Good Paragraph (如何写好段落)	190
Writing Topic Sentences (写主题句)	194
Writing Supporting Sentences (写展开句)	197
Unit 2 Writing General Training Essays	
第二单元 普通培训类小论文写作	201
Writing The Body Part (写主体部分)	201
Writing The Introduction And Conclusion (写导语和结尾)	205
Unit 3 Writing Academic Essays	
第三单元 学术类小论文写作	210
Writing The Body Part (写主体部分)	210
Writing The Introduction And Conclusion (写导语和结尾)	214
Unit 4 Writing A Full Essay	
第四单元 写一篇完整的小论文	220
Student Essay Analysis (分析学生论文)	220

Unit 5: Practice Tests	
第五单元 模拟试题	227
General Training Test (普通培训类试题)	227
Academic Test (学术类试题)	229
Chapter 5 Communicative Quality	
第五章 交流技巧	
Introduction To Communicative Quality (交流技巧简介)	232
Unit 1 Using Sentence Connectors	
第一单元 运用关联词	234
Introducing Contrasting Information (表示对比的关联词)	235
Emphasising Information (表示强调的关联词)	237
Introducing A Possible Result Or Conclusion (表示结果的关联词)	240
Writing A List: The Rule Of Three (表示举例的关联词)	242
Adding Information To A Sentence (表示附加的关联词)	244
Expressing A Time (表示时间的关联词)	246
Unit 2 Grammar Focus	
第二单元 词汇要点解析	248
Expressing The Past (过去时)	248
Expressing The Present (现在时)	250
Expressing The Future: Speculating (将来时)	253
Making Generalisations: Use Of 'The' (类指'The'的使用)	255
Using Pronouns (代词的使用)	257
Appendix Answer Key To Exercises	
附录 习题答案	258

Chapter One

Introduction To The Writing Test

第一章

雅思写作简介

Introduction To The Writing Test

写作考试简介

Notes

The writing part of the IELTS is a *one-hour* test consisting of two tasks. Task one and task two. Each task is awarded a band score, and the two separate band scores are converted into a final, or overall band score for the writing part.

雅思的写作考试由两部分组成，第一部分和第二部分。要求在一个小时内完成。每部分一个分数，由这两个分数再得出最后的写作分数。

You are recommended to spend 20 minutes on task one and 40 minutes on task two. However, it is *your* responsibility to manage your own time. You may, if you wish, attempt task two *before* task one: they don't have to be completed in chronological order. It is important to bear in mind, however, that task two is worth more marks than task one. For example, if you were awarded a band 6 for task one, and a band 7 for task two, your overall score for the writing would be a band 7. However, if you were awarded a band 7 for task one, and a band 6 for task two, then your overall score would be 6. Therefore, if you spend too much time on task one, thus not allowing yourself time to complete task two adequately, your overall band score may be affected.¹

考卷上建议你用 20 分钟做第一部分，40 分钟做第二部分。不过，到底如何分配时间由你自己决定。如果你愿意，可以先做第二部分。没有规定要求你一定要先做第一部分，再做第二部分。不过，有一点你得记住，第二部分比第一部分分数多。比如说，如果你在第一部分得了 6 分，第二部分得了 7 分，那么你最后的得分是 7 分。但是，如果你在第二部分得了 7 分，第一部分得了 6 分，那么你最后的得分是 6 分。因此，如果你在第一部分花太多时间，第二部分来不及完成，你的成绩可能会受影响。

You must use a pencil for the writing test. You cannot use a pen. You can use the question paper to make notes if you wish, but test papers *cannot* be taken out of the room. You are *not* allowed to use a dictionary in the test.

考试时你只能用铅笔，不能用钢笔。如果你愿意，你可以在考卷上打草稿，但是考卷不能带出考场。同时不准使用字典。

Test Tip

Towards the end of the writing test you are told when you have 30 minutes left. And again when you have 15 minutes left. Therefore, if you do task two first, you can think about beginning task one when you are given the 30-minute warning. This way you will be able to spend the first 40 minutes thinking about your essay, and *not* how much time you have left.

¹ Source: IELTS Handbook October 2000. UCLES

提示:

写作考试临近结束时，考官会告诉你还剩下 30 分钟。在剩下 15 分钟时，考官会再次提醒你。因此，如果你先做第二部分，在剩下 30 分钟的时候，你应该考虑开始做第一部分了。这样的话，你可以把开始的 40 分钟花在论文上，而不用老想着还剩下多长时间。

General Training Test (普通培训类)

Task One (第一部分)

In the General Training test, task one is to write a letter. This may be an informal letter to a friend or a formal letter requesting information or making a formal complaint, for instance. You therefore need to be familiar with different writing styles. The word length is restricted to 150 words. If you write too few words, it will affect your band score. To leave sufficient time for task two, it is therefore important that you practice writing task one questions in 20 minutes.

在普通培训类写作考试中，第一部分是写一封书信。可能是一封很随意的写给朋友的便笺，或是一封正式的信函，比如询问有关事宜或抱怨。因此你要熟悉不同的写作风格。字数在 150 字左右。写得太少可能会影响分数。为了给第二部分腾出足够的时间，你在平时训练中就要注意在 20 分钟内完成第一部分。

Task Two (第二部分)

Task two is to write a 250-word essay on a topic of general interest. Essays are assessed according to the criteria outlined in table 1. You are expected to present an opinion or point of view in a style appropriate for the purpose. Therefore, you are expected to *support and evaluate* your ideas. You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

第二部分要求写一篇一般题材、250 字左右的小论文。评分标准如表 1 中所示。你要以恰当的方式提出看法或观点，并支持和阐释自己的观点。规定时间为 40 分钟。

Academic Test (学术类考试)

Task One (第一部分)

Task one is to write a report. You are required to describe information from a given set of data. The data are presented as either a chart or table of figures, and you have to write a report for a university lecturer. To leave sufficient time for task two, it is therefore important that you practice writing task one questions in 20 minutes.

第一部分要求写一个报告。要求你对给定的一组数据加以描绘。数据以图表或表格的形式出现。而你得写出一篇可供大学老师用的报告。为了给第二部分腾出足够的时间，你在平时训练中就要注意在 20 分钟内完成第一部分。

Task Two (第二部分)

Task two is to write a 250-word essay on a topic of general interest. However, you should aim for a more *academic style* of writing in that you should present *an*

argument to evaluate and support your opinions. This may involve comparing and contrasting different points of view. You should adopt a more critical approach than in the General Training test, and aim for a more balanced essay. You are expected to write in a style appropriate for a college lecturer. The essay titles are intended to be of general interest to university students. You should spend about 40 minutes on this task.

第二部分要求就一般题材写一篇 250 字左右的小论文。但是你需要采用更学术化的文体，在阐释和支持自己的观点的同时必须要有讨论。这可能包括将不同观点进行比较和对比。你要以一种比普通培训类考试评判性更强的方式，使写出的文章更加面面俱到，要适合大学老师的风格。小论文的标题是大学生所普遍感兴趣的。规定时间为 40 分钟。

The Scoring System (记分方式)

You are given a band score for each of the writing tasks on a scale of 1 to 9. Your overall band score for the writing part is then calculated as a percentage of both the scores. Task 2, however, is worth more marks than task one.

写作的分值从 1 分到 9 分。两部分在总分中各占一个百分比。不过，最后的分数更侧重于第二部分。

Band Score

- 
- 9 Expert user of written English
 - 8 The writing is well-organized with few mistakes and ideas are fully explained.
 - 7 The reader can understand the writing. It is well-organised with few mistakes.
 - 6 The reader can understand the writing without too much difficulty.
 - 5 The writing can be understood but the message is not very clear.
 - 4 The reader has difficulty understanding the writing.
 - 3 The writing is hard to understand and contains a lot of mistakes.
 - 2 The writing shows almost no ability to communicate.
 - 1 The writing contains one or two simple sentences.
 - 0 The candidate is absent or doesn't answer the question at all.

Fig. 1: An overview of the band scores

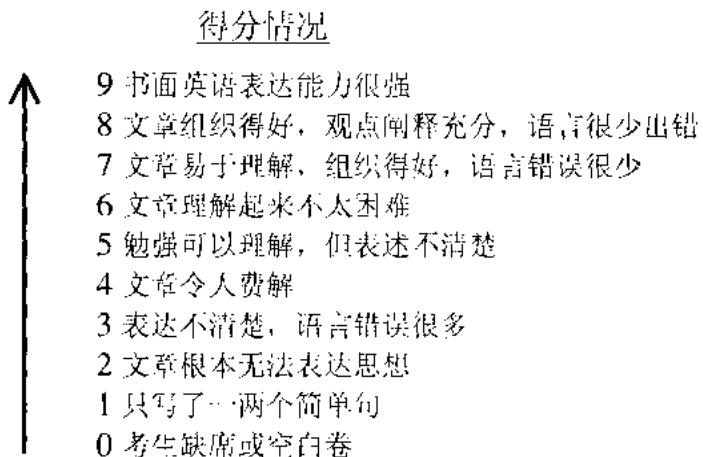


图1：分值一览表

Marking Criteria (评分依据的三个方面)

The marking criteria are the same for both the General Training *and* Academic tests.
普通培训类和学术类评分标准相同。

Task One (20 minutes)	Task Two (40 minutes)
Task fulfillment	Arguments, ideas and evidence
Coherence and cohesion	Communicative quality
Vocabulary and sentence structure	Vocabulary and sentence structure

Table 1: showing the marking criteria for the writing test²

第一部分 (20分钟)	第二部分 (40分钟)
完成要求	讨论、论点和论据
统一性和连贯性	交流技巧
词汇和句型	词汇和句型

表1：写作考试评分依据的三个方面

² Source: IELTS Handbook. UCLES, 2000

Main Problems Faced By Chinese Candidates

中国考生面临的问题

Many people fail to do as well as they are able to do in the writing part of the IELTS test because they don't answer the question in a way they are supposed to.
很多考生得不到理想的写作成绩，因为他们没有按要求答题。

Problems Candidates Tend To Make (考生易犯的错误)

<i>General Training: Task 1</i>	Candidates often don't fully do what they are supposed to do. They fail to develop their ideas.
<i>Task 2</i>	Candidates often fail to answer the question. Instead it is usual for candidates to simply list their opinions in order. Firstly, secondly, thirdly etc. instead of discussing their ideas.
普通培训类：第一部分	考生答题不完全，没有充分阐释观点。
第二部分	答题不正确，常见的错误是只列出观点，第一、第二、第三等等，没有对观点进一步讨论。
<i>Academic:</i>	
<i>Task 1</i>	Candidates often simply list the data given, and fail to compare the data, looking for trends. They often give opinions, which are not required.
<i>Task 2</i>	Candidates often fail to answer the question. Instead it is usual for candidates to simply list their opinions in order. Firstly, secondly, thirdly etc. instead of presenting an argument.
学术类：第一部分	考生常犯的错误是通常只列出给定的数据，而没有将数据进行比较，找出所反映出的趋势。考生往往发表自己的观点，有画蛇添足之嫌，因为这一点考卷没有要求。
第二部分	答题不正确，常见的错误是只列出观点，第一、第二、第三等等，没有对观点进一步论证。

Differences In Writing Styles (写作风格不同)

This may, in part, arise from the differences in writing styles between Chinese and English. In Chinese, it is usual to give evidence to support your opinion, and state your point of view in the conclusion. When writing in English, however, you should present your opinion first in the introduction. Explain your opinion in the main body, by presenting arguments both for and against, and *re-state* your opinion in the conclusion. However, many candidates simply list their ideas without explaining the

ideas in detail, or giving the opposite side of the argument. *This makes the essay very simple.* And even if you make very few mistakes, a simple essay cannot get a very high band score because *arguments, ideas and evidence and communicative quality* is poor.

写论文时，中国的考生要特别注意中文和英文写作风格之间的不同。中文中，一般先论证再给出观点，这同英文正好相反。在英文中，你应该在引文中先提出观点，在正文中从正反两面进行论证，而在结论中重申自己的观点。很多考生只是简单地列出论点而没有详细解释这些论点或给出反面的观点。这样做的结果是论文显得单薄无力。这样的论文，即使犯的语言错误很少，也不会得高分。因为讨论、论点和论据不充分，交流技巧贫乏。

Frequently Asked Questions 常见的疑问

“What if I don’t know anything about the topic of the essay?”

No one is testing your knowledge. Questions are selected so that they are general enough for anyone to answer. You are asked to give your opinions about the topic and not to show how much you know about the subject. Indeed, your examiner is only interested in how well you can communicate your ideas in writing and may know less about the topic than you do!

“如果我对论文的话题一无所知怎么办？”

考试不是为了检测你的知识面。间的问题都很普通，任何人都能回答。要求你对某一话题发表观点，并不是考你对这一话题了解多少。事实上，考官看重的是你的书面表达能力，对有些话题可能还没有你了解得多。

“What if I write too little?”

You must try to keep to the recommended word length. If your letter, report or essay is too short you will be penalised, and it will affect your band score.

“如果我写得太少怎么办？”

你最好按要求的字数写。如果你的信、报告或论文太短，对你将不利，这会影响你的成绩。

“What if I run out of ideas and cannot write enough words?”

Provided you spend a few minutes thinking about the topic, and explain your ideas well, this won’t be a problem. 250 words is a very short essay.

“如果我把想得到的意见都写完了，字数还凑不够，怎么办？”

如果你在下笔之前思考上几分钟，好好阐明自己的观点，250字的小论文应该不成问题。

“Can I do task two before task one?”

Yes.

“我可以先做第二部分吗？”

可以。

“When writing a letter, do I need to include an address?”

No. If you do you will lose valuable time because your examiner will not consider it as part of task and won’t even read it!

“写书信时我有必要写地址吗？”

没必要。不要求写地址，这样只会浪费你宝贵的时间，而你的考官看都不会看上一眼。

"If I use simple English, and don't make any mistakes, will this affect my band score?"

Yes, it will. If you use simple English, even if you don't make mistakes, you cannot get a very high band score.

“如果我用简单的英语，但不犯错误，这会影响我的分数吗？”
会的。如果你使用简单的英语，即使不犯错误，你也不会得到高分。

"If I make lots of mistakes, will it affect my band score?"

It will, of course, affect your band score. But always remember that explaining and expressing your ideas well is more important than not making mistakes. IELTS is a test of how well you can use English. It is *not* a grammar and vocabulary test.

“如果我出了很多错误，这会影响我的分数吗？”
这当然会影响你的分数。不过始终记住阐释和表达清楚你的观点比少犯错误更重要。雅思考的是你运用语言的能力，而不是考你的语法和词汇。

"Do I have to use a pencil, or can I use a pen?"

You must use a pencil in every part of the test. This includes the writing part.

“我一定得用铅笔吗，我可以使用钢笔吗？”
你必须用铅笔，所有的雅思考试都必须用铅笔，写作也不例外。

"Will my handwriting affect my band score?"

You are not being examined on how neat your handwriting is. However, do try to keep your writing as neat as possible otherwise it may be difficult for the examiner to understand what you are saying.

“我的笔迹会影响我的分数吗？”
考官不会因为你字写得好坏来给你加分或减分。不过，你最好写得清楚一点，否则会妨碍考官对你的文章的理解。

"Can I use a dictionary?"

No.

“我可以用字典吗？”
不可以。

"Can I use scrap paper to make notes?"

No. If you do someone will take it off you. You can, however, use the question sheet to make notes.

“我可以带纸进去打草稿吗？”
不可以。如果你这样做了，你的草稿纸会被没收。不过，你可以用答题卷打草稿。

"How objective is the marking for the writing part?"

The writing is marked as objectively as it can be. Examiners use a strict marking guide when assessing your essays, letters and reports. In addition, a second examiner may also give their opinion to make sure all examiners are marking to the same standards.

"写作考试评分客观吗?"

写作考试评分做到了尽可能的客观。在评判你的论文时，考官有一个严格的评分标准。而且，会有另外一个考官检测一下评分是否公正，是否依照标准做了。

Test Tip

You must stop writing when you are told to do so. If you do not one of the examiners or British Council staff in the test room will make a note of your candidate number and it will affect your band score.

提示:

考试结束考官叫你停笔时，你一定要照办。否则，考官或英国领事馆的官员会记下你的准考证号，这会影响你的成绩。

How To Use This Book (如何使用本书)

Notes

This book covers both the general test and the academic test. Therefore, if you intend taking the:

这本书包含普通培训类和学术类考试。

General Test

- Work through units 1 to 5 in Chapter two
- Units 1, 2, 5 and 6 in Chapter four
- Chapter 5

如果你参加普通培训类考试，你需要阅读：

第二章的第一单元到第五单元

第四章的第一、第二、第五和第六单元

第五章

Academic Test

- Work through units 1 to 4 in Chapter three
- Units 1, 3, 5 and 6 in Chapter four
- Chapter 5

如果你参加学术类考试，你需要阅读：

第三章的第一单元到第四单元

第四章的第一、第三、第五和第六单元

第五章

Practice Tests

模拟试题

General Test

Writing Task 1

You should spend no more than 20 minutes on this task.

You have recently moved to a new apartment or house. Unfortunately, the bus service in the area is very poor.

Write a letter to your local bus company. Explain the problem, say what you think is good about the service and suggest how it could be improved.

You should write at least 150 words.

Writing Task 2

You should spend no more than 40 minutes on this task.

Modern science has led to the development of genetically modified food, such as rice and vegetables that can be grown in many different types of climates. Some people argue, however, that the food may not be safe to eat, and should not be sold.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.

You should write at least 250 words.

Academic Test

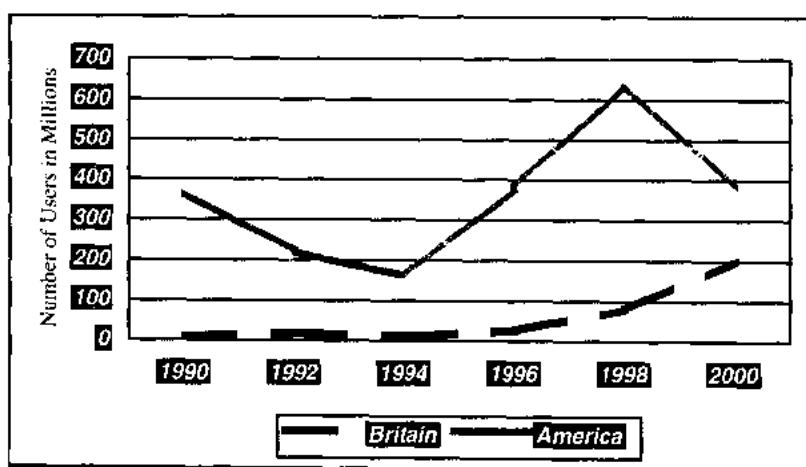
Writing Task 1

You should spend no more than 20 minutes on this task.

The table below shows the number of mobile phone users in two countries, America and Britain, between the years 1990 and 2000.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.

You should write at least 150 words.



Writing Task 2

You should spend no more than 40 minutes on this task.

Genetic research has led to the cloning of animals such as sheep and cows. Some scientists argue that human cloning will be possible in the near future. Many people, however, are concerned that human cloning could be very dangerous and should be banned.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.

You should write at least 250 words.

Chapter Two

General Training Test Task One: Letter Writing

第二章

普通培训类第一部分：
书信写作

Introduction To Letter Writing 书信写作简介

Notes

In task one of the General Training test you have to write a 150-word letter. This may be an informal letter to a friend, or a more formal letter, such as a letter of complaint, or a letter asking for information. You have 20 minutes in which to do this. If you are writing a formal letter, you should use formal language.

普通培训类的第一部分要求你写一封 150 字左右的书信。可能是一封写给朋友的便笺，或是比较正式的信，如抱怨信、问询信等等。你要在 20 分钟之内完成。记住，正式的书信要用正式的语言，反之亦然。

Task One Is Assessed On (评分依据的三个方面)

- ⇒ Task fulfillment (完成要求情况)
- ⇒ Coherence and cohesion (统一性和连贯性)
- ⇒ Vocabulary and sentence structure (词汇和句型)

Task fulfillment refers to how well you fulfill the requirements of the question.
完成要求情况指的是对问题所要求的各个方面满足的程度。

Coherence and cohesion refers to how well you have structured the letter and how easy it is to read. This includes use of sentence connectors.
统一性和连贯性指的是你如何组织书信，是否易于阅读。这其中包括句间关联词的使用。

Vocabulary and sentence structure refers to how many mistakes you make in sentence structure and word use.
词汇和句型指的是你在句型和单词使用方面的出错情况。

Layout Of A Letter (书信的结构)

A letter should have four distinct sections, as outlined in figure 2, below.

一封书信应有四个部分，如下面的图 2 中所示。

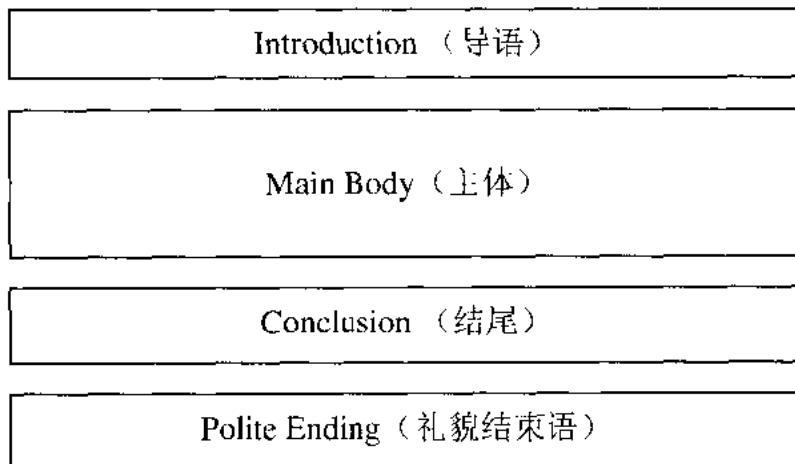


Fig.2: Showing the standard layout of a letter

图2：书信的结构

Purpose Of Each Section (各个部分的目的)

Each section of the letter has a different purpose. The introduction gives your reason for writing the letter. In other words you tell the person *to whom you are writing to and why you are writing*. For example, you may be writing to complain about something, or to request information. Or, if it's a letter to a friend, you may want to invite them to spend a holiday with you.

书信每个部分都有自己不同的目的。导语要讲明你写这封书信的理由。换句话说，你要说明写给谁以及写信的目的。举例说，你可能写信去抱怨什么或询问有关信息。或者如果写给朋友，你可能想邀请他同你一起度假。

The main body of the letter is where you give all the details. In this section you need to think about what information the person reading the letter needs. For example, if you are writing to complain about a product you have bought, the person reading the letter will want to know exactly what the problem is, and why it is a problem so that they can solve the problem for you. Also details such as the make and model of the item you purchased (i.e. Sony Walkman, model number 00321). If you're requesting information you need to say exactly what type of information you need, and why. Or, if it's a letter to a friend, why you are inviting them, including, of course, a time and meeting place.

在主体部分你要给出所有的细节。这一部分你要考虑读信的人需要什么信息。比如说，如果你写的是封抱怨信，抱怨你所购买的商品。读信的人可能想知道到底是什么问题，为什么是个问题，只有这样，他们才能帮你解决问题。细节可能涉及到你所购买物品的型号等等（比如索尼随身听，型号 00321）。如果你写的是封问询信，你要说明你需要什么

样的信息和为什么要知道这些信息。或者，如果你写的是给朋友的信，你要说明你为什么邀请他，以及见面的时间和地点。

The conclusion is important because here you tell the person you are writing to what you would like them to do. For example, if it is a letter of complaint, you may want the person to do something for you, such as replace an item you have bought, or refund your money. If you're requesting information you may want to receive the details in writing. Or, if it's a letter to a friend, you may want them to phone you.

结束的部分很重要，因为在这一部分你要告诉收信人你希望他怎样做。举例说，如果是一封抱怨信，你可能要收信人为你做些什么，比如说，调换物品或退钱给你。如果是问询信，你可能希望他们提供书面材料。或者是一封给朋友的信，你可能希望他们给你打电话。

The ending of the letter should be a polite close. Here a simple, polite phrase should be used. "I look forward to hearing from you soon", for example.

书信要有一个礼貌的结束语，需要使用简单礼貌的短语，如“期望能早日收到您的回复。”

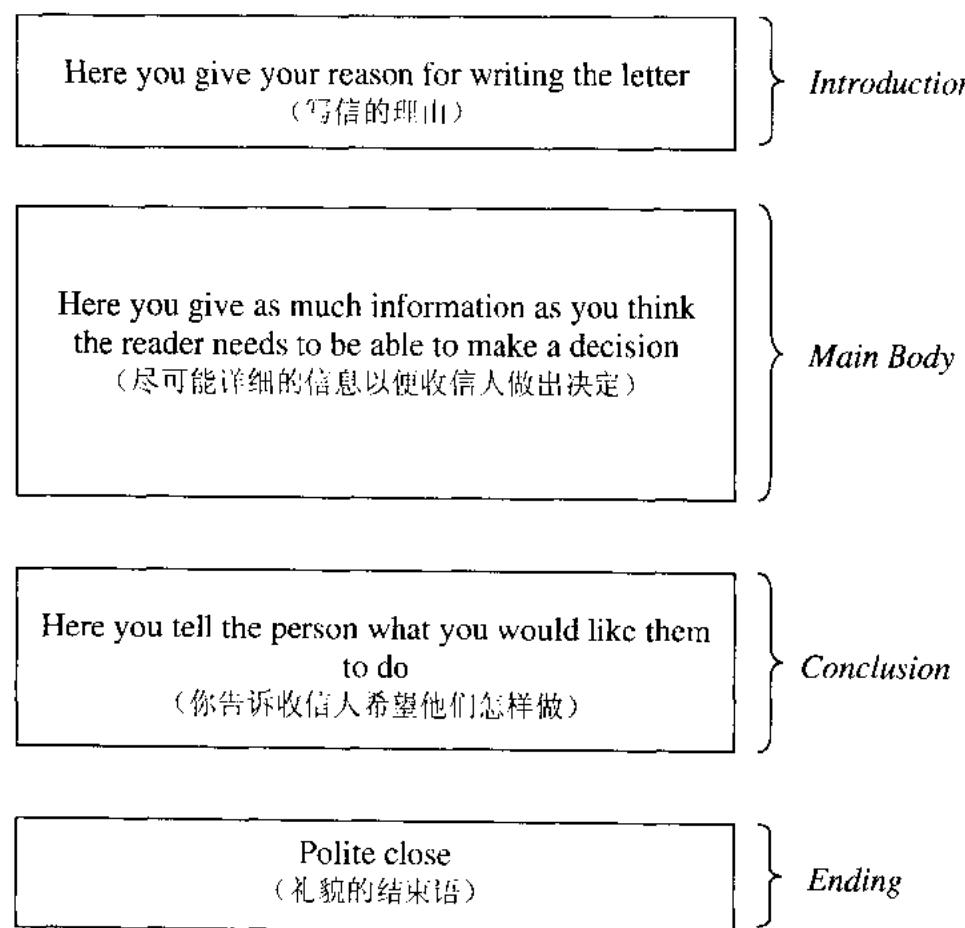


Fig.3: Showing the purpose of each section
每个部分的目的

An IELTS Letter Compared To A Real Letter

比较雅思书信和一般书信

Notes

When you are writing a real letter, there are important details you must give, such as your address and the address of the person you are writing to. In the IELTS test, however, *it is important not to give these details*. This is because you are being assessed on how well you can communicate in writing in a day-to-day situation. Therefore, it is the letter that is important, not things such as addresses. In fact, if you do write an address the examiner *will not mark it*, and *you will waste valuable time*.

写一般书信的时候，有些细节很重要，如你的地址和收信人的地址。在雅思书信中，记住不要给出这些细节。因为雅思评判的是你日常交流中的语言运用能力，因而重要的是书信本身，而不是地址这些细节。事实上，如果你写上了地址，可能考官都不会看上一眼。这样做，你只是在浪费宝贵的时间。

An IELTS Letter (雅思书信)

Dear Mr Hannah,

I write for information regarding the delivery of your ornamental clocks.

Maggot Industries is a medium sized company based in Shanghai, and a major supplier of electrical products to over 650 outlets in Eastern China. We actively conduct regular market surveys and have identified a growing market for Big Ben clocks. We are therefore keen to source a supplier.

I have reviewed your catalogue and am impressed with your company profile. However, before going ahead with a purchase I would like to know the availability of the products. Therefore, if you can send me details of the time and cost of shipping I feel confident that we'll be able to negotiate a deal soon after.

I look forward to receiving the information at your earliest convenience. And should you require further details please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

William Hague

Fig. 4: Showing the details included in an IELTS letter

图4：雅思书信包含的各部分一览表

A Real Letter (一般书信)

Maggot Industries
Fisheries Building
118 Nan Jing Xi Lu
Shanghai
200047
P.R. China
28th March 2001

Mr. Phil Hannah
Marketing Manager
Big Ben Clocks and Watches
Tower Street
London
SW1
England

Dear Mr Hannah,

I write for information regarding the delivery of your ornamental products.

Maggot Industries is a medium sized company based in Shanghai, and a major supplier of electrical products to over 650 outlets in Eastern China. We actively conduct regular market surveys and have identified a growing market for Big Ben clocks. We are therefore keen to source a supplier.

I have reviewed your catalogue and am impressed with your company profile. However, before going ahead with a purchase I would like to know the availability of the products. Therefore, if you can send me details of the time and cost of shipping I feel confident that we'll be able to negotiate a deal soon after.

I look forward to receiving the information at your earliest convenience. And should you require further details please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,
William Hague
William Hague

Fig. 5: Showing the details included in a real letter

图5：一般书信包含的各部分一览表

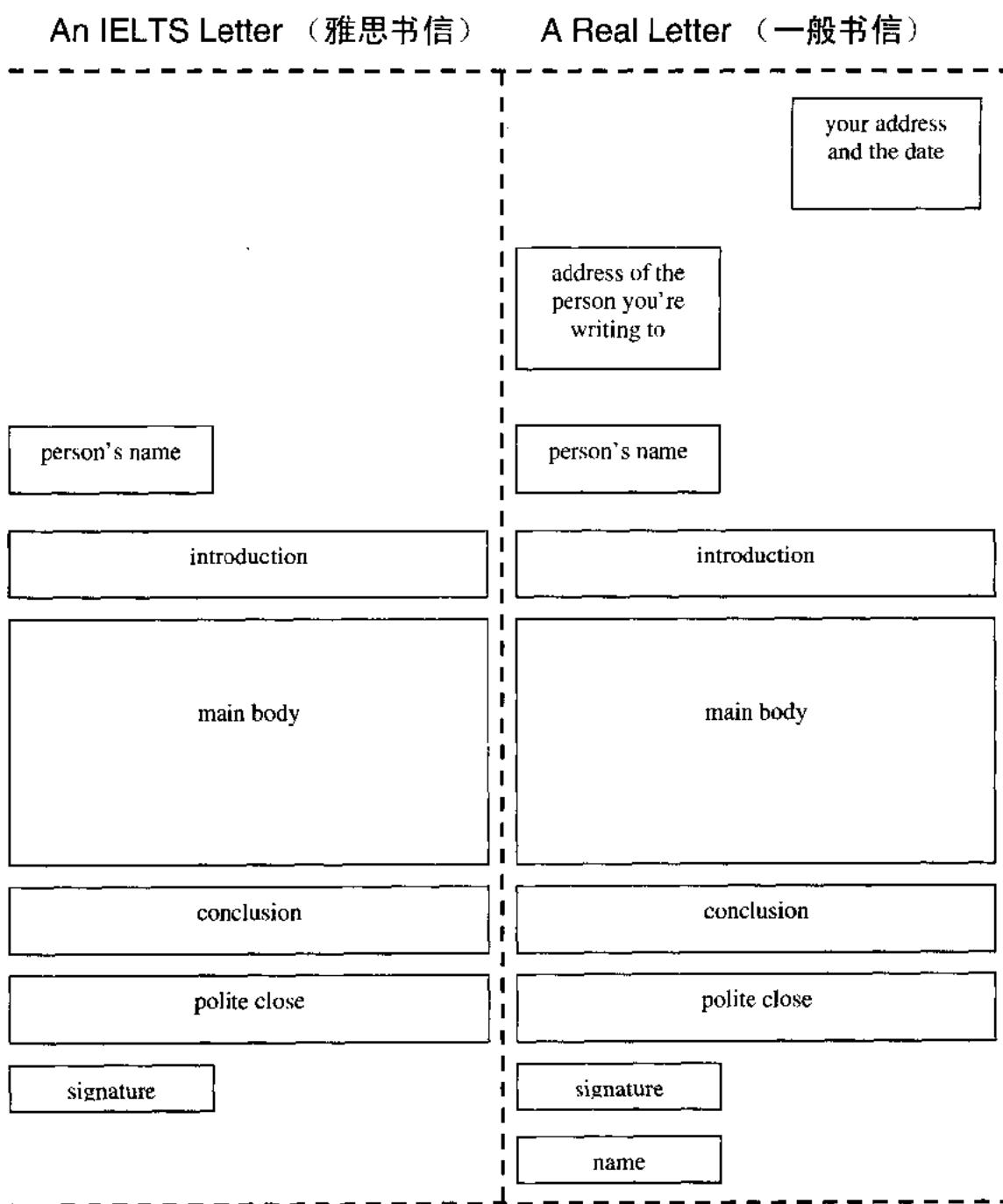


Fig. 6: Comparing a real letter with an IELTS letter

图6：比较一般书信和雅思书信

Unit 1 Task Fulfillment

Notes

Task fulfillment is quite simply how well you have answered the question accurately. To do this well *you must develop your ideas* and make sure that you *don't leave out information*, or *include irrelevant information*. It is important, therefore, that you first of all look at the title and identify the tasks, or requirements.

Analysing The Question

Notes

It is very important that you look at the letter question very carefully. You should know what you should write about and develop your ideas. If you do not, you cannot get a high band score for task one.

Look at the following title.

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

Notice how letter questions are *usually* arranged.

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

This is the context of the letter. It tells you who you are and what you are doing.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

This tells you what you need to do.

Identifying The Tasks

The first thing to do when analysing the title is to identify the tasks, or the requirements. In other words, *you need to identify what it is you have to write about in the letter*. You can do this in two ways:

- 1) Underline the tasks
- 2) List the tasks

Test Tip

In most (*but not all*) IELTS letter questions there are three tasks to fulfill.

Method 1: Underline The Tasks

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

Method 2: List The Tasks

- 1) Invite him or her to visit you
- 2) Describe your hometown
- 3) Suggest things you can do together

If you write a list of the tasks, when you have completed your letter you can very quickly, and easily, check to make sure you have completed the tasks. Also, you can refer to the list while you are writing the letter.

Test Tip

This is the technique many examiners use when grading letters to make sure the candidate has fulfilled the tasks.

Exercise 1: Analysing The Question

Work with your partners and look at the following letter questions. Underline, or list the tasks. (Answer provided)

Question 1: You have just returned from a trip to London. When you arrived back in China you discovered that your suitcase was missing.

Write a letter to the manager of the airport. Say what happened. Describe the suitcase and its contents.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Question 2: You are studying at university and share a room with another student. You are dissatisfied with the room because your roommate often disturbs you when you are studying.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer at the university. Say who you are. Explain the situation and request another room.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Question 3: You will soon begin a course at university.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer. Explain who you are. Ask for information about the different types of accommodation that is available.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Developing Your Ideas

Notes

Having identified the tasks, you are now well prepared to think of ideas. Once again, let us look back at our sample letter question.

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

- 1) Invite him or her to visit you
- 2) Describe your hometown
- 3) Suggest things you can do together

We have identified three tasks. What we now need to do is think of ideas so that we can fulfill the tasks fully enough to get a good band score.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a way of thinking of as many ideas as you can, and helps you to develop *creative thinking* skills. It also means you think of many ideas that you can use in your letter *without including irrelevant information*. This is easily achieved by thinking of ideas for each task in turn.

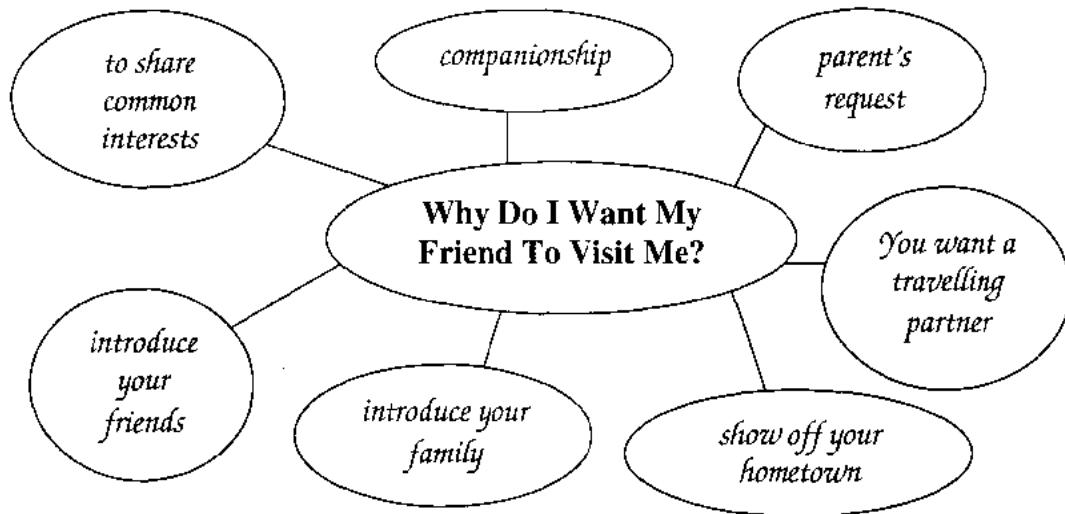
However, *you must consider the context*. That is to say, you must consider:

- a) Your relationship with the person you are writing to (i.e. a friend)
- b) What you are (i.e. a university student)
- c) What you are doing (i.e. taking a vacation)
- d) How well you know the person you are writing to (i.e. very well)
- e) Your purpose for writing (i.e. to persuade your friend to visit you)

Example:

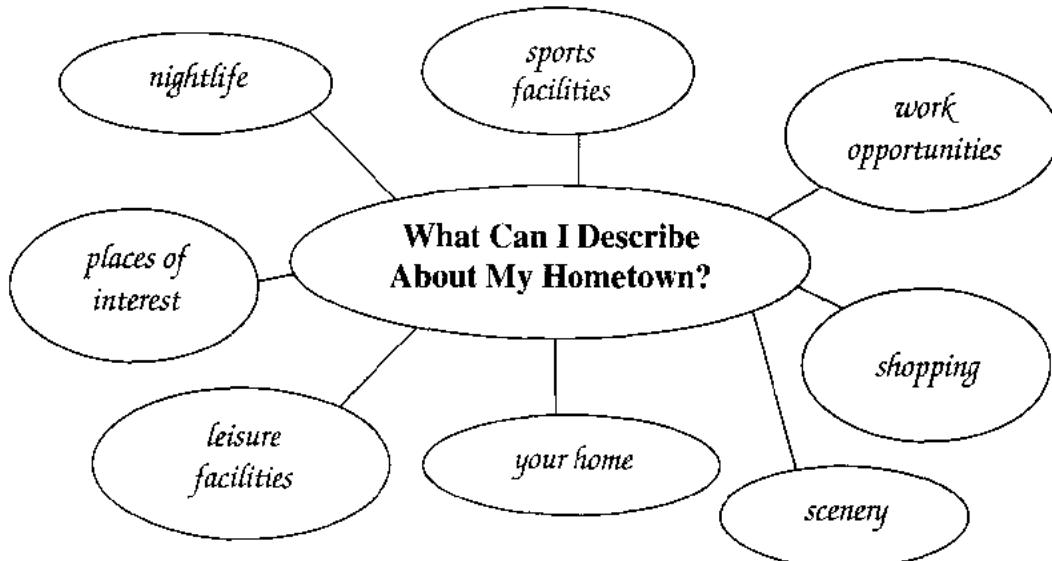
Task 1

Context: you are good friends, and both on your summer vacation.



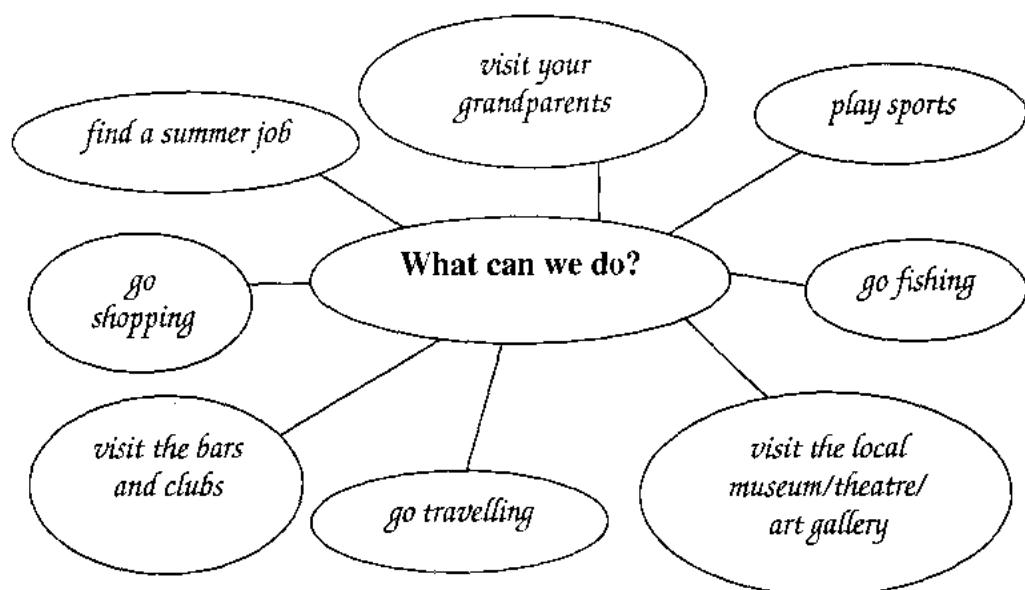
Task 2

Context: imagine your friend lives in a different province, or even a different country, and has never visited your hometown.



Task 3

Context: you are both young. Therefore, you enjoy going to bars and clubs. Maybe you enjoy travelling and taking part in sports. However, you are also university students. Therefore, you have very little money.



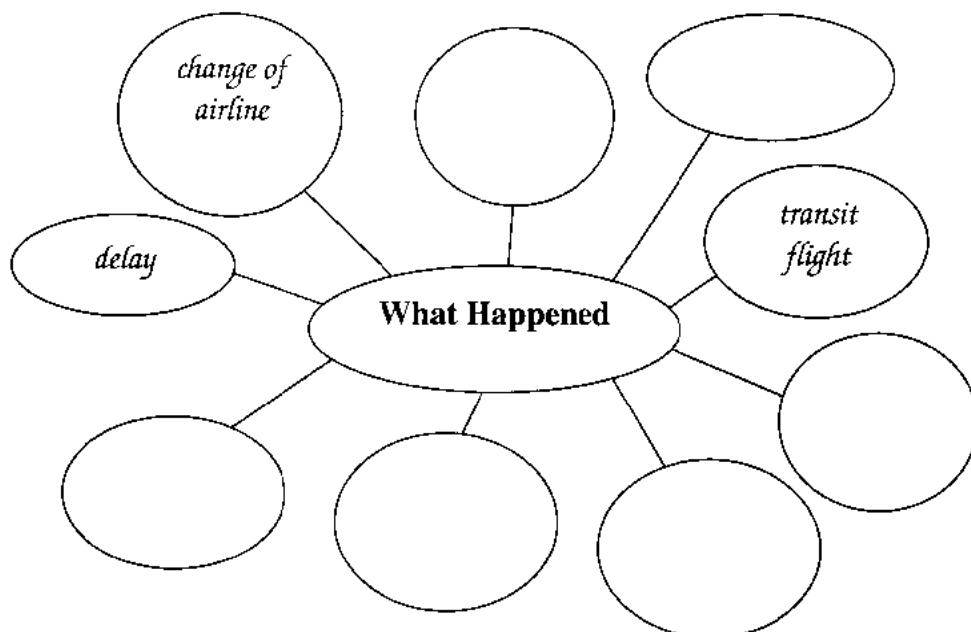
Exercise 2: Developing Your Ideas

Work in groups. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can for the following questions.

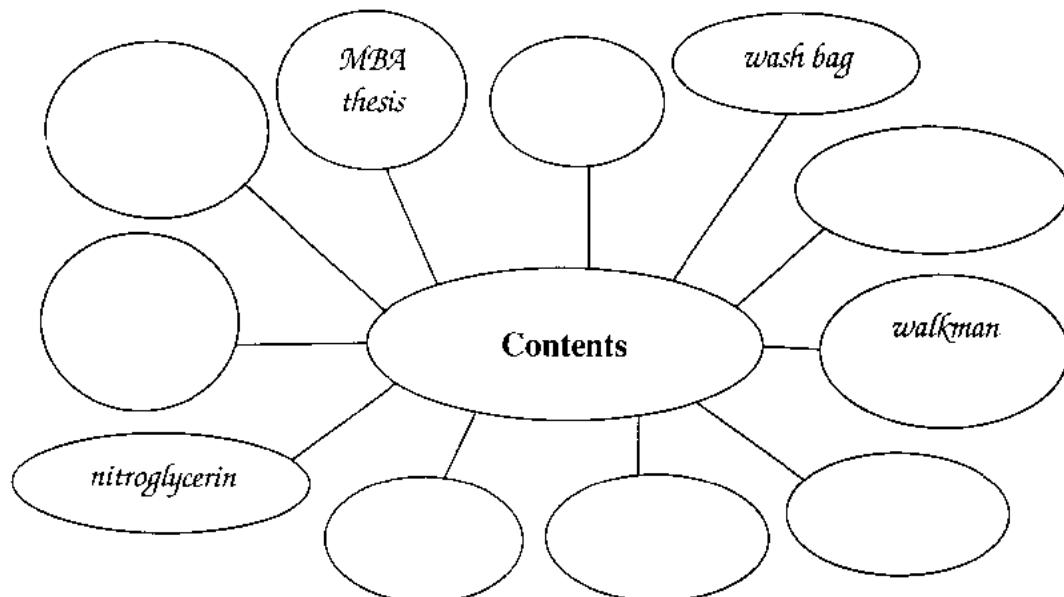
Question 1: You have just returned from a trip to London. When you arrived back in China, you discovered that your suitcase was missing.

Write a letter to the manager of the airport. Say what happened. Describe the suitcase and its contents.

Context: _____



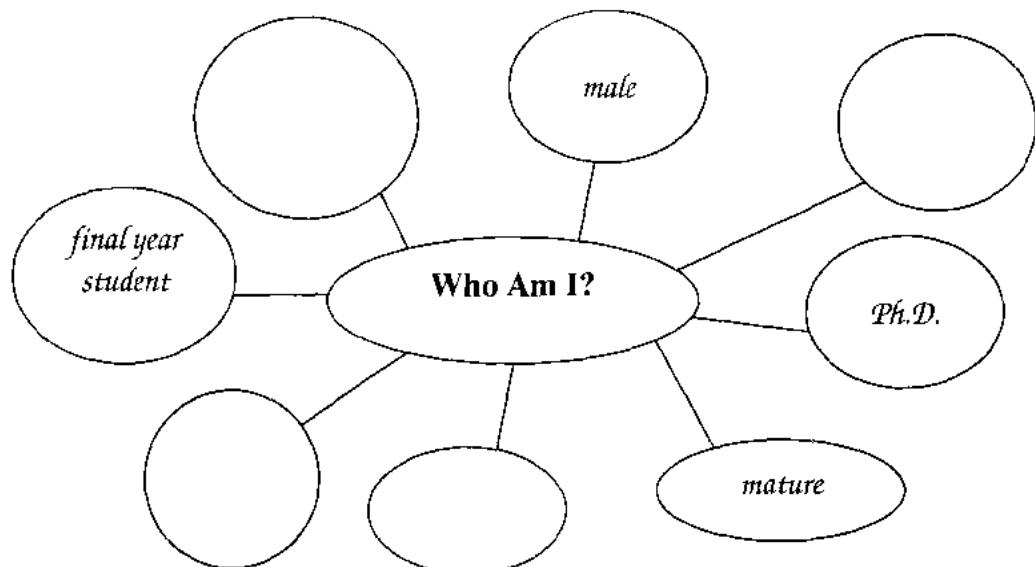
Context: _____



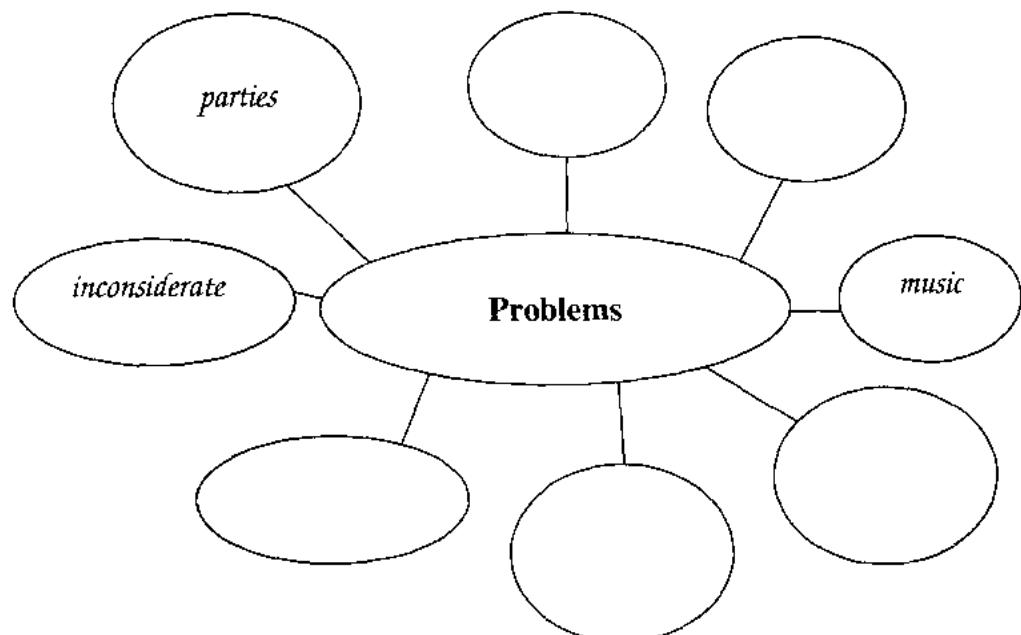
Question 2: You are studying at university and share a room with another student. You are dissatisfied with the room because your roommate often disturbs you when you are studying.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer at the university. Say who you are. Explain the situation and request another room.

Context: _____



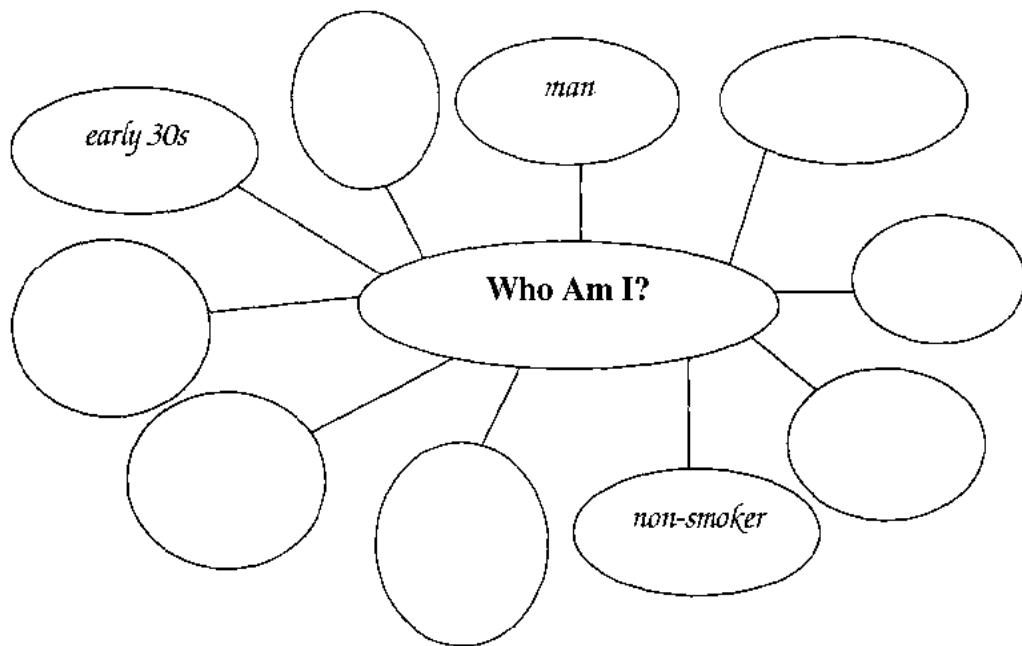
Context: _____



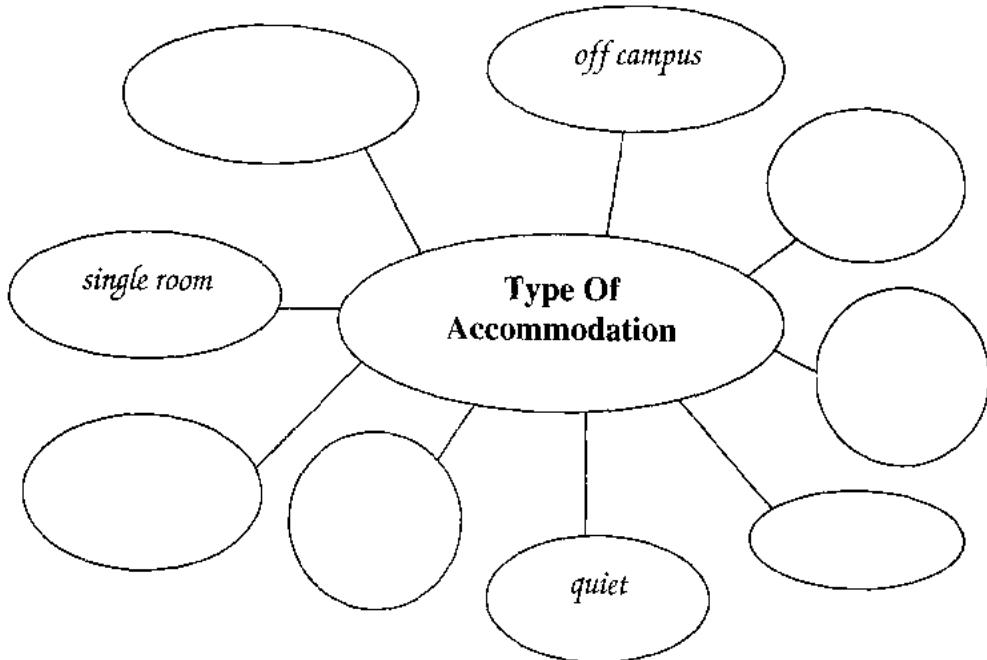
Question 3: You will soon begin a course at university.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer. Explain who you are. Ask for information about the different types of accommodation that is available.

Context: _____



Context: _____



Organising The Information

Notes

When you have identified exactly what you should do and brainstormed ideas you are ready to organise the information. In fact, it is very important that you organise the information properly because it makes it easy for the reader to follow what you are saying in your letter. This improves *communicative quality*.

How To Organise The Information

Let us consider the example letter title:

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

- 1) Invite him or her to visit you
- 2) Describe your hometown
- 3) Suggest things you can do together

In this example there are three tasks to fulfill. However, *your reason for writing the letter* is to invite your friend to visit you. Therefore, this information *must* go in the introduction (see writing an introduction and conclusion, page 37).

The other two tasks - describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together - is the main information that you want to give. *Its purpose is to persuade your friend to visit you.* Therefore, this information goes in the main body of the letter.

The purpose of this section is to state your reason for writing the letter.
- *Invite your friend to visit you*

The purpose of this section is to persuade or convince the reader to do as you request, and/or to give all the information the reader will need to be able to make a decision.

Important information that *must* be included:
- *Describe your hometown*
- *Suggest things to do together*

The purpose of this section is to suggest an action (say what you would like the reader to do).

- *Ask him to tell me if he's going to visit*

Fig.7: Showing how information should be organised in a letter

Exercise 3: Organising Your Information

Work in groups. Look at the ideas you brainstormed for the following questions and which section of the letter the information should go. Introduction, main body or conclusion. (Answer provided)

Question 1: You have just returned from a trip to London. When you arrived back in China you discovered that your suitcase was missing.

Write a letter to the manager of the airport. Say what happened. Describe the suitcase and its contents.

Reason:

The reason I am writing the letter is:

Information:

The information I must give is:

Action:

I want the reader to:

Question 2: You are studying at university and share a room with another student. You are dissatisfied with the room because your roommate often disturbs you when you are studying.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer at the university. Say who you are. Explain the situation and request another room.

Reason:

The purpose of the letter is:

Information:

The information I must give is:

Action:

I want the reader to:

Question 3: You will soon begin a course at university.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer. Explain who you are. Ask for information about the different types of accommodation that is available.

Reason:

The purpose of the letter is:

Information:

The information I must give is:

Action:

I want the reader to:

Identifying Relevant Information

Notes

It is very important that you *include all the necessary information* and *leave out irrelevant information*. Let us consider the example question:

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

- 1) Invite him or her to visit you
- 2) Describe your hometown
- 3) Suggest things you can do together

How To Identify Relevant Information

The Introduction

In the introduction I should state my reason for writing. In other words, I have to invite my friend to visit me.

Following is a list of the ideas that could be included in the introduction.

- ✗ *To share common interests*
- ✓ *Introduce my family*
- ✓ *Parent's request*
- ✗ *You want a travelling partner*
- ✓ *Show off my hometown*
- ✓ *Introduce my friends*
- ✗ *Companionship*

I now need to decide which information I should include in the letter. For example, I would not tell our friend that I am lonely, and need a companion for the holiday. This would be *inappropriate* because this is what you would say to a lover, *not* a friend! However, I could talk about common interests in the main body, when I suggest things we can do together. This includes travelling together.

Nevertheless, I would like to say that I'd like to introduce my family and friends, and that my parents request that he visits. This shows my friend that I respect him, and talk about him in positive terms. Therefore, the information I need to include in the introduction is:

Introduce my family	This information is included in the introduction because they are the reasons why I want my friend to come and stay for the holiday.
Parent's request	
Show off my hometown	
Introduce my friends	
I want a travelling partner and companion	This information is not included in the introduction because they are things I can talk about in the main body.

The Main Body

The main body is where you give all the information necessary for the reader to make a decision. In the example letter title, I want my friend to make a decision about whether to come and stay with me or not. However, I have to do two things in the main body. 1) describe my home town, and 2) suggest things we can do together. Therefore, I need to divide the main body into two parts.

Describing My Hometown

- ✓ *Nightlife*
- ✓ *Sports facilities*
- ✓ *Work opportunities*
- ✓ *Scenery*
- ✗ *My home*
- ✓ *Leisure facilities*
- ✓ *Places of interest*

I now need to think about the *context*. That is, we're both young and we enjoy things such as bars, nightclubs and sports. Therefore, I want to include this information in the description of my hometown. However, the letter title says "*Describe your hometown...*" not *your home*. Therefore, if I describe my home the information will be *irrelevant*.

We are also university students and have very little money. Therefore, when I suggest things we can do together I want to talk about finding a summer job. Hence, I can mention work opportunities at the end of this part. This will introduce the idea. I will then talk about it in the second part (see writing a good paragraph, page 190).

Next, I need to *group* the information by identifying related information.

Nightlife	This information is related.
Leisure facilities	
Sports facilities	
Scenery	This information is related.
Places of interest	
Work opportunities →	This information introduces the next topic.

Things To Do Together

- ✓ *Find a summer job*
- ✗ *Visit my grandparents*
- ✗ *Play sports*
- ✓ *Go fishing*
- ✓ *Visit the local museum/theatre/art gallery*
- ✓ *Go travelling*
- ✓ *Visit the bars and clubs*
- ✗ *Go shopping*

I have decided to introduce the idea of looking for a summer job at the end of the first part of the main body. I therefore need to begin the second part by talking about this idea to make my letter easier to read. However, I have far more ideas than I can use in my letter because of the time constraints (20 minutes) and word limit (150 words). Therefore I need to decide which information to include, and which to leave out.

Once again, I need to think about the *context*. Because we have no money it's important we look for a job. This means we will be able to visit the local bars and nightclubs in the evening. But we'll have little time to go shopping or play sports. And I don't think my friend would be keen on meeting my grandparents! But we could spend some time travelling (maybe on a weekend) or visiting the local museum.

<i>Find a summer job</i>	{	<i>This information is included because they're things we both enjoy doing, and will be able to do if we earn some money.</i>
<i>Go fishing</i>		
<i>Visit the local museum</i>		
<i>Go travelling</i>		
<i>Visit the bars and clubs</i>		
<i>Visit my grandparents</i> →		<i>My friend won't be interested in doing this.</i>
<i>Play sports</i>	{	<i>We won't have the time to do this.</i>
<i>Go shopping</i>		

Exercise 4: Identifying Relevant Information

Work in groups. Look at the ideas you brainstormed for the following questions and decide what information to include.

Question 1: You have just returned from a trip to London. When you arrived back in China you discovered that your suitcase was missing.

Write a letter to the manager of the airport. Say what happened. Describe the suitcase and its contents.

Information to Include in the Introduction

Information to Include in the Main Body

Handwriting practice lines for the word 'apple'.

Question 2: You are studying at university and share a room with another student. You are dissatisfied with the room because your roommate often disturbs you when you are studying.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer at the university. Say who you are. Explain the situation and request another room.

Information to Include in the Introduction

The image shows two identical sets of horizontal lines for handwriting practice. Each set consists of five thin, black, horizontal lines spaced evenly apart. The sets are positioned side-by-side, creating a symmetrical layout.

Information to Include in the Main Body

Question 3: You will soon begin a course at university.

Write a letter to the accommodation officer. Explain who you are. Ask for information about the different types of accommodation that is available.

Information to Include in the Introduction

Information to Include in the Main Body

Unit 2 Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Notes

The introduction and conclusion are closely related. The introduction should be brief, polite, and should clearly state your reason for writing. The conclusion should also be brief and polite and tell the reader what you want them to do.

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to state your reason for writing the letter.

Conclusion

The purpose of this section is to suggest an action (say what you would like the reader to do).

Fig.8: Showing how information should be organised in a letter

How To Write The Introduction And Conclusion

It is *very important* that you use the correct *tone*. In other words, should the letter be formal or informal? This depends on whom you are writing to. When writing the introduction and conclusion ask yourself the following questions:

- Who am I? (student, worker, relative, friend, colleague, customer etc)
- Who am I writing to? (friend, colleague, stranger etc)
- What type of letter is it? (formal, informal)
- How well do I know the person? (not at all, just a little, very well)
- If I have contacted the person before, how did I contact him/her? (email, letter, phone)
- If I've met the person before, when and where did we meet? (social occasion, business meeting, introduced by someone)

Discussion

Work in pairs. Look at the following examples 1a and 1b. Discuss the following questions:

- a) *What is wrong with example 1b?*
- b) *How can it be improved?*
- c) *Example 1a is much better. Why?*

You have recently bought a small, portable cassette player. However, when you arrived home you discovered it didn't work.

Write a letter to the manufacturer. Say where you bought it. Explain what has happened and what you would like them to do.

Example 1a

Dear Sir,

I write concerning the recent purchase of a Sony cassette player from Number One department store, Zhong Shan Road, Shanghai.

However, I will be perfectly satisfied if you would either refund my money or replace the faulty cassette player.

I look forward to an early reply.

Example 1b

Dear Sir,

My name is Qui Wei, and it is my great pleasure to write to your esteemed company. Your company is very famous in China for its high quality products and modern designs. However, I bought one of your cassette players last week. A Sony. A very famous brand in the world.....

I am very disappointed by the quality of the product I bought from such a famous company as yours. The cassette player was a gift for my wife's birthday and I was very embarrassed when she found it didn't work. In fact, I have already consulted my lawyer on this matter, and you will be hearing from her shortly.

Example 1a: Introduction

This introduction clearly states the reason for writing without giving irrelevant information. It is also polite.

Example 1a: Conclusion

The conclusion is also polite and suggests what the reader should do. It also gives the reader a choice of actions ("*...refund my money or replace the faulty cassette player*").

Example 1b: Introduction

This shows what you *should not do!* The introduction is *too polite*. Therefore it uses inappropriate language. For example, "*it is my great pleasure to write to your esteemed company*", when, in fact, *it is not* a pleasure to write to the company. Also, "*Your company is very famous in China...*". The company is fully aware of how famous they are!

The writer has also begun the letter by saying "*my name is...*" This is *incorrect*. You should *never* begin a letter by telling the reader your name. This goes at the end of the letter.

Example 1b: Conclusion

The conclusion is the opposite. It is *very impolite*, even threatening ("*I have already consulted my lawyer on this matter, and you will be hearing from her shortly*") and does not suggest a solution. It also contains irrelevant information ("*The cassette player was a gift for my wife's birthday*") because the reason why you bought the product does not matter.

Language Focus

The language you should use depends on your relationship with the person you are writing to (colleague, employer, customer etc.), how well you know the person (very well, just a little, not at all etc.) and their social status (general manager, departmental manager, secretary etc.).

We can therefore divide the letters into three categories: formal impersonal letters, formal personal letters and informal letters.

Formal Impersonal Letters

Introduction: Formal Personal Letters

When you write to someone you've never met or met only once or twice, it's very important that you are polite and that you introduce yourself. Or you remind the person of your last meeting. However, do not give too much detail. You should always begin this type of letter with '*Dear...*' followed by the person's family name.

- *Dear Mr Smith,*
- *Dear Ms Smith,*
- *Dear Sir or Madam,*
- *To Whom It May Concern,*

- *I write concerning*
- *Thank you for your letter of June 24, 2001.*
- *I write in response to your advertisement for a computer programmer.....*
- *Following our meeting/telephone conversation on Friday March 5, 2001,*
- *Thank you for your email of Tuesday May 6.*
- *With reference to our meeting last Monday (January 6)*

Conclusion: Formal Impersonal Letters

The conclusion should be polite and clearly state what you'd like the person to do and end with a polite close.

Conclusion

- *I will/would be grateful if.....*
- *Can you kindly look into this matter*
- *Please inform me at your earliest convenience.*
- *Please look into this matter*
- *Please let me know as soon as you have the information.*

Polite Close

- *I look forward to hearing from you.*
- *I look forward to meeting you in person.*
- *I look forward to receiving your reply.*
- *Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting.*
- *I look forward to meeting you again soon.*
- *Please call me any time.*

Discussion 1

Work with your partners. Look at the examples 2a and 2b. Discuss the following questions:

- a. *What is wrong with example 2a?*
- b. *How can it be improved?*
- c. *Example 2b is much better. Why?*

Example 2a

You recently purchased an item of clothing from a local department store. When you arrived home you discovered a fault with the goods you bought.

Write a letter to Mr Brown, the manager of the store. Explain the situation and say what you'd like done about it.

Dear Mr Brown,

I have been a customer of yours since 1987, and regularly shop in your department store. However, last week I bought a green woolen sweater from the knitwear department on the third floor. But when I got home I noticed

If I don't hear from you in the next two weeks I will be forced to take legal action on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Example 2a: Introduction

Too many irrelevant details are included: "I have been a customer of yours since 1987, and regularly shop in your department store. However, last week I bought a green woolen sweater from the knitwear department on the third floor."

Many important details are missing:

Which department store did you buy the sweater from?

When was the sweater purchased (date)?

Example 2a: Conclusion

This is very impolite and threatening. "If I don't hear from you in the next two weeks I will be forced to take legal action on this matter." Therefore, the language is *inappropriate*.

Example 2b

Dear Mr Brown,

I write concerning a sweater I purchased from your department store in Bedford Road, London, on Friday 4th June, 2001.

I would be grateful if you will either refund my money or exchange the sweater.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Example 2b: Introduction

This example is much better because it gives all the relevant details (*what, where and when*) without including irrelevant information.

Example 2b: Conclusion

Example 2b is polite, to the point and offers two alternative actions: "I would be grateful if you will either refund my money or exchange the sweater." It also includes a polite close: "I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience."

Discussion 2

Work with your partners. Look at the examples 3a and 3b. Discuss the following questions:

- a) *What is wrong with example 3a?*
- b) *How can it be improved?*
- c) *Example 3b is much better. Why?*

Example 3a

You are working as a marketing manager in an international company, and have recently received an email from one of your colleagues, who works in the company's head office in New York, informing you of a forthcoming visit.

Write a letter to the person. Thank him for the email. Ask if he has any special requirements and tell him about any arrangements you have made for the visit.

Dear Mr Smith,

Thank you for the email you sent me yesterday. I enjoyed reading it very much. In fact, I showed it to my boss who also liked it very much.

Please tell me when you can visit our office again soon. We're very good friends and my wife wants to meet you very much.

Your esteemed friend and colleague,

Example 3a: Introduction

Too many important details are missing (*date and content of the email*). Inappropriate language is used: "...I enjoyed reading it very much. In fact, I showed it to my boss who also liked it very much."

Example 3a: Conclusion

This example is too friendly, and uses inappropriate language: "We're very good friends and my wife wants to meet you very much."

In this example you are writing to someone you have only met one or two times. You don't know the person well, and you certainly are not good friends!

Example 3b

Dear Mr Smith,

Thank you for email of February 3rd, 2000, concerning the meeting held at your office on January 22nd regarding the merger of our respective departments.

Please let me know what you think of my proposal so that we can push ahead with the arrangements.

Looking forward to meeting you again soon.

Example 3b: Introduction

This example is polite, brief, and gives all the important details (*what, when and contents*).

Example 3b: Conclusion

This example is much better. It uses formal language that clearly suggests an action: "*Please let me know what you think of my proposal so that we can push ahead with the arrangements.*" At the same time the final sentence is still friendly: "*Looking forward to meeting you again soon.*"

Exercise 5: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Question 1: You work as a human resource manager in an international company and you have been asked to arrange a conference in a local hotel.

Write a letter to the hotel manager. Give details of the conference and ask for information about the size of the rooms available and lunch / dinner arrangements.
(Answer provided)

Question 2: You want to invite a guest speaker to give a talk in your company.

Write a letter to the speaker. Introduce your company and invite him / her to give a talk. Include information about facilities you have available.
(Answer provided)

Question 3: You have recently received a letter from your local department store requesting the final payment on some furniture you recently bought. However, you have made all the payments.

Write a letter to the manager. Explain the mistake and give all necessary details such as a description of the product you bought and when the last payment has made.

Question 4: You want a credit card.

Write a letter to the bank manager. Introduce yourself. Ask for information about obtaining a credit card as well as interest rates and repayment methods.

Formal Personal Letters

Introduction: Formal Personal Letters

Even when writing a formal personal letter, you can use *more informal language* if you know the person well enough. *But only in the introduction and conclusion.* However, be careful *not to be too informal.* You *must* use formal language in the main body of the letter. You should begin this type of letter with '*Dear.....*' followed by the person's family name. Or you would begin this type of letter with '*Dear.....*' followed by the person's given name (if you are writing to a Westerner!).

- *Dear Mr Smith,*
- *Dear Ms Smith,*
- *Dear John,*
- *Dear Jane,*

- *I trust you had a good flight back to Toronto.*
- *It was good to meet you again after so long.*
- *Thank you for the tie. My wife loves it.*

Conclusion: Formal Personal Letters

The conclusion can be friendlier if it's someone you know well. But it should still suggest an action. The close can be friendlier still.

Conclusion

- *Please let me know your thoughts on this as soon as possible.*
- *Let me know as soon as you've reached a decision.*
- *Please get back to me as soon as you can.*

Polite Close

- *Please give my regards to Mavis and the kids.*
- *I'll call you in couple of weeks. See what you think.*
- *Cheers for now.*

Discussion

Work with your partners. Look at the examples 4a and 4b. Discuss the following questions:

- a) *What is wrong with example 4a?*
- b) *How can it be improved?*
- c) *Example 4b is much better. Why?*

Example 4a

A company client who knows you well has recently been to see you for a business meeting. He has just returned to his own country.

Write a letter. Thank him for the visit and give any details about the meeting that he will need.

Dear Pete,

It was great to see you last week. It has been so long since we last saw each other, and I miss you very much.

I have to go to Hong Kong soon on business. I really wish you could come with me.

I think about you always.

Example 4a: Introduction

This example is over friendly. It doesn't state the purpose of writing and uses some inappropriate language: "*I miss you very much.*"

Example 4a: Conclusion

This example uses inappropriate language: "*I really wish you could come with me*" and "*I think about you always.*"

Even though you know the person well, and maybe good friends, it is still a formal letter.

Example 4b

Dear Pete

I trust you had a good flight back to Toronto. I guess you'll agree that the meeting was successful, so now we can push forward and finalise the details of the contract.

Let me know what you think of the contract. I'll be Hong Kong for most of July so the best way to contact me is by email.

Love to Lily and the kids.

Example 4b: Introduction

This is a good example of a polite, friendly introduction to someone you know quite well *as a colleague, not a friend*.

Example 4b: Conclusion

This is a good example of a formal, yet friendly letter. The ending paragraph suggests an action in a formal, yet polite manner: "*Let me know what you think of the contract. I'll be Hong Kong for most of July so the best way to contact me is by email.*" Whilst the final sentence acknowledges your friendship: "*Love to Lily and the kids.*"

Exercise 6: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Question 1: You have been asked to organise a dinner party for the senior management team in your company to celebrate the retirement of the company chairman.

Write a letter to your colleague, who is also your close friend. Explain the situation and ask him/her to suggest a suitable restaurant. (Answer provided)

Question 2: You have to leave the country on business but need to leave some instructions for your colleague, who is also a close friend, about a project you are working on.

Write a letter to your colleague. Give necessary details of your trip. Explain what the project is, and suggest what he/she should do. (Answer provided)

Question 3: Your direct boss has just been promoted to manager of your company.

Write him a letter, congratulate him and wish him a bright future.

Question 4: Your client has sent you a new year calendar.

Write him a letter, thank him for the gift and wish him a happy new year. Suggest when and why you'll meet next time.

Informal Letters

Introduction: Informal Letters

When you are writing a letter to a friend your language can be much more informal. That is to say you can use the same language you would use if you were talking to the person. You would normally begin this type of letter with '*Dear...*' followed by the person's given name.

- *Dear Susan,*
- *Dear John,*

- *How's life in Sydney? Still enjoying it I hope.*
- *How are you? I trust you're well.*
- *It's been a while since I wrote.....*

Conclusion: Informal Letters

In the conclusion you should be friendly and clearly state what you'd like the person to do.

Conclusion

- *Let me know.....*
- *Drop me a line when you get the chance.....*
- *Think it over and I'll call you in a couple of weeks.*

Polite Close

- *Looking forward to seeing you soon.*
- *Take care of yourself.*
- *Write soon.*

Discussion

Example 5a

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

Dear Roland,

How are you these days? It's been so long since I've seen you. I miss you very much and would love you to come and stay with me for a while.

I hope you can come soon because I'm very lonely without you, and can't wait until the start of the new term to see you again.

Love always.

Example 5a: Introduction

This example is *not* related to the instructions: "*How are you these days? It's been so long since I've seen you.*" The instructions say you've recently returned home for the summer vacation. Therefore, it's only been a short time since you've seen your friend.

It also uses inappropriate language: "*I miss you very much.*" This is inappropriate because this is what you might say to a lover, *not* a friend!

Example 5a: Conclusion

The language used in this example is far too inappropriate. "*I'm very lonely without you, and can't wait until the start of the new term to see you again*" is what you would say to a lover, *not* a friend! The close of the letter, "*love always*" is also inappropriate for the same reason.

Example 5b

Dear Roland,

I'm pleased to say I've arrived home safely. I've been telling my parents all about you and they'd love to meet you, so why don't you come and stay for a while?

Give me a call if you can come and stay and I'll make sure the spare bedroom is ready for you.

See you soon.

Example 5b: Introduction

This example is much better. It is related to the instructions: "*I'm pleased to say I've arrived home safely.*" It is polite, succinct, informal, and gives the reason for writing: "*They'd love to meet you, so why don't you come and stay for a while?*"

Example 5b: Conclusion

This example is polite, friendly and suggests an action ("*Give me a call if you can come and stay*").

Exercise 7: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Question 1: You have recently been offered a scholarship to study at university in the UK.

Write a letter to your friend who is also studying in the UK. Tell him/her about the scholarship. Say when you will arrive in the UK. and ask him/her to meet you at the airport. (Answer provided)

Question 2: You have recently arrived in the UK to begin your university studies.

Write a letter to your parents. Tell them about your university, where you are living and what you are studying. (Answer provided)

Question 3: Your friend Cathy is ill in hospital.

Write her a letter. Tell her about your job or studies and inform her you will visit her next Monday.

Question 4: Your neighbours have recently moved to another city.

Write a letter to them, ask them to describe their new house and the city. Express your wish to keep in touch.

Example Introduction And Conclusion

Example Letter Question

You are a university student, and have recently returned home for the summer vacation.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to visit you. Describe your hometown and suggest things you can do together.

Introduction

Dear Kelvin,

I'm pleased to say I've arrived home safely. I've been telling my parents all about you. They'd love to meet you, so why don't you come and stay for a while?

Give your Reason for writing

Conclusion

Anyway, let me know if you can come and I'll get the spare bedroom ready.

Suggest an action

Cheers for now.

Polite close

Alex

Test Tip

In the example above the contracted forms of 'they would' (they'd) and 'he would' (he'd) is used. This is acceptable and normal when writing informal letters. However, *don't use contracted forms when writing formal letters because it is inappropriate*. The exception being commonly used contractions such as 'it's' and 'I'd.' *If you are not sure whether you should use the contracted form or not, don't!*

Unit 3 Types Of Letters

Writing A Letter Of Complaint

Notes

Even though you are writing a letter to complain about something, you should still begin with a polite introduction. This gives the person a good impression. Also remember that the person you are writing to is probably not the person whose fault it is.

Layout of a letter of complaint

Introduction	(Reason for writing the complaint)
Main Body	Paragraph 1 (The necessary details: where you bought it, when, and what the problem is)
	Paragraph 2 (Why you are complaining)
Conclusion	(Say what you want the reader to do)

Think of a letter of complaint as a *hamburger* (!), where the bread is the polite introduction and ending, and the meat is where you give the facts.

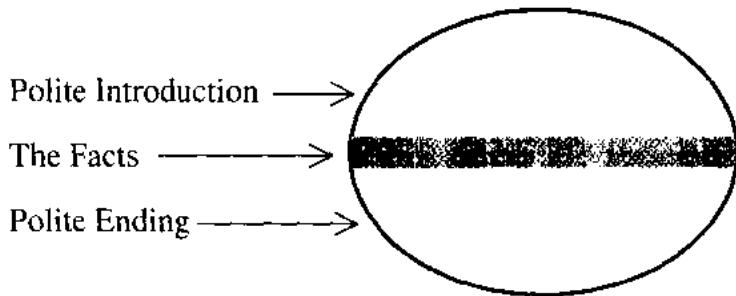


Fig. 9: Showing the feature of a letter of complaint

Example 1: Complaining About A Product

You have recently made a purchase from your local department store. However, when you arrived home you found a fault with it.

Write a letter to the manager. Say what the product is, explain the problem and say what you'd like to be done about it.

Dear Ms Morris,

I write regarding the recent purchase of a woollen sweater from your department store in Bedford Road, London, on June 25, 2001.

} Polite introduction

I recently washed the sweater in cool water, as per the instructions on the label. However, when I removed the sweater from the machine the garment was stretched out of shape, and no longer fits.

I phoned the store last Tuesday (June 21) and spoke to the department manager, a Mr Raymond Mould, who was rather rude on the phone and informed me that I am not able to get a replacement sweater as it was purchased at a reduced price. I have been a loyal customer for many years, and until this incident never had any complaints. I therefore feel disappointed to be treated in such a manner.

} The facts

I would, however, be perfectly satisfied if you would kindly replace the sweater or refund my money, whichever is more convenient.

} Polite ending

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours truly,

Mable March

Example 2: Complaining About A Service

You have recently returned from a trip. However, you were dissatisfied with the service you received at the hotel where you were staying.

Write a letter to the manager of the hotel. Give the details of when you stayed, explain why you were unhappy with service and say what you'd like to be done about it.

Dear Sir,

I write to express my dissatisfaction with the service I received whilst staying at your hotel during my vacation between the 6th and 12th of June this year.

Although your hotel is rated as a four star, I found that the rooms were not cleaned on a daily basis, and that my bed was made up only every three days. In addition, the shower only worked from the hours of 6.00 to 8.30 in a morning, and 7.00 to 9.30 at night. Consequently, if I arrived back at the hotel during the day, it was impossible for me to take a shower.

The food in the restaurant was similarly disappointing. Not only was it extremely overpriced, but the quality was very poor. I was therefore forced to have to eat out in local restaurants.

I trust you will take my complaints seriously, and make every effort to improve your service in the future. I would also greatly appreciate a discount on my bill (receipt enclosed).

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Your faithfully,

L. G. Alexander

Example 3: Complaining About Noise

A nightclub has recently opened near to where you live. You are very unhappy about the situation because you believe it disturbs the peace of the neighbourhood.

Write a letter to your local government official. Say who you are. Explain why you are unhappy about the nightclub and suggest what should be done about it.

Dear Mr Blunket,

I have been a resident of Greenhouse Gardens, London Road, Oxford, for the past 16 years. However, a nightclub recently opened directly across the road from my apartment block that is causing me a lot of distress.

To begin with, the club itself is very unsightly. It has blackened windows with sexually explicit pictures displayed on the outside, which I find extremely offensive. Also, the noise level during the early hours of the morning when the club closes is so intense that it disturbs my sleep. Consequently I find that I am unable to concentrate fully on my job, as I am often too tired.

I work as a surgeon in the local hospital; therefore I'm sure you can appreciate the gravity of my complaint. Indeed, the consequences of my making an incorrect diagnosis due to lack of sleep can be very serious indeed.

I understand that as a member of the local government you have the power to close the club down. Nevertheless, I appreciate that people need to make a living and I would not like to be responsible for people losing their jobs. Therefore, if you could please ensure that the offensive pictures are removed, and the noise level is kept to a minimum, I would be more than satisfied.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

A. D. Blood (Dr)

Grammar & Language Focus

Tense Used

When writing a letter of complaint you generally use *the present tense* when writing the introduction because you are writing about something that is happening now.

When writing the main body it is usual to use *the present tense together with the past tense* because you are writing about something that may have happened in the past (*washing an item of clothing*) that has affected the present (*it no longer fits!*).

When writing the conclusion it is usual to use *the future tense* because you are asking the reader to do something for you (*refund your money, for example*) that can only happen in the future.

Person Used

In general you should use *the first person*. Therefore you should use personal pronouns such as *I, mine, you and yours* because you are talking about something that is affecting *you*.

Useful Expressions

I'm writing to complain about.....

I write to express my concern/dissatisfaction about.....

I'd like to express my disappointment about.....

I will appreciate anything you can do to help me.

I trust you will take my complaints seriously.....

I would, however, be perfectly satisfied if you would kindly replace the item or refund my money, whichever is more convenient.

Exercise 8: Writing A Letter Of Complaint

Question 1: You are a student at university. The dean of your university has planned to close the student union bar.

Write a letter to the dean. Complain about his decision to close the bar and state your reasons why it's important to you. (Answer provided.)

Question 2: You have recently returned home from a vacation. However, you were not satisfied with the service you received at the hotel where you stayed.

Write a letter to the manager of the hotel. Say who you are. Explain why you were dissatisfied and say what you'd like to be done about it.

Question 3: New neighbours have recently moved in next door to you. The neighbours are always arguing loudly, especially at night.

Write a letter to your landlord. Explain the problem and say what you'd like him or her to do about it.

Question 4: The local government has planned to build a major road directly in front of your home.

Write a letter to the local government officer. Say who you are. Explain why you are unhappy about the road being built and suggest what they could do instead.

Writing A Letter Of Suggestion

Notes

You may be asked to write a letter suggesting how a public service (e.g. a bus service) could be improved. When you are writing a letter of suggestion, remember you are not complaining. Therefore, your letter should be *polite* and *factual*.

Layout of a Letter of Suggestion

Introduction	(Reason for writing)
Main Body	Paragraph 1 (Things you like about the service) Paragraph 2 (Things that could be improved)
Conclusion	(Suggest what the reader should do)

You should begin the letter by saying what you find good about the service. If you don't, the person who is reading your letter may think you are complaining about their service.

Think of a letter of suggestion as a *two storeyed house* (!). Where the roof is the polite introduction, the second floor as the things you find good about the service, the first floor as the suggestions you want to make, and the foundations as the conclusion.

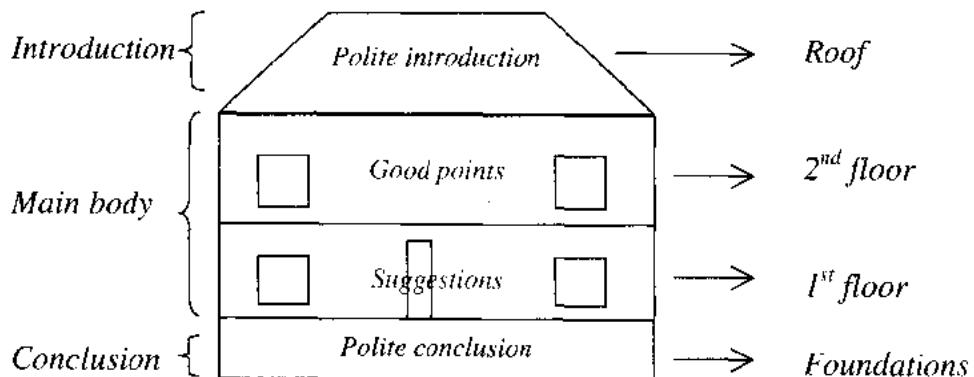


Fig. 10: Showing the feature of a letter of suggestion

The Introduction

In the introduction you should briefly introduce yourself and say why you are writing. However, don't give too many details; otherwise, they will be irrelevant.

Discussion: Writing The Introduction

Work with your partners. Look at the example introductions, 1a and 1b. Discuss the following questions:

- a) *What is wrong with example 1a?*
- b) *How can it be improved?*
- c) *Example 1b is much better. Why?*

Your local bus company is conducting a survey and wants to know what people think of the service they offer.

Write a letter to the manager. Say who you are. Say what you like about the service and make suggestions as to how it can be improved.

Example 1a

Dear Sir,

My name is Kevin Huang. My address is apartment number 107, building number 4, lane 46 Hong Kong Avenue, Shanghai. I am writing to tell you what I think about the service your company offers and how you could improve it.

Example 1b

Dear Sir,

I am a resident of Hong Kong Avenue, on route number 108. I write in reply to your invitation from local residents to present their opinions about the service you provide.

Author's Comments

Example 1a gives too many details. Your address is irrelevant because this would normally be included at the top of a real letter (see pages 17 and 18). And, of course, you should never begin a letter by giving your name.

It is also a little impolite: "*I am writing to tell you what I think about the service your company offers and how you could improve it.*" The person reading the letter will think you are complaining about something!

Example 1b is much better. It only gives the important details: "*I am a resident of Hong Kong Avenue, on route number 108.*" It also clearly states the reason for writing: "*I write in reply to your invitation from local residents.....*"

Writing The Main Body

The First Paragraph

You should divide the main body into two or three paragraphs, each one giving a different suggestion. The first paragraph should give details about what you like about the service. This is important, because the company needs to know what you find good about the service, as well as how you think it can be improved. And putting this good information first gives the reader a good impression.

The Second And Third Paragraphs

The second and third paragraphs should give details about how you think the service could be improved, *and why*. It is important to say why so the reader can assess how much of a benefit your suggestions will be.

Example First Paragraph

I'm very pleased with the regularity of the service and the condition of the buses. They are always clean and well maintained. The drivers are also very polite and helpful, often going out of their way to assist old people and pregnant women.

Say what you like about the service

Example Second And Third Paragraphs

I would, however, like to see the service extended beyond 10.00 o'clock at night as I often don't finish work until this time and generally miss the last bus. Many of my colleagues also find themselves in a similar position. I therefore feel it would be a great improvement if the service were to be extended to 10.30 or 11.00.

Give an opinion

Give your reasons

Suggest how it could be improved

My final suggestion is to extend the length of the route to include Macau Road, as many residents in my neighbourhood find it inconvenient to go shopping at present because the nearest stop is in Guandong Street, some fifteen minutes walk from Macau Road.

A second suggestion

Writing The Conclusion

When writing the conclusion to a letter of suggestion keep it brief and polite because, unlike most letters, you are not asking the reader to carry out an action (to phone you, for example). Therefore, it is the least important part. However, without a conclusion, your letter wouldn't appear very polite.

Example Conclusion

I appreciate your efforts to continually improve the service and will be more than happy to expand on any of the comments I've made here.

I look forward to an improved service.

Yours faithfully,

Test Tip

If you have to write a letter of suggestion, two or three opinions, with good reasons and suggestions, are enough.

Example 1: Letter Of Suggestion

A hotel you stayed in recently asked guests to write to the manager and suggest ways in which they could improve their service.

Write a letter to the manager. Explain who you are. Say what you liked about the hotel and suggest ways in which it could be improved.

Dear Sir,

I write in response to your invitation to guests who have recently stayed in your hotel to suggest ways in which you can improve your service.

I was a guest at your hotel last May, and I found that the level of customer care was excellent. Indeed, every member of your staff, from the manager to the maid, was, without exception, extremely polite and helpful. And the standard of the rooms was beyond what I expected.

However, I found that the restaurant stopped serving breakfast at 8.30 am. As I was on holiday I would have liked to take breakfast at around 9.00 o'clock, but was unable to do so. I also spoke to several other guests who expressed the same disappointment. In addition, I feel that if you could supply Chinese language newspapers, the quality of stay for Mandarin or Cantonese speakers would be considerably enhanced.

Looking forward to your reply.

Your faithfully,

Zhu Xiao Zhou

Example 2: Letter Of Suggestion

You are studying at university and one of your lecturers has asked his students to write and suggest ways in which he could improve his teaching.

Write a letter to the lecturer. Say what you enjoy about his lectures and suggest how they could be improved.

Dear Dr Stanley,

Last week you asked students to write and give you feedback on your lectures. Therefore, I have outlined my thoughts below.

In general, I find your lectures very informative and inspiring. Indeed, I particularly like the way you demonstrate complex issues with the use of simple drawings. This makes your lessons both interesting and memorable.

However, I do feel that you could provide us with more handouts, as I often don't have time to take down all the important points. I would also like to see more discussion work, as I find this method the most suitable way to clarify and deepen my understanding of the subject content.

I'd like to thank you for the interest you are taking in your students and look forward to your next lecture.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Bloggs

Grammar & Language Focus

Tense used

When writing a letter of suggestion you generally use *the present tense* when writing the introduction because you are expressing an action at the time of writing.

When writing the main body it is usual to use *the present tense together with the future tense* because you are expressing something about the service that is happening now (*the drivers are always very polite*) as well as suggesting improvements for the future (*I would, however, like to see the service extended*).

When writing the conclusion it is usual to use *the present tense* because you may express something that is happening now (*residents in my neighbourhood find it inconvenient to go shopping*) together with the future tense to suggest a future action (*I'd be happy to discuss the matter in further detail*).

Person Used

In general you should use *the first person*. Therefore you should use personal pronouns such as *I, mine, you and yours* because you are talking about your own feelings and a service offered by the person you are writing to.

Useful Expressions

I'm writing in reply to.....

I write with my suggestions about.....

I'd like to express my views on.....

Your service is excellent, however.....

I'd like to see more improvements in your service.

I feel that it would be beneficial if

I'd like to suggest that

I trust you'll consider my suggestions carefully.

I hope you will find my suggestions useful.

Exercise 9: Writing A Letter Of Suggestion

Question 1: Your local government official has asked residents in your neighbourhood to suggest how the facilities in the area could be improved.

Write a letter to your local government official. Say who you are. Suggest improvements and give your reasons. (Answer provided)

Question 2: You have recently returned home from a vacation. The manager of the hotel where you stayed has asked guests to suggest ways in which the hotel and the services they provide can be improved.

Write a letter to the manager of the hotel. Say who you are. Suggest improvements and give your reasons.

Question 3: Your local school wants to improve the facilities for the children who attend the school, and the local population.

Write a letter to the governor of the school. Say who you are. State your suggestions and your reasons.

Question 4: Your university has asked students to suggest how the library could be improved.

Write a letter to the principal. Say who you are and state your suggestions and your reasons.

Writing A Letter Of Application

Notes

You may be asked to write a letter of application (e.g. applying for a job) in the IELTS Test. A letter of application should be polite and factual. It should also emphasise your experience and strengths.

Layout of A Letter of Application

Introduction (Reason for writing)

Main Body

Paragraph 1 (Background information about yourself such as achievements and experiences)

Paragraph 2 (Reasons for applying and required response)

Conclusion (Suggest what the reader should do)

When you write a letter of application you are trying to sell yourself! Therefore, think of a letter of application as a *VCD Machine* (!). The outside of the machine looks very beautiful. But the parts inside may be either of very high quality or of very poor quality (you don't know until you have tried the machine for some time).

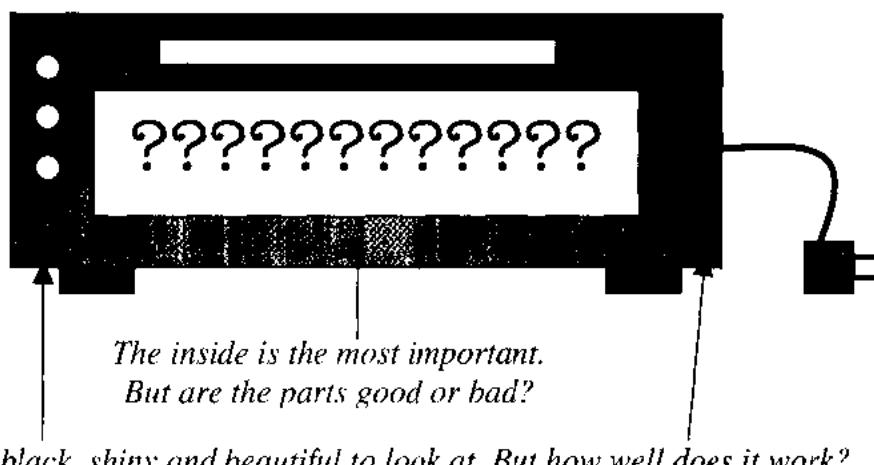


Fig. 11: Showing the feature of a letter of application

When writing a letter of application you should use the same approach. That is to say you should emphasise your strengths, abilities and experience but not your weak points.

Example

In my letter I say: Since my graduation in 1987 I've been working as a computer programmer for Designer Programmes, when I was mainly involved in the design and production of management information systems. I resigned last month to pursue a career in network design.

What really happened is: I joined Designer Programmes after graduating from university. However, I didn't get on well with the manager and he fired me last week because we had a big argument. Therefore, I'm looking for a new job!

Writing The Introduction

In the introduction you should briefly introduce yourself and say why you are writing. Information such as when and where the job was advertised are important because it is information the company needs assess how affective their advertising is.

Discussion

Work with your partners. Look at the example introductions, 1a and 1b. Discuss the following questions:

- a) *What is wrong with example 1a?*
- b) *How can it be improved?*
- c) *Example 1b is much better. Why?*

You have seen a job advertised in your local paper.

Write a letter of application. Introduce yourself. Give details of your experience and say why you'd like the job.

Example 1a

Dear Sir,

I'm a 45-year old man and graduated from Shanghai Jiao Tong University in 1981 with a Bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. I have spent the last 20 years working for a famous corporation. For the last 8 years I've been working as the manager of the maintenance department.

Example 1b

Dear Sir,

I'm currently working as a senior engineer in a famous corporation, and would like to apply for the position of senior engineer as advertised in the Xin Min Evening News on the 15th August.

Author's Comments

Example 1a gives too many details. You should not give your age (unless you are in your early 20s) because many companies don't like hiring older people. Details such as when and where you graduated, and how long you've been working for, should go in the main body. However, don't give too many details as they are included in your résumé.

Example 1b is much better. It only gives the important details: "*I'm currently working as a senior engineer in a famous corporation*". It also clearly states the reason for writing: "*..... (I) would like to apply for the position of senior engineer.....*" and states where and when the job was advertised "*as advertised in the Xin Min Evening News on the 15th August*".

Writing The Main Body

The main body should be divided in three paragraphs.

Paragraph One

Here you should give brief details about your background. However, you shouldn't give details such as dates and places where you've worked (except your latest job) because this information is included in your résumé.

Paragraph Two

Here you should outline your achievements, giving brief details or promotions or special projects you've worked on, including brief details of your responsibilities. Again, don't add too much detail otherwise you'll repeat the information in your résumé.

Paragraph Three

Here you should give your reasons for applying for the job. This is important because the reader will want to know the reason why you want to leave your present company or job.

Example Main Body

Following my graduation from Shanghai Jiao Tong University, I worked for a famous corporation as an engineer. I've remained at the company since my graduation and have gained a wealth of experience. In fact I've been involved in a number of projects, the most recent being the supervising of the installation of up-to-date blast furnace technology.

Here you should give some background information

I was promoted to senior engineer in 1989, and to departmental manager in 1994 following the publication of an article in the "The Engineer" outlining my design for an improved system.

Here you should briefly outline your achievements

However, I feel as though I need to move away from the company if I am to further my career, as my company still operates on the traditional ethos of age status. Therefore, I consider that I have progressed as far as I can in my present company. At least for the next ten years.

Here you should give your reasons for applying for the job

Writing The Conclusion

When writing the conclusion to a letter of application you want the person reading the letter to reply to you. However, it is important to keep it brief because the person reading the letter is probably a very busy person and, therefore, has no time, or interest, in reading a long essay!

Example Conclusion

I hope you find my experience satisfactory and look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely

Example 1: Applying For A Job

You have seen a job advertised in your local newspaper.

Write a letter to the personnel manager. Introduce yourself. Outline your experiences and qualifications and say why you'd like the job.

Dear Mrs Washup,

I'm writing in response to the advertisement you placed in the Manchester Evening News for a librarian.

I graduated with a Master's degree in librarian studies in 1982, and began my career in Guildford Public Library. In 1989 I moved to Central Library, London, and in 1992 was promoted to subject specialist in the humanities department.

During the past ten years I have also been actively involved in academic research, and have published several articles in "Librarian Now", "Library Matters" and "Librarian Daily". I also teach librarian studies on a part-time basis at the university of London.

However, my husband has recently been re-located to Manchester by his company, and I am therefore seeking a position in the same area.

I have enclosed my résumé that outlines in detail my qualifications and experience as well as an open letter of recommendation from London Central Library.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

B. Worm

Example 2: Applying For A Scholarship

A university in the UK is advertising scholarships in your field of expertise.

Write a letter to the professor of the department. Introduce yourself. Give details about your education and experience, and say why you should be considered for the scholarship.

Dear Professor Jarvis,

I write to submit my application for the Ph.D. scholarship in strategic management.

I graduated in 1989 with a degree in International Finance and spent the first five years of my career working for the local government in the environmental planning department. In 1994 I returned to university and read for an MBA in strategic management.

I completed my dissertation on industrial modernisation, and published several articles in "The Manager" and "The Journal of Strategic Management". I have also travelled widely throughout Europe and Asia as a guest lecturer in many prestigious universities, including the University of Tokyo and the University of Paris.

I believe that the advanced knowledge and understanding I would gain from pursuing a Ph.D. would put me in a strong position to assist in the continued modernisation of industrial practices in China.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

He Li Ping

Grammar & Language Focus

Tense Used

When writing a letter of application you generally use *the present tense* when writing the introduction because you are expressing a present action (*I'm writing to...*). Using *a passive voice* makes the letter more polite. Compare the following examples.

Example I: *I want to apply for the position of senior engineer as advertised in the Xin Min Evening News on the 15th August.*

Example II: *I would like to apply for the position of senior engineer as advertised in the Xin Min Evening News on the 15th August.*

Author's Comments

In example II, "...want to apply for..." has been changed to "...would like to apply for..." This makes the letter more polite. *Being polite is very important in a letter of application because you are not writing to request something. You are writing to ask the person to consider something.*

When writing the main body of a letter of application it is usual to use *the past tense together with the present tense* because you are talking about past achievements (*I graduated in 1989*) and what you are doing now (*I'm presently engaged in....*).

When writing the conclusion it is usual to use *the future tense* because you are talking about future desires (*I look forward to.....*).

Person Used

In general you should use *the first person*. Therefore you should use personal pronouns such as *I, mine, you and yours* because you are talking about yourself and the person, company or organisation you are writing to.

Useful Expressions: Letters Of Application

I'm writing in response to your advertisement in Shanghai Daily of August 8.

Your advertisement for a news reporter in today's People's Daily interested me.

I'd like to apply for the position of operator you advertised in

I'm writing in response to the advertisement you placed in the Manchester Evening News for a librarian.

I have rich experience in sales fields.

I have enclosed my résumé that outlines in detail my qualifications and experience.

I'm quite content with my present job; however, I have to leave to further my career.

Due to economic adversity, I have to leave my present job.

Should you grant me a personal interview, I would be very grateful.

Exercise 10: Writing A Letter Of Application

Question 1: Your local newspaper is organising a writing competition.

Write a letter to the editor. Explain why you are applying to join the competition and give details of a story you've written. (Answer provided)

Question 2: You have seen a job advertised in your local paper.

Write a letter to the personnel manager. Explain your reasons for applying. Give some information about yourself and say why you want to leave your present company.

Question 3: You are studying at university overseas. Recently, your department has advertised for an overseas student to assist the professor in an important research project.

Write a letter to the professor. Give some information about yourself, including your research interests, and explain how you will benefit from the experience.

Question 4: You want to study in an American university.

Write a letter to the admission office of that university. Introduce yourself, outline your achievements and express your hope that your application could be accepted.

Writing A Letter Asking For Information

Notes

You may be asked to write a letter asking for information. When you are writing a letter asking for information your letter should be polite and *only* ask for information you know the person will be able to provide.

Layout of A letter Asking for Information

Introduction (Reason for writing)

Main Body (Specific details of the information including any special requirements)

Conclusion (Suggest a response)

Think of a letter asking for information as a *water well* (!). To be able to get the water out of the well you first need to lower a bucket down the hole and raise it when it's full of water. Think of your letter as the bucket, and the information you need as the water.

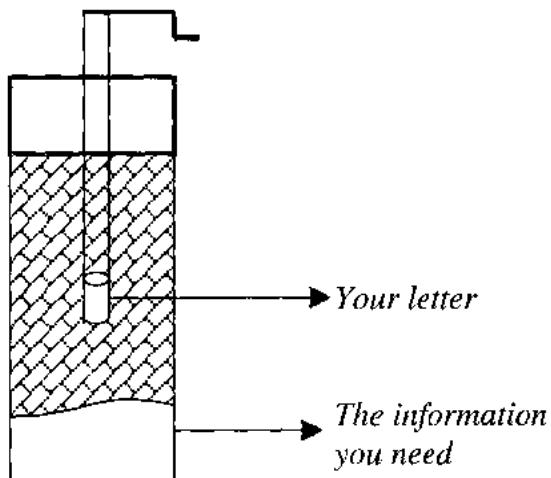


Fig. 12: Showing the feature of a letter asking for information

Writing The Introduction

In the introduction you should briefly introduce yourself and say why you are writing.

Discussion

Work with your partners. Look at the example introductions, 1a and 1b. Discuss the following questions:

- a) What is wrong with example 1a?
- b) How can it be improved?
- c) Example 1b is much better. Why?

You are interested in studying at university.

Write a letter to the admissions officer. Say who you are and ask for any relevant information.

Example 1a

Dear Sir,

I'm a 35-year old man and graduated from Fudan University in 1988 with a Bachelor's degree in Computer engineering. I have been working as an engineer in Ford Motor Company but would like to make a career change. Therefore, I'd like some information about the MBA course at your university that begins in September.

Example 1b

Dear Sir,

I'd like to receive some information regarding the MBA at your university.

Author's Comments

Example 1a gives too much information. Details such as your age, when and where you graduated, and your major are irrelevant.

Example 1b is much better. It simply gives a brief, yet polite reason for writing.

Writing The Main Body

The main body should be divided into two or three paragraphs. Each paragraph should focus on a different request.

The Main Body

Here you should give brief details about yourself. Information such as your sex or age may be important. For example, if you are asking for information about university accommodation, your age is important because young people prefer to be with other young people so they can enjoy parties and discos. Older people may prefer a quieter location. Your sex is important because if you are a female student you may prefer to share some accommodation with other female students. Therefore, these details *are* important.

Also in the main body think of other information you may need, such as bus times and routes to and from the train station, or airport, to the university. Or even a map of the campus or area. Remember, also, to keep your letter polite, even if it is the person's job to provide you with the information you need.

Example Main Body

I'm a mature, female student and would prefer, as far as possible, to share some accommodation with other mature female students, preferably in a quiet location. However, I have no objection to living on campus as long as it is quiet enough for me to study. I'm also a non-smoker, and would prefer to share with other non-smokers, although this is a preference rather than a request.

Give as much information as the person needs, but don't give unnecessary details.

I will arrive in London on the 26th August from Shanghai, and would be very grateful if you could also send me details of how to get to the university from London Heathrow Airport, as this will be my first time to the UK.

If you make a second request, use a separate paragraph.

Writing The Conclusion

When writing the conclusion to a letter asking for information, keep it brief and polite. Remember to ask the person to reply to you!

Example Conclusion

I look forward to receiving the information and meeting you in person in September.

Yours sincerely

Example 1: Asking For Information

Your local museum is advertising an exhibition that you are interested in going to see.

Write a letter to the manager of the museum. Introduce yourself, and ask for any relevant information.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I'd like to receive some information about the forthcoming Qing Dynasty exhibition at your museum.

I'm presently studying for a degree in ancient Chinese Literature and have a particular interest in this period. Indeed, I shall soon begin writing my dissertation focusing on how much the literature tells us about the way in which ordinary people of the time lived. I am therefore interested to know if your exhibition focuses on all sectors of Qing Dynasty society, or whether it is mainly concerned with the monarchy.

My second request, may, I feel, be a little unusual. But I would like to know if you have any written documents dating back to this period in your archives. And if so, would I be allowed to review any of the material?

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Your faithfully,

Qing Zhou

Example 2: Asking For Information

You are considering immigrating to another country.

Write a letter to the immigration office of the country you wish to go to. Introduce yourself. Give details about your education and work experience and ask for details about how to apply for immigration.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I would like to receive information regarding the immigration procedures to Canada.

I am 34 years old and am currently working as a senior mechanical engineer. I hold Bachelor's and a Master's degree from the Tong Ji University, Shanghai. I am married and my wife will be having our first child this coming autumn.

I have been considering immigrating to Canada for some time, and would like to know if my qualifications and work experience make me eligible to apply. I have enclosed my résumé as well as a statement of my current financial status and English professional level.

I'd also like to know if my wife and I can make one application, or whether we have to apply separately. In addition, if you could send me information regarding permanent residence in Canada I'd be most grateful.

I look forward to receiving the information at your earliest convenience.

Yours truly,

Kevin Qiu

Grammar & Language Focus

Tense Used

When writing a letter asking for information you generally use *the future tense* when writing the introduction because it's the information you want to receive in the future.

When writing the main body it is usual to use *the present tense together with the future tense* because you give some background information about the present (*I'm a mature, female student*) and requesting something to happen in the future (*I would prefer to share with other non-smokers*).

When writing the conclusion it is usual to use *the future tense* because you are expressing a future desire (*I look forward to receiving the information*).

Person Used

In general you should use *the first person*. Therefore you should use personal pronouns such as *I, mine, you and yours* because you are talking about yourself and requesting information from the person reading the letter.

Useful Expressions

I'm writing for information about.....

I'd like to receive.....

I would like to receive information regarding.....

I would like to request materials for.....

I would like to know.....

If you could send me information regarding, I'd be most grateful.

I should be very grateful if you could let me have information about.....

I should be most grateful to you if you would kindly send me the details of.....

I shall appreciate the information about.....

Exercise 11: Writing A Letter Asking For Information

Question 1: There is a conference going to be held at your local university that you would like to attend.

Write a letter to the organiser of the conference. Explain your reasons for wanting to attend. Give some information about yourself and ask for any relevant information.
(Answer provided)

Question 2: Your company's General Manager has invited you to give a talk.

Write a letter to the organiser. Explain your reasons for writing. Give some information about your talk and ask for information about the equipment, seating arrangements etc.

Question 3: You are interested in buying a new computer system for your company.

Write a letter to the sales manager of the computer company. Explain your reasons for writing. Ask for any relevant information such as delivery costs, after sales service and discounts.

Question 4: The General Manager of your company has been invited to give a talk at the next management meeting in your office. You have been asked to make all the necessary arrangements.

Write to the General Manager. Describe the room you have available. Ask him or her about necessary facilities, such as an overhead projector and other necessary requirements such as seating arrangements.

Writing A Letter To A Friend

Notes

You may be asked to write a letter to a friend. When you are writing a letter to a friend you should still be polite but you can be more informal with your writing.

Layout of A Letter to a Friend

Introduction	(Reason for writing)
Main Body	Paragraph 2 (Details such as when, where)
	Paragraph 3 (Other necessary information)
Conclusion	(What you want your friend to do)

Think of a letter to a friend as a *telephone conversation* (!). What you say during the telephone conversation is *similar* to what you should write. A letter, however, is properly organised and uses slightly more formal language.

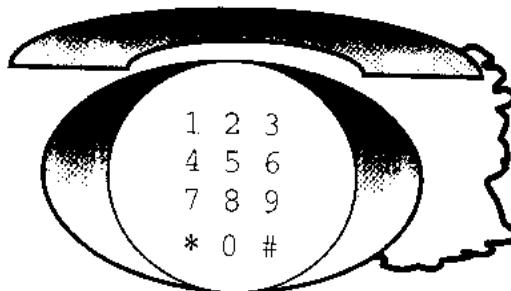


Fig. 13: Showing the feature of a letter to a friend

Example Telephone Conversation To A Friend

- a) Hi Phil, how's it going?
- b) Not so bad. And you? } *Introduction*
- a) Can't complain.
- a) Hey, I was thinking of inviting a few friends over for dinner. Are you free? } *Main body*
- b) When is it?
- a) Wednesday, 7 O'clock.
- b) Yeah, sure. I'd love to come. Is it OK if I bring a friend? } *Conclusion*
- a) Yeah, of course. No problem.
- b) Great. See you Wednesday then.
- a) See you Wednesday. Have a good week.
- b) You too.
- b) Bye.
- a) Bye. } *Polite close*

Example Letter To A Friend

You are arranging a dinner party.

Write a letter to your friend. Invite him or her to the party. Give the necessary details and say why you are holding it.

Dear Bob,

*How are you? I haven't seen you for a while.
Hope all is well. Anyway, I'm writing because I'm
inviting some friends over for dinner and I thought
you'd like to join us.*

*The dinner will be at my place, next Wednesday at
7 o'clock. Mary's doing the cooking (I'm sure
you'll be pleased to learn!). Sichuan food, I believe.
I'll be taking care of the bar!*

*I've included a map of how to get to our new
apartment. It's a little out of the way, I'm afraid, but
we've got a spare room and you're welcome to stay
the night if you wish. In fact, there's an exhibition on
at the museum, so we can go and take a look on
Thursday. One request, though. Bring some music
with you. Some classical and jazz would be nice.*

*Anyway, do let me know if you can make it. My new
number's at the top of the page, so you can give me
call sometime.*

*Take care and see you soon.
Sam*

*Introduction
and your reason
for writing*

Main body

Conclusion

Polite close

Writing The Introduction

In the introduction you want to be friendly and clearly state your reason for writing.

Writing The Main Body

Here you should give as much information as you think your friend needs, and explain your reasons.

Writing The Conclusion

When writing the conclusion make sure to say what you want the person to do. Phone you, for example.

Example 1: Letter To A Friend

You are on holiday and want your friend to join you.

Write a letter to your friend. Introduce the place where you are. Say what you are doing and suggest things that he or she can do.

Dear Sarah,

I'm sure you're going to be very envious when you read this but I am presently lying on a beach in Southern Thailand. As you've no doubt guessed, I'm currently on holiday. In fact, this is the reason I'm writing. How would you like to come to Thailand for a while?

I live in a quiet town just outside of Bangkok, which is about a 1-hour bus ride from coast; a very scenic place indeed. I also have a spare room available because my flat mate is away in Japan until August, so you won't have to worry about expensive accommodation.

I'm working in a local school, teaching maths and computers to young children. The kids are really enthusiastic and very friendly. You'll love meeting them. In fact, if you wanted to stay longer I could ask the principle if she wouldn't mind you working here for a while. With your qualifications and experience it shouldn't be a problem.

Anyway, please let me know your decision as soon as possible.

Bye for now.

Julie

Example 2: Letter To A Friend

You have been invited to a friend's wedding. However, you cannot attend.

Write a letter to your friend. Thank them for the invitation and explain why you are unable to attend.

Dear Steve and Monica,

Thank you very much for the invitation to your wedding. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend.

The reason, I'm pleased to say, is that Wendy is pregnant, and the baby is due more or less on the day of your wedding! Although she said it'd be all right for me to come alone, I feel it's my duty as a husband to be by her side, and to care for her after the baby arrives.

We're both hoping it'll be a girl and plan to name her Margaret, after her grandmother. But if it's a boy we plan to name him Fredrick. No particular reason except that we both like the name.

Anyway, I would like to wish you both a long and happy life together and hope to come to see you as soon as Wendy is well enough.

Have a wonderful day and don't forget to send us some photographs.

Cheers for now.

Patrick and Wendy

Grammar & Language Focus

Tense Used

When writing a letter to a friend you generally use *the present tense together with the future tense* when writing the introduction because you are expressing something you're doing now to express a future desire (*I'm writing to invite some friends over for dinner*).

When writing the main body of a letter to a friend it is usual to use *the future tense* if you are, for example, inviting them to visit you, or *the present tense* if, for example, you are writing about an experience (an holiday, for example).

When writing the conclusion it is usual to use *the future tense* because you are asking them to respond in some way (do let me know if you can make it).

Person Used

In general you should use the first person because you are talking about yourself and your own experiences. Therefore you should use personal pronouns such as *I, mine, you and yours*.

Useful Expressions

I'm writing to.....

I thought you'd like to know.....

How would you like to.....

Have a wonderful time.

You must come to visit me next summer.

Please remember me to your family.

My wife and I are looking forward to meeting your family.

I regret bitterly that I cannot accept your invitation.

Please write soon, and let me know what time I can find you at home.

Would you please drop me a line to let me know if you can come?

Exercise 12: Writing A Letter To A Friend

Work in groups. Write the following letter to a friend.

Question 1: You have recently moved to a new apartment.

Write a letter to your friend. Describe your new apartment and invite him or her to visit you. (Answer provided.)

Question 2: You have just started a course at a new university.

Write a letter to your friend. Tell him or her about the course. Describe the university and give details about life on campus.

Question 3: You are a university student. It will soon be the summer vacation and you want to go on holiday.

Write a letter to your friend. Say where you would like to go and why. Invite your friend to go with you.

Question 4: Your friend Tom was ill and stayed in hospital for a week. However, he has just recovered and returned back home.

Write a letter to him. Ask him how he feels and how he is spending his time. Tell him you will visit him sometime next week.

Unit 4 Coherence And Cohesion In Letter Writing

Notes

Coherence and cohesion refers to how easy it is to read your letter and how well you have used sentence connectors to help express your meaning. Below is an example letter of complaint. Read the letter and then look at the analysis of the sentence connectors used.

Sentence Connector Use In Letter Writing

Example

You have recently purchased a faulty item of clothing from your local department store.

Write a letter to the manager of the store. Describe the problem and say what you would like done about it.

Dear Sir,

I write regarding the recent purchase of a machine-washable, woollen sweater from your department store in Bedford Road, London, on June 25, 2001.

I recently washed the sweater in cool water, as per the instructions on the label. However, when I removed the sweater from the machine the garment was stretched out of shape, and no longer fits.

I phoned the store last Tuesday (June 21) and spoke to the department manager, a Mr Raymond Mould, who was rather rude on the phone and informed me that I am not able to get a replacement sweater as it was purchased at a reduced price. I have been a loyal customer for many years, and until this incident, never had any complaints. I therefore feel disappointed to be treated in such a manner.

I would, however, be perfectly satisfied if you would kindly replace the sweater or refund my money, whichever is more convenient for you.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Mable March

Analysis Of Sentence Connector Use

Dear Sir,

I write regarding the recent purchase of a machine-washable, woollen sweater from your department store in Bedford Road, London, on June 25, 2001.

Introduces contrasting information

I recently washed the sweater in cool water, as per the instructions on the label. *However*, when I removed the sweater from the machine the garment was stretched out of shape, *and* no longer fits.

Introduces additional information

I phoned the store last Tuesday (June 21) *and* spoke to the department manager, a Mr Raymond Mould, who was rather rude on the phone and informed me that I am not able to get a replacement sweater as it was purchased at a reduced price. I have been a loyal customer for many years, *and until this incident*, never had any complaints. I *therefore* feel disappointed to be treated in such a manner.

Introduces a result

*Introduces additional information along with a phrase
to express a time, or when something happened*

Introduces contrasting information

I would, *however*, be perfectly satisfied if you would kindly replace the sweater or refund my money, *whichever* is more convenient for you.

Indicates a choice to be made by the reader

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Mable March

Exercise 13: Coherence And Cohesion In Letter Writing

Work in groups. Look at the following letter and complete the sentences using the appropriate sentence connectors from the box below. Explain your choice of words. (Answer provided)

Sentence Connectors

Moreover	Furthermore	However	Indeed	As a result
Although	Nevertheless	In addition	Because of this	
Therefore	In fact	Both	But	And
Especially	Whilst	Additionally		

Question 1

Dear Sir,

I write regarding the availability of student accommodation.

I'm an overseas student _____ will arrive at the university on the 4th September. I would like, as far as possible, to live on campus. _____. I'm a mature student and would prefer a quiet room away from younger students. I'd _____ prefer to share with other female students, preferably one's who don't smoke, _____. this is not a strict request.

I shall be reading for my Ph.D. in biological science, and would like to be within easy walking distance of the laboratory if this is possible. _____ once again this is a preference rather than a requirement.

I am due to arrive in London on the morning of the 4th September. _____, this will be my first time to visit the UK _____. I will be grateful if you can also let me have directions to the university, along with train times etc.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Liu

Question 2

Dear Mrs Brown,

I am a final year undergraduate, living in student accommodation (block C). _____ I write to express my concern about the level of noise on campus late at night.

I am currently writing my final year dissertation. _____ I often have to work late into the night. _____, I find that I am often disturbed by the level of noise caused by the younger students after a night of partying. _____ I would like to request a move to an accommodation block that is located in a quieter part of the campus.

_____, I still prefer to share with other female students, _____ non-smokers. _____, I'd be prepared to share with students who smoke provided the accommodation is in a quiet location. _____ a place off campus would serve my purposes just as well.

I will call in to your office next week and make an appointment to see you. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Wang

Question 3

Dear Sir,

I write to apply for the position of management consultant as advertised in the New York Daily (September 26).

I graduated from Harvard in 1986 with an MBA in financial management _____ have been working for McDougle and Snipe ever since.

_____ McDougle and Snipe are a well-respected company, I feel that my promotional opportunities are limited given its size. I am, _____, seeking a more challenging position in an international company.

_____, I have gained a broad range of experience _____.
have travelled widely, _____ internationally and domestically.
_____, whilst my MBA is in financial management I
_____ have considerable experience working in project management
gained during 1978 to 1984, when I worked for General Motors.

I have included my résumé for your consideration _____ hope to hear
from you shortly.

Yours sincerely,

R. Biggs

Question 4***Group Analysis***

Task A: Change groups and compare what you have written with the other group members.

Task B: Re-join your first group members. Discuss your ideas and make any changes you feel necessary.

Task C: Elect one person to present your letter to the class.

Remember: Often, we can use several different sentence connectors to connect the same sentences.

Unit 5 Writing A Full Letter

Notes

By now you should be fully familiar with letter writing for the IELTS test, and should be able to identify weaknesses in letters other people have written.

Student Letter Analysis

Below is a detailed analysis of the letters written by students. All the letters were written under the same conditions as a real IELTS test.

You have recently returned home from a trip abroad. When you arrived back in China you found your suitcase was missing.

Write a letter to the manager of the airport. Say what happened. Describe your suitcase and the contents. Say what you'd like to be done about it.

Letter 1

Dear sir/madam,

I am writing about my suitcase which was lost on your plane last week.

When I got on the plane, I put my suitcase beside me and I forgot it at all when I got off. It is a small, black suitcase, in which have a tiny address book contain my address and phone number and some documents. Although it has been four days, there's no one called me for it. I wonder whether you have found it on the plane, so, could you arrange to send it to me by EMS. I will pay all the costs it may cause.

I will appreciate it very much if you can give me your earliest reply and thank you for all the things you have done for me.

Yours sincerely,

Detailed Letter Analysis

There are 5 main problems with this letter.

1) There are important details missing in the introduction.

I am writing about my suitcase which was lost on your plane last week. (Line 1)

The candidate should have included details such as the day, flight number and destination (i.e. London to Shanghai). Therefore, task fulfillment is poor.

2) In paragraph 2 the candidate has left out many important details.

The letter title says *describe* the suitcase and its contents. Yet the candidate hasn't described the contents of the suitcase, and has only briefly described the case itself.

It is a small, black suitcase, in which have a tiny address book contain my address and phone number and some documents.
(Line 3)

3) Organisation is also poor. The candidate has also talked about three different topics in the same paragraph: what happened, the description of the suitcase and its contents, *and* suggested what he wanted the reader to do. The topics, however, should go in separate paragraphs. Instead, the candidate included all information in Paragraph 2.

4) It uses inappropriate language and there are some grammatical mistakes.

“When I got on the plane, I put my suitcase beside me and I forgot it at all when I got off.” should be

“*When I got on the plane I put my suitcase beside me and forgot it when I got off.*”
Pay attention to the adverb you used.

“It is a small, black suitcase, in which have a tiny address book contain my address and phone number and some documents.” should be

“*It's a small black suitcase, in which there is a tiny address book containing my address and phone number as well as some documents.*”

Pay attention to the difference between (there be) and (have). Practice using correct verb forms.

“Although it has been four days, there's no one called me for it.” should be

“*Although it has been four days no one has called me about it.*”

Use the right verb form.

“I wonder whether you have found it on the plane, so, could you arrange to send it to me by EMS, I will pay all the costs it may cause.” should be

“*I wonder whether you have found it on the plane. If so, could you please send it to me by EMS? I will pay all the costs incurred.*”

“I will appreciate it very much if you can give me your earliest reply and thank you for all the things you have done for me.” should be

“*I will appreciate it very much if you can give me your earliest reply and thank you for anything you can do for me.*”

Pay attention to the tense here. The airline hasn't done anything for you except lose your suitcase!

Overall, the letter is poorly organised and does not fulfill the tasks very well. It would not get a very high score in an IELTS test.

Letter 2

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you about the loss of my suitcase.

Last Monday, I took the plane CZ2148 of your company from Shanghai to London. When I wanted to take my luggage after arrival I couldn't find my suitcase. I immediately contacted your agent at the airport and was told that they would help me to look for it in two days. However, one week passed. I still don't get any information from you.

My suitcase is 24" size with black, soft polyester cover outside. There are some of my personal goods in it, such as clothing, shoes. But most important inside one series of books, which is very helpful for my university study. There is also a label of my address on the handle. So please give this matter your prompt attention.

I'll appreciate it very much if you can help me to find my suitcase. Otherwise, I have no choice but to ask for compensation for my lost luggage, that is US\$ 200 totally.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Detailed Letter Analysis

There are 4 main problems with this letter.

1) There are important details missing in the introduction.

I am writing to you about the loss of my suitcase. (Line 1)

The candidate should have included details such as the day, flight number and destination (i.e. London to Shanghai). Therefore, task fulfillment is poor.

2) The candidate has begun to describe the contents but could have included more details such as the type of clothing and books (i.e. a series of economic books).

*There are some of my personal goods in it, such as clothing, shoes.
But most important inside one series of books, which is very
helpful for my university study. (Line 7)*

3) The conclusion should include a suggested action.

Example: "please look into the matter and call me as soon as the case has been recovered." Instead, the candidate writes threateningly as follows:

*I'll appreciate it very much if you can help me to find my suitcase.
Otherwise, I have no choice but to ask for compensation for my
lost luggage, that is US\$ 200 totally. (Paragraph 4)*

4) It uses inappropriate language and there are some grammatical mistakes.

"Last Monday, I took the plane CZ2148 of your company from Shanghai to London." should be

"Last Monday I took flight CZ2148 from Shanghai to London."

"Of your company" is irrelevant information.

"There are some of my personal goods in it, such as clothing, shoes." should be

"There are some personal goods in it, such as clothing and shoes."

"There is also a label of my address on the handle." should be

"My address is on the label attached to the handle."

"However, one week passed. I still don't get any information from you." should be

"However, one week has passed and I still haven't received any information."

Pay attention to the tense. It talks about something which has lasted until the present.

Overall, the letter is better than example letters 1 and 3.

Letter 3

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter about my suitcase which was lost in your plane.

I came back Shanghai from New York by the plane of your company on April 5, 2001. The flight number was NU2566. Unfortunately, I forgot my suitcase in the plane and went straight home. The suitcase is black leather case. There are some clothes of mine and a notebook in it. More seriously, there are still important documents in that suitcase. As you know, I went home from New York on a business trip. I was sent by my company to New York. These documents are very important to me and my company.

I shall appreciate it very much if you can give me a favourable reply.

Yours sincerely,

Detailed Letter Analysis

There are 4 main problems with this letter.

1) There are important details missing in the introduction.

I am writing this letter about my suitcase which was lost in your plane. (Line 1)

2) Organisation is poor. For example, in paragraph 2 the candidate writes:

I came back Shanghai from New York by the plane of your company on April 5, 2001. The flight number was NU2566. (Line 2)

This information should be included in the introduction because it is the reason for writing.

3) In paragraph 2 the candidate has left out many important details. The letter title says *describe* the suitcase and its contents. Yet the candidate hasn't done this in detail.

The suitcase is black leather case. There are some clothes of mine and a notebook in it. More seriously, there are still important documents in that suitcase. (Line 4)

4) It uses inappropriate language and there are some grammatical mistakes.

"As you know, I went home from New York on a business trip. I was sent by my company to New York. These documents are very important to me and my company." This is irrelevant information.

"Unfortunately, I forgot my suitcase in the plane and went straight home." should be
"Unfortunately, I left my suitcase on the plane and went straight home."

Try not to be influenced by your Chinese way of thought.

Overall, the letter is poorly organised and does not fulfill the tasks very well. It would not get a very high score in an IELTS test.

Example Letter

Dear Sir,

I write concerning the loss of my suitcase on flight SU163, London to Shanghai, on Monday July 5, 2001.

I reported the loss to the airport manager, Mrs Qiu Wei, on my arrival in Shanghai. She informed me the case had been misdirected to Bangkok during my transit in Paris, and immediately called the manager at Charles De Gaul Airport, a Mr Roland Kubler. However, to date, my luggage has still not arrived in Shanghai.

It's a large, plain, black case with two silver fasteners on the lid, and contains a blue business suit, two shirts (one blue, one white) and a blue spotted silk tie. In addition, there is a pair of Levi jeans, a red woolen sweater and a clear plastic wash bag containing shampoo, soap, toothpaste etc.

Please look into this matter and notify me as soon as my luggage has been recovered.

I look forward to an early response.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Sole

Unit 6 Practice Tests

Practice Test One

You have seen a package tour advertised in your local newspaper.

Write a letter to the company. Ask for details of the holiday and include any special requirements such as vegetarian food. (Answer provided.)

Begin your letter ‘Dear.....’

Practice Test Two

The company you work for is advertising a job that you'd like to apply for.

Write a letter to the personnel manager. Explain your reasons for applying. Give some information about yourself and say why you'd like the job. (Answer provided)

Begin your letter 'Dear.....'

Practice Test Three

You have a friend in Australia who has recently invited you to spend a vacation with him/her. However, you are unable to go due to personal reasons.

*Write a letter to your friend. Thank him/her for inviting you and explain your reasons.
(Answer Provided)*

Begin your letter ‘Dear.....’

Practice Test Four

Your local TV channel has asked viewers to write with suggestions about how a regular evening programme could be improved.

Write a letter to the editor. Introduce yourself. Say what you like about the programme and suggest ways in which it could be improved. (Answer provided)

Begin your letter ‘Dear.....’

Chapter Three

Academic Test Task One: Report Writing

第三章

学术类写作的第一部分：
报告写作

Introduction To Academic Test One: Report Writing

学术类考试第一部分简介：报告写作

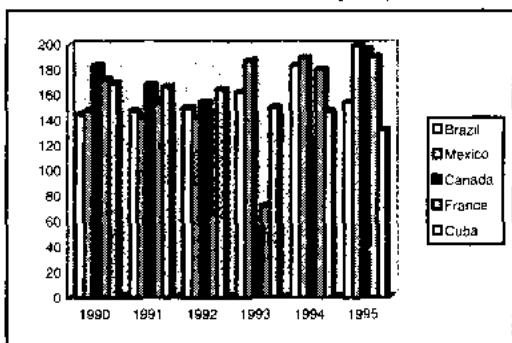
Types Of Charts 各种类型的图表

Notes

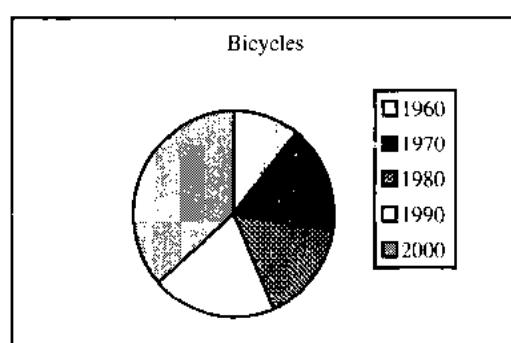
In task one of the academic test you have to write a 150-word report for a university lecturer based on data you are given. You have 20 minutes in which to do this. In the report, you are asked to describe the data. Data are presented in the form of a chart, such as a bar chart, line chart or pie chart, or maybe a table of figures. You should use formal language.

学术类的第一部分要求你根据所给的数据为大学的演讲人写上一篇 150 字的报告。要求在 20 分钟之内完成。你需要对所给的数据进行描述。数据以各种不同类型的图表的形式出现，可能是条形图、圆形分析图、曲线图和数据表。要使用正式语言。

Bar Chart (条形图)



Pie Chart (圆形分析图)



Line Chart (曲线图)

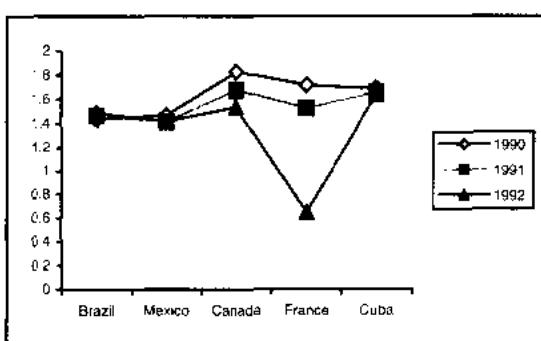


Table of Figures (数据表)

1960	1970	1980	1990
1356	1496	1495	1568
1524	1647	1992	1884
1326	1397	1220	1008
1466	1520	1564	1312
1777	1756	1700	1626
1212	1210	1210	1212

Fig. 14: Showing the different types of charts

图 14：不同类型的图表

Assessment Criteria 评判标准

Task One Is Assessed On (评分依据的三个方面)

- ⇒ Task fulfillment (完成要求情况)
- ⇒ Coherence and cohesion (统一性和连贯性)
- ⇒ Vocabulary and sentence structure (词汇和句型)

Task fulfillment refers to how well you have described the data.

完成要求情况指的是你怎样对所给数据进行描述。

Coherence and cohesion refers to how well you have structured the report and how easy it is to read. This includes use of sentence connectors.

统一性和连贯性指的是你怎样组织报告以及报告是否易于理解。这里包括句间关联词的使用。

Vocabulary and sentence structure refers to how many mistakes you make in sentence structure and word use.

词汇和句型指的是你在句型和单词使用上的出错情况。

Layout Of A Report 报告的结构

Notes

When you write your report, you should use the same general layout as an essay. That is to say, it should have three distinct sections, as outlined in figure 15, below.
写报告的时候，报告的结构同小论文的结构一样。也就是说，应该有三个部分，如图 15 中所示。

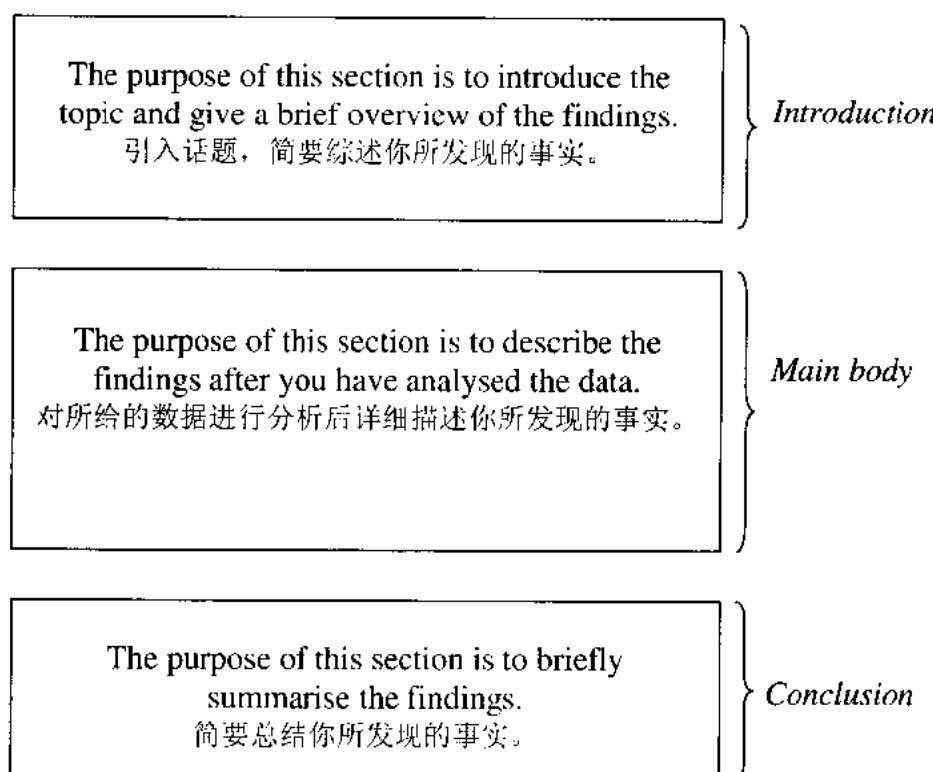


Fig. 15: Showing the standard layout of a report

图 15: 报告的一般结构

Unit 1 Task Fulfillment

Notes

Task fulfillment refers to how well you have answered the question accurately. However, to do this well, you must develop your ideas and make sure that you don't leave out information, or include irrelevant information. It is important, therefore, that you first of all look *very carefully* at the data, and try to find trends and unusual or unexpected results.

Analysing The Data

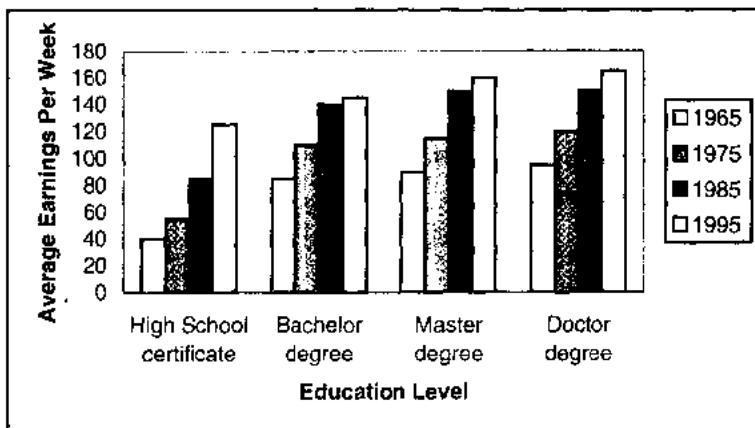
Analysing The Data In Charts

It is very important that you look at the data very carefully. You should know what the data is describing. If you do not, you cannot get a high band score for task one.

Look at the following table of data.

The chart below shows the average earnings per week, in pounds sterling, of people of different levels of education living in the UK between the years 1965 and 1995.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.



We need, first of all, to look at the sample question above. The instructions tell us that the data represent the average earning of people in the UK over a thirty-year period (1965 to 1995).

The best way to analyse the data is to re-write them so that they are easier to review. This helps to ensure that you include all the information, and *don't* include irrelevant information.

Example

Year	H. S. certificate	Bachelor degree	Master degree	Doctor degree
1965	40	85	90	95
1975	55	110	115	120
1985	85	140	150	150
1995	125	145	160	165

Looking For Expectations, Unexpected Findings And Trends

We are now in a position to look for *trends* and *anomalies*¹. Thinking about what we would *expect to see* (expectations), and comparing this to what we *actually find* in way of *trends* and *unexpected findings*, easily achieves this.

Expectations

Looking at the data in the table we can see that the higher a person's education, the greater will be their earnings. Also, we should see an increase in earnings over the thirty-year period.

Unexpected Findings

1. The difference in earnings of people with different levels of education is very small.
2. In 1985, people with a Master's degree enjoyed the same average earnings as people with a Doctoral degree.
3. The biggest change occurred in the period 1985 to 1995, when high school graduates enjoyed the greatest increase in earnings.
4. During the same period, people with a Doctoral degree increased their earnings by the least amount.

Trends

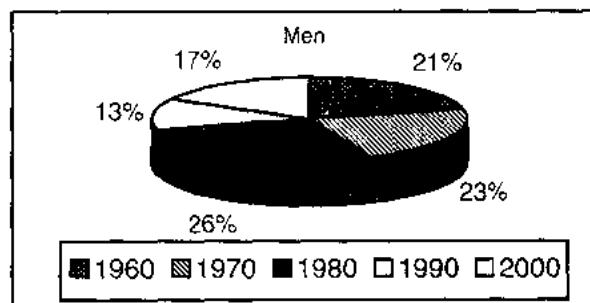
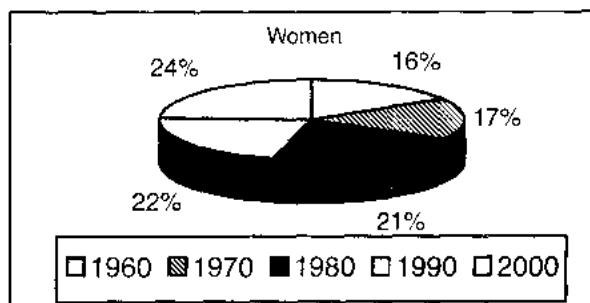
1. There was an overall increase in earnings across the board.
2. Over the thirty-year period, there was a big increase in earnings amongst people with high school certificates (£85).
3. There was a gradual increase in earning amongst people with a university degree.
4. The increase in earning for the whole period was less for people with a Bachelor's degree (£60) than for people with a Master's or Doctoral degree (£70).

¹ Trends = a general direction.

Anomalies = irregularities

Exercise 14: Analysing The Data

Question 1: The charts below show the percentage of men and women in Australia who smoked during a 40-year period, between 1960 and 2000. (Answer provided)



	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Men					
Women					

Expectations

Work in pairs. Write down what you would *expect* to see.

.....

Unexpected Findings

Work in pairs. Write a list of *unexpected findings*.

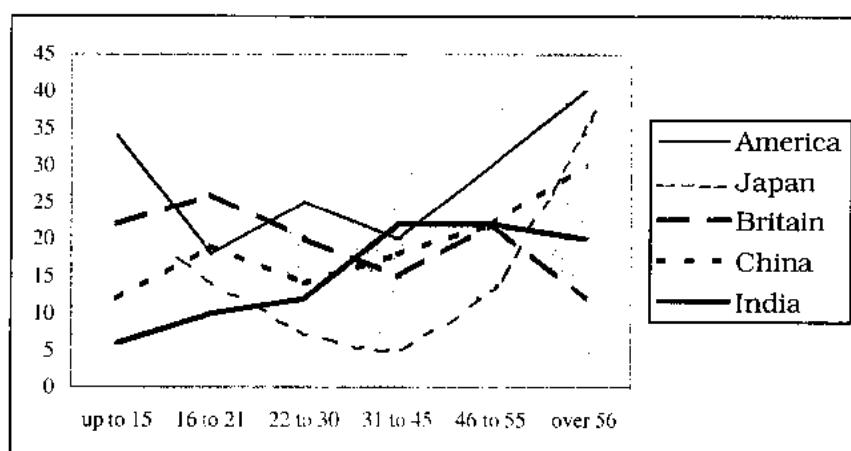
1.
2.
3.
4.

Trends

Work in pairs. Write a list of *trends*.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Question 2: The chart below shows the percentage of TV watched by different age groups, in five different countries. (Answer provided)



	Up to 15	16 to 21	22 to 30	31 to 45	46 to 55	Over 56
India						
China						
Britain						
Japan						
America						

Expectations

Work in pairs. Write down what you would *expect* to see.

.....

.....

.....

Unexpected Findings

Work in pairs. Write a list of *unexpected findings*.

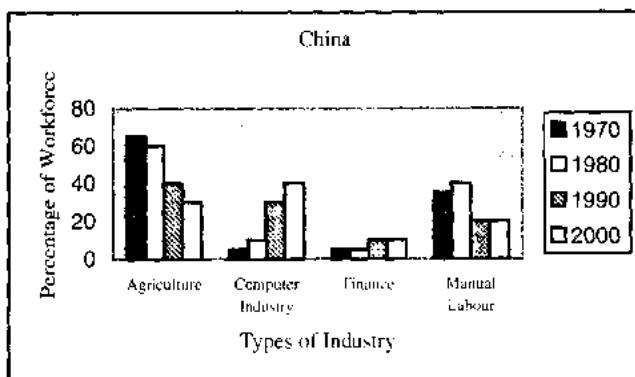
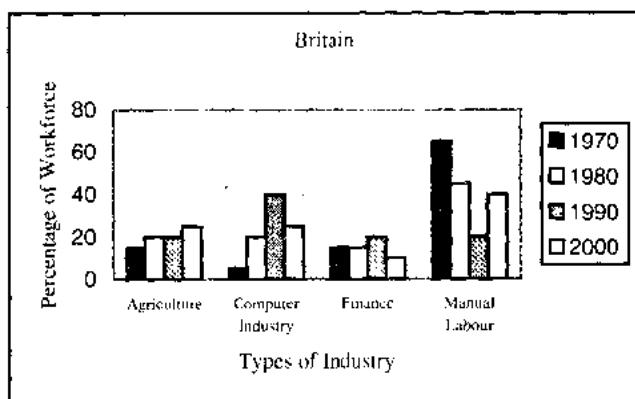
1.
2.
3.
4.

Trends

Work in pairs. Write a list of *trends*.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Question 3: The charts below show the percentage of people employed in different types of industry, during the period 1970 to 2000, in Britain and China. (Answer provided)



Britain				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	18	5	18	61
1980	20	20	18	41
1990	20	40	20	20
2000	21	21	10	40
China				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	61	5	5	38
1980	60	6	5	40
1990	40	30	10	20
2000	30	40	10	20

Expectations

Work in pairs. Write down what you would *expect* to see.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Unexpected Findings

Work in pairs. Write a list of *unexpected findings*.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Trends

Work in pairs. Write a list of *trends*.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Analysing The Data In A Table

Notes

Data may be presented in the form of a table. When data are presented in this way simplify the data so that you can analyse them more easily. This is achieved easily enough by reducing the figures by a standard amount: in the case of the example below, by 1000.

Example: Simplifying Tabulated Data

The table below shows the number of UK households, in 1,000s, which own a computer, and the purpose for which they were used.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business	20,000	34,000	36,000	24,000	49,000	92,000
Pleasure	24,000	48,000	56,000	68,000	92,000	98,000
Work	8,000	12,000	15,000	14,000	23,000	32,000
Work and Pleasure	32,000	54,000	60,000	58,000	71,000	78,000
Business and Pleasure	36,000	62,000	62,000	84,000	96,000	128,000
Total	120,000	210,000	229,000	477,000	331,000	428,000

Simplifying The Data

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business	20	34	36	24	49	92
Pleasure	24	48	56	68	92	98
Work	8	12	15	14	23	32
Work and Pleasure	32	54	60	58	71	78
Business and Pleasure	36	62	62	84	96	128
Total	120	210	229	477	331	428

Analysing The Data

We are now in a position to analyse the data, and look for trends and unexpected findings. However, when writing the report remember that the figures represent thousands!

Question 4 (Answer provided)

Expectations

Work in pairs. Write down what you would expect to see.

.....

.....

.....

Unexpected Findings

Work in pairs. Write a list of *unexpected findings*.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Trends

Work in pairs. Write a list of *trends*.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Describing The Data

Notes

In task one you are asked to *describe the information in the chart*. Therefore, to write a good, coherent report, it is important to use descriptive language. But first we need to review some language that can be used to describe data.

Language Focus: Describing Data

Example 1: *There was a dramatic increase, in 1970, in the number of university graduates.*

Example 2: *The numbers remained steady throughout the twenty-year period.*

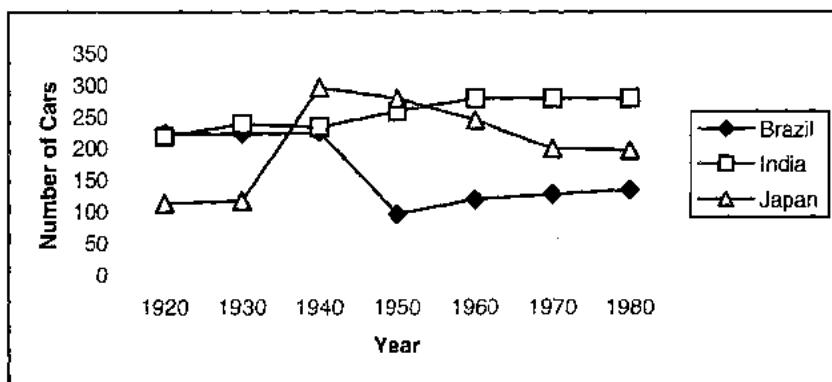
Phrase Definition

Dramatic increase	<i>Big increase</i>
Significant difference	<i>Big difference</i>
Huge drop	<i>Go down by a big amount</i>
Little change	<i>To change only slightly</i>
Remained steady / stable	<i>No, or very little change over time</i>
Surprising find	<i>Something unexpected</i>
The greatest difference occurred	<i>A time when the biggest change happened</i>
Significant increase/decrease	<i>A big change</i>
Minor fluctuation	<i>Very small changes over time</i>
Steady rise / decrease	<i>A gradual change over time</i>
Slight drop / increase / rise / fall / change	<i>A small change</i>

Example: Phrase Usage

The chart below shows the number of private cars used between the years 1920 to 1980, in three different countries.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.

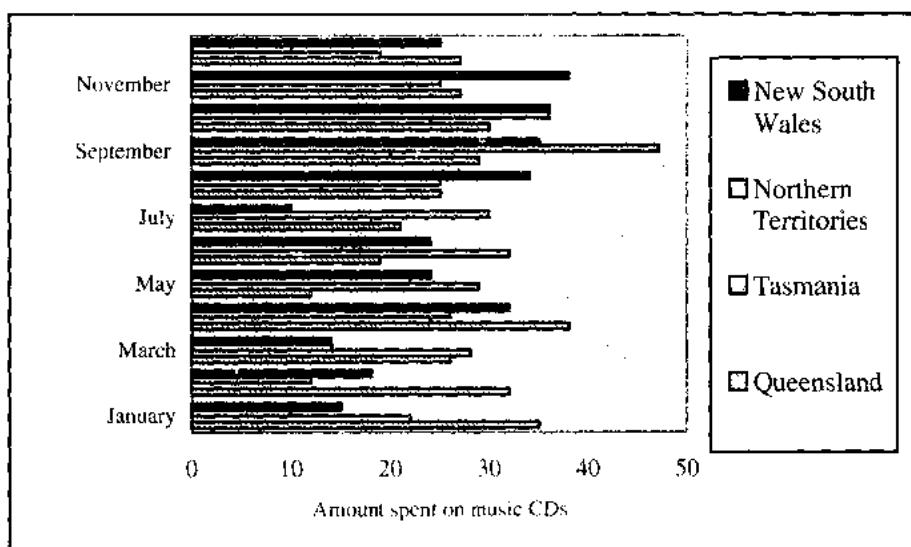


- Dramatic increase “*Japan experienced a massive increase in car ownership in the 1930s.*”
- Significant difference “*There is a significant difference between all three countries.*”
- Huge drop “*There was a huge drop in car ownership in Brazil during the 1940s.*”
- Little change “*There was little change in India between 1930 and 1940.*”
- Remained steady / stable “*Car ownership in Brazil remained steady between 1920 and 1940.*”
- Surprising find “*The most surprising find is the difference between Japan and Brazil.*”
- The greatest difference occurred “*The greatest difference occurred between 1940 and 1950 in Brazil.*”
- Significant increase/decrease “*There was a significant difference in the number of cars owned in Japan between the years 1940 and 1970.*”
- Minor fluctuation “*There was a minor fluctuation between 1920 and 1940 in India.*”
- Steady rise / decrease “*India experienced a steady rise between 1940 and 1960.*”
- Slight drop/increase/rise/fall/change “*There was a slight drop between 1930 and 1940 in India.*”

Exercise 15: Describing The Data

Work in groups. Look at the charts below. Describe the data by writing one sentence using each of the phrases given.

Question 1: The chart below shows the percentage of people's income spent on music CDs, in four Australian territories, during the year 2000. (Answer provided)

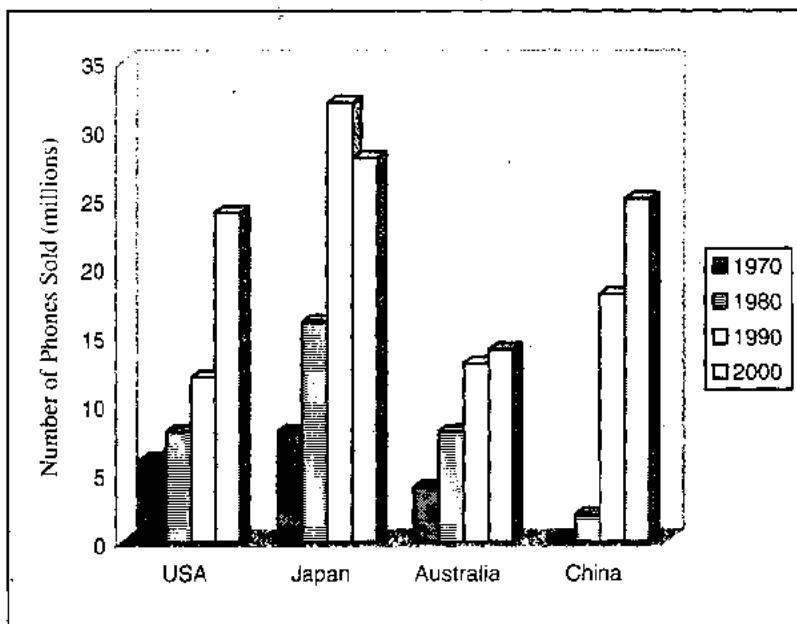


	New South Wales	Queensland	Tasmania	Northern Territories
January				
February				
March				
April				
May				
June				
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				

- Dramatic increase
- Significant difference
- Huge drop
- Little change
- Remained steady / stable
- Surprising find
- The greatest difference occurred
- Significant increase/decrease
- Minor fluctuation
- Steady rise / decrease
- Slight drop / increase / rise / fall / change

Question 2 : The chart below shows the number of mobile phones sold in four different countries, over a 40-year period, from 1970 to 2000.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information. (Answer provided)



	USA	Japan	Australia	China
1970	5 million	8 million	4 million	1 million
1980	8 million	15 million	8 million	2 million
1990	11 million	32 million	13 million	17 million
2000	24 million	27 million	14 million	24 million

Developing Your Ideas

Notes

Task fulfillment also refers to how well you *develop* your ideas. In other words, *don't simply list the changes that took place*. Instead, *explain how the changes happened, compared to other data in the chart. Look for differences between the categories, as well as within the categories.*

Language Focus: Comparing And Contrasting The Data

When comparing and contrasting data you need to use the appropriate phrases. Below is a list of phrases that are useful for this purpose.

Year	H. S. certificate	Bachelor degree	Master degree	Doctor degree
1965	40	85	90	95
1975	55	110	115	120
1985	85	140	150	150
1995	125	145	160	165

Compared to

Example: *Compared to high school leavers, university graduates earned a high salary in 1965.*

In contrast

Example: *In 1965, people with a Master's or a Doctoral degree only earned slightly more than people with a Bachelor's degree. In contrast, however, university graduates earned far more than school leavers.*

Significant difference

Example: *Between 1965 and 1985, there was a significant difference in the earnings between high school leavers and university graduates.*

Stabilised

Example: *The difference in earning between high school leavers and university graduates stabilised in 1995.*

Levelled out

Example: *In 1985, earnings levelled out amongst people with a Master's degree and with a Doctoral degree.*

Remained steady

Example: *Earnings amongst university graduates remained fairly steady after 1985.*

Slightly more/less

Example: *Earning for people with a Bachelor's degree was slightly less than people with a Master's or Doctoral degree.*

Gradual increase/decline

Example: *There was a gradual increase in earning amongst people with a university degree.*

Steady increase/decrease

Example: *There was a steady increase in earnings for people who held a Doctoral degree between the years 1965 and 1995.*

Significant increase/decrease

Example: *There was a significant increase in earnings amongst people with a Bachelor's degree between 1965 and 1975.*

Diminished

Example: *The difference in earnings between high school leavers and university graduates diminished after 1995.*

Rose/Dropped sharply

Example: *Earnings in general rose sharply between 1965 and 1995.*

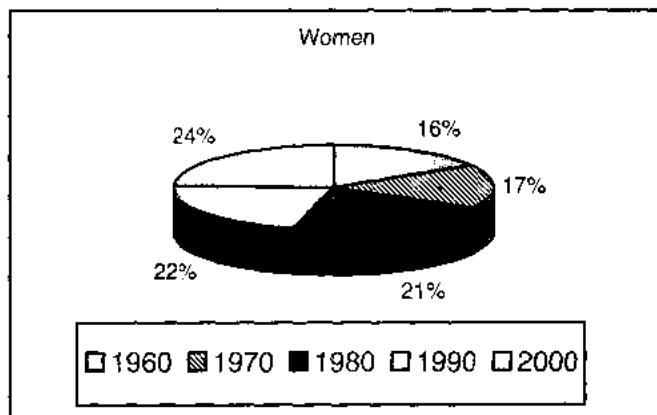
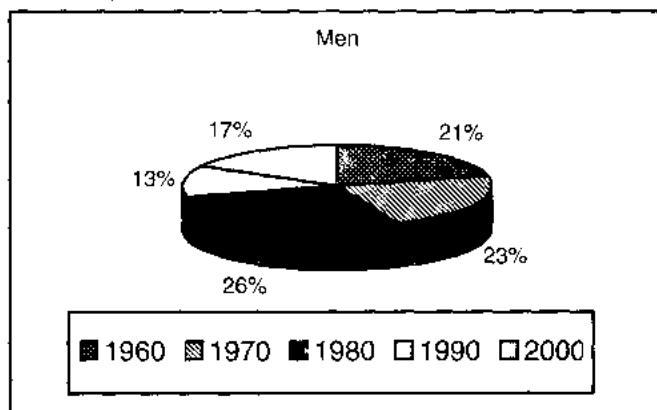
Relatively

Example: *Earnings between people with different levels of education is relatively small.*

Exercise 16: Developing Your Ideas

Work in groups. Look back at the data you compared and contrasted for the following charts and develop your ideas using the language focus above.

Question 1: The charts below show the percentage of men and women in Australia who smoked during a 40-year period, between 1960 and 2000. (Answer provided)



	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Men					
Women					

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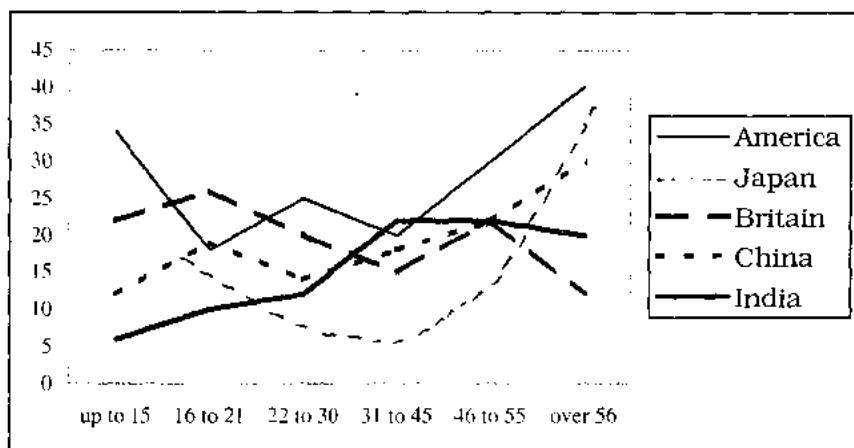
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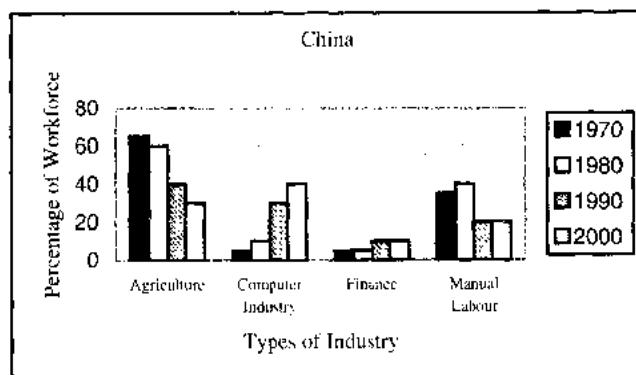
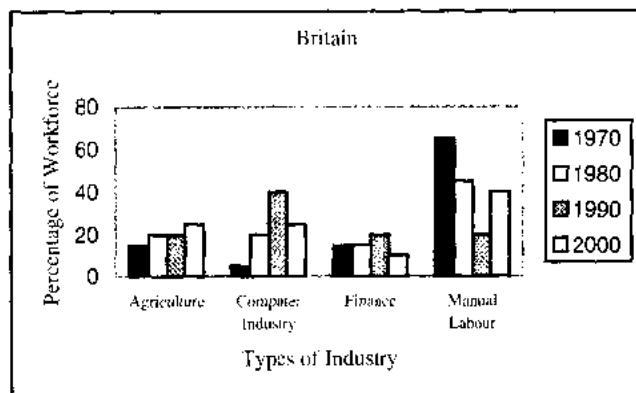
Question 2: The chart below shows the percentage of TV watched by different age groups, in five different countries. (Answer provided)



Simplifying The Data

	Up to 15	16 to 21	22 to 30	31 to 45	46 to 55	Over 56
India						
China						
Britain						
Japan						
America						

Question 3: The charts below show the percentage of people employed in different types of industry, during the period 1970 to 2000, in Britain and China.



Britain				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	18	5	18	61
1980	20	20	18	41
1990	20	40	20	20
2000	21	21	10	40
China				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	63	5	5	38
1980	60	6	5	40
1990	40	30	10	20
2000	30	40	10	20

Question 4: The chart below shows the number of UK households, in 1000s, which owned a computer, and the purpose for which they were used.

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business	20,000	34,000	36,000	24,000	49,000	92,000
Pleasure	24,000	48,000	56,000	68,000	92,000	98,000
Work	8,000	12,000	15,000	14,000	23,000	32,000
Work and Pleasure	32,000	54,000	60,000	58,000	71,000	78,000
Business and Pleasure	36,000	62,000	62,000	84,000	96,000	128,000
Total	120,000	210,000	229,000	477,000	331,000	428,000

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business						
Pleasure						
Work						
Work and Pleasure						
Business and Pleasure						
Total						

Writing The Main Body Of The Report

Notes

The main body of the report is where you describe, in detail, what the chart shows. You need to include as much information as possible *without* including irrelevant information. One way to do this is to look at the unexpected findings and the trends. However, you also need to *develop* your ideas. This can be achieved by *comparing and contrasting* the findings.²

When we compare and contrast, we describe similarities and differences. The best way to achieve this is to look at the *trends* and *unexpected findings*. This we have already done in the planning stage. We now need to *organise* the information so that we give a trend and then *contrast* this with an unexpected finding.

How To Compare And Contrast The Data

Notes

To compare and contrast simply means to look for differences or similarities. Therefore, to organise your ideas effectively you need to take one sub-topic (overall earnings, for example) and look for any changes that took place.

Example

Year	H. S. certificate	Bachelor degree	Master degree	Doctor degree
1965	40	85	90	95
1975	55	110	115	120
1985	85	140	150	150
1995	125	145	160	165

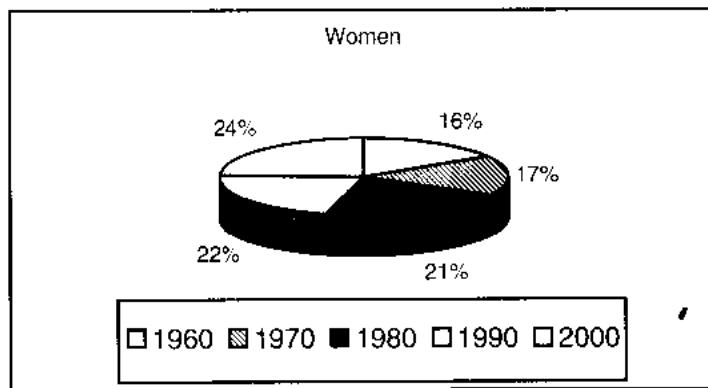
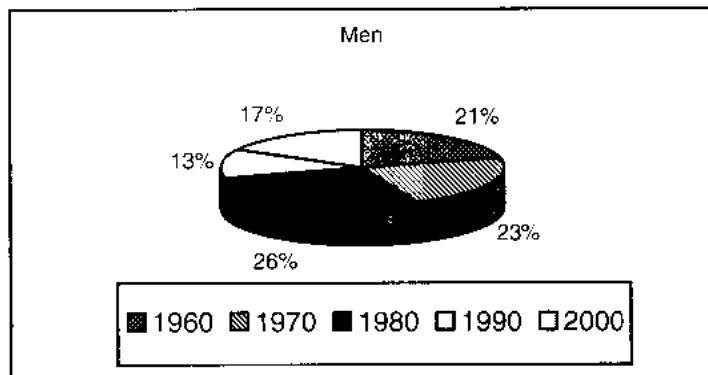
² Compare and contrast = discuss the similarities and differences

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. There was an overall increase in earnings across the board. | } | <i>A comparison of overall earnings</i> |
| 2. <i>The difference in earnings of people with different levels of education is very small.</i> | | |
| 3. Over the thirty-year period, there was a big increase in earnings amongst people with high school certificates (£85). | } | <i>A comparison of school leaver's salaries</i> |
| 4. <i>The biggest change occurred in the period 1985 to 1995, when high school graduates enjoyed the greatest increase in earnings.</i> | | |
| 5. There was a gradual increase in earnings amongst people with a university degree. | } | <i>A comparison of university graduate's earnings</i> |
| 6. <i>The increase in earnings for the whole period was less for people with a Bachelor's degree (£60) than for people with a Master's or Doctoral degree (£70).</i> | | |
| 7. In 1985, people with a Master's degree enjoyed the same average earnings as people with a Doctoral degree. | } | <i>A comparison of people holding Master's degrees with people holding doctoral degrees</i> |
| 8. <i>During the same period, people with a Doctoral degree increased their earnings by the least amount during the overall thirty-year period.</i> | | |

Exercise 17: Comparing And Contrasting The Data

Work in groups. Look back at the *trends* and *unexpected findings* for the charts below. Compare and contrast your data.

Question 1: The charts below show the percentage of men and women in Australia who smoked during a 40-year period, between 1960 and 2000. (Answer provided)



	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Men					
Women					

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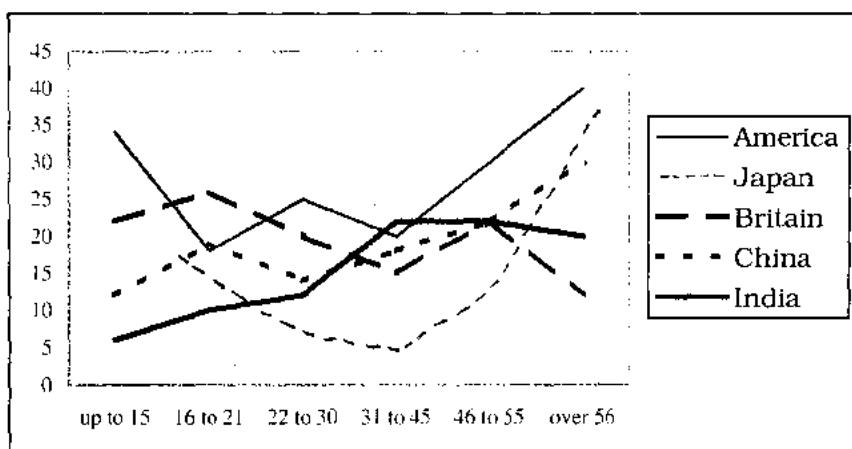
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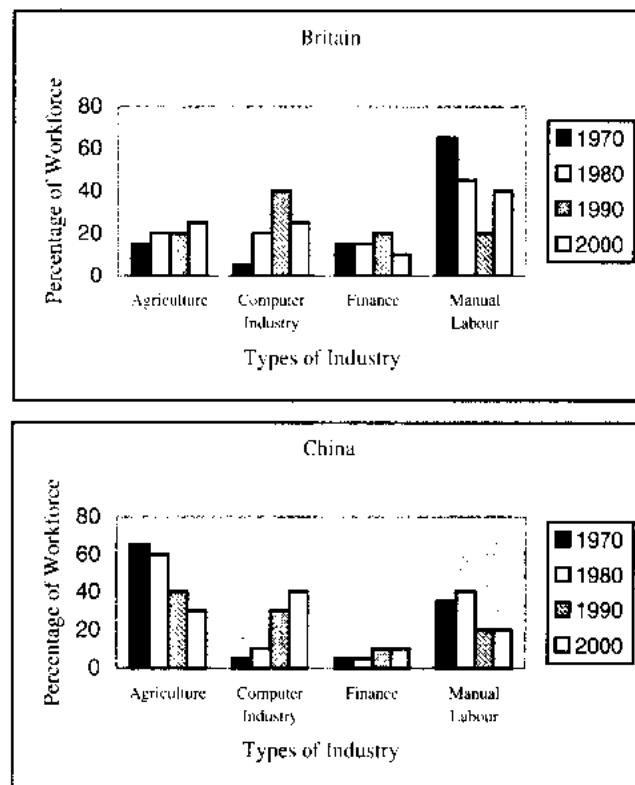
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Question 2: The chart below shows the percentage of TV watched by different age groups, in five different countries. (Answer provided)



	Up to 15	16 to 21	22 to 30	31 to 45	46 to 55	Over 56
India						
China						
Britain						
Japan						
America						

Question 3: The charts below show the percentage of people employed in different types of industry, during the period 1970 to 2000, in Britain and China.



Britain				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	18	5	18	61
1980	20	20	18	41
1990	20	40	20	20
2000	21	21	10	40

China				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	61	5	5	38
1980	60	6	5	40
1990	40	30	10	20
2000	30	40	10	20

Question 4: The table below shows the number of UK households, in 1,000s, which owned a computer, and the purpose for which they were used.

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business	20,000	34,000	36,000	24,000	49,000	92,000
Pleasure	24,000	48,000	56,000	68,000	92,000	98,000
Work	8,000	12,000	15,000	14,000	23,000	32,000
Work and Pleasure	32,000	54,000	60,000	58,000	71,000	78,000
Business and Pleasure	36,000	62,000	62,000	84,000	96,000	128,000
Total	120,000	210,000	229,000	477,000	331,000	428,000

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business	20	34	36	24	49	92
Pleasure	24	48	56	68	92	98
Work	8	12	15	14	23	32
Work and Pleasure	32	54	60	58	71	78
Business and Pleasure	36	62	62	84	96	128
Total	120	210	229	477	331	428

Unit 2 Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Notes

When writing a report it is important to introduce the topic to begin the report, and summarise the findings at the end, just as it is when writing an essay. These, however, should be kept brief so as not to include irrelevant information, or waste valuable time, because your examiner will mainly be interested in the main body.

<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Conclusion</i>
general overview of the findings	summary of the main findings

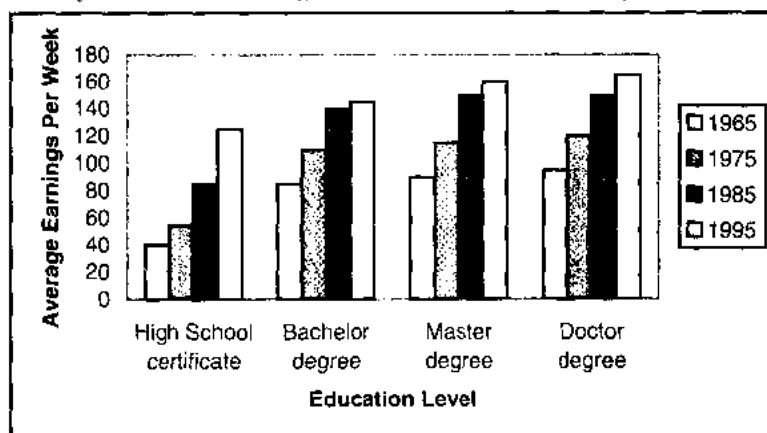
Fig.16: Showing what information should be included in the introduction and conclusion

The Introduction

The introduction should be a very general overview of the findings. To do this, we can begin by looking at what we expected to see in the sample data.

Sample Data

The chart below shows the average earnings per week, in pounds sterling, of people of different levels of education living in the UK between the years 1965 and 1995.



Year	H. S. certificate	Bachelor degree	Master degree	Doctor degree
1965	40	85	90	95
1975	55	110	115	120
1985	85	140	150	150
1995	125	145	160	165

We began by analysing the data in unit 1. Below are our initial findings.

Expectations

Looking at the data in the table we can see that the higher a person's education, the greater will be their earnings. Also, we should see an increase in earnings over the thirty-year period.

Unexpected Findings

1. The difference in earnings of people with different levels of education is very small.
2. In 1985, people with a Master's degree enjoyed the same average earnings as people with a Doctoral degree.
3. The biggest change occurred in the period 1985 to 1995, when high school graduates enjoyed the greatest increase in earnings.
4. During the same period, people with a Doctoral degree increased their earnings by the least amount.

Trends

1. There was an overall increase in earnings across the board.
2. Over the thirty-year period, there was a big increase in earnings amongst people with high school certificates (£85).
3. There was a gradual increase in earning amongst people with a university degree.
4. The increase in earning for the whole period was less for people with a Bachelor's degree (£60) than for people with a Master's or Doctoral degree (£70).

Writing The Introduction

Notes

The purpose of the introduction is to introduce the topic and give a brief overview of the findings. Therefore, the introduction can be divided into three parts. However, the introduction needs to be brief, therefore each part should only contain *one* sentence.

Introduction	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><i>Sentence one: introduce the topic</i></td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><i>Sentence two: say what you would expect to find</i></td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"><i>Sentence three: say what you did find</i></td></tr> </table>	<i>Sentence one: introduce the topic</i>	<i>Sentence two: say what you would expect to find</i>	<i>Sentence three: say what you did find</i>
<i>Sentence one: introduce the topic</i>				
<i>Sentence two: say what you would expect to find</i>				
<i>Sentence three: say what you did find</i>				

Fig.17: Showing how information should be organised in an introduction

Organising The Information

The next step is to organise the information.

Example

The topic is:.....*Average earnings in the UK.*

I would expect to find:...*The higher the person's education, the higher their salary.*

I actually found:.....*The differences were very small.*

It is now simply a matter of putting the information into sentence form, by using the relevant sentence connectors.

Example Introduction

The chart shows average earnings in the UK over a thirty-year period, from 1965 to 1995. We would expect to find that a person's earnings are related to their level of education, which, indeed, is the case. However, the difference in education levels, compared to earnings, was smaller than expected.

Analysis Of The Introduction

The chart shows average earnings in the UK over a thirty-year period, from 1965 to 1995.

*This sentence introduces
the topic*

We would expect to find that a person's earnings are related to their level of education, which, indeed, is the case.

*This sentence shows
expected findings*

However, the difference in education levels, compared to earnings, was smaller than expected.

*This sentence shows what
we actually found*

Writing The Conclusion

Notes

The conclusion is *a summary of the main findings of the report*. However, keep the conclusion brief, as it is the main body of the report that your examiner is mostly concerned with.

Summarise The Main Findings

When writing the conclusion, look at the analysis you made of the data and underline the *main findings* of the report. Let us look, once again, at our sample data.

Example

Finding 1: *The higher people's education, the more they earned.*

Finding 2: *The differences were very small.*

Finding 3: *High school leavers enjoyed the biggest salary increase.*

Example Conclusion

While people's earnings increased according to their level of education, the differences are far smaller than would be expected. What's more surprising, however, is that the increase in earnings amongst high school leavers was far higher than the earnings for university graduates.

Analysis Of The Conclusion

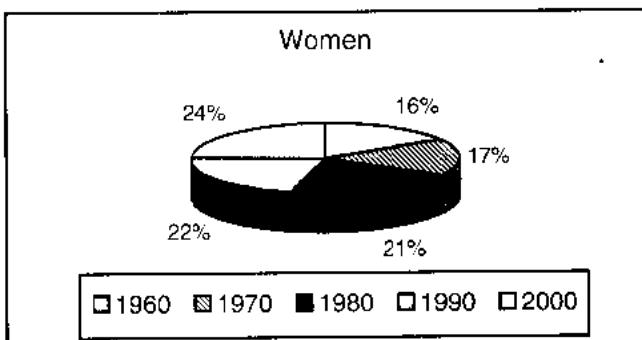
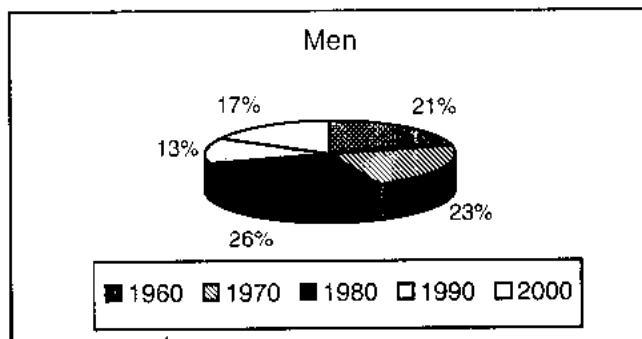
While people's earnings increased according to their level of education, the differences were far smaller than would be expected. } A summary of findings one and two.

What's more surprising, however, is that the increase in earnings amongst high school leavers was far higher than the earnings for university graduates. } A summary of finding three.

Exercise 18: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Work in groups. Look back at the information given for the charts below and write an introduction and conclusion.

Question 1: The charts below show the percentage of men and women in Australia who smoked during a 40-year period, between 1960 and 2000. (Answer provided)



	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Men	21	23	26	13	26
Women	24	17	16	21	22

Organise The Information

The topic is:.....*The number of male and female smokers in Australia.*

I would expect to find:.....*More men smoking than women, and the number of smokers to decline over the years.*

I actually found:.....*There was a big increase in the year 2000.*

Summarise The Main Findings

Finding 1:

Finding 2:

Finding 3:

Finding 4:

Write The Introduction And Conclusion

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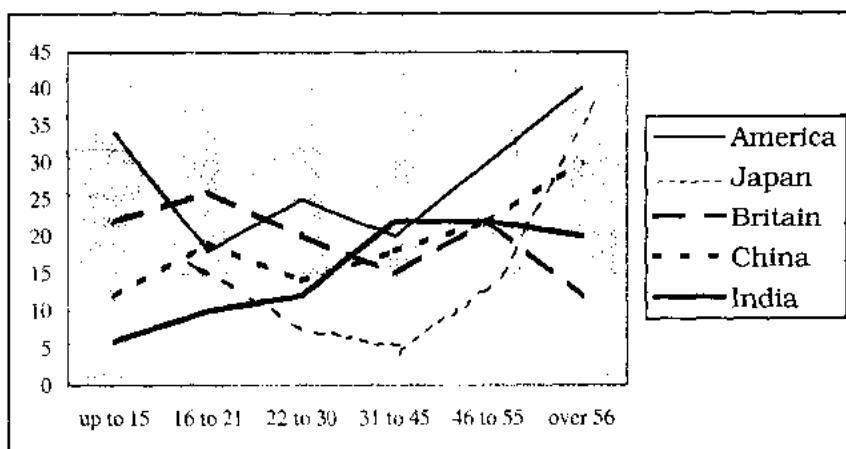
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Question 2: The chart below shows the percentage of TV watched by different age groups, in five different countries. (Answer provided)



	Up to 15	16 to 21	22 to 30	31 to 45	46 to 55	Over 56
India						
China						
Britain						
Japan						
America						

Organise The Information

The topic is:

I would expect to find:

I actually found:

Summarise The Main Findings

Finding 1:

Finding 2:

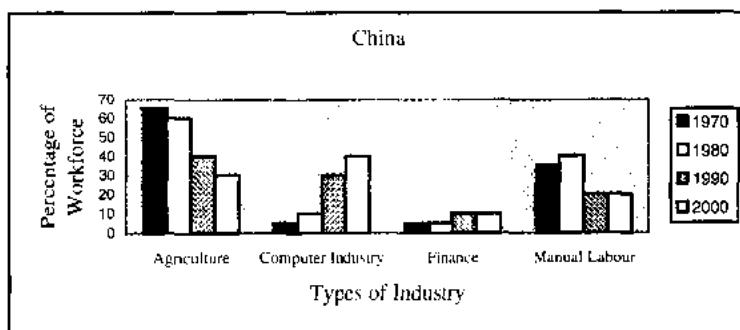
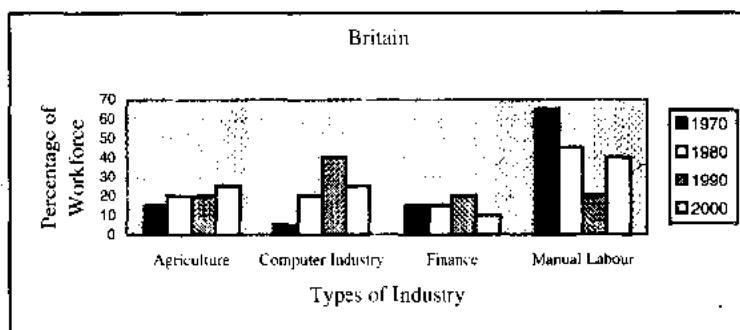
Finding 3:

Finding 4:

Write The Introduction And Conclusion

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Question 3: The charts below show the percentage of people employed in different types of industry, during the period 1970 to 2000, in Britain and China.



	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970				
1980				
1990				
2000				

	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970				
1980				
1990				
2000				

Organise The Information

The topic is:

I would expect to find:

I actually found:

Summarise The Main Findings

Finding 1:

Finding 2:

Finding 3:

Finding 4:

Write The Introduction And Conclusion

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Question 4: The table below shows the number of UK households, in 1,000s, which owned a computer, and the purpose for which they were used.

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business	20,000	34,000	36,000	24,000	49,000	92,000
Pleasure	24,000	48,000	56,000	68,000	92,000	98,000
Work	8,000	12,000	15,000	14,000	23,000	32,000
Work and Pleasure	32,000	54,000	60,000	58,000	71,000	78,000
Business and Pleasure	36,000	62,000	62,000	84,000	96,000	128,000
Total	120,000	210,000	229,000	477,000	331,000	428,000

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Business						
Pleasure						
Work						
Work and Pleasure						
Business and Pleasure						
Total						

Organise The Information

The topic is:

I would expect to find:

I actually found:

Summarise The Main Findings

Finding 1:

Finding 2:

Finding 3:

Finding 4:

Write The Introduction And Conclusion

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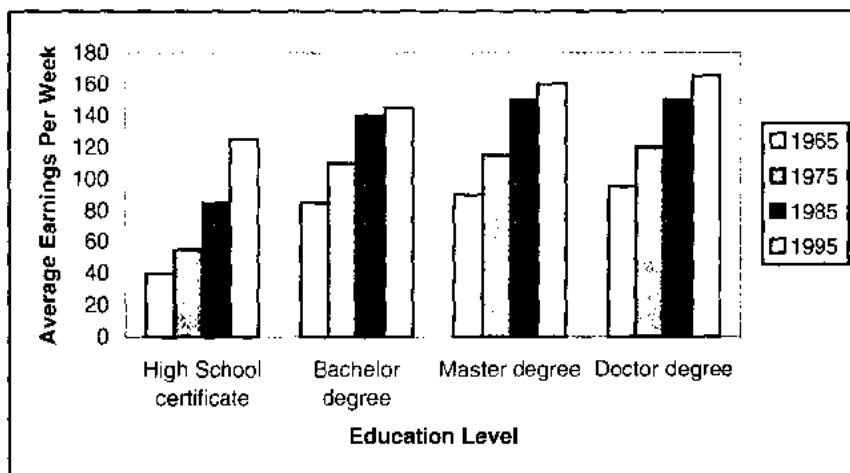
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Example Introduction And Conclusion

The chart below shows the average earnings per week, in pounds sterling, of people of different levels of education living in the UK between the years 1965 and 1995.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.



The chart shows average earnings in the UK over a thirty-year period, from 1965 to 1995. We would expect to find that a person's earning are related to their level of education, which, indeed, is the case. However, the difference in education levels, compared to earnings, was smaller than expected.

While people's earning increased according to their level of education, the differences are far smaller than would be expected. What's more surprising, however, is that the increase in earnings amongst high school leavers was far higher than the earnings for university graduates.

Unit 3 Coherence And Cohesion In Report Writing

Notes

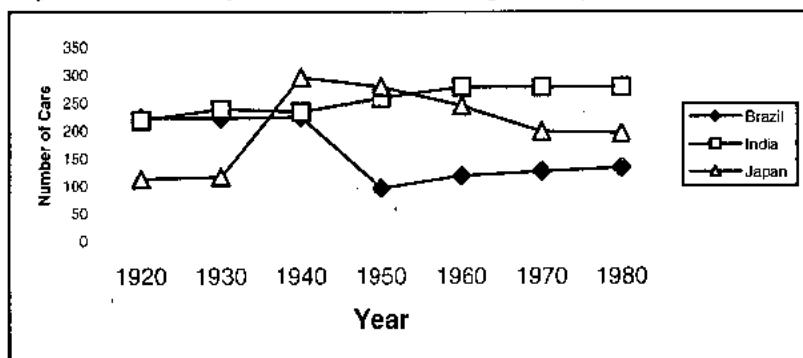
Coherence and cohesion refers to how easy it is to read your report and how well you have used sentence connectors to help express your meaning. Below is an example report. Read the report and then look at the analysis of the sentence connectors used. In report writing, coherence and cohesion can also be reflected by how well you describe the data. (See describing the data, page 115)

Sentence Connector Use In Report Writing

Example

The chart below shows the number of private cars used between the years 1920 to 1980, in three different countries.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.



There was little change in car ownership in Japan between 1920 and 1930, when it remained stable at around 110 to 115. However, there was a significant difference in the number of cars owned between the years 1930 and 1940 when it leapt from 110 to nearly 300.

The greatest difference, however, occurred between 1940 and 1950 in Brazil. Indeed, whilst car ownership in Brazil remained steady between 1920 and 1940 at around 230, there was a huge drop during the 1940s to 100. However, the most surprising find is the difference between Brazil and Japan. Whilst Japan experienced a massive increase in the number of car owners during the 1930s, the opposite occurred around the same time in Brazil, when there was a massive drop in car ownership. This was followed by a steady increase from 100 in 1950 to around 130 in 1980.

Some minor fluctuations occurred in Brazil between 1920 and 1940, after which, the country saw a steady increase in car ownership, until 1960, when the trend slowed right down and only increased from 120 in 1950 to 140 in 1980. India, on the other hand, saw a slight increase from 230 in 1920 to 240 in 1930, when it levelled off, until 1940 when there was a steady rise to 280. During 1960 to 1980 it remained stable at 280.

Analysis Of Sentence Connector Use In The Example Report

Introduces contrasting information

There was little change in car ownership in Japan between 1920 and 1930. *However*, there was a significant difference in the number of cars owned between the years 1930 and 1940. *In fact*, the country experienced a massive increase during the 1930s.

Stresses, or emphasises the importance of the information and gives information to show your statement is true

Tells the reader you are going to introduce contrasting information in the sentence

Introduces contrasting information

The greatest difference, *however*, occurred between 1940 and 1950 in Brazil. *Indeed*, *whilst* car ownership in Brazil remained steady between 1920 and 1940, there was a huge drop during the 1940s.

Stresses, or emphasises the importance of the information and gives information to show your statement is true

Introduces contrasting information

However, the most surprising find is the difference between Brazil and Japan. *Whilst* Japan experienced a massive increase in the number of car owners during the 1930s, the opposite occurred *around the same time* in Brazil, *when* there was a massive drop in car ownership. *This was followed by* a steady increase from 100 in 1950 to around 130 in 1980.

Phrases to express a time, or when something happened

An expression to show when a change took place, or happened

Some minor fluctuations occurred in Brazil between 1920 and 1940, *after which*, the country saw a steady increase in car ownership, *until* 1960, when it levelled off.

A time expression to express when something finished or changed

An expression to show when something happened

Introduces contrasting information

Expresses a time when a trend ended

Introduces something that happened over time

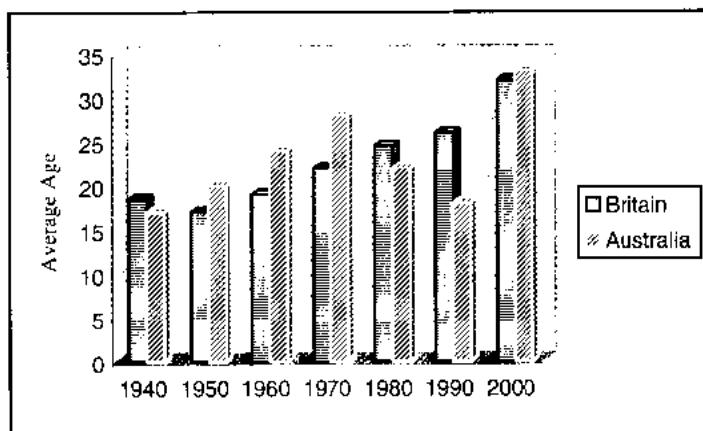
India, *on the other hand*, saw a slight increase from 230 in 1920 to 240 in 1930, when it levelled off, *until* 1940 when there was a steady rise to 280. *During* 1960 to 1980 it remained stable at 280.

Exercise 19: Coherence And Cohesion In Report Writing

Work in pairs. Look at the following chart and complete the sentences using sentence connectors and descriptive language. (Answer provided)

Question 1: The chart below shows the average age that women got married in two countries, between the years 1940 and 2000.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.



	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Britain	18	16	19	21	24	25	31
Australia	17	20	24	26	22	18	33

There was a _____ in the age women in Britain got married during the war years from 18 in 1940 to 16 in 1950. Australia, _____, witnessed an _____ trend, from 17 to 20 during the same period. Both countries, _____, saw a _____ between 1950 and 1960, from 16 to 19 in Britain and from 20 to 24 in Australia.

Britain, _____, continued on an _____ between 1960 and 1980 with an _____ of three years each decade, but _____ between 1980 and 1990. Australia, _____, saw a _____ from 24 in 1960 to 26 in 1970, after which it witnessed a _____ to 22 in 1980. A trend that continued until 1990 when the average age _____ to 18.

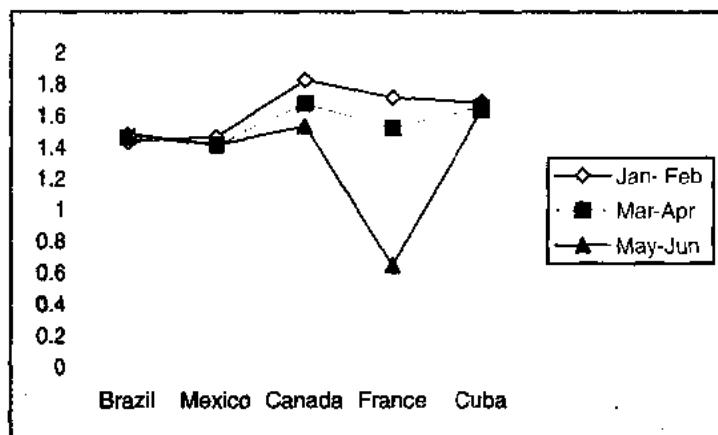
The greatest difference, _____, occurred between 1990 and 2000, when Australia saw a _____ from 25 to 33, closely followed by Britain which saw an _____ from 25 in 1990 to 33 in the year 2000.

Discussion

Work in groups. Compare your paragraphs and explain your choice of descriptive words and sentence connectors to the other group members.

Question 2: The chart below shows the number of reported road accidents in five countries during the first six months of 2001.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.



	January-February	March-April	May-June
Brazil	144	147	149
Mexico	147	142	142
Canada	183	168	154
France	172	153	65
Cuba	169	166	164

Brazil, during the period January to June, saw a slow, _____ in the number of reported road accidents, from 144 in the first two months, to 147 during March to April and 149 _____ May to June. This, _____, is in _____ to Cuba who witnessed a slow, but steady _____, from 169 in January and February, to 166 in the following two months and again to 164 in May to June.

Mexico, _____, witnessed a _____ from 147 in January to February to 142 in March and April when it _____ for the following two months. The _____, _____, occurred in Canada and France, who both saw the number of road accidents _____. In France, the decline was fairly _____ from 172 at the beginning of the year, to 153 in March and April and again to 154 in May and June. Whereas France saw a _____ from 172 in January and February, to 153 in March and April, _____ 65 in May and June.

Discussion

Work in groups. Compare your paragraphs and explain your choice of descriptive words and sentence connectors to the other group members.

Question 3***Group Analysis***

Task A: Change groups and compare what you have written with the other group members.

Task B: Re-join your first group members. Discuss your ideas and make any changes you feel necessary.

Task C: Elect one person to present your report to the class.

Remember: Often, we can use several different sentence connectors to connect the same sentences, or several different phrases to describe the same data.

Test Tip

When talking about a period of time use *during*. When talking about data use *from*.

Example

"The imprisonment figures in Great Britain climbed *during the period* 1930 to 1980 *from* 30 thousand to 85 thousand."

"*During* the next ten years ..."

Unit 4 Writing A Full Report

Notes

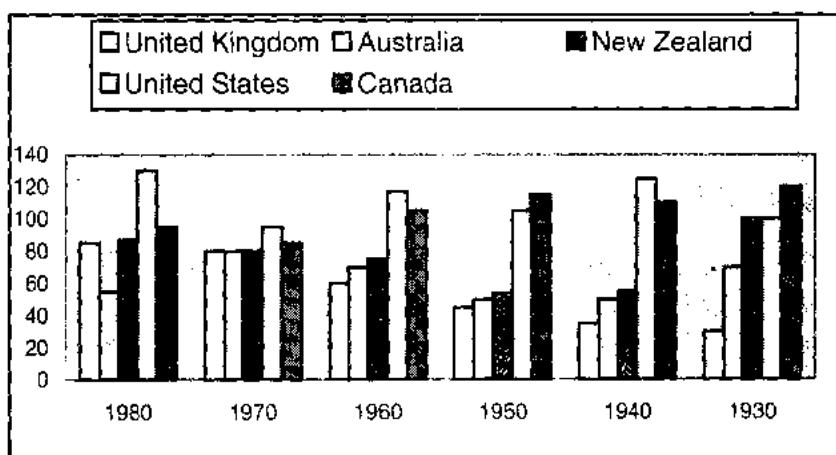
By now you should be fully familiar with report writing for the IELTS test, and should be able to identify weaknesses in reports other people have written.

Student Report Analysis

Below is a detailed analysis of the reports written by students. All the reports were written under the same conditions as a real IELTS test.

The chart below shows imprisonment figures for five different countries between the years 1930 and 1980.

Write a report to a university lecturer describing the information.



Report 1

The table below shows the figures for imprisonment in five countries between 1930 and 1980. In 1930, Canada's imprisonment was the highest, and the Great Britain's imprisonment was the lowest. In 1940, United State's imprisonment was become highest because the United States developed their imprisonment after 'Civil War'. In 1950, the United States imprisonment became poor. So Canada's imprisonment was the highest. In 1960, the United State's imprisonment was getting developed. It still became highest. In 1970 and 1980 it is same. In this time the United State's imprisonment developed quickly and the Australia's imprisonment is the lowest because it was affected by the imprisonment dangers in Asia. In 1970, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand, their imprisonment is same. The United States is very big and they invite more scientist at the world to develop their imprisonment. So, their imprisonment got fast developing.

From 1930 and 1960, Great Britain's imprisonment was also lowest because it was affected by the World War I and World War II. In 1980, Great Britain develop their imprisonment, and they get good mark. In 1980, Australia's imprisonment is lowest.¹

Detailed Report Analysis

There are 4 main problems with this report.

- 1) The candidate has not *described the data*, but, instead, has simply *listed* the information given in the chart. For example:

Canada's imprisonment was the highest, and the Great Britain's imprisonment was the lowest. (line 2)

In 1960, the United State's imprisonment.... became highest. In 1970 and 1980 it is same. In this time the United State's imprisonment developed quickly and the Australia's imprisonment is the lowest... (line 6)

By analysing the data you avoid simply listing the information given. Indeed, many people don't do very well in task 1 of the IELTS test because they simply list the information given in the chart, instead of *describing the data*.

- 2) It is confusing. The candidate says:

In 1960, the United State's imprisonment.... became highest. In 1970 and 1980 it is same. In this time the United State's imprisonment developed quickly and the Australia's imprisonment is the lowest.... (line 6)

If we look at the chart we see that in 1980 Australia did have the lowest imprisonment rate. But in 1970, the imprisonment rate in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand were equal. Therefore, either the information the candidate has given is inaccurate, or, when the candidate says "*in this time.... Australia's imprisonment is the lowest*", he or she is *only* referring to 1980. This we can work out because later the candidate says:

In 1970, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand, their imprisonment is same. (line 9)

Therefore, we have to read the report *very carefully* to understand the message.

¹ Source: A mock test conducted in Shanghai, April 2001

3) The candidate has given reasons for the changes. For example:

In 1940, United State's imprisonment was become highest because the United States developed their imprisonment after 'Civil War.
(Line 3)

...Australia's imprisonment is the lowest because it was affected by the imprisonment dangers in Asia. (line 8)

The United States is very big and they invite more sciencer at the world to develop their imprisonment. So, their imprisonment got fast developing. (line 10)

From 1930 and 1960, Great Britain's imprisonment was also lowest because it was affected by the World War I and World War II. (line 13)

In the IELTS test, you are asked to *describe* the data, *not* give reasons. Once again, many people lose marks in the IELTS test *because* they give reasons.

4) It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.

"In 1960, the United State's imprisonment was getting developed. It still became highest." should be

"In 1960, The United State's imprisonment was in the process of being developed. Yet it still outnumbered the other countries."

"In this time the United State's imprisonment developed quickly..." should be

"During this period The United State's imprisonment developed quickly..."

"The United States is very big and they invite more sciencer at the world to develop their imprisonment. So, their imprisonment got fast developing." should be

"The United States invited many world scientists to help develop their prison system, resulting in its rapid development."

Pay attention to word spelling. Don't take something for granted.

"Great Britain develop their imprisonment, and they get good mark." should be

"Great Britain developed their prison system with good results."

Overall, the report is confusing and difficult to understand, and would not get a very high mark in an IELTS test.

Report 2

There have different investment in five countries between 1930 and 1980. The five countries involve Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada.

In 1930, Great Britain had the fewest imprisonment. Canada had the most among the five countries. The second country, there have two, New Zealand and United States, they were higher than Australia. But Australia was higher than Great Britain.

In 1940, the United States increased fast. It occupied the top of five countries. Australia and New Zealand has decrease more, the Canada occupied the second position. And the Great Britain had no change.

In 1950, Great Britain increased quickly. New Zealand had a little bit down. United States had decreased more. Canada raised to become first, Australia had no change.

In 1960, there had an interesting situation. There were three countries had got the same figure. They were Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand. United States had a little decreasing than the Canada. But United States was still first one. And Canada behind of it.

In 1980, there had more complex in five countries. There had increased in four countries. Only Australia had decreased more especial United States had the largest change. United States must be the first position and so no country can go ahead of it.²

Detailed Report Analysis

There are 4 main problems with this report.

1) The candidate has misunderstood the topic.

There have different investment in five countries between 1930 and 1980. (Line 1)

"Imprisonment figures" refers to the number of people put into prison for breaking the law. Yet the candidate refers to it as an "investment". You have to read the topic carefully before you start writing.

2) The main problem, however, is that the candidate has simply listed the information given in the chart, and has not described the data.

In 1930, Great Britain had the fewest imprisonment. Canada had the most among the five countries. The second country, there have two, New Zealand and United States, they were higher than Australia. But Australia was higher than Great Britain. (Line 3)

² Source: A mock test conducted in Shanghai, April 2001

In 1940, the United States increased fast. It occupied the top of five countries. Australia and New Zealand has decrease more, the Canada occupied the second position. And the Great Britain had no change. (Line 6)

In 1950, Great Britain increased quickly. New Zealand had a little bit down. United States had decreased more. Canada raised to become first, Australia had no change. (Line 9)

Once again, this problem can be avoided by *analysing the data*.

3) The last paragraph is confusing.

It is very difficult to understand what the candidate is saying in the last paragraph.

4) It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.

"There have different investment in five countries between 1930 and 1980." should be

"There was different rates of imprisonment in the five countries between 1930 and 1980."

"In 1930, Great Britain had the fewest imprisonment." should be

"In 1930, Great Britain had the lowest rate of imprisonment."

"New Zealand had a little bit down. United States had decreased more. Canada raised to become first, Australia had no change." should be

"Although the rate of imprisonment in New Zealand fell, it was out matched by The United State's. The rate in Canada, on the other hand, increased, whilst Australia experienced no change."

"In 1960, there had an interesting situation." should be

"An interesting situation occurred in 1960."

"United States had a little decreasing than the Canada. But United States was still first one. And Canada behind of it." should be

"Although the United States experienced a decline in imprisonment rates, it still remained ahead of Canada."

"Only Australia had decreased more especial United States had the largest change." should be

"Whilst the rate in Australia decreased the most, the greatest change occurred in the United States."

Overall, it is easier to understand than sample report 1. However, it still wouldn't get a very high mark in an IELTS test.

Report 3

The table shows us the figures for imprisonment in five countries between 1930 and 1980. The height of the bar stands for the proportion of imprisonment.

From the table, it's easy to find evidence that the figures for imprisonment in five countries changed a lot from 1930 to 1980. In Great Britain, the figure is 30,000 for imprisonment in 1930, but the figure is up to 90,000 for imprisonment in 1980, it's 3 times. And the figure is increasing step by step. Surprisingly, the figure for imprisonment in the United States is the most great. Especially in 1980, the figure nearly exceeded 140,000. Except Australia, the figures for imprisonment in other four countries are increasing gradually between 1930 and 1980, although the figure is decreasing in some years. But the figure for imprisonment in Australia is the lowest one, only 50,000 in 1980.

In a word, American's imprisonment is the highest, the European is lower than American, and the Australian is the lowest.³

Detailed Report Analysis

There are 4 main problems with this report.

1) The candidate has attempted to develop his or her ideas but has not analysed the data closely enough.

In Great Britain, the figure is 30,000 for imprisonment in 1930, but the figure is up to 90,000 for imprisonment in 1980.... (Line 4)

Surprisingly, the figure for imprisonment in the United States is the most great. Especially in 1980, the figure nearly exceeded 140,000. (Line 6)

If we analyse the data closely we see that the imprisonment rates in Australia, Canada, and the United States fluctuate between 1930 and 1980. Whereas the United Kingdom saw a steady increase from 1930, and New Zealand, having experienced a sudden drop between 1930 and 1940, again saw a steady increase. Therefore, what the candidate has failed to do is look for *trends* in the data.

2) The report is a little confusing in some places. For example:

In Great Britain, the figure is 30,000 for imprisonment in 1930, but the figure is up to 90,000 for imprisonment in 1980, it's 3 times. (Line 4)

Obviously, the candidate means that between 1930 and 1980 the imprisonment rate in Great Britain tripled, from 30,000 in 1930 to 90,000 in 1980. Although it is easy to

³ Source: A mock test conducted in Shanghai. April 2001

work this out, it means that the person reading the report has to stop and think what the writer means.

3) The candidate doesn't always explain his or her ideas clearly. For example:

....the figures for imprisonment in other four countries are increasing gradually between 1930 and 1980, although the figure is decreasing in some years. (Line 8)

And the figure is increasing step by step. (Line 6)

The problem here is that the candidate hasn't included the amount. For example, how big are the steps? This can be given as an actual figure (10 to 15) or a percentage (5%). Therefore, the reader has to look at the chart to find this information.

4) It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.

"In Great Britain, the figure is 30,000 for imprisonment in 1930, but the figure is up to 90,000 for imprisonment in 1980, it's 3 times." should be

"In Great Britain, in 1930, imprisonment figures stood at 30,000. But they increased three fold, to 90,000 by 1980."

"Surprisingly, the figure for imprisonment in the United States is the most great." should be

"Surprisingly, the figure for imprisonment in the United States is the highest."

"Except Australia, the figures for imprisonment in other four countries are increasing gradually between 1930 and 1980....." should be

"With the exception of Australia, the figures for imprisonment in the other four countries increased gradually between 1930 and 1980....."

"In a word, American's imprisonment is the highest, the European is lower than American, and the Australian is the lowest ." should be

"In a word, America has the highest rate of imprisonment, followed by Europe and finally Australia."

Overall, the report is better than report 2, mainly because the candidate has at least tried to analyse and describe the data.

Report 4

According to the data from the graph, it shows us the figures for imprisonment in five countries during 50 years between 1930 and 1980.

In Great Britain, in 1930, it's about 30 thousands. during the ten years, the imprisonment figures remain the same. but after 1940, the imprison people has increased rapidly. in 1980, the figure has achieved about 90 in thousands. it is three-fold to the 1930.

The situation in Australia, New Zealand is more similar. The imprisonment from 1930 to 1980 are not increased or droped still. the lowest figure in Australia is 50 person in thousands in 1940 and the highest figure is 80 person in thousands in 1970. New Zealand lowest figure is about less than 50 person in thousands in 1940, 1950 and 1980 and the highest figure is more than 70 person in thousands in 1970.

The United States and Canada's imprisonment's figures are more higher than other countries. in 1930, the American's figure is about 100 person in thousands, and then droped steadily, but in 1980, the figures are rosed sharply, is about 140 person in thousands. The Canada has some differents from United States. the figure in 1930 is more higher about 120 person in thousands but after that, the imprisonment's figure are no more than 1930.

From the graph, we can clearly see that the imprisonment are increasing.⁴

Detailed Report Analysis

There are 3 main problems with this report.

- 1) One of the problems with this report is that the candidate has left out important information. For example:

In paragraph 2, the candidate has simply said the figures for Britain increased rapidly. However, an easy improvement would be to say that they increased by an average of 10 thousand every 10 years, up until 1970.

- 2) The second problem is that the candidate has not compared the data. He or she has only described what happened in each country. For example:

The United States and Canada's imprisonment's figures are more higher than other countries. in 1930, the American's figure is about 100 person in thousands, and then droped steadily, but in 1980, the figures are rosed sharply, is about 140 person in thousands. (Paragraph 4)

⁴ Source: In-class test conducted in Suzhou, April 2001.

However, if we analyse the data carefully we see that Great Britain is quite unusual because the imprisonment figures increase steadily, whereas the figures for the other countries tend to fluctuate. And it is especially different from Canada whose figures show the opposite trend to Britain: they *decrease* steadily.

3) It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.

"In Great Britain, in 1930, it's about 30 thousands. during the ten years, the imprisonment figures remain the same. but after 1940, the imprison people has increased rapidly. in 1980, the figure has achieved about 90 in thousands. it is three-fold to the 1930." should be

"The imprisonment rate in Great Britain reached around 30 thousand in 1930, and remained stable during the next 10 years. However, after 1940 there was a significant increase in the number of imprisonments, reaching 90 thousand in 1980; a three-fold increase from 1930."

Pay attention to capitalisation of the first letter of the sentences.

"The situation in Australia, New Zealand is more similar. The imprisonment from 1930 to 1980 are not increased or droped still." should be

"The situation in Australia and New Zealand was similar in that the imprisonment rates from 1930 to 1980 remained stable."

"The United States and Canada's imprisonment's figures are more higher than other countries." should be

"The imprisonment figures for the United States and Canada remained higher than the other countries."

"The Canada has some differents from United States. the figure in 1930 is more higher about 120 person in thousands...." should be

"Canada differs from the United States because the figures reached a peak of 120 people in a thousand in 1930..."

Pay attention to the use of "the".

Overall, the candidate has done reasonable job at *describing* the data, but has failed to *compare* the figures. However, it is better than reports 1, 2 and 3.

Report 5

From the bar chart; we could know the figures of imprisonment in five countries (Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, United Sates and Canada).

The imprisonment figures in Great Britain always climbed from 1930 to 1980. It was from 30 thousands to 85 thousands.

In Australian, the figures stood at 70 thousands in 1930. Then got down to 52 thousands in 1940. However, there was little change during the period 1940 to 1950 to 54 thousands. From 1950, the figures rose up quickly and reached a peak of 79 thousands. But from then on, it sudden dropped to 50 thousands.

The figures in New Zealand was almost the same like Australia. It dropped from 1930 to 1950. Then picked up to 90 thousands in 1980.

The figures in United States stood at 100 thousands in 1930. However, it rose steadily to 130 thousands in 1940. Then got down to 110 thousands in 1950. But it picked up again to 120 thousands in 1960. In next ten years, the figures droped to 95 thousands. At last, it reached the peak of 140 thousands.

In Canada, the figures dropped from 1930 to 1970. It stood at 120 thousands in 1930 and got to the bottom to 90 thousands in 1970. Then the figures pick up to 95 thousands in 1980.⁵

Detailed Report Analysis

There are 4 main problems with this report.

- 1) **The main problem with this report is, once again, that the candidate has not compared the figures given in the chart.** In other words, he or she has described what is happening *within* each country, but *has not described differences between the countries*. For example:

In Australian, the figures stood at 70 thousands in 1930. Then got down to 52 thousands in 1940. However, there was little change during the period 1940 to 1950 to 54 thousands. From 1950, the figures rose up quickly and reached a peak of 79 thousands. But from then on, it sudden dropped to 50 thousands. (Paragraph 3)

The figures in United States stood at 100 thousands in 1930. However, it rose steadily to 130 thousands in 1940. Then got down to 110 thousands in 1950. But it picked up again to 120 thousands in 1960. In next ten years, the figures droped to 95

⁵ Source: In-class test conducted in Suzhou, April 2001.

thousands. At last, it reached the peak of 140 thousands.
(Paragraph 5)

In Canada, the figures dropped from 1930 to 1970. It stood at 120 thousands in 1930 and got to the bottom to 90 thousands in 1970. Then the figures pick up to 95 thousands in 1980. (Paragraph 6)

2) A second problem is that the candidate has left out important information.

For example:

The imprisonment figures in Great Britain always climbed from 1930 to 1980. It was from 30 thousands to 85 thousands.
(Paragraph 2)

In this paragraph, the candidate hasn't mentioned by how much the figures changed. Again, by looking at the data, we see it was a steady increase.

The figures in New Zealand was almost the same like Australia. It dropped from 1930 to 1950. Then picked up to 90 thousands in 1980. (Paragraph 4)

Again, the candidate hasn't given enough detail. Indeed, if we look at the data we see there was a sudden drop in 1930 from 100 thousand to 55 thousand, where it remained until 1960.

3) There is no conclusion to the report.

4) It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.

"In Australian, the figures stood at 70 thousands in 1930. Then got down to 52 thousands in 1940." should be

"*In Australia, the figures stood at 70 thousand in 1930. Then dropped to 52 thousand in 1940.*"

"The figures in New Zealand was almost the same like Australia." should be
"The figures in New Zealand were almost the same as Australia."

"Then got down to 110 thousands in 1950." should be

"Then dropped to 110 thousand in 1950."

"In next ten years, the figures droped to 95 thousands." should be

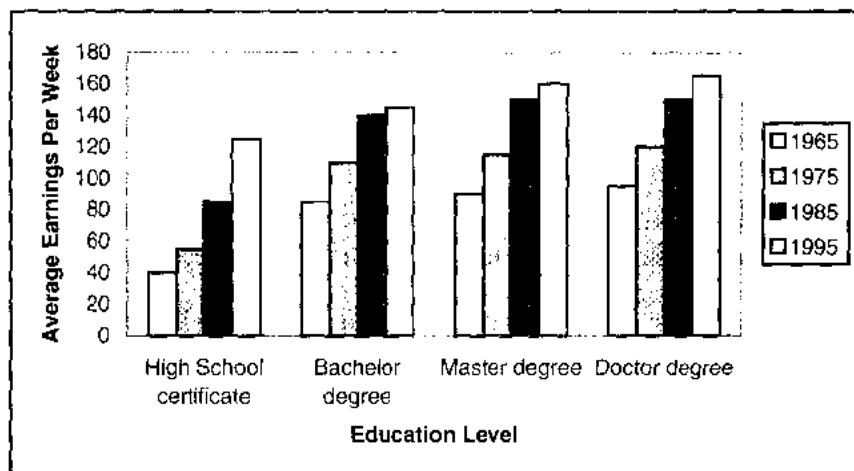
"During the next ten years, the figures dropped to 95 thousand."

Overall, the candidate has done reasonable job at *describing* the data, but has failed to *compare* the figures. However, it is better than reports 1, 2 and 3.

Example Report

The chart below shows the average earnings per week, in pounds sterling, of people of different levels of education living in the UK between the years 1965 and 1995.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.



The chart shows average earnings in the UK over a thirty-year period, from 1965 to 1995. We would expect to find that a person's earnings are related to their level of education, which, indeed, is the case. However, the difference in education levels, compared to earnings, is far smaller than expected.

The greatest increases were amongst high school leavers, whose average earnings rose sharply from £40 per week in 1965, to £125 per week thirty years later; and from £85 per week in 1985, to £125 in 1995.

People holding a Bachelor's degree only managed a modest increase of £5 per week, reaching a level of £145 in 1995. People at Master's and Doctor degree level fared slightly better, with an average increase in earnings of £10 and £15 per week respectively: from £150 to £160 for Master's, and £150 to £165 for PhD's.

The greatest overall increase in earnings, however, was during the period 1975 to 1985, when every category of employee increased their earning by at least £30 per week.

Overall, the earnings amongst high school leavers were much higher than the earnings for university graduates, whilst the difference of earnings between people of different education levels was far smaller than expected.

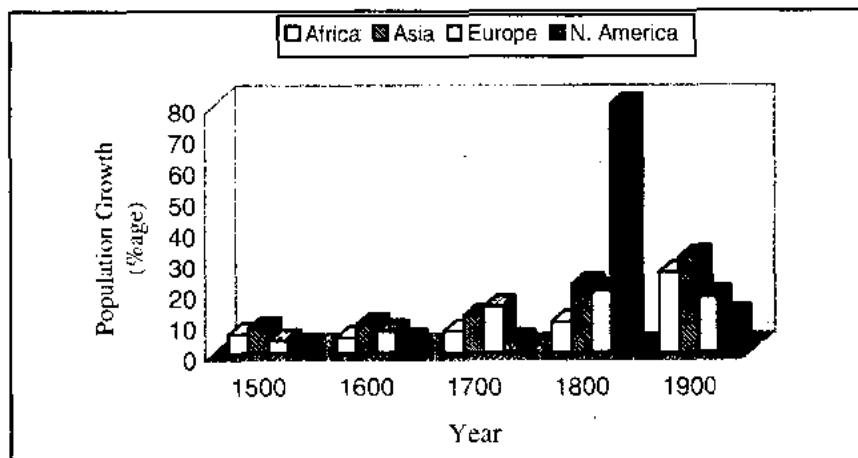
Unit 5 Practice Tests

Practice Test One

The chart below shows the population growth, as a percentage of the total population, in four continents over a 500 year period.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.

You should write at least 150 words. (Answer provided)

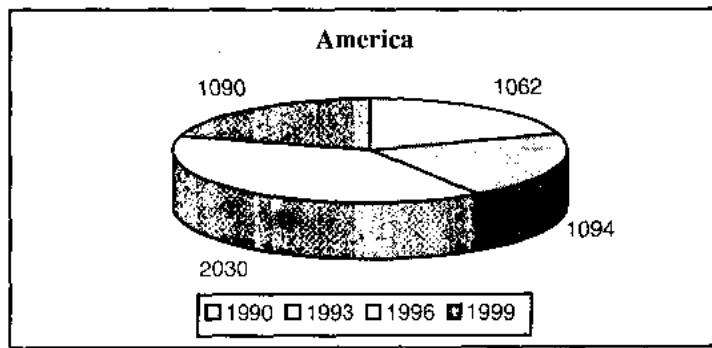
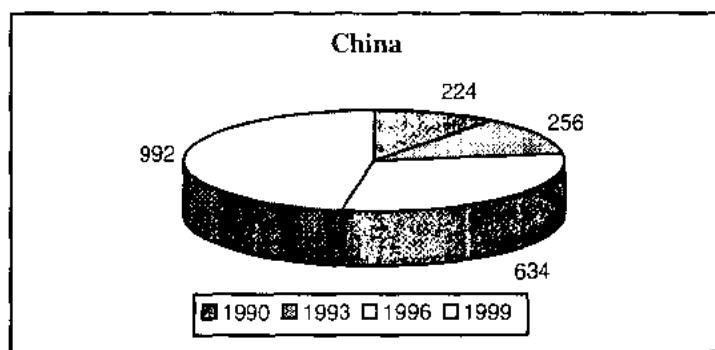


Practice Test Two

The charts below show the average amount of coffee drunk, in cups per year, by people in America and China over a 9 year period, from 1990 to 1999.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.

You should write at least 150 words. (Answer provided)

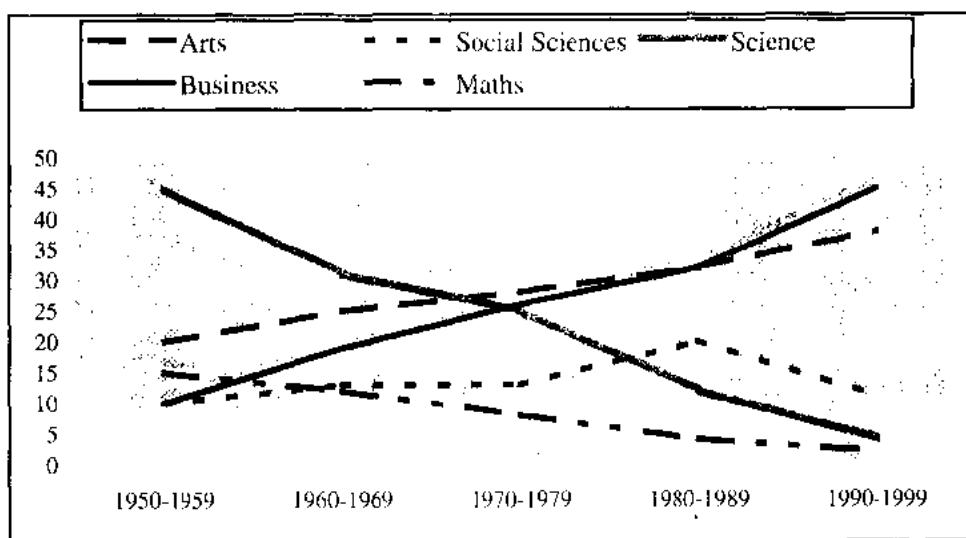


Practice Test Three

The chart below shows the subjects university students in Australia studied during five decades, from 1950-1959 to 1990-1999.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.

You should write at least 150 words. (Answer provided)



Practice Test Four

The chart below shows the number of road accidents in Britain during a 6 year period, from 1995 to 2000.

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information.

You should write at least 150 words. (Answer provided)

Year	First Quarter	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Forth Quarter	Total
1995	256,000	325,000	629,000	864,000	2,074,000
1996	364,000	565,000	746,000	863,000	2,538,000
1997	329,000	764,000	565,000	925,000	2,583,000
1998	262,000	659,000	670,000	746,000	2,337,000
1999	429,000	444,000	394,000	657,000	1,924,000
2000	398,000	387,000	625,000	755,000	2,165,000
Total	1,802,000	3,144,000	3,629,000	4,180,000	12,755,000

Chapter Four

General Training And Academic Test Task Two: Essay Writing

第四章

普通培训类和学术类
第二部分：小论文写作

Introduction To Essay Writing (General Training & Academic)

小论文写作简介 (普通培训类和学术类)

Notes

In task two of the general and academic tests, you have to write a 250-word essay. In the general test you have to *give an opinion* about the question. In the academic test you have to *present a written argument*. You have 40 minutes in which to do this.

普通培训类和学术类的第二部分都是 250 字左右的论文写作。不过，在普通培训类中，要求你对问题发表自己的观点。在学术类中，你不仅要提出自己的观点还需论证自己的观点。你要在 40 分钟内完成。

Task Two Is Assessed On (评分依据的三个方面)

- ⇒ Arguments, Ideas and Evidence (讨论、论点和论据)
- ⇒ Communicative Quality (交流技巧)
- ⇒ Vocabulary and Sentence Structure. (词汇和句型)

Arguments, ideas and evidence refers to how well you answer the question by giving relevant ideas, and how well you *discuss or present* your ideas.

讨论、论点和论据指的是你是否按题目要求给出了相关的观点以及你是否很好地讨论或描述了自己的观点。

Communicative quality refers to how well you have structured the essay and how easy it is to read. This includes use of sentence connectors.

交流技巧指的是你如何组织论文，论文是否易于理解。这其中包括句间关联词的使用。

Vocabulary and sentence structure refers to how many mistakes you make in sentence structure and word use.

词汇和句型指的是你的论文在句型和单词运用方面的出错情况。

Layout Of An Essay (论文的结构)

When you write your essay you should use a standard, general layout. That is to say, it should have three distinct sections, as outlined in figure 18, below.
论文有一个规范的结构。也就是如图 18 中所示，一篇论文由三部分组成。

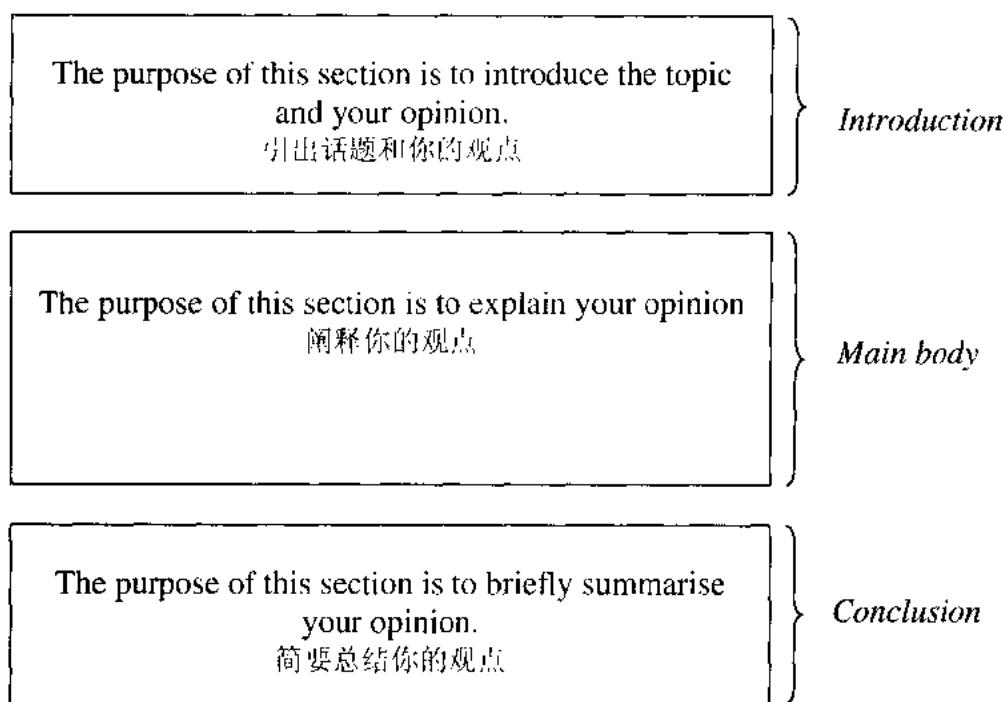


Fig. 18: Showing the standard, general layout of an essay

图18：论文的一般结构

Unit 1 Arguments, Ideas And Evidence (General Training & Academic)

Notes

Arguments, ideas and evidence refer to how well you answer the question. In other words, you *must* talk about what the question *asks* you to talk about. If you don't, your essay may not be relevant, or you may lose sight of the issue, and may lose marks. Indeed, if you know what you are supposed to talk about in your essay you will be able to think of many more ideas than if you just begin writing without thinking about the essay question first.

Analysing The Question

Notes

Your ideas *are* important, and can make a *big* difference to the quality of the essay. However, without analysing the title it is very difficult to think of good, relevant ideas. You should therefore spend one or two minutes thinking carefully about the title.

Test Tip

People often fail to do as well as they could do in the essay writing because they didn't think about the question before beginning to write the essay. Remember, a few minutes spent planning the essay could potentially improve your score in the essay writing by one band!

Question Analysis

Example Essay Question

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.

The first thing to do when analysing the title is to underline the important information. This enables you to think carefully about what the question is really asking.

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

You are now in a position to rewrite the question using your own words. If you do, it helps you understand the question more clearly.

Example

Because nuclear power is so dangerous, countries should use safer methods of producing electricity.

Example 2

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

You are now in a position to rewrite the question using your own words. This helps you to thoroughly understand the question.

Example

Developing countries need skilled, educated people to help develop their economy, so when they immigrate the economy suffers.

Exercise 20: Analysing The Question

Work in pairs. Look at the following essay questions and underline the important information. Re-write the questions using your own words. (Answer provided)

Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.

.....
.....
.....

Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.

.....
.....
.....

Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.

.....
.....
.....

Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going to university or work.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer.

.....
.....
.....

Finding The Issues

Notes

The next step in analysing the question is to think about the issues¹. This is a *very important* part of question analysis. If you don't think about the issues you will find it very difficult to think of good, relevant ideas. *It is the issues that you should talk about in your essay.*

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

There are two *main* issues in this question:

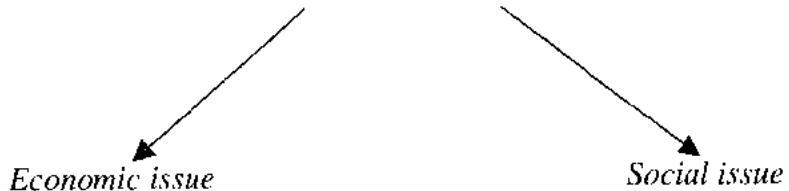


In other words, nuclear power is cheap and efficient to produce, and, therefore, can save a country a lot of money. This, then, is an economic issue. It is also a very clean form of energy. Therefore, it does not pollute the environment (an environmental issue).

Example 2

Every year, thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

There are two *main* issues in this question:



In other words, because highly skilled and educated people are needed to develop and maintain a country's economy, if they leave in large numbers, then there are fewer people who can work in, for example, high technology industries, which are a major source of income for the country. Therefore, it is an economic issue. However, people should be allowed to live and work overseas if they wish. Therefore, it is a social issue.

¹ Issues: concerns, consequences or possible results.

Exercise 21: Finding The Issues

Work in groups. Find the main issue or issues in the following essay questions.
(Answer provided)

Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.

Issue 1:

Issue 2:

Issue 3:

Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.

Issue 1:

Issue 2:

Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.

Issue 1:

Issue 2:

Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going on to university or work.

Issue 1:

Issue 2:

Test Tip

It is very important to practice writing essays in 40 minutes. This way you can make sure you can do as well as you are able to do in the IELTS writing test.

Coming Up With Ideas: Brainstorming

Notes

Having identified the issues you are well prepared to think of ideas. Once again, let us look back at our sample essay questions.

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

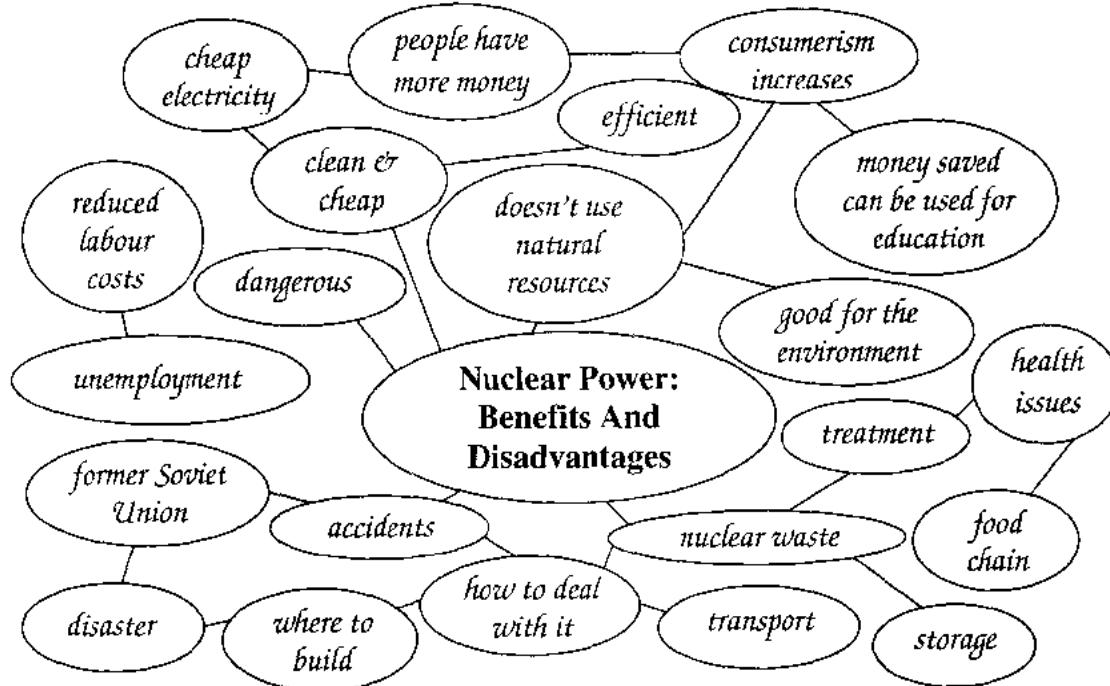
We have identified two main issues in this question: *economic issues* and *environmental issues*. We now need to consider the *consequences* of using nuclear power in terms of the environment and the economy. One way to do this is look at each issue in turn and brainstorm ideas. This enables you to develop good, relevant ideas.

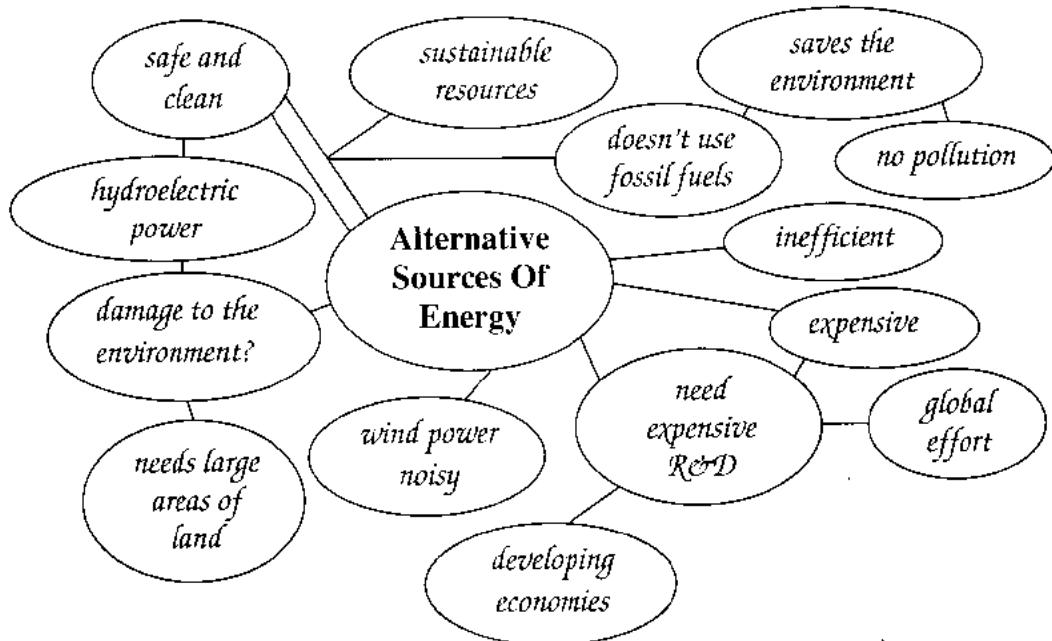
Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a way of thinking of as many ideas as you can, and helps you develop *creative thinking* skills. It also means you think of many ideas that you can discuss in your essay.

Once again, let us return to the question about nuclear power. This time, however, instead of thinking about the question itself, let us consider the issues behind the question.

Issues: effects on the economy and effects on the environment





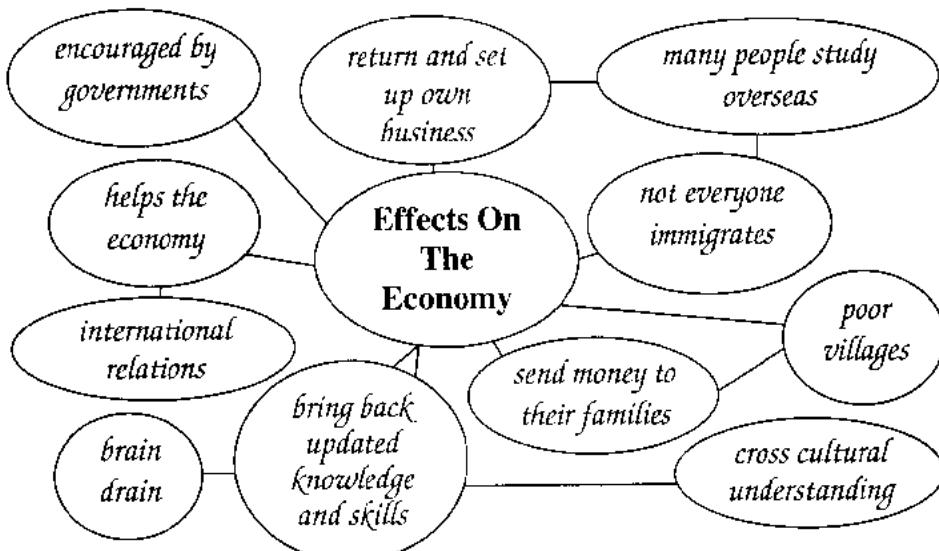
Example 2

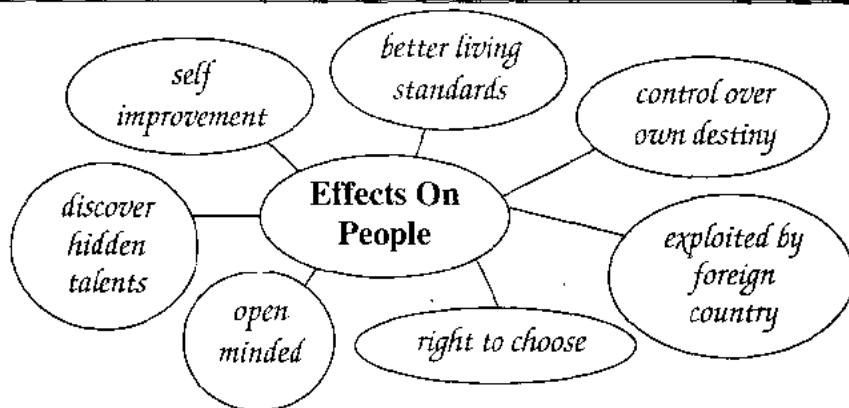
Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

We have identified two main issues in this question: an *economic issue* and a *social issue*. What we now need to consider is what are the advantages and disadvantages of people living and working overseas.

Brainstorming

Issues: effects on the economy and effects on people





The Importance Of Issues

Thinking about the issue, or issues is important because it keeps your essay relevant. In other words *when you talk about the issues you answer the question.*

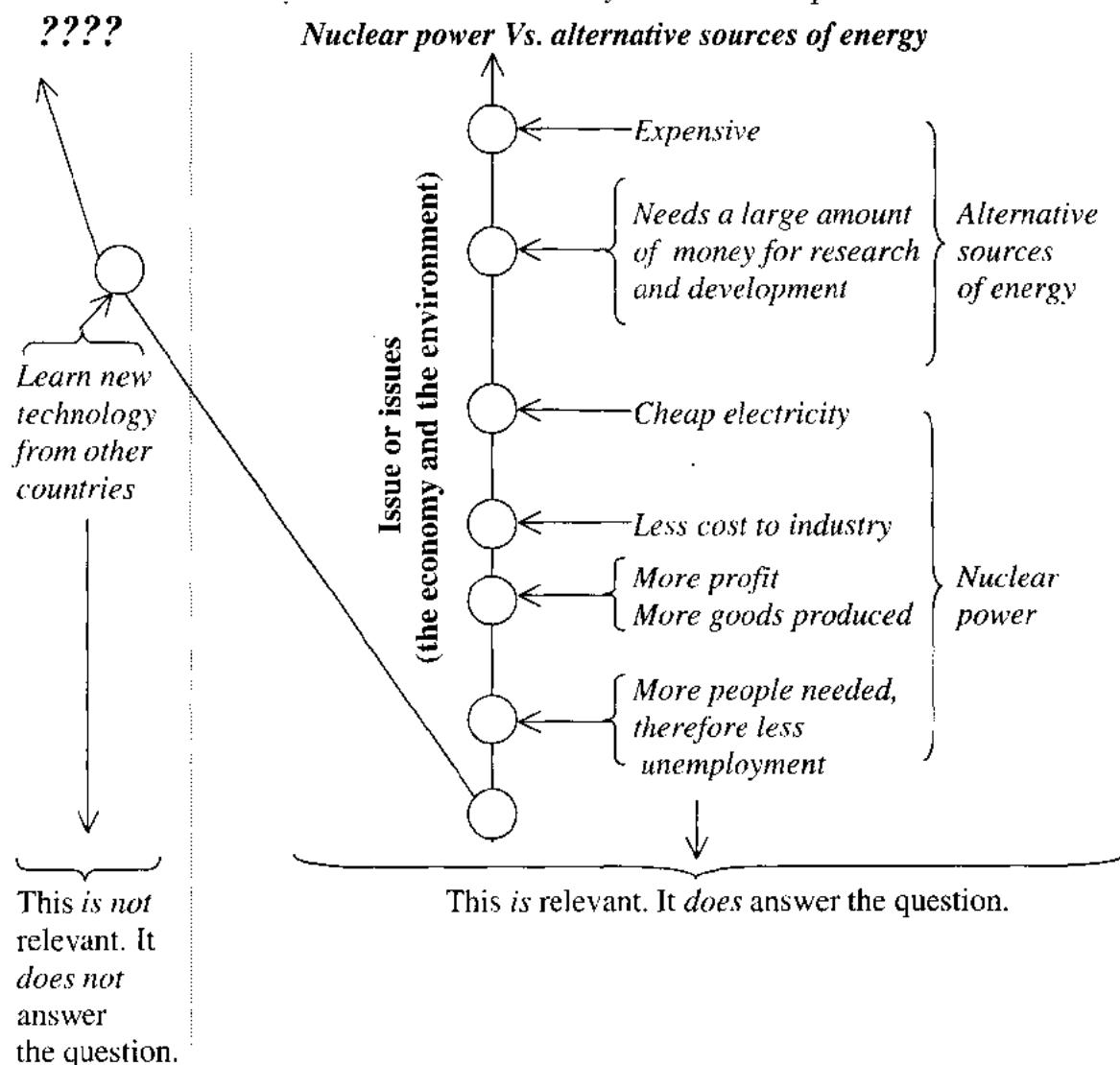
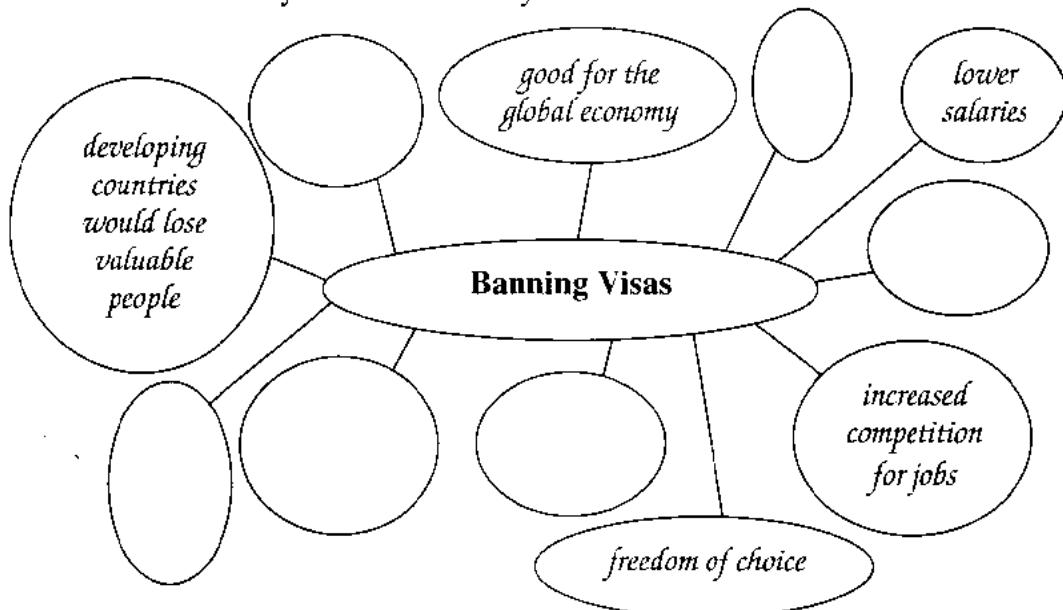


Fig. 19: showing the importance of analysing the title and thinking about the issues.

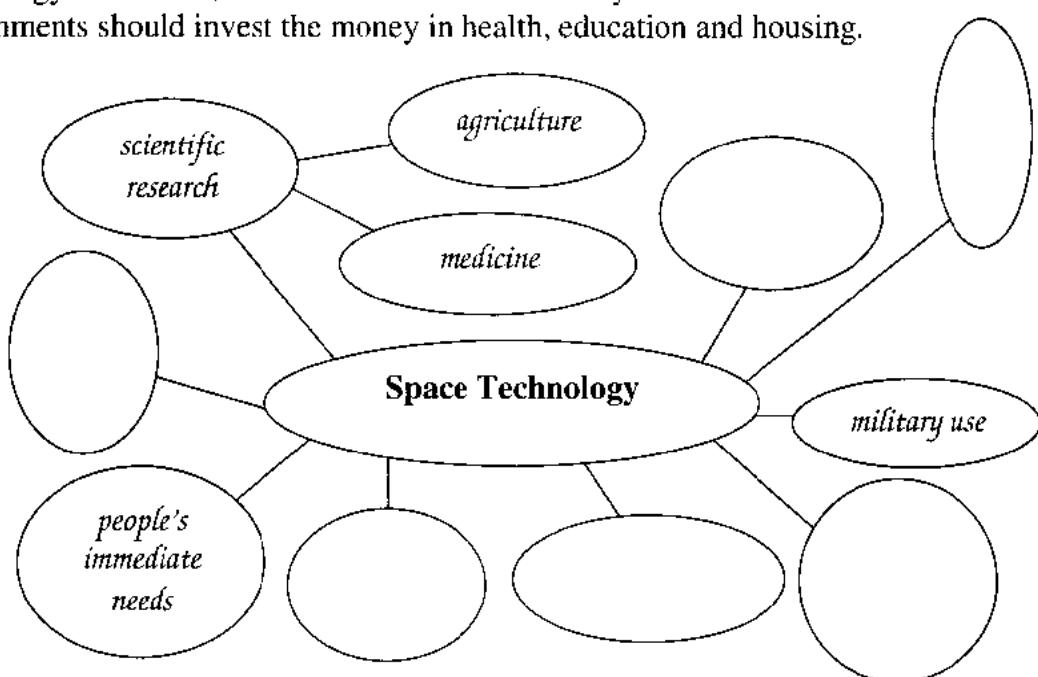
Exercise 22: Coming Up With Ideas

Work in groups. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can for the following questions.

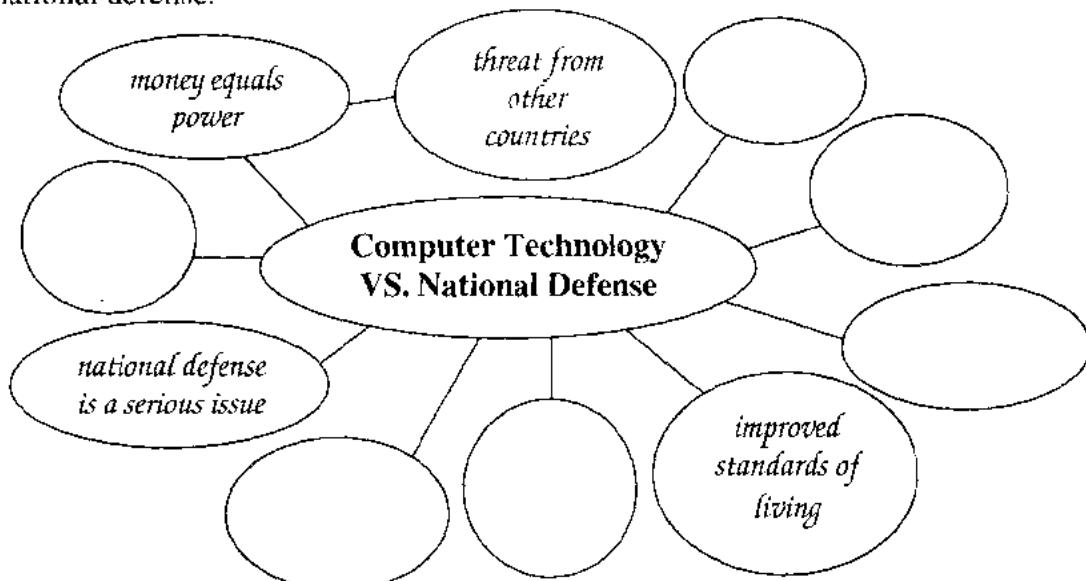
Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.



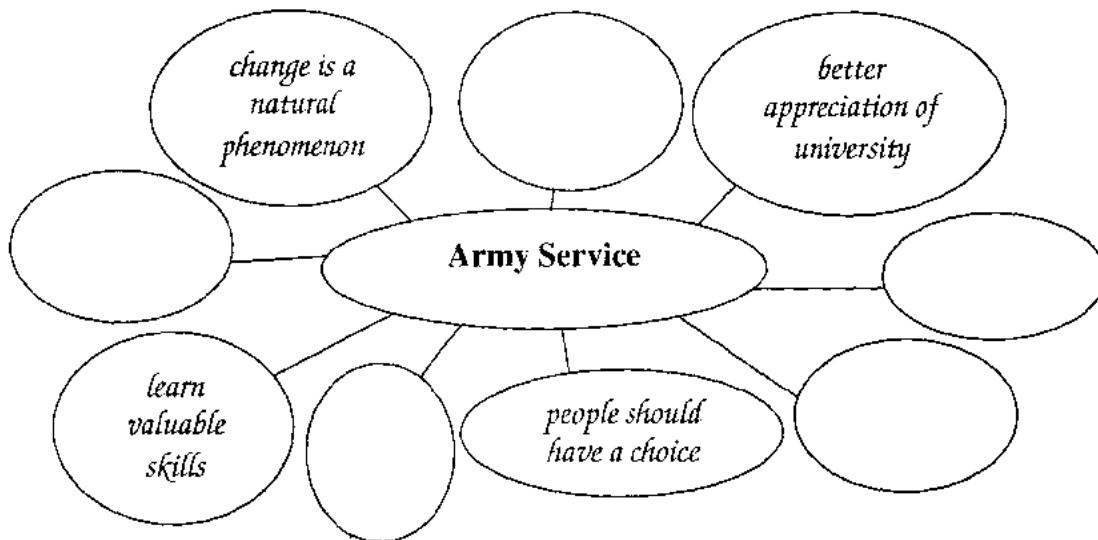
Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.



Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.



Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going to university or work.



Test Tip

The best way of brainstorming ideas is to discuss the topics in groups. This also helps to improve your spoken English.

When brainstorming ideas don't write long sentence. Save time by writing words or short phrases.

Sample Essay: Author's Analysis

The sample essay below has been written by a student working under exactly the same test conditions as the real IELTS test.

The question asks: *Why so many people want to go to an English speaking country to study, and why English is an important international language.*

Nowadays, the world becomes smaller and smaller with the development of technology. You can touch all corner of the world by the computer. However, a problem still exist - language. So many people in the non-English speaking countries study in English in order to make themselves suit the modern society. In one way, they move to English-speaking countries such as Australia, Britain or America to study at school, college or university.

Yes, but why do you think this? Why do you think this?

Explain your meaning.

Firstly everyone knows that English is an important international language. For example, if in a country nobody can speak English, the nation must be closed and poor. They didn't know what happened outside. They can't use many technology that other countries invented. They develop very slowly. Then, English-speaking countries are the most nation in the world. Most of these countries are developed country. If you want to sign a contract with foreign country, usually it is an English contract. It helps the trade go on.

Why can't they? Explain why you think this.

Besides, if you want to look for some data from the net, you must know English well. Many dot-com use English as their language. If you chat with foreigner, English is your first choice.

This paragraph is not related to the issue (the economy)

In my opinion, whether people know English well or not decide the national development in global society with high competition. Indian is a good example. She export many software to America every year and create many talented people in computer science.

This paragraph should be linked to paragraph two because the second paragraph introduces the topic of trade

Test Tip

When you think about the essay question *do not think there is a right and wrong answer*. As you can see from the ideas brainstormed above *there is only for and against*. It is your job to *consider both sides of the argument*. If you do this you can improve your band score.

Remember, It is your opinion compared to the opinions of other people.

Organising Your Ideas

Notes

Having brainstormed ideas we can now make a list of the ideas, categorising them for and against.

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

For Nuclear Power

Doesn't use natural resources
Clean & cheap
Cheap electricity
People have more money
Consumerism increases
Efficient
Money saved can be used for education
Improves the economy
Good for the environment
Reduced labour costs

Against Nuclear Power

Dangerous
Expensive to build
Nuclear waste
Treatment
How to deal with it
Accidents
Former Soviet Union
Disaster
Transport
Reduced labour costs
Storage
Health issues
Unemployment

For Alternative Sources

Sustainable resources
Saves the environment
No pollution
Doesn't use fossil fuels
Safe and clean

Against Alternative Sources

Expensive
Need expensive R&D
Developing economies
Global effort
Needs large areas of land
Damage to the environment
Inefficient

Test Tip

The more ideas you can think of whilst doing the exercises in this book the better, because your ideas may be relevant for other essay titles.

Example 2

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

The Economy

For The Argument

*Brain drain
Education is expensive
Set up a company overseas
Should care for elderly parents
Harmful to the economy
Helps the economy
Unpatriotic*

Against The Argument

*Not everyone immigrates
People encouraged by governments
Many people study abroad
Return and set up their own business
Send money to their families
Poor villages
International relations
Cross-cultural understanding
Bring back knowledge and skills*

People

For The Argument

*Forget their own culture
Cultural isolation
Exploited by foreign country*

Against The Argument

*Have a right to choose
Control over own destiny
Discover hidden talents
Open-minded
Better living standards
Self-improvement*

There are far more ideas here than we could possibly use in a 250 word essay. Nevertheless, some of these ideas can be used as topic sentences, and others can be used to explain the topics.

Test Tip

In the IELTS tests you will not have time to organise all your information this way. However, if you use this technique while you are developing your essay writing skills, the process of writing a good essay will become easier and easier. This will help you improve your band score.

Exercise 23: Organising Your Ideas

Work in groups. Look back at the ideas you brainstormed for the following questions and organise your ideas into for and against.

Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.

For

*Good for the global economy
Freedom of choice*

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Against

*Increased competition for jobs
Lower salaries
Developing countries would lose
valuable people*

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Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.

For

*Scientific research
Agriculture
Medicine*

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Against

*Military use
People's immediate needs*

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Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.

For

Money equals power
Improved standards of living

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Against

National defense is a serious issue
Threat from other countries

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Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going to university or work.

For

Learn valuable skills
Better appreciation of university

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Against

Change is a natural phenomenon
People should have a choice

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Test Tip

The exercises in this book are designed to help you better understand how to write an essay in English. With practice you will be able to write a good essay in far less time than it has taken you so far, and will help to achieve a higher band score in your IELTS writing.

Writing An Essay Plan

Notes

Essay plans are a useful way to organise your ideas. They ensure that all your ideas are relevant and well explained, and that your essay is well organised.

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

So far, we have analysed the title, identified the main issues, brainstormed ideas and organised those ideas in categories.

For Nuclear Power

*Doesn't use natural resources
Clean & cheap
Cheap electricity
People have more money
Consumerism increases
Efficient
Money saved can be used for education
Improves the economy
Good for the environment
Reduced labour costs*

Against Nuclear Power

*Dangerous
Expensive to build
Nuclear waste
Treatment
How to deal with it
Accidents
Russia
Disaster
Transport
Reduced labour costs
Storage
Health issues
Unemployment*

For Alternative Sources

*Sustainable resources
Saves the environment
No pollution
Doesn't use fossil fuels
Safe and clean*

Against Alternative Sources

*Expensive
Need expensive R&D
Developing economies
Global effort
Needs large areas of land
Damage to the environment
Inefficient*

Clearly, however, there are far more ideas than we can use in our essay. Therefore, we have to decide which ideas to use as our topic sentences, and which of the ideas *explain*, or *support* the topics.

Test Tip

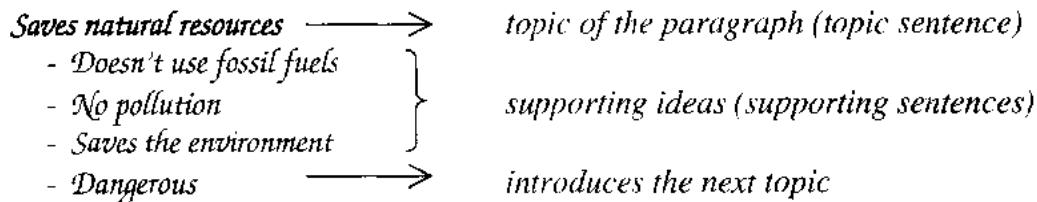
In the IELTS test, your essay is only 250 words long. *This is a very short essay.* Four or five ideas, *that are well explained*, are enough.

Writing A Balanced Essay

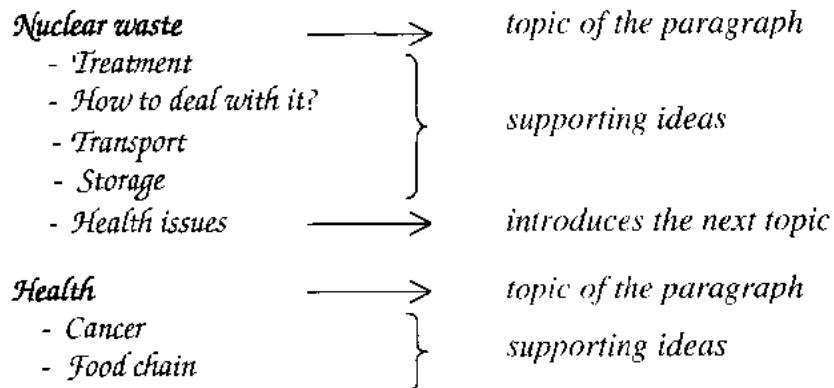
When writing your essay it is important to organise your ideas so that you give both sides of the argument. That is to say ideas for, and ideas against. If you do, your essay will be well balanced, and this will help you to get a higher band score.

Example Essay Plan 1

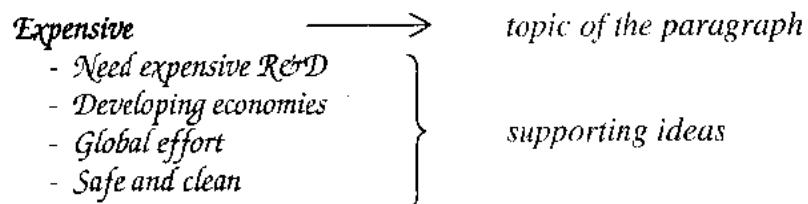
For Nuclear Power



Against Nuclear Power



Alternative Sources



Test Tip

Your ideas **are** important. They have to be relevant, and you have to express them well. But always remember that your examiner is testing your use of English, **not** your knowledge.

Example 2

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

The Economy

For The Argument

- Brain drain*
- Education is expensive*
- Set up a company overseas*
- Should care for elderly parents*
- Harmful to the economy*
- Unpatriotic*

Against The Argument

- Not everyone immigrates*
- People encouraged by governments*
- Many people study abroad*
- Return and set up their own business*
- Send money to their families*
- Poor villages*
- International relations*
- Cross-cultural understanding*
- Bring back knowledge and skills*
- Helps the economy*

People

For The Argument

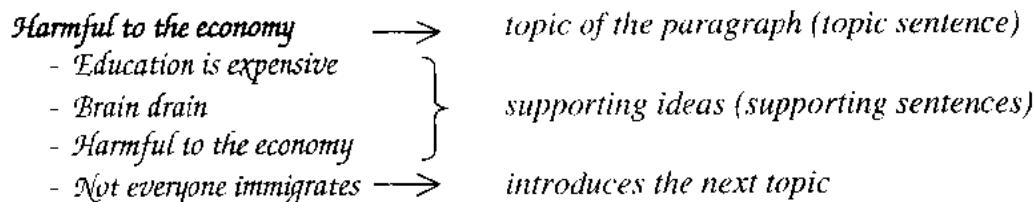
- Forget their own culture*
- Cultural isolation*
- Exploited by foreign country*

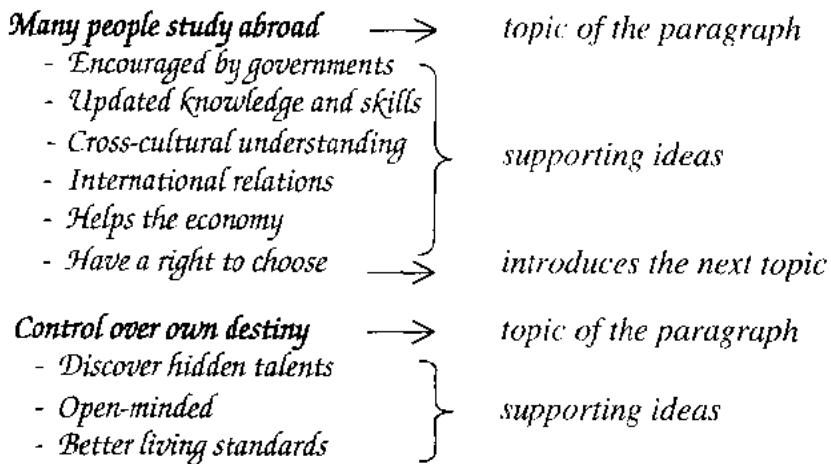
Against The Argument

- Have a right to choose*
- Control over own destiny*
- Discover hidden talents*
- Open-minded*
- Better living standards*
- Self-improvement*

Example Essay Plan 2

For The Argument



Against The Argument

Exercise 24: Writing An Essay Plan

Look at the ideas you brainstormed for the following questions and write essay plans.

Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.

Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

.....

.....

Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

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Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

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Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.

Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

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Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

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Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

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Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.

Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

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Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going to university or work.

Topic of the paragraph

Supporting ideas

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Writing A Thesis Statement

Notes

A thesis statement introduces your main idea and forms the main topic of the essay. A thesis statement is important because if you don't state your opinion at the beginning of the essay your examiner will find it difficult to follow your argument.

A Thesis Statement

A thesis statement is the *main topic of the essay*. That is to say, it is your *main idea*.

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

Now let us consider that we are *against* the use of nuclear power, and believe that the money spent on building nuclear power stations, developing nuclear energy, and treating nuclear waste, should be spent on research and development of alternative sources of energy. This, then, would form the main topic of the essay.

Against

The consequences of a nuclear accident are so severe that its use as an energy source should be banned, with the money being invested in the development of sustainable sources of energy.

Now let us consider that we are *for* the use of nuclear power because of the benefits it brings to the economy and the people of the country.

For

There are, of course, many dangers associated with the use of nuclear energy. However, modern technology ensures the dangers are minimal, and they are far outweighed by the benefits it can bring to an economy.

Example 2

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

Against

Whilst there are disadvantages to skilled, educated people leaving developing countries, they are far outweighed by the gains made when these same people return.

For

Developing countries are losing a lot of talented, educated people because many choose to live in developed countries. This is leading to a shortage of talent that is badly needed for the continued economic development of their own country.

Test Tip

You don't have to write an essay that is either for or against the question. You can be somewhere in the middle if you wish. For example, you may partially agree with the use of nuclear energy, or you may recognise the value of using nuclear energy but not be totally in favour of its use.

Example:

I partially agree with the statement because....

Nuclear energy has many advantages, but I'm not in total favour of its use because....

Exercise 25: Writing A Thesis Statement

Look at your essay plans and write a thesis statement for each question.

Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.

Thesis Statement

Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.

Thesis Statement

Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.

Thesis Statement

Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going to university or work.

Thesis Statement

Writing A Good Paragraph

Notes

An essay is a collection of paragraphs. Therefore, if you can write a good paragraph, you can write a good essay. A good paragraph should contain a topic sentence and supporting sentences.

Topic Sentences

Each paragraph should contain *only one topic*. The topic sentence is usually the first sentence of the paragraph. This forms the main topic of the paragraph.

Supporting Sentences

The supporting sentences are the evidence you give to support your topic. Their purpose is to explain your idea to the reader. However, it's better if *the last sentence introduces the topic of the next paragraph*. This makes it easier to follow your ideas.

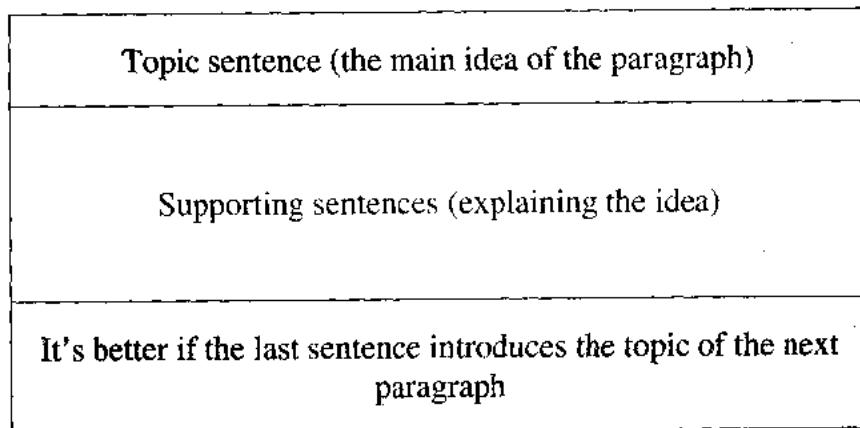


Fig.20: Showing the structure of a paragraph

Introducing The Topic Of The Next Paragraph

Whilst it is a good idea to introduce the topic of the next paragraph, it is not always necessary or possible. However, it does improve *communicative quality* because it makes your ideas or arguments easier to follow. This is because it acts as a link between the paragraphs.

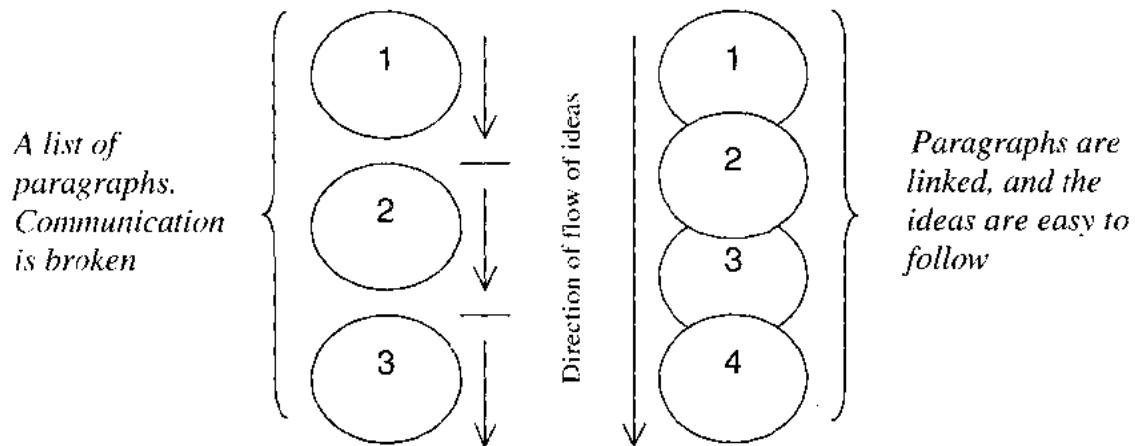


Fig.21: Showing the linking of paragraphs

Test Tip

To do as well as you can in the essay writing *it is very important that you explain your ideas clearly*. Remember, a few ideas that are well explained are far better than lots of ideas that are not well explained.

Discussion

Work in groups. Discuss the following questions:

- *Which paragraphs are better? Why do you think so?*
- *How could they be improved? Explain your answer.*

Paragraph 1

One of the main benefits of nuclear power is that it doesn't use natural resources, so it's good for the environment. And because electricity is cheap, people will save money, so it's also good for the economy. But alternative sources of energy are expensive, so they're bad for the economy. Nuclear power, though, can be very dangerous. And treating nuclear waste is also a serious problem.

Paragraph 2

One of the main benefits of nuclear power is that it doesn't use natural resources such as coal, gas and oil. This, of course, is a major benefit as far as the environment is concerned because pollutant gasses, produced by traditional methods of production, are absent. Nor does it require the extensive mining of raw material that is widely believed to be in short supply. Nuclear power is, however, extremely dangerous.

Paragraph 3

Too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to an economy. However, not everyone immigrates. People can update their skills abroad and return to help the economy. Besides, people should have the right to live and work in another country if they wish. They can become more open minded and improve their living standards.

Paragraph 4

Too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to an economy. Indeed, education is expensive, and a big investment for any government to make. However, when people choose to leave the country in which they grew up, and were educated, the country that benefits is the country the person goes to. Therefore, the person's native country does not see a return on their investment. However, not everyone immigrates.

Author's Comments:

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 1 *contains too many topics*. The topic sentence is: “*One of the main benefits of nuclear power is that it doesn't use natural resources*”, yet this idea is not explained. Indeed, the paragraph goes on to talk about the benefits to the economy. Finally, that nuclear waste is dangerous and the treatment of nuclear waste is a problem.

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 2 only contains one topic. The topic is introduced in the first sentence: the benefits of nuclear power. The rest of the paragraph explains this idea.

The last sentence: “*Nuclear power is extremely dangerous*” introduces the reader to the topic of the next paragraph.

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 3 *contains too many topics*. The topic sentence is: “*Too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to an economy*”, yet this idea is not explained. Instead the paragraph talks about the benefits of studying abroad, although this idea has not been introduced. Therefore, it is confusing to the reader.

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 4 only contains one topic. The topic is introduced in the first sentence: harm to the economy. The rest of the paragraph explains this idea.

The last sentence: “*However, not everyone immigrates*” introduces the reader to the topic of the next paragraph.

Writing Topic Sentences

Notes

Topic sentences introduce the reader to the topic of the paragraph. They are very important because without a topic sentence the reader will find your essay confusing, and difficult to follow. And if your essay is confusing, and difficult to follow, you won't be able to get a high band score in the IELTS test.

Let us look, again, at our example essay titles:

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

Paragraph One

Topic of the paragraph: *Nuclear energy saves natural resources.*

Topic sentence: *One of the main benefits of nuclear power is that it doesn't use natural resources such as coal, gas and oil.*

Paragraph Two

Topic of the paragraph: *Nuclear waste is difficult to treat.*

Topic sentence: *Dealing with nuclear waste is a big problem.*

Paragraph Three

Topic of the paragraph: *Nuclear energy is harmful to people's health.*

Topic sentence: *The health of people and other forms of life that live near power stations is also a major concern.*

Paragraph Four

Topic of the paragraph: *Alternative sources of energy are expensive.*

Topic sentence: *The downside of alternative sources of energy is the cost.*

Example 2

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

Paragraph One

Topic of the paragraph: *It's harmful to the economy when people leave the country.*

Topic sentence: *Too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to an economy.*

Paragraph Two

Topic of the paragraph: *Many people choose to study abroad.*

Topic sentence: *Far more people choose to study abroad than to immigrate.*

Paragraph Three

Topic of the paragraph: *People gain control over their own destiny.*

Topic sentence: *By updating their knowledge and skills, people gain control over their own destiny.*

Exercise 26: Writing Topic Sentences

Look back at your essay plans and write a topic sentence for each paragraph.

Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going to university or work.

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Topic sentence:.....

Test Tip

If your examiner has difficulty understanding your ideas, or following your main argument, you will get a lower band score than you are capable of getting. Therefore, when you are writing your essay, always *ask yourself* this question: "*What do I mean by this?*" Then *answer* your own question.

Writing Supporting Sentences

Notes

It is important to remember that the person reading your essay *cannot ask you questions* if they don't understand your meaning clearly. Therefore, when communicating in writing, *it is your responsibility to explain your ideas*. This is the purpose of supporting sentences.

Example 1

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

Paragraph 1

Topic sentence: One of the main benefits of nuclear power is that it doesn't use natural resources such as coal, gas and oil.

Supporting sentences: *It helps to protect the environment because fuel such as coal and oil produces waste gases that pollute the atmosphere. It also ensures a reliable supply of electricity for many generations to come.*

Paragraph 2

Topic sentence: Dealing with nuclear waste is a big problem.

Supporting sentences: *Nuclear waste is very dangerous, and takes many years before it becomes safe. Even if it is buried, if anything happens, such as an earthquake, the damage to the environment could be very serious. Nuclear waste also has to be transported to the place where it is to be stored. If anything happens whilst it is being transported, an accident, for example, the results could be very serious.*

Paragraph 3

Topic sentence: The health of people and other forms of life that live near power stations is also a major concern.

Supporting sentences: *It is not unusual to hear reports that people who live close to a nuclear power station often suffer from cancer. If this is true, then maybe it harms plants and animals. This, then, would present a further danger to the health of people who eat these plants and animals.*

Paragraph 4

Topic sentence: The downside of alternative sources of energy is the cost.

Supporting sentences: *Take, for example, solar energy. This is an expensive way of producing electricity because the technology is relatively underdeveloped. This means electricity is expensive for people to buy, which affects the economy of the country, as well as people's living standards, because they have less disposable income to buy consumer goods or services.*

Example 2

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

Paragraph 1

Topic sentence: Too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to an economy.

Supporting sentences: *The government invests a lot of money in people's education. If they leave the country the government doesn't see a return on their investment. Therefore, when people live in another country, the country of their birth cannot take advantage of their skills and education. In other words, they take from the country without giving anything back.*

Paragraph 2

Topic sentence: Far more people choose to study abroad than to immigrate.

Supporting sentences: *It is becoming increasingly popular for people to go overseas to further their education. This can bring great benefits to the people themselves and the country's economy because they return with updated knowledge and skills that can bring many advantages to their own country.*

Paragraph 3

Topic sentence: By updating their knowledge and skills, people gain control over their own destiny.

Supporting sentences: *By studying overseas, on their return, people are often valued highly by employers because of the skills they gain. Not only the skills learnt at university, such as team work, analytical thinking and creativity, but also skills such as being able to communicate more effectively with people from other cultures. This gives people a wider choice of jobs, as well as promotional opportunities.*

Exercise 27: Writing Supporting Sentences

Explain your meaning for each topic sentence you wrote for the following questions.

Question 1: In a truly global economy people should be allowed to live and work wherever they wish. Therefore, visas should be banned so that people can live and work in another country without difficulty.

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

.....

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

Question 2: Every year countries spend millions of dollars investing in space technology. However, this is a waste of a country's financial resources. Instead, governments should invest the money in health, education and housing.

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

.....

Question 3: In order for a country to become economically powerful the government should invest in research and development of computer technology, and less money on national defense.

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

Question 4: Many young people in China are influenced by Western cultures. Some people argue that this is leading to loss of traditional values. Therefore, young people should be made to spend two years in the army where they are taught discipline and traditional values, before going to university or work.

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

Topic sentence:

Supporting sentences:

.....

.....

Unit 2 Writing General Training Essays

Notes

When writing General Training essays you are expected to be able to *discuss* your ideas by giving an opinion and supporting your opinion with evidence. In other words, you are supposed to either:

- 1) Give an opinion and explain your reasons why you think this.
- 2) Give a problem and suggest a solution.

However, it is important that all your ideas are relevant.

Writing The Body Part

Notes

In the general test you have to give an opinion about the question. In other words, you have to say if you agree with the question or not. You have to give your reasons and explain your reasons in the essay.

The safety of nuclear energy is a major concern. → An opinion

Indeed, the nuclear accident in the former Soviet Union resulted in devastating environmental damage that extended far beyond the proximity of the station itself. } Reasons

Example: Explaining An Idea

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

Opinion: *Accidents can be very serious.*

Reasons: *Nuclear power is dangerous.
Dealing with nuclear waste is a big problem.*

Opinion: *It can be harmful to people's health.*

Reasons: *High incidences of cancer.
Food may be affected.*

Opinion: *More research is needed into alternative sources of energy.*

Reasons: *Presently, it's too expensive and may be harmful to a country's economy.
Natural resources are in short supply.
Nuclear energy is too dangerous.*

Analysis Of The Sample Essay

The consequences of a nuclear accident are so severe that its use as an energy source should be banned, with the money being invested in the development of sustainable sources of energy.

Thesis statement

If there is ever an accident, such as the one that happened in the former Soviet Union in recent years, the consequences to the environment can be disastrous. Then, of course, dealing with nuclear waste is a big problem. Not only with where and how to store it, but also how to transport it safely. And once again, should there be an accident whilst the waste is being transported to the storage site, the consequences can be very serious indeed.

Opinion: nuclear power is very dangerous

The health of people and other forms of life that live near power stations is also a major concern. Indeed, we often hear reports of high levels of cancer amongst people who live close to nuclear power plants. Thus we must ask ourselves what effect this has on the food chain. For example, if crops, animals, fish etc are also affected, how does this affect the health of people who eat this food?

Opinion: nuclear power is harmful to people's health

Many alternative sources of energy, however, are expensive because it is still under-developed. This can seriously affect the economy of a country, especially countries whose economy's are still being developed. However, considering that natural resources such as coal and oil may well be depleted not too far into the future, a global effort to improve the efficiency of, say, solar power, is surely a far better solution than using nuclear fuel.

Problem, including the reasons

Possible solution

Discussion

Work in groups. Read the following essay and discuss these questions:

- *How has the writer of the essay presented his ideas?*
- *How are those ideas explained?*
- *How do you know what the writer's point of view is?*

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

The consequences of a nuclear accident are so severe that its use as an energy source should be banned, with the money being invested in the development of sustainable sources of energy.

If there is ever an accident, such as the one that happened in the former Soviet Union in recent years, the consequences to the environment can be disastrous. Indeed, when the accident occurred large areas of land around the station were rendered unusable because of the radiation. But it also affected a much wider area because the radiation was carried by the wind to many other parts of the globe, especially Western Europe. Therefore, the damage done to people's health may never be known.

But even without nuclear accidents, the health of people and other forms of life that live near power stations is also a major concern. Indeed, we often hear reports of high levels of cancer amongst people who live close to nuclear power plants. Thus we must ask ourselves what effect this has on the food chain. For example, if crops, animals, fish, etc, are also affected, how does this affect the health of people who eat this food?

Many alternative sources of energy, however, are expensive because it is still under developed. This can seriously affect the economy of a country, especially countries whose economy's are still being developed. However, considering that natural resources such as coal and oil may well be depleted not too far into the future, a global effort to improve the efficiency of, say, solar power, is surely a far better solution than using nuclear fuel.

Author's Comments

The main issues in this question are the economy and the environment. In this essay the writer has chosen to focus on the environmental issue, rather than the economic issue. This, then, forms the main *focus* of the essay. However, the writer hasn't simply listed his ideas. Instead, he has *discussed* them.

Paragraph 2 mainly focuses on the writer's concerns about the dangers of a nuclear accident. To introduce the topic the author quoted the accident that happened in the former Soviet Union, and then explained why he felt this was a serious problem in the remainder of the paragraph.

The third paragraph builds upon the writer's concern about the dangers associated to the health of people. This time, however, the writer has discussed the idea that simply living near a nuclear power station can be harmful. Thus the writer has explained his ideas in more depth.

The question, however, mentions nuclear energy *and* alternative sources of energy. Therefore, it is important to mention this in the essay. Therefore, the writer has briefly discussed this in the last paragraph. This shows the examiner that the writer can consider both the issues – economic and environmental – and present an opinion about them.

It is clear from reading the essay that the writer could discuss the issues in greater depth. However, this is not possible because the time (40 minutes) is too short, and the word-length (250 words) is too few. However, this doesn't matter, because what is important is that the writer has shown his examiner how well he is able to express his ideas in writing. This is important because this is the skill that is being tested.

Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Notes

The purpose of the introduction is to introduce the reader to the main topic of the essay (the use of nuclear power, for example) and your opinion (agree, disagree, partially agree, agree up-to-a-point, etc.). Your thesis statement, therefore, should be included in the introduction. You should not, however, write the title. This will only waste valuable time because your examiner will ignore it.

Writing The Introduction

A Standard Introduction Compared To An IELTS Introduction

Normally, when you write an essay (at university, for example) the introduction serves to introduce the topic of the essay, leading into your thesis statement.

Read the following examples to the example essay question and discuss, with your partners, these questions:

- *How is the introduction to the standard essay different from the introduction to the IELTS essay?*
- *How has the writer of the essay introduced his opinion?*

Nuclear power is far too dangerous. Therefore, countries should ban its use and concentrate, instead, on developing alternative sources of energy such as hydroelectric power, wind power and solar energy.

A Standard Essay Introduction:

Nuclear power is a relatively recent discovery in the field of physics. Yet it has proven to be a very popular method of producing electricity, and is used widely by many countries worldwide for this purpose. Using a minimum of natural resources, it is capable of producing vast amounts of electricity at a cost far lower than traditional methods have thus far been able to achieve. However, it has many disadvantages, namely, it is highly dangerous. In fact, as I shall argue, it is far too dangerous to be used as a method of producing electricity.

An IELTS Essay Introduction:

There are, of course, many advantages to using nuclear power. However, in my opinion, I have to agree with the statement that it is far too dangerous to be used as a general source of energy.

Author's Comments: Standard Introduction

As you can see from this example, a standard essay introduction is rather long, and introduces the reader to the general topic of the essay, narrowing the focus to the thesis statement. (See fig. 22, below.)

IELTS Introduction

As you can see from this example, an IELTS essay introduction is very brief and to-the-point. It mainly consists of the thesis statement, with a brief introduction that introduces the writer's main idea. (See fig. 23, below.)

A standard essay introduction

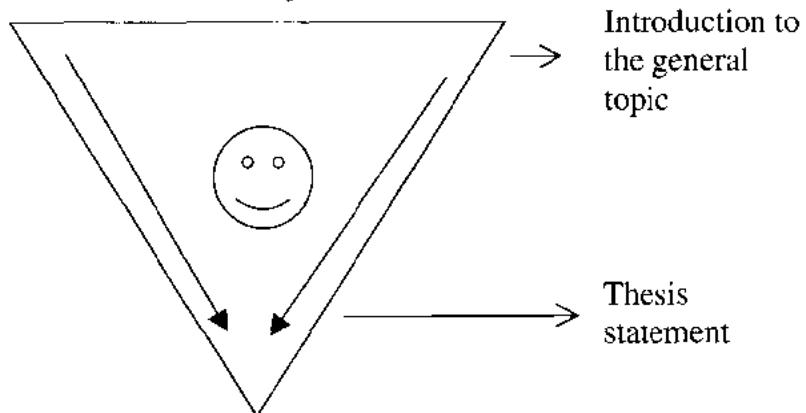


Fig. 22: Showing the structure of an introduction to a standard essay

An IELTS essay introduction

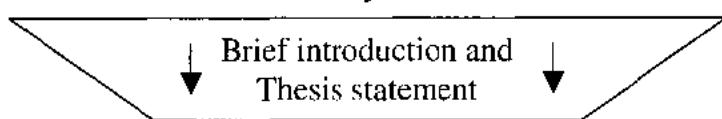


Fig. 23: Showing the structure of an introduction to an IELTS essay

Analysis Of The General Training Introduction

Nuclear power is widely used. And, of course, there are many advantages of using it. } *Brief introduction to the topic*

However, in my opinion, I have to agree with the statement that it is far too dangerous to be used as a general source of energy. } *My opinion*

Useful Phrases: General Training Essays

- ◻ *In my opinion.....*
- ◻ *I believe.....*
- ◻ *I have to agree/disagree because.....*
- ◻ *A better solution is to*

Writing The Conclusion

Notes

The purpose of the conclusion is to summarise what you said in the essay and to re-state your point of view. Therefore, you need to consider the main points of each paragraph.

Example: Summarising The Main Ideas

Having considered the issues I am not in favour of using nuclear power.	}	<i>This re-states the thesis statement</i>
The damage resulting from a nuclear accident is too severe to ignore.		<i>A summary of paragraph 2</i>
There's a serious risk to people's health.	→	<i>A summary of paragraph 3</i>
More effort should be applied to the development of alternative sources of energy.	}	<i>A summary of paragraphs 1 and 4</i>

Example: General Training Summary

Having considered the issues I am not in favour of using nuclear power because of the potential damage caused by a nuclear accident, and the risk to people's health. Instead, I believe more effort should be applied to the development of alternative sources of energy.

Useful Phrases: General Training Essays

- Having considered.....
- As I have suggested.....
- It is my belief that.....
- To conclude, I have to say that.....

Example Essay: General Training

Nuclear power is widely used. And, of course, there are many advantages of using it. However, in my opinion, I have to agree with the statement that it is far too dangerous to be used as a general source of energy.

Safety is a big problem. Indeed, if there is ever an accident, such as the one that happened in the former Soviet Union in recent years, the consequences can be disastrous. Then, of course, dealing with nuclear waste is a big problem. Not only with where and how to store it, but also how to transport it safely. And once again, should there be an accident whilst the waste is being transported to the storage site, the consequences can be very serious indeed.

The health of people and other forms of life that live near power stations is also a major concern. Indeed, we often hear reports of high levels of cancer amongst people who live close to nuclear power plants. Thus we must ask ourselves what effect this has on the food chain. For example, if crops, animals, fish etc. are also affected, how does this affect the health of people who eat this food?

Many alternative sources of energy, however, are expensive because it is still under-developed. This can seriously affect the economy of a country, especially countries whose economies are still being developed. However, considering that natural resources such as coal, oil and gas may well be depleted not too far into the future, a global effort to improve the efficiency of, say, solar power, is surely a far better solution than using nuclear fuel.

Having considered the issues I am not in favour of using nuclear power because of the potential damage of a nuclear accident, and the risk to people's health. Instead, I believe more effort should be applied to the development of alternative sources of energy.

Exercise 28: Writing A Full Essay

Work in groups. Look at the following question and write a *full* essay.

You should spend no more than 40 minutes on this task.

Question 1: Education is a right, not a privilege. Therefore, education should be free for everyone, regardless of wealth and social status.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answers. (Answer provided)

Question 2: The growth of big cities is leading to the destruction of the environment. Therefore, more should be done to protect areas of natural beauty.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answers. (Answer provided)

Question 3: Top sports players; film stars and singers are paid far too much for their work, when in fact they contribute very little to society. Therefore, they should be paid an average salary and treated the same as ordinary people.

How far do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your answers.

Question 4: Since the 1980s, China opened its doors to the West. However, this is having a negative influence on the Chinese culture, and young people, especially, are forgetting their own traditions and customs. Therefore, schools should pay more attention on teaching traditional values.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answers.

Question 5: Modern working pressure makes life far more stressful than it was twenty or thirty years ago. Therefore, holiday entitlement should be increased to allow people more leisure time.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answers.

Unit 3 Writing Academic Essays

Notes

The process of writing an academic essay is the same as for writing a general essay. The only difference is that *when you write a general essay you discuss your opinion. In academic essay writing you present an argument.* Therefore, when writing an academic essay, you should argue against the opposing opinions by finding weaknesses in the argument to support your own opinion. In other words, rather than simply explaining your ideas, you are comparing your ideas with other people's ideas and opinions.

- 1) Present the opposing opinion and find problems or weaknesses in that opinion to support your own.
- 2) Don't simply explain your own opinions.

Writing The Body Part

Notes

In the academic test you have to present a written argument. In other words, you have to say if you agree with the question or not and you have to explain your reasons by showing weaknesses in the opposing argument. *The opposing argument disagrees with the thesis statement.*

Example: Opposing An Argument

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

Argument: *Educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to the economy.*

Opposing argument: *People have worked for a number of years and already contributed to the economy.*

Argument: *They take a wealth of experience out of the country.*

Opposing argument: *More and more people are choosing to study overseas, and return to their own country after a period of study.*

Argument: *Some people may choose not to return after completing their studies.*

Opposing argument: *The benefits they can gain on their return often far outweigh the benefits offered by the country in which they choose to study.*

Example Paragraph

When skilled, educated people choose to leave a developing country in favour of countries with developed economies, the benefits that they bring to their own country can often far outweigh the negative effects.

} Thesis statement

Too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can, indeed, be harmful to the economy of the country that they leave because governments, and indeed taxpayers, invest a lot of money in their education.

} Opposing argument

However, the processes involved in immigrating, visa applications, relocation costs, language training and so on can very expensive. Therefore, people who do choose to immigrate first have to amass enough wealth for the purpose. Given aside help from family members, these people tend to be people in their 30s and 40s, who have already worked for a number of years and saved enough money for the purpose of immigration, and have therefore contributed to their country's economy.

} Weaknesses in the opposing argument

Note

If you are writing an academic essay, *do not use personal pronouns* (I, we, you etc.). Instead *write in the third person passive*.

Example

- It is argued that
- It is widely believed that
- Supporters of this theory argue that
- It can be argued that....
- It is important to consider that

Test Tip

In the academic IELTS writing, you are supposed to write an essay for a college lecturer who has no specialist knowledge in the subject. This means that *no one is testing your knowledge*. You are, however, being assessed on *your ability to write in an academic style*.

Discussion

Work in groups. Read the following essay and discuss these questions

- *How is the essay different from the general essay?*
- *How has the writer of the essay presented his ideas?*
- *How are those ideas explained?*
- *How do you know what the writer's point of view is?*

Every year thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

Too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to the economy of the country that they leave because governments, and indeed taxpayers, invest a lot of money in their education. However, the processes involved in immigrating, visa applications, relocation costs, language training and so on can be very expensive. Therefore, people who do choose to immigrate first have to amass enough wealth for the purpose. Given aside help from family members, these people tend to be people in their 30s and 40s, who have already worked for a number of years and saved enough money for the purpose of immigration, and have therefore contributed to their country's economy. However, far more people choose to study abroad than to immigrate.

It is becoming increasingly popular for people to go overseas to further their education. Indeed, they are often encouraged, or even sponsored by their governments to do so, because universities in developed countries have the financial resources to provide up-to-date equipment and modern expertise. Moreover, universities in Western countries tend to focus on teaching the application of knowledge, in areas such as teamwork and problem solving that are important in a modern economy. A problem emerges, however, when the people studying abroad decide, for whatever reason, not to return to the country of their birth.

Notwithstanding, people living overseas often have to face the problem of isolation, which can be enough to discourage people from staying after their graduation. Moreover, the benefits they can enjoy on their return can be enormous. Indeed, people who have studied overseas are often valued highly by employers because of the skills they gain. Important skills, such as: teamwork, analytical thinking and creativity. More importantly, however, they acquire a greater sense of cultural awareness and are often able to communicate more effectively with people from other cultures, which is a valuable asset to any company that is involved in international trade and negotiations.

Author's Comments

The main issue in this question is, of course, the economy. And this forms the main *focus* of the essay. However, the writer hasn't simply listed his ideas. Instead, he has presented his opinion by *arguing against* the opposing opinion.

For example, paragraph 1 begins "*too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to the economy...*". This is the opinion presented in the question, and is *opposite* to the writer's opinion. This we know because the writer points out a weakness in the argument ("*however, the processes involved in immigrating, visa applications, relocation costs, language training and so on can be very expensive*") and *explains why* it is weakness in the rest of the essay.

In paragraph 2 the writer argues that overseas study can greatly benefit a country's economy, and supports this claim by saying that people are "*...often encouraged, or even sponsored by their governments...*" to study in an overseas university. This has the effect of making the reader realise that the argument presented in the question (*people going overseas is harmful to the economy of a country's economy*) is, in fact, a weak argument.

Once again, the writer's point of view is strengthened in the last paragraph when he points out the difficulties faced by people who go to live overseas, as well as the skills they take back to their homeland.

By arguing against a point of view, the writer is able to show the examiner that he can present his opinion by *arguing against* a contrasting point of view.

Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Notes

The purpose of the introduction is to introduce the reader to the main topic of the essay (the use of nuclear power, for example) and your opinion (agree, disagree, partially agree, agree up-to-a-point, etc.). Your thesis statement, therefore, should be included in the introduction. You should not, however, write the title. This will only waste valuable time because your examiner will ignore it.

Writing The Introduction

A Standard Introduction Compared To An IELTS Introduction

Normally, when you write an essay (at university, for example) the introduction serves to introduce the topic of the essay, leading into your thesis statement.

Read the following examples to the example essay question and discuss, with your partners, these questions:

- *How is the introduction to the standard essay different from the introduction to the IELTS essay?*
- *How has the writer of the essay introduced his opinion?*

Every year, thousands of highly skilled, well-educated people leave developing countries and go to live in another country, such as Canada, Australia, America or Britain. This is having a negative effect on the future development of these countries because these are the very people they need in order to develop their economy.

Example: Standard Essay Introduction

Many people who live in countries such as China, Pakistan and Indonesia, whose economies are in the process of being developed, choose to leave the country of their birth to seek a better life in a country such as Canada, Australia or America whose economies are, of course, fully modernised. This has led to the belief that countries with developing economies are experiencing a 'brain drain'. In other words, for countries with under-developed economies to be able to gain economic power, they first need to develop and modernise their industry, for which they need highly skilled and educated people. Therefore, if these people leave the country in large numbers, the economy is likely to suffer. I believe, however, that the economy of developing countries can benefit if people return having studied, or even lived overseas.

Example: An IELTS Essay Introduction

Whilst educated people who choose to leave developing countries can indeed, have a negative effect on the economy, I believe that the economy of developing countries can actually benefit if people return having studied, or even lived overseas.

Author's Comments: Standard Introduction

As you can see from this example, a standard essay introduction is rather long, and introduces the reader to the general topic of the essay, narrowing the focus to the thesis statement. (See fig. 24, below.)

IELTS Introduction

As you can see from this example, an IELTS essay introduction is very brief and to-the-point. It mainly consists of the thesis statement, with a brief introduction that introduces the writer's main idea. (See fig. 25, below.)

A standard essay introduction

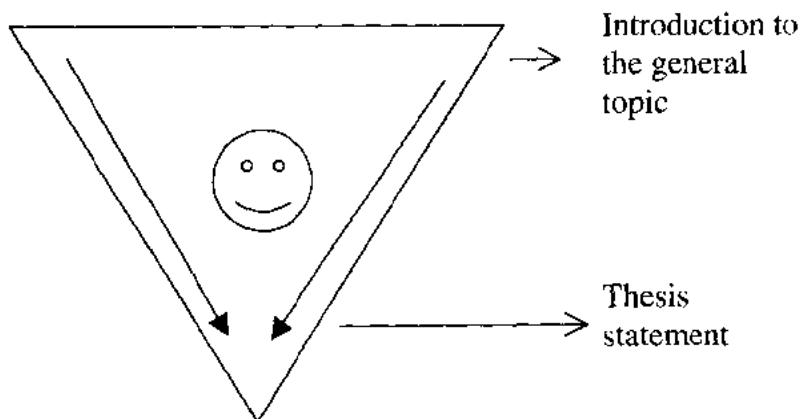


Fig. 24: Showing the structure of an introduction to a standard essay

An IELTS essay introduction

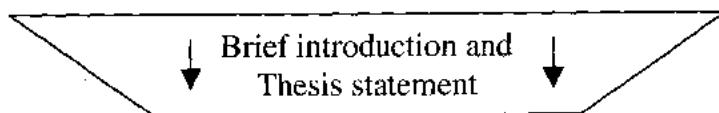


Fig. 25: Showing the structure of an introduction to an IELTS essay

Introduction Analysis

Many developing countries are faced with the problem that highly skilled and educated people choose to leave the country of their birth to live in developed countries. However, I disagree that this is harmful to the economies of developing countries because those who choose to return make a valuable contribution.

Useful Phrases: Academic Essays

- I shall argue that.....*
- I propose that.....*
- After considering the facts.....*

Test Tip

If you are writing an academic essay it is acceptable to use personal pronouns in the introduction and conclusion *but not the main body*.

Writing The Conclusion

Notes

The purpose of the conclusion is to summarise what you said in the essay and to re-state your point of view. Therefore, you need to consider the main points of each paragraph. The conclusions are the same for both general and academic essays.

Example: Summarising The Main Ideas

The gains made when people return far outweigh the losses. } *This re-states the thesis statement*

More people study abroad than immigrate. → *A summary of paragraph 2*

People return with updated knowledge and skills. → *A summary of paragraph 3*

People who return contribute greatly to the development of their country's economy. } *A summary of paragraph 4*

Test Tip

Do not waste valuable time by writing a long introduction and conclusion. Instead, keep them brief and to-the-point. They are important, but the main body of the essay is more important.

Example: Academic Essay Summary

Whilst it can be argued that developing countries are experiencing a 'brain drain', as I have argued, the realities are that developing countries benefit greatly from people going overseas because of the contribution they can make to the economy on their return.

Useful Phrases: Academic Essays

- After considering the facts.....
- As I have argued above.....
- To sum.....
- As I have argued in the essay Therefore I believe that
- Whilst there are many advantages I believe that

Example Essay: Academic

Many developing countries are faced with the problem that highly skilled and educated people choose to leave the country of their birth to live in developed countries. However, I disagree that this is harmful to the economies of developing countries because the many who choose to return make a valuable contribution.

It can be argued that too many educated, skilled people leaving a country can be harmful to the economy of the country that they leave. Indeed, governments and taxpayers invest a lot of money in people's education. Therefore, if they leave the country the government, or the taxpayer doesn't see a return on their investment. In other words, when people live in a foreign country, the country of their birth cannot take advantage of their skills and education. Therefore, the people who choose to leave take from their country without giving anything back. However, far more people choose to study abroad than to immigrate.

It is becoming increasingly popular for people to go overseas to further their education. In fact, they are often encouraged, or even sponsored by their governments to do so. This can bring many benefits to the people themselves and the country's economy because people return with updated knowledge and skills that are needed by modern industry. This, then, can greatly benefit their own country.

Moreover, by updating their knowledge and skills, people gain control over their own destiny. By studying overseas, on their return, people are often valued highly by employers because of the skills they gain. Important skills, such as teamwork, analytical thinking and creativity. Furthermore, because they acquire a greater sense of cultural awareness they are often able to communicate more effectively with people from other cultures, which is a valuable asset to any company that is involved in international trade and negotiations. This gives people a wider choice of jobs, as well as promotional opportunities.

Whilst it can be argued that developing countries are experiencing a 'brain drain', as I have argued, the realities are that developing countries benefit greatly from people going overseas because of the contribution they can make to the economy when they return.

Exercise 29: Writing A Full Essay

Work in pairs. Look at the following question and write a *full* essay.

Question 1: In all cultures, social status is awarded on the amount of wealth an individual has. However, social status should be awarded on the skills and experience a person has gained.

How far do you agree or disagree with this statement? (Answer provided)

Question 2: Modern technology has contributed greatly to the development of a global economy.

How far do you agree or disagree with this statement? (Answer provided)

Question 3: Travel is an essential part of modern life, and employers often expect people to travel long distances to work every day. Therefore, companies should be taxed heavily, and the money used to provide cheap and efficient public transport.

How far do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your answers.

Question 4: Many people argue that women are incapable of taking on the responsibility of a senior company manager because their ‘natural’ role in life is homemaker and caregiver.

How far do you agree or disagree with this argument? Give reasons for your answers.

Question 5: Universities focus too much attention on teaching knowledge, and not enough effort on teaching skills necessary for work, such as problem solving, team work and communication skills.

How far do you agree or disagree with this argument? Give reasons for your answers.

Unit 4 Writing A Full Essay

Notes

By now you should be fully familiar with essay writing for the IELTS test, and should be able to identify weaknesses in essays other people have written.

Student Essay Analysis

Below is a detailed analysis of the essays written by students. All the essays were written under the same conditions as a real IELTS test.

Why do so many people want to go to an English speaking country to study, and why English is an important international language.

What do you think? Give reasons for your answers.

Essay 1

Recent years, lots of people pursuing their study go to some English-speaking nations, including USA, Australia and England. You must speak English when you study and live these countries since English is their formal communicating language.

English has a very long history in the language developing and it's an important international language. English is accepted by most countries, so maybe it's the most widespread in the world. All the words are made up of 26 English alphabets, and you have to say that the creator of the language is so great.

In any field, economy, politics, society and science, there are so plenty of works published in English. America is an English-speaking state as the most developed country in the world. If you want to catch up with the present economy information, if you want to rich yourself in your field, if you're concerned any changes in the society, and if you're in charge of a very important science project, needing much materials, you must be with the help of English. Therefore the importance of English is being emphasised more and more by every country. Because they learn that no mastering the language, then no development and no progress.

As a result, millions of people choose to further their study in English, so they move to such countries to make themselves more involved in the atmosphere of the language.¹

¹ Source: an in-class mock test conducted in Suzhou, April 2001.

Detailed Essay Analysis

There are 5 main problems with this essay.

- 1) **Paragraph 2 is irrelevant. It is not talking about the issues (the economy) and therefore does not answer the question.**
- 2) **In paragraph 2 the candidate has thought about the economic issue, but has not developed his or her ideas.** In other words, the candidate has not explained why English is important to the development of a country's economy. If, however, the candidate had used one of the sentences as a topic sentence, he or she would have been able to explain his or her ideas more clearly.
- 3) **The candidate has used very few sentence connectors. Therefore, paragraph 3 is a list of ideas, not a coherent paragraph.**
- 4) **The candidate has not concluded the essay by summarising his or her ideas.**
- 5) **It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.**

"America is an English-speaking state as the most developed country in the world." should be

"*America is the most developed English speaking country in the world.*"

"If you're concerned any changes in the society." should be

"*If you are concerned about any changes in society.*"

"You must speak English when you study and live these countries since English is their formal communicating language." should be

"*You must speak English when you study and live in these countries since English is their official language of communication.*"

"English is being emphasised more and more by every country. Because they learn that no mastering the language, then no development and no progress." should be
"*English is being emphasised more and more by every country because if you don't master the language, economic development is held back.*"

Overall, the essay does not answer the question very well and therefore contains a lot of irrelevant information. It would not get a very high score in an IELTS test.

Essay 2

Nowadays, the world becomes smaller and smaller with the development of technology. You can touch all corner of the world by the computer. However, a problem still exist - language. So many people in the non-English speaking countries study in English in order to make themselves suit the modern society. In one way, they move to English-speaking countries such as Australia, Britain or America to study at school, college or university.

Firstly everyone knows that English is an important international language. For example, if in a country nobody can speak English, the nation must be closed and poor. They didn't know what happened outside. They can't use many technology that other countries invented. They develop very slowly. Then, English-speaking countries are the most nation in the world. Most of these countries are developed country. If you want to sign a contract with foreign country, usually it is an English contract. It helps the trade go on.

Besides, if you want to look for some data from the net, you must know English well. Many dot-com use English as their language. If you chat with foreigner, English is your first choice.

In my opinion, whether people know English well or not decide the national development in global society with high competition. India is a good example. She export many software to America every year and create many talented people in computer science.

Detailed Essay Analysis

There are 5 main problems with this essay.

- 1) The essay is poorly organised and is therefore confusing.** For example, in paragraph 2 the candidate begins to talk about English being an important international language.

Firstly everyone knows that English is an important international language. For example, if in a country nobody can speak English, the nation must be closed and poor. They didn't know what happened outside. They can't use many technology that other countries invented. They develop very slowly. (Line 7)

And ends the paragraph by talking about English speaking countries being developed countries.

Then, English-speaking countries are the most nation in the world. Most of these countries are developed country. If you want to sign

*a contract with foreign country, usually it is an English contract.
It helps the trade go on.* (Line 10)

- 2) The candidate has not explained his or her ideas.** For example, the candidate says:

....if in a country nobody can speak English, the nation must be closed and poor. (Line 8)

but does not explain why he or she believes this.

- 3) Paragraph 3 is irrelevant because it does not talk about the issue of economic development. Therefore, it does not answer the question.**

- 4) The candidate has given his or her opinion in the conclusion.**

In my opinion, whether people know English well or not decide the national development in global society with high competition.
(Line 17)

This should be the *topic sentence*. Then the candidate would have been able to explain this idea in the paragraph.

- 5) It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.**

“So many people in the non-English speaking countries study in English in order to make themselves suit the modern society.” should be

“*Many people in the non-English speaking countries study English in order to adapt to a modern society.*”

“They can’t use many technology that other countries invented.” should be
“*They can’t use much of the technology invented by other countries.*”

“English-speaking countries are the most nation in the world.” should be
“*Much of the world’s population* live in English speaking countries.”

“If you chat with foreigner, English is your first choice.” should be
“*If you want to chat with a foreigner, English is your first choice.*”

Overall, the essay does not answer the question very well and is poorly organised. Nor has the candidate explained his or her ideas. It would not get a very high score in an IELTS test.

Essay 3

Nowadays, many young Chinese people intend to go abroad to take further study. English-speaking countries are their main choices. Focusing on this problem, arguments arise recently. Some people claim that it will cause the loss of useful people. Others think it as a better way to study hi-technology in English. I think the latter are right.

English is very important language in the world. Although people speaking English are not the most of the world, the countries and areas using English are number one. Since the industrialisation started in UK English act as a significant in the use and spread of modern technology. At present, most of English-speaking countries are developed countries. In case developing countries want to improve their economy and technology, English is a necessary media to obtain useful knowledge from Western countries. As the result, nobody can deny that English is the most important and useful language, which is widely used in our social and economic life.

In this case, in order to handle English fluently and obtain knowledge and technology in English, people go to study in English-speaking countries is the best way. First, it will push you to work hard to learn English. If not, you can't be alive in English-speaking environment. Second, many young people going to study abroad will make them to keep touch with advertising technology and help them to acquire necessary knowledge in short period. It do will cause the lots of useful people temporary. But you can imagine what will happen if they came back after finishing their study. It will be a great power to develop our country. Even for the authority, going to abroad and taking a short time study will help them keep mind opening.

As the fact, I'd like to study abroad, such as UK, Australia, if I have the opportunity. I hope to come back to my country after study to do something for my homeland.

Detailed Essay Analysis

There are 6 main problems with this essay.

- 1) **The main problem is that the candidate has not focused on the issues (the economy).** He or she has talked about economic development in under-developed countries, but mentions this mid-way, or at the end of each paragraph, instead of using it as the topic of the paragraph. This makes the essay confusing because it is difficult to understand why the candidate thinks English is an important language. The underlined sentences should be *topic sentences*. Then the candidate would have been able to develop his or her ideas more clearly.

In case developing countries want to improve their economy and technology, English is a necessary media to obtain useful knowledge from Western countries. (Line 10)

- 2) In paragraph 3 the candidate has only included a reference to the economy at the end of the paragraph (*It will be a great power to develop our country*). (Line 20)**

But you can imagine what will happen if they came back after finishing their study. It will be a great power to develop our country. (Line 19)

- 3) The candidate hasn't really considered the issues closely enough.** He or she talks about gaining knowledge from western countries. But economic development depends on much more than just knowledge. It is largely about international trade, in which English is used as the medium of communication.
- 4) Paragraph 3 is confusing because the candidate hasn't made it clear why obtaining technical and advertising knowledge is important.** Again, the problem is that he or she hasn't introduced the topic at the beginning of the paragraph.

In this case, in order to handle English fluently and obtain knowledge and technology in English, people go to study in English-speaking countries is the best way. First, it will push you to work hard to learn English. If not, you can't be alive in English-speaking environment. Second, many young people going to study abroad will make them to keep touch with advertising technology and help them to acquire necessary knowledge in short period. (Paragraph 3)

- 5) The candidate has not concluded the essay by summarising his or her ideas.**
Therefore, it is irrelevant.

As the fact, I'd like to study abroad, such as UK, Australia, if I have the opportunity. I hope to come back to my country after study to do something for my homeland. (Paragraph 4)

- 6) It uses inappropriate language and there are some mistakes in word use and sentence structure.**

"Since the industrialisation started in UK English act as a significant in the use and spread of modern technology." should be

"Since industrialisation started in UK, English has played a major role in the use and spread of modern technology."

"First, it will push you to work hard to learn English. If not, you can't be alive in English-speaking environment." should be

"First, it will encourage you to work hard to learn English. If you don't, you can't survive in an English-speaking environment."

"Although people speaking English are not the most of the world, the countries and areas using English are number one." should be

"Although non-English speakers outnumber English speakers, English speaking countries and areas are still number one."

"...many young people going to study abroad will make them to keep touch with advertising technology and help them to acquire necessary knowledge in short period.
It do will cause the lots of useful people temporary." should be

"...many young people going abroad to study will quickly be able to update their knowledge of the world of advertising, although it does cause a temporary loss of talent in their own country."

Overall, the essay does not answer the question very well because the candidate has not thought about the issues. It would not get a very high score in an IELTS test, although it is better than essays one and two.

Unit 5 Practice Tests

General Training Test

Practice Test One

You should spend no more than 40 minutes on this task.

Universities do not prepare people for work. Instead, they teach knowledge that has little relevance in 'the real world'.

How far do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answers. (Answer provided)

Practice Test Two

You should spend no more than 40 minutes on this task.

Children spend far too much time in front of a computer, and not enough time playing sports. This is resulting in a generation of unhealthy people. Therefore, children should not be allowed to use computers until the age of 18.

Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answers. (Answer provided)

Academic Test

Practice Test One

You should spend no more than 40 minutes on this task.

Modern science is slowly unlocking the secrets of the human genes. Some people argue that this is a good thing, because in the future doctors will be able to cure serious illnesses such as cancer and heart disease. However, others argue that it could be used to 'manufacture' people according to the needs of society.

What do you think? Give reasons for your answers. (Answer provided)

Practice Test Two

You should spend no more than 40 minutes on this task.

In traditional societies, children have always cared for their parents in their old age. However, in modern societies this is often not possible because children frequently have to move away from their hometown to seek work. Therefore, companies should be responsible for providing for their employees when they retire.

How far do you agree or disagree with this argument? Give reasons for your answers.
(Answer provided)

Chapter Five

Communicative Quality

第五章

交流技巧

Introduction To Communicative Quality

交流技巧简介

Notes

It is important to remember that the purpose of the writing part of the IELTS test is to assess how well you can *communicate your ideas* in writing. In other words, it is *not designed to test your knowledge of sentence structure and grammar*. It is, however, designed to assess how well you can communicate your ideas by using different types of sentence structures, including the use of sentence connectors and tenses, as well as phrases to emphasize important information or to support an opinion.

我们始终要记住雅思写作考试的目的是检测你如何表达思想的能力。换句话说，不是考查你的句型和语法知识，而是考查你使用不同句型、连接词、强调信息和支持某一观点等等的词语来表达你思想的能力。

To begin this unit we first need to review the marking criteria for the writing test.
在讲解交流技巧之前，我们首先要回顾一下写作考试的评分标准。

Marking Criteria (评分依据的三个方面)

The marking criteria are the same for both the general *and* academic tests.
普通培训类考试和学术类考试的评分标准是一样的。

Task One (20 minutes)	Task Two (40 minutes)
Task fulfillment	Arguments, ideas and evidence
Coherence and cohesion	Communicative quality
Vocabulary and sentence structure	Vocabulary and sentence structure

Table 3: showing the marking criteria for the writing test¹

第一部分 (20分钟)	第二部分 (40分钟)
完成任务	讨论、论点和论据
统一性和连贯性	交流能力
词汇和句型	词汇和句型

表3：写作考试评分的三个方面

¹ Source: IELTS Handbook, UCLES, 2000

As is shown in the table above, coherence and cohesion and vocabulary and sentence structure are an important part of the marking criteria for task one, and communicative quality and vocabulary and sentence structure are an important part of the marking criteria for task two. They are important because they assess how well you have expressed your ideas. Therefore, the better you can express your ideas and opinions the higher band score you will get in the writing part.

从上面的表中，我们可以看出，统一性和连贯性，词汇和句型是考试的第一部分的重要评分标准之一。交际能力，词汇和句型是考试第二部分的重要评分标准。它们之所以重要是因为通过它们可以评判你表达思想的能力。表达思想的能力越强，你得分就越高。

In this unit we shall review the use of sentence connectors, as well as ways of expressing ideas that will help you to improve your communication skills.

在本单元里，我们将复习一下句间关联词的使用，以及不同的表达思想的方式，这将有助于你提高交际的技巧。

Unit 1 Using Sentence connectors

Notes

Communicative quality simply means how well you express your ideas. If it is easy for your examiner to understand, and to follow, your ideas, you will get a high mark for communicative quality. Therefore, you need to be able to use sentence connectors well. Your examiner will look to see how well you use sentence connectors.

Sentence Connectors

Sentence connectors are words that connect sentences. Their purpose is to link sentences and paragraphs so that the information is easy to understand. If you don't use them, or you don't use them correctly, you will lose marks for communicative quality.

Compare The Examples Below

Example 1

Modern technology makes life more convenient. Indeed, it is now possible to send a letter to people living on the other side of the world within moments. Something never even dreamt of twenty years ago. This technology, in fact, has revolutionised the way business is conducted, bringing prosperity to many more people.

The downside, however, is the stress it can bring. People often feel under pressure at work, resulting in ill health. Moreover, people become lazy, preferring to communicate by email rather than walk to the other side of the office, or to ride in an elevator rather than walk up stairs. As a result, future generations may suffer.

Example 2

Modern technology makes life more convenient. It is now possible to send a letter to people living on the other side of the world within moments. This was never dreamt of twenty years ago. This technology has revolutionised the way business is conducted. It brings prosperity to many more people.

The downside is the stress it often brings. People feel under pressure at work. This makes them ill. People become lazy. They prefer to communicate by email rather than walk to the other side of the office. To ride in an elevator rather than walk up stairs. Future generations may suffer.

Author's Comments

You can see from these two examples that example one is easier to follow, and the ideas are communicated more fluently. Sentence connectors, if properly used, can express the writer's ideas more effectively.

Example two, however, does not 'flow' as easily as example one does. The sentences are more like a list of ideas than a flow of communication.

Introducing Contrasting Information

Notes

You should use contrasting information when you want to show the opposite side of an argument. *However*, *but*, *although* and *nevertheless* are commonly used.

However:

- It is used to join two sentences.
- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of the sentence.
- It is usually followed by a comma (,).

The main purpose of a university is to teach knowledge. However, skills such as teamwork and effective communication are also important.

The main purpose of a university is to teach knowledge; however, skills such as teamwork and effective communication are also important.

The main purpose of a university is to teach knowledge. Skills such as teamwork and effective communication, however, are also important.

But:

- It is used to join two sentences.
- It *usually* comes at the beginning of the sentence.
- It is *not* usually followed by a comma (,).

Students study at university to gain knowledge. But employers also want people who can work in a team and communicate effectively.

Although:

- It is used to join two sentences.
- It *can* come at the beginning of the sentence or in the middle of the sentence.
- It is *not* usually followed by a comma (,).

Although genetic research can bring many benefits to society, the danger is that it could be used for less peaceful purposes.

Genetic research can bring many benefits to society, although the danger is that it could be used for less peaceful purposes.

Nevertheless:

- It is used to join two sentences.
- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of the sentence.
- It is usually followed by a comma (,).

It can be argued that China's open door policy is negatively affecting Chinese culture. Nevertheless, the social and economic benefits far outweigh any disadvantages.

It can be argued that China's open door policy is negatively affecting Chinese culture; nevertheless, the social and economic benefits far outweigh any disadvantages.

It can be argued that China's open door policy is negatively affecting Chinese culture. The social and economic benefits, however, far outweigh any disadvantages.

Exercise 30: Introducing Contrasting Information

Work in pairs. Join the sentences below using the sentence connectors explained above. (Answer provided)

City transport is cheap, clean and efficient.

It's often very crowded.

Without public transport, such as subways and buses, a city would not be able to function.

Something really should be done to improve it.

At least it's better than none at all.

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Discussion

Work in groups. Compare the sentence connectors you have used with those other people have used. Explain your reasons for using the sentence connectors you have used.

Test Tip

If you begin a sentence with *although*, and you want to give some examples before introducing the contrasting information, the examples *must* be in brackets (). This is because examples are *signal words*. They tell the reader that the sentence is about to end. Brackets do the opposite. They tell the reader that the sentence is *not going to end*.

Compare these two examples:

Example A: *Although nuclear energy has many advantages (it is cheap, efficient and clean) it can also be very dangerous and is believed to be a cause of certain types of cancer.*

Example B: *Although nuclear energy has many advantages, it is cheap, efficient and clean, it can also be very dangerous and is believed to be a cause of certain types of cancer.*

Emphasising Important Information

Notes

If you are presenting an opinion or argument, emphasising important information draws a reader's attention to what you are saying.

You can emphasise information by using the present perfect or present progressive tense and a sentence connector such as *in fact* or *indeed*.

Example

- *Genetic research has come a long way in recent years. Indeed, it is reported that scientists in Beijing have recently cloned a cow.*
- *There appears to be a growing interest in the Asian market. In fact, more and more foreign owned companies are setting up business in countries such as China.*

In fact:

- It is used to emphasise important information.
- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.
- It is usually followed by a comma (,).

Whilst big companies seemingly pay high salaries, when, in fact, the time people spend travelling to their workplace reduces the money they actually earn.

In fact, whilst big companies seemingly pay high salaries, when the time people spend travelling to their workplace reduces the money they actually earn.

Test Tip

If you use *in fact* in the middle of a sentence you should use a comma (,) before and after the phrase.

Indeed:

- It is used to emphasise important information.
- It *must* come at the beginning of a sentence.
- It is usually followed by a comma.

Many companies are located on the outskirts of big cities. Indeed, employers may spend several hours each week commuting to work.

Many companies are located on the outskirts of big cities; indeed, employers may spend several hours each week commuting to work.

Exercise 31: Emphasising Important Information

Question 1: Use different phrases to emphasise the information in the following sentences. The first one has been done for you as an example.

- a. Computers technology is developing at a phenomenal rate.

Indeed, given the current rate of development, computers may soon become intelligent.

- b. It's important that schools and universities prepare students for work in a modern company.

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- c. Globalisation could lead to prosperity for many more people worldwide

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- d. Nuclear accidents can result in serious environmental damage.

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- e. Some companies care more for profits than they do about the environment.

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- f. Tourism is an important industry for any economy.

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Test Tip

When you are practicing your writing you can improve your use of vocabulary and sentence structure by using a computer because modern software programmes check your grammar and your spelling for you. However, when the computer indicates an error, think carefully about the mistake you have made.

If you improve your use of grammar, your spelling and your use of words, you can make a significant difference to your IELTS writing band score.

Test Tip

It is important to emphasise contrasting information if you are writing an academic essay. However, it also makes a better general essay.

Question 2: Join the sentences below using the sentence connectors explained above.
(Answer provided)

In any modern city traffic congestion is a major concern.

The amount of traffic in many cities is increasing rapidly.

This leads to many problems, such as pollution, danger to the young and elderly as well as health problems.

Respiratory illnesses, such as asthma, are as serious as heart disease in some countries.

Given the efforts of scientists, as well as many large companies, traffic pollution is slowly decreasing.

With increased wealth, more and more people around the world own a car.

Scientists can produce clean fuel, the problem of road safety does not go away.

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Discussion: Compare the sentence connectors you have used with those other people have used. Explain your reasons for using the sentence connectors you have used.

Test Tip

Use different types of sentence connectors. If you keep using the same ones you will lose marks for communicative quality.

Example 1: Without doubt, English is important as a means of effective communication, especially as China is about to join the WTO. Therefore it is important if you want to get a well-paid job. Especially in a joint venture company.

Example 2: Without doubt, English is important as a means of effective communication. Moreover, as China is about to join the WTO English is important if you want to get a well-paid job, especially in a joint venture company.

In example one I have used the same sentence connector twice in two consecutive sentences. In example two I have changed the second sentence slightly and used a different sentence connector. This shows my examiner that I am able to use different sentence connectors to communicate my ideas effectively.

Introducing A Possible Result Or Conclusion

Notes

If you want to explain your idea you can give a possible result or conclusion. *Otherwise, as a result, because of this and therefore* are commonly used.

Otherwise:

- It expresses something you think might happen in the future.
- It is a useful word to use to express a concern.
- It is *not* usually followed by a comma.
- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.

Governments need to strictly control genetic research. Otherwise, the technology could be used for profit instead of people's welfare.

Governments need to strictly control genetic research. The technology could otherwise be used for profit instead of people's welfare.

As A Result, Because Of This, As A Consequence:

- It expresses something that happened in the past or is happening now.
- It is a useful phrase to introduce an example from your own experience to explain an idea.
- All these phrases are usually followed by a comma (,).

I began using a computer about 10 years ago. As a result / As a consequence, whilst I can work more efficiently, I actually have less leisure time.

Using a computer enables me to do considerably more work in a relatively short time. But because of this I find life much more stressful.

Therefore:

- It expresses something that happened in the past or is happening now.
- It is a useful phrase to introduce an example from your own experience to explain an idea.
- It is *not* usually followed by a comma (,).
- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.

Exercise 32: Introducing A Possible Result Or Conclusion

Work in pairs. Join the sentences below using the sentence connectors explained above. (Answer provided)

Cars, however, are too expensive for many people to afford.

Public transport is a popular means of getting around.

Buses are often very crowded, especially in the rush hour.

Modern subway systems go part way to solving this problem.

Not only are they very cheap and convenient, they are also often quicker than travelling by car.

Many people now prefer to travel by subway, which are becoming busier and busier.

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Discussion

Work in groups. Compare the sentence connectors you have used with those other people have used. Explain your reason for using the sentence connectors you have used.

Writing A List: The Rule Of Three

Notes

In the English language there is an unwritten (and often untaught!) rule that lists should be *no longer than three items in length*. Any more than three items sounds unnatural. This, of course, affects communicative quality. *For instance, for example, such as and including* are commonly used.

Compare The Examples Below

Example A

Modern transport is cheap, convenient, safe, efficient, comfortable and easy to use. ✗

Example B

Modern transport has many advantages. For example, it is cheap, convenient and easy to use. ✓

For Instance, For Example:

- They come at the beginning of a list.
- They begin a new sentence.
- They are usually followed by a comma.

Environmental pollution is a serious problem. For instance / For example, the pollution from factories can pollute rivers, harm sea life which can have a negative effect on people's health.

Such As:

- It comes at the beginning of a list.
- It *does not* begin a new sentence.
- It is followed by nouns or the 'ing' form of the verb.
- It *is not* followed by a comma (,).

Including:

- It comes at the beginning of a list.
- It *does not* begin a new sentence.
- It is followed by nouns or the past tense form of the verb.
- It *is not* followed by a comma (,).

Much can be done to protect the environment, including / such as planting sustainable forests, encouraging the use of public transport and educating people.

Exercise 33: Writing A List: The Rule Of Three

Work in pairs. Complete the sentences using each of the sentence connectors explained above. (Answer provided)

Living in a foreign country.....

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Living in a big city

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Having only one child

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Keeping pets

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Test Tip

It is *better* to avoid using etc. in academic essays. Instead, use *for example, such as, or and so on.*

Example

Modern transport has many advantages. For example, it is cheap, convenient and easy to use.

Modern transport has many advantages. It is cheap, convenient, easy to use and so on.

Modern transport has many advantages such as convenience, ease of use and low cost.

Test Tip

In the IELTS essay writing (academic *and* general tests) you *can* use relevant experiences to explain your ideas.

Test Tip

Don't begin each paragraph:

Firstly, *Secondly*,

Thirdly, *Finally*,

This turns your essay into a list of ideas. Your essay is not a list of ideas. It is a written discussion (general essays) or argument (academic essays). Therefore it affects communicative quality because your paragraphs are not linked.

Adding Information To A Sentence

Notes

If you want to add information to a sentence there are many sentence connectors you can use. The more common ones are: *and*, *also*, *as well (as)*, *additionally*, *in addition*, *furthermore* and *moreover*.

When you add information to a sentence you can:

- Join two sentences together so that they make one sentence;
- Connect two sentences.

Example

- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient. It is also cheap.*
- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient and cheap.*
- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient. It is cheap as well.*
- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient, as well as cheap.*
- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient. Additionally, it is cheap.*
- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient. Moreover, it is also cheap.*
- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient. It is, moreover, also cheap.*
- ✓ *Public transport is very convenient. Furthermore, it is also cheap.*

And, Also, As Well (As):

- They *do not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.
- They *do not* have to be followed by a comma (,).

Many students as well as / and teachers agree that education should be free for everyone.

Additionally, In Addition:

- They are usually followed by a comma (,).
- They usually come at the beginning of a sentence.
- They are used in formal writing.

Planting more trees can greatly improve the environment.

Additionally / In addition, the recycling of paper can reduce the destruction of rain forests.

Moreover:

- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.
- It is usually followed by a comma (,).
- It is used in formal writing.

Planting more trees can greatly improve the environment. Moreover, the recycling of paper can reduce the destruction of rain forests.

Furthermore:

- It usually comes at the beginning of a sentence.
- It is usually followed by a comma (,).
- It is used in formal writing.

Modern working pressure is far greater than it used to be because of the distance people have to travel to work. Additionally / In addition / Moreover / Furthermore, people are expected to do more work in the same amount of time.

Exercise 34: Adding Information To A Sentence

Work in pairs. Join the sentences below using the sentence connectors explained above. (Answer provided)

Global warming is being taken seriously by many people around the world.

Many people now make an effort to recycle plastics, metals and paper.

Many cities are getting greener with the planting of more trees.

More could be done.

Better public transport would mean fewer people would use cars.

Traditional forms of transport, _____ cars and buses, could be replaced with electric powered vehicles.

Roads could be made safer for bicycles _____ pedestrians.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Test Tip

Additionally, in addition, moreover and furthermore are formal. Therefore, if you are writing an informal letter don't use them because they are inappropriate.

Discussion

Work in groups. Compare the sentence connectors you have used with those other people have used. Explain your reason for using the sentence connectors you have used.

Expressing A Time

Notes

If you want to say when something happened, or will happen, there are many words you can use, depending on the time you want to express. *Following, until, before, after, just after, around the time (of), during, between and whilst* are commonly used.

Following, Until, Before, After, Just After, When:

- They talk about a specific time.
- They *do not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.
- They *are not* followed by a comma (,).

Following my graduation in 1986 I worked as an accountant for Profit and Soul before moving to Big Track International.

Until the Industrial Revolution, much of Europe was farmland.

Before the invention of the computer, people's lives were far less interesting than they are today.

After Profit and Soul I worked for Big Track International.

Just after my graduation, in 1986, I did some volunteer work for the Project Hope.

When I began my studies, I still wasn't sure if I wanted to major in Computer Science.

Around The Time (of), During:

- They *do not* talk about a specific time.
- They *do not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.
- They *are not* followed by a comma (,).

Around the time of my 28th birthday I decided to change my career.

During my early childhood I developed a love of reading.

Between:

- It talks about two specific time periods.
- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.
- It *is not* followed by a comma (,).

Between March and July, 1994, I worked as a volunteer teacher.

Between the two world wars America experienced a major economic depression.

Whilst:

- It talks about something that happened *within* a specific time period.
- It *does not* have to come at the beginning of a sentence.
- It *is not* followed by a comma (,).

I was inspired to pursue my writing career by my professor whilst I was at university.

Whilst many countries fought World War Two America grew rich through the sale of arms.

Exercise 35: Expressing A Time

Work in pairs. Join the sentences below using the sentence connectors explained above. (Answer provided)

My 16th birthday I decided that I should try to write a book.

That year I was too busy with my studies to begin writing it.

Year, however, I started writing the first chapter.

That was just after my 17th birthday, in fact.

I completed the first chapter in six months.

But it wasn't until the _____ spring that I started on chapter two.

I did start to write it, however; I found that I couldn't think of any good ideas, so I took a holiday instead.

I was on holiday that my ideas came back to me.

I arrived back home I had no difficulty in completing the second chapter.

Then and my 18th birthday, I worked on the book whenever I had time _____ it was completed.

Using Sentence Connectors

Work on your own. Write a passage entitled *My Life*. Use relevant sentence connectors.

Unit 2 Grammar Focus

Notes

Vocabulary and sentence structure refers to *how well you can use vocabulary and grammar* to express your ideas. *Not how many words you know, or how much you know* about grammar. Therefore, it is important to improve your *use* of vocabulary and grammar.

Expressing The Past

Using The Past Simple

The past simple is used to express an action that started sometime in the past, but has now finished.

Using The Progressive And The Past Simple Together

The progressive forms of verbs can be used to express an action that is happening now or an action that was happening sometime in the past. It is formed by adding '-ing' onto the end of the verb.

The past progressive ('-ing') form of verbs are often used together with the past simple to express an action that was happening sometime in the past.

Example

- I was walking to work when a man stopped me.
- I was talking to my sister when the phone rang.
- I was sitting in class when the teacher asked me...
- We were chatting when it started to rain.

Using Personal Experience To Explain An Idea

The past simple (used with or without the progressive) can emphasize a point you want to make. Therefore, it is useful if you are presenting an opinion or an argument by showing the result of a past action. It is particularly useful if you want to use your own experience to support an opinion or argument.

Example

Whilst I agree that children should be taught computers at an early age, I also believe that parents should be responsible for restricting the time children spend playing on them. Indeed, as a child I often spent many hours playing computer games, instead of concentrating on my schoolwork. As a result, I failed the college entrance test.

Whilst I agree that children should be taught computers at an early age, I also believe that parents should be responsible for restricting the time children spend playing on them.

An opinion or argument (present tense)

Supporting argument (the result of a past action - past tense)

Indeed, as a child I often spent many hours playing computer games, instead of concentrating on my schoolwork. As a result, I failed the college entrance test.

Fig. 26: Showing how the past simple can be used to support an opinion or argument

Exercise 36: Using The Progressive And The Past Simple

Look at the following statements and write a supporting argument. The first one has been done for you as an example.

- a. Technology is developing so quickly that it's often difficult to keep up with the changes.

Indeed, 10 years ago I often helped people who were experiencing problems with their machines. Now I feel as though I know virtually nothing!

- b. It's hard to deny that the pace of life is getting quicker and quicker.

.....

- c. I feel that children are put under far too much pressure at school, nowadays.

.....

- d. I find it hard to agree that smoking causes lung cancer.

.....

- e. English is certainly becoming more and more important.

.....

- f. I'm firmly convinced that global warming is a serious problem.

.....

Expressing The Present

Using The Present Progressive

The present progressive is often used to describe something that is changing or developing.

Example

- *The growing interest in the WTO is evidence that the world is quickly developing into a global economy.*
- *The changing nature of society is resulting in people working longer and longer hours.*

Exercise 37: Using The Present Progressive

Question 1: Look at the following sentences and re-write them using the present progressive. The first one has been done for you as an example.

a. Technology is wonderful. Soon, people will be able to hold a conversation with a computer.

Technology is developing so quickly that people will soon be holding conversations with computers.

b. Global pollution is a serious issue. Indeed, it gets worse and worse every day.

.....

c. If you travel overseas you learn a lot about other cultures.

.....

d. Many countries are concerned there will soon be more old people than young people.

.....

e. People earn more money than they did 20 or 30 years ago, but have less leisure time.

.....

f. If you practice your English every day it will get better and better.

.....

Question 2: Work in pairs. Look at the following chart and describe what you see. Use the present progressive.

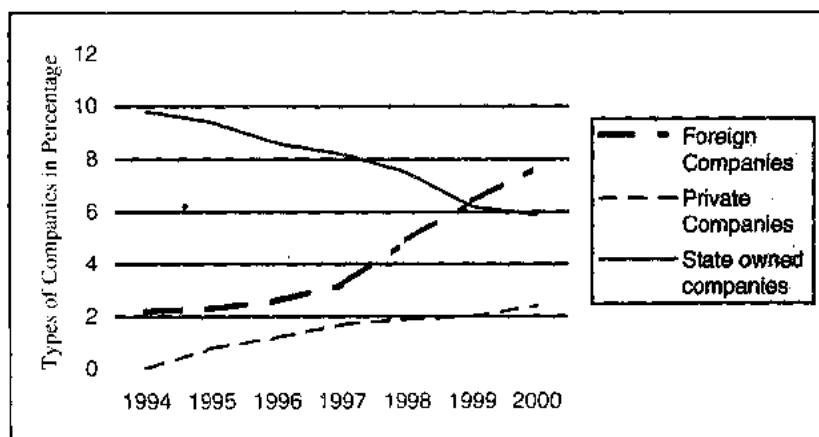


Chart showing the percentage of companies in Mexico between the years 1994 and 2000.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Using The Present Perfect

The present perfect is used to express an action that happened sometime in the past (we may not know when) and has recently finished. *It is often used to express actions that are important.*

Example

- *The Democrats have just won the American elections.*
- *Scientists in Beijing have successfully cloned a cow.*



*Scientists began their research
sometime in the past.*

*The present. The cow has
been cloned.*

Using Time Expressions In The Present Perfect

Time expressions can be used to make the meaning more specific, and to emphasize the importance of the information. The more specific the time, the more important the information. Compare the following sentences:

<i>Scientists in Beijing have cloned a cow.</i>	→	<i>important news</i>
<i>Scientists in Beijing have <u>recently</u> cloned a cow.</i>	→	<i>very important news</i>
<i>Scientists in Beijing have <u>just</u> cloned a cow.</i>	→	<i>highly important news</i>

Question 3: Look at the following sets of words and write sentences using the present perfect. The first one has been done for you as an example.

- a. NASA/space ship/Mars

NASA has just sent the first manned spacecraft to Mars.

.....

- b. Population/Mexico/14 million
-

- c. Bill Gates/world's first trillionaire
-

- d. Beijing/2008/Olympics
-

- e. Computers/artificial intelligence
-

- f. Crime rate/Japan/this month/lowest ever recorded
-

Expressing The Future: Speculating

Notes

In the IELTS essay writing you are asked to express an opinion in the General Training test, and present an argument in the Academic test. When expressing an opinion, or presenting an argument, you are saying what you think may happen, or what you believe a particular outcome will be. *This is speculating about the future.*

Speculating About The Future: Language Focus

If you express a belief or opinion about the future it is important that you state it *as your belief*, and *not a fact*. Therefore, instead of using standard structures such '*going to*' and '*will*' to express the future introduce your idea or belief using structures such as the ones outlined below.

General Training And Academic Essay Writing

- *It/this could lead to ...*
- *It/this could potentially lead to ...*
- *It's possible that...*
- *It's likely that...*
- *It/this could result in...*
- *It/this may result in...*
- *It/this could potentially result in...*

Academic Essay Writing

- *It can be argued that...*
- *It's often argued that...*
- *This suggests that...*
- *This would suggest that...*
- *This seems to suggest that...*

The Use Of 'Going To' And 'Will' To Express The Future

'*Going to*' and '*will*' are used to express a firm intention or plan. They state that something '*will*' happen in the future. *Therefore, they are rarely used when speculating.*

Example

- *I'm going to decorate my new apartment next week.*
- *I'm going to visit my sister the weekend.*
- *I will meet you after work tonight.*
- *I will pay for lunch.*

Compare The Following Sentences

Sentence A: *China's entry into the WTO is going to result in many opportunities for young graduates with good English.*

Sentence B: *China's entry into the WTO will result in many opportunities for young graduates with good English.*

Sentence C: *Given the current rate of technological development computers will reach a state of intelligence.*

Sentence D: *China's entry into the WTO could potentially result in many opportunities for young graduates with good English.*

Sentence E: *It's likely that young graduates will have more job opportunities when China joins the WTO.*

Sentence F: *The current rate of technological development would seem to suggest that computers may, in fact, reach a state of intelligence.*

This is not speculating

This is speculating

Exercise 38: Expressing The Future: Speculating

The following sentences express a definite action in the future. Re-write them so they express a belief or opinion. The first one has been done for you as an example.

- a. Genetically modified food is dangerous to human health.

Genetically modified food could potentially prove harmful to human health.

- b. Globalisation is unifying countries world wide, and is going to lead to world peace.
-

- c. The world's supply of fossil fuels will soon run out. Therefore, governments should invest in alternative sources of energy.
-
-

- d. China will become an economic super power by the end of the 21st century.
-

- e. If I get an MBA from Oxford University I'll be able to find a high paid job.
-

- f. I believe that robots, and not doctors, will operate on people in the future.
-

Making Generalisations: Use Of 'The'

Notes

A generalisation is a way of expressing something in general terms.

Example

- All babies are cute (*except the ones that aren't cute!*)
- I love music (*except the music my daughter plays!*)
- I enjoy playing sports (*except cricket and volleyball!*)

When you explain an idea, or present an argument, there are times when you have to make a generalisation.

Example

- People have to live in a modern society (*many people still live in traditional, rural societies*)
- Mosquitoes spread many types of disease (*in fact, it's only female mosquitoes that bite people and spread disease*)

The Use Of 'The' Before Plurals

'The' is *not used* in generalisations before plurals (more than one). Compare the sentences in the box.

Plurals	
X	✓
I love play	I love <u>the</u> play
I love <u>the</u> plays	I love plays
I like <u>the</u> fruit	I like fruit
I studied <u>the</u> computers	I studied computers
Baby is cute	<u>The</u> baby is cute

Exercise 39: The Use Of 'The'

Question 1: Read the following paragraph and cross out 'the' if it should not be used. The first one has been done for you as an example.

The Shanghai is a great place. There are the theatres, the cinemas, the bars, the clubs and all sorts of the entertainment here. And the Nan Jing Road is great. I don't know if you've ever been to the Hong Kong, but it looks just like that at night, with all the bright lights, the noise and the lively crowds. You'll love it. It's so different from your hometown. And there are so many the private companies here that we'll easily be able to find a summer job.

'The' Before Uncountable And Countable Nouns

The only time '*the*' is used with *uncountable nouns* is when the (uncountable) noun is followed with '*of*'. However, '*the*' is usually used before a countable noun. Compare the sentences in the box.

Uncountable Nouns	
X	✓
<i>I'm studying <u>the</u> Chinese law</i>	<i>I'm studying Chinese law</i>
<i>I'm studying law of China</i>	<i>I'm studying <u>the</u> law of China</i>
<i>I love <u>the</u> rice</i>	<i>I love rice</i>
Singular Countable Nouns	
<i>The invention <u>of the</u> airplanes has revolutionised modern travel</i>	<i>The invention <u>of the</u> airplane has revolutionised modern travel</i>
<i>The private <u>cars</u> make a significant contribution to air pollution</i>	<i>Private <u>cars</u> make a significant contribution to air pollution</i>
<i>Private <u>car</u> makes a significant contribution to air pollution</i>	<i>The private <u>car</u> makes a significant contribution to air pollution</i>
<i>The money makes <u>the</u> world go round</i>	<i>Money makes <u>the</u> world go round</i>

Question 2: Read the following paragraphs and cross out '*the*' if it should not be used. The first one has been done for you as an example.

Having spent over thirty years in the industry, I decided to return to the university and study for a Master's degree in the education. The university I chose was in the south of England, near the London, in fact.

I enjoyed the time I spent in the university very much, and the friends I made often write to tell me about the things they are doing. However, none of the friends I did make ever come to the China to visit me, even though I've invited them.

Notes

'The' is not normally used before the names of:

Places/Countries
Towns/Cities

States/Provinces
Lakes, Buildings, Mountains etc.

Except:

Places such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom

Using Pronouns

Notes

It is bad practice to repeat nouns in a sentence, or in sentences that are close together. Instead, nouns are normally replaced by relative pronouns such as 'it' and 'they'. Relative pronouns are words used in the place of noun when the noun has already been used.

Compare The Following Paragraphs

Paragraph 1

Whilst the use of nuclear energy has certain advantages, the dangers nuclear energy brings are too grave to be ignored, and the money spent on the development of nuclear energy should be spent, instead, on the research and development of alternative sources of production. ×

Paragraph 2

Whilst the use of nuclear energy has certain advantages, the dangers it brings are too grave to be ignored, and the money used for its development should be spent, instead, on the research and development of alternative sources of production. ✓

Author's Comments

Paragraph 1: This paragraph repeats the same noun (nuclear energy) many times. This makes the writing less interesting, and affects the communicative quality.

Paragraph 2: This paragraph uses relative pronouns in place of the noun. This makes it much more interesting to read and shows your examiner that you can use relative pronouns well.

Test Tip

Do not try to impress your examiner by using words and expressions you have recently learnt, unless you know how to use them well (your teacher can help you with this) because part of what your writing is assessed on is sentence structure and your use of grammar. Instead, use the language you feel comfortable with using. This way you will probably make fewer mistakes.

Appendix Answer Key To Exercises

Notes

The following answers are a *guide only*. It is important to remember that often you can use your own answers to express your own meaning.

Chapter Two General Training Test Task One: Letter Writing

Unit 1 Task Fulfillment

Exercise 1: Analysing The Question

Question 1

- 1) Say what happened
- 2) Describe the suitcase
- 3) Describe the contents

Question 2

- 1) Say who you are
- 2) Explain the situation
- 3) Request another room

Question 3

- 1) Explain who you are
- 2) Ask for information about accommodation

Exercise 3: Organising Your Information

Question 1

- Reason: Report the loss of the suitcase
Information: Details of the flight, including flight number, date and destination.
The suitcase's appearance
Detailed description of the contents
Action: Contact me

Question 2

- Reason: Complain about your roommate
Information: The reason for the complaint
The type of room you'd prefer
Action: Expect a phone call / visit

Question 3

- Reason: Request information

Information: Important details about yourself: gender, age range, smoker, etc.

Types of accommodation you'd prefer

Action: Send the information

Unit 2 Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Exercise 5: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Question 1

Introduction:

Dear Sir,

I write for information regarding the rooms and facilities you have available for a conference my company plans to hold the coming July.

Conclusion:

I look forward to receiving the information at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Question 2

Introduction:

Dear Professor Black,

Our company wishes to restructure our management team in line with the suggestions you have made in your latest book. We wish you, therefore, to give a talk to our executives at a time convenient to you.

Conclusion:

Should you decide to take up the offer I will contact you with all the necessary arrangements.

Looking forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Exercise 6: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion

Question 1

Introduction :

Dear Brian,

I've been asked to organise a dinner party for the chairman's retirement, but to be frank, I'm not sure which restaurant is most suitable. And as you know him better than I do I thought you may have a clearer idea.

Conclusion:

I'd appreciate your thoughts on this as soon as possible because I've got a tight deadline to meet.

Take care and I'll see you soon.

Sincerely,

Question 2***Introduction:***

Dear Liz,

I have to leave for Thailand next Wednesday to meet with the new clients. However, I'm in the middle of an important project and need you to take over for a few days.

Conclusion:

Please get back to me as soon as possible, and I'll make all the necessary arrangements. And let me know if there's anything you'd like me to bring back from Thailand.

Sincerely,

Exercise 7: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion**Question 1*****Introduction:***

Dear Wang Xiaozhou,

Great news. I've just been offered a scholarship to study law in Guildford Law College. However, it'll be my first time to the UK and I'd appreciate it if you could meet me at the airport.

Conclusion:

Please let me know if you'll be able to meet me. And of course, if there's anything you'd like me to bring with along just say so.

See you soon.

Annie

Question 2***Introduction:***

Dear Mum and Dad,

Well, I've arrived safely. Wang Xiaozhou met me at the airport and we travelled to Guilford together so I didn't have any problems finding my way around. Anyway, let me tell you something about the town.

Conclusion:

Do write soon and wish grandma a happy birthday for me. Tell her I'll be thinking about her.

Love to everyone.

Annie

Unit 3 Types Of Letters

Exercise 8: Writing A Letter Of Complaint

Question 1

Dear professor Jones,

I write on behalf of myself and my fellow students to complain about your decision to close the student union bar.

The bar serves as a social base for many students who live both on and off campus, and is an important recreation facility as it helps to relieve the stress of exams and assignment deadlines. Moreover, it similarly serves to develop and strengthen bonds of friendship amongst students both within and between faculties.

I am sure you'd agree that social skills are an essential feature of modern life, and employers demand new graduates to be able to work closely as a member of a team. My fellow students and I feel, therefore, that if you close the student bar the opportunities for developing these essential life skills will be diminished. This, in turn, could reflect badly on the university as employers would be less willing to hire its graduates.

I sincerely hope you consider our viewpoint carefully as the benefits the student bar brings go far beyond student entertainment.

Should you wish to discuss the matter in person I would be happy to visit your office at a time of your convenience.

Sincerely,

Exercise 9: Writing A Letter Of Suggestion

Question 1

Dear Sir,

I write in response to your request for residents to suggest how the local facilities could be improved.

I'm a resident of City Boulevard, in Garden Place. I'm married with two teenage children.

I find the facilities for older residents more than satisfactory. The local shopping center is well served by a variety of shops, and the public park serves as a perfect place for me to exercise my dog. However, I feel that the needs of younger residents have been neglected.

Although the local park provides an area for youngsters to play football, the complaints I receive from my own children is the lack of suitable meeting places.

Whilst there is an abundance of pubs in the area, my children, being under the legal drinking age of 18, are not able to take advantage of these places. Therefore, I feel that the younger generation would benefit greatly with the introduction of a community hall that offered indoor sports facilities, such as badminton and table tennis, as well as a coffee shop where they could socialise more freely.

I'd like to thank you for the interest you take in the local community and would be more than happy to discuss further suggestions should you wish to do so.

Sincerely,

Exercise 10: Writing A Letter Of Application

Question 1

Dear Sir,

I'd like to apply to enter the writing competition your newspaper is organizing.

I'm a final year undergraduate student, majoring in history, and have conducted some in-depth research into life in the town during the 15th century. I plan to continue my research after graduating and finally write a book about this period of the town's history.

However, I have never published before and understand that I have much to learn before doing so. I therefore feel that by entering the competition I will be able to gain a valuable insight into how to write for publication.

The story looks specifically at the life of one woman, who was born in the town in 1486. It begins with her birth into a very poor family, and follows her struggles through life and the way she overcame many difficulties. It, therefore, gives an insight into the life of ordinary people over 500 years ago, and would be of interest to many local residents.

I sincerely hope that you will take my application seriously and look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Sincerely,

Exercise 11: Writing A Letter Asking For Information

Question 1

Dear Professor Blunt,

I write for information regarding the forthcoming International Education Conference to be held at your university.

I'm about to complete a Ph. D. in Education from the university of Anglesea, and have a particular interest in the teaching of work place skills and employer's perceptions of new graduates.

I plan to attend the conference and would like information about the contributory speakers, the content of their talks, and their research interests. However, although I have been living in the UK for the past 5 years I'm unfamiliar with Edinburgh. Therefore, if you could please also send the details of how to get to your university from your train station it would make my travel arrangements that much easier.

In addition, if you could let me have details of the accommodation that is available (bearing in mind I'm still a student) I would be more than grateful.

I look forward to receiving the information and meeting you in person.

Sincerely,

Exercise 12: Writing A Letter To A Friend**Question 1**

Dear John,

I'm just writing to let you know that I've moved to a new apartment, and would like to invite you and Susan to a house warming party on the 25th September.

I think you'll like the new apartment. It's much better located than the old place – convenient for the subway, and not too far from the centre of town.

It's only small place. Two bedrooms and a medium size living room. However, it's on the 15th floor, so the view of the city is fabulous. It also means we can open the windows in the summer and let the breeze cool the apartment. It saves us a fortune in electricity.

It's fully furnished with traditional wooden chairs and a wooden floor throughout. This gives it a lovely homely feel. And we've got satellite TV so I can watch all the football matches.

Anyway, please let me know if you can come.

Unit 4 Coherence And Cohesion In Letter Writing**Exercise 13: Coherence And Cohesion In Letter Writing****Question 1**

Dear Sir,

I write regarding the availability of student accommodation.

I'm an overseas student **and** will arrive at the university on the 4th September. I would like, as far as possible, to live on campus. **However**, I'm a mature female student and would prefer a quiet room away from younger students. I'd **also** prefer to share with other female students, preferably one's who don't smoke, **however**, this is not a strict request.

I shall be reading for my Ph.D. in biological science, and would like to be within easy walking distance of the laboratory if this is possible. **Nevertheless**, once again this is a preference rather than a requirement.

I am due to arrive in London on the morning of the 4th September. **However**, this will be my first time to visit the UK. **As a result**, I will be grateful if you can also let me have directions to the university, along with train times etc.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Liu

Question 2

Dear Mrs. Brown,

I am a final year undergraduate, living in student accommodation (block C), **and** I write to express my concern about the level of noise on campus late at night.

I am currently writing my final year dissertation. **As a result** I often have to work late into the night. **However**, I find that I am often disturbed by the level of noise caused by the younger students after a night of partying. **Therefore** I would like to request a move to an accommodation block that is located in a quieter part of the campus.

Furthermore, I still prefer to share with other female students, **especially** non-smokers. **Nevertheless**, I'd be prepared to share with students who smoke provided the accommodation is in a quiet location. **Alternatively**, a place off campus would serve my purposes just as well.

I will call in to your office next week and make an appointment to see you. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Wang

Question 3

Dear Sir,

I write to apply for the position of management consultant as advertised in the New York Daily (September 26).

I graduated from Harvard in 1986 with an MBA in financial management **and** have been working for McDougle and Snipe ever since.

Although McDougle and Snipe are a well-respected company, I feel that my promotional opportunities are limited given its size. I am, **therefore**, seeking a more challenging position in an international company.

Indeed, I have gained a broad range of experience **and** have travelled widely, **both** internationally and domestically. **As a result**, whilst my MBA is in financial management I **therefore** have considerable experience working in project management gained during 1978 to 1984, when I worked for General Motors.

I have included my résumé for your consideration **and** hope to hear from you shortly.

Yours sincerely,

R. Biggs

Unit 6 Practice Tests

Practice Test One

Dear Sir,

I write for information about the package tour to the Greek Islands between June and August next year.

I would like to receive more information about the tour, including the length and cost. I'd also like to know if customers are given a choice of hotels, or if you use standard accommodation.

As I'm a student the cost is the most important factor for me. However, as I am on vacation between July and September, the time I can go is flexible; therefore, I would like specific details concerning my cheapest option. Also, does the cost include travel insurance, or do I have to arrange this separately?

At the same time would you kindly forward the details of other tours you offer? In fact, I'd be particularly interested in any destination that includes visiting ancient monuments because archaeology is my specialist subject at university.

I look forward to receiving the information at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Practice Test Two

Dear Mr. Buffin,

I write to apply for the internal vacancy you've advertised for a project manager in the marketing department.

I joined Sprigat, Sprat and Buffin in 1987, following my graduation from MIT where I studied Graphic Design and International Machinery. Since joining the company I've made considerable headway in my career. Beginning as a designer, I was promoted to team leader 2 years ago. I have won several company awards for my design work, including the prestigious "Golden Gate" last year for my highly successful table mat design work. In addition, I won second prize in a national phone designing competition run by telecom corporation in 1999-2000.

I believe the job would help me to strengthen my leadership skills, which have been honed during my time as a team leader. And the valuable experience I've gained over the years puts me in a position to nurture the talents of your designers who join the company.

I look forward to hearing from you soon and discussing the matter in person.

Sincerely,

Practice Test Three

Dear Monica,

Thank you for your wonderful offer of spending the summer in Australia. Unfortunately, I have to say no.

The problem lies with my studies. I've almost completed writing my Ph. D. thesis, but my supervisor wants me to re-write the final two chapters. This isn't a big problem, except that my scholarship ends in September. Therefore, if I don't complete the thesis before then I will be faced with a lot of expenses. I have asked the university to extend my scholarship but they told me they are unable to do so.

Of course, if I get it completed in time, I'd come and join you. But I really don't think I'll be able to, especially as my supervisor will be away for most of September. I will, however, be able to come and see you as soon as I've completed my work.

In the meantime, drop me a line and let me know what your work schedule is. That way I can coincide my visit with your next vacation.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Liz

Practice Test Four

Dear Ms Cotton,

I write in response to your request for viewers to suggest how your TV programme could be improved.

The programme offers a wide range of light-hearted entertainment that is suitable for all members of the family. Thus, it serves as an excellent way to relax and reduce the stresses of the day.

However, I feel that the time the programme is shown is too late. Indeed, I have a 9 year old daughter who thoroughly enjoys your programme but misses the second half of the show because she has to go to bed at 9.00. Therefore, if the programme could be shown between 8 and 9, instead of 8.30 to 9.30, it would benefit many younger viewers.

Additionally, I feel the show is disrupted far too frequently by commercial advertising that distract from people's enjoyment. Therefore, I believe it would be a great improvement if there were only one break, say mid-way through the show. This would similarly give people ample time to make a cup of tea.

I trust you will take my suggestions seriously and look forward to any improvements you make.

Sincerely,

Chapter Three Academic Test Task One: Report Writing**Exercise 14: Analysing The Data****Question 1**

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Men	21	23	26	13	17
Women	16	17	21	22	24

Expectations:

1. More men smoke than women;
2. The number of smokers will decline.

Unexpected findings:

1. Sharp decrease in men smoking after 1980;
2. Sharp increase in women smoking after 1970;
3. The number of male smokers decreased from 21% in 1960 to 17% in 2000;
4. Female smokers saw the opposite trend. They increased from 16% in 1960 to 24% in 2000.

Trends:

1. The increase in male smokers corresponds with a decline in female smokers;
2. While women showed a steady increase, male smokers dropped sharply after 1980, but began a steady increase again after 1990.

Question 2

	Up to 15	16 to 21	22 to 30	31 to 45	46 to 55	Over 56
India	6	10	12	23	22	20
China	10	19	14	17	22	29
Britain	22	26	18	15	22	12
Japan	/	14	8	6	10	36
America	34	18	25	20	30	40

Expectations:

Most TV to be watched by the age group under 15 and over 56

Unexpected Findings:

1. In India and America the amount of TV watched increases around the age of 22;
2. A sharp decline occurs in Britain after the age of about 46.

Trends:

The general trend is that the amount of TV watched increases with age.

Question 3

Britain				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	18	5	18	61
1980	20	20	18	41
1990	20	40	20	20
2000	21	21	10	40

China				
	Agriculture	Computer Industry	Finance	Manual Labour
1970	61	5	5	38
1980	60	6	5	40
1990	40	30	10	20
2000	30	40	10	20

Expectations:

1. More people will be employed in agriculture and manual labour in China compared to Britain;
2. More people will be employed in finance in Britain compared to China.

Unexpected findings:

1. Sharp drop in agricultural workers in China after 1970;
2. People working in the computer industry in China exceeded that of Britain in the year 2000;
3. In 1970 and 2000, more people did manual labour in Britain than in China.

Trends:

1. China experienced a decline in agricultural and manual work, and a significant rise in computer-related work;
2. Far less significant change took place in Britain with the exception of a significant decline in manual jobs.

Question 4***Exceptions:***

A significant increase in people owning computers.

Unexpected findings:

Findings are roughly what would be expected.

Trends:

1. There was a steady increase in computer use in all categories;
2. Most computer usage is for business or pleasure purposes.

Exercise 15 Describing The Data**Question 1**

	New South Wales	Queensland	Tasmania	Northern Territories
January	15	35	22	10
February	18	32	/	12
March	14	27	28	15
April	32	38	25	26
May	25	12	29	22
June	25	18	32	15
July	10	21	18	30
August	33	25	12	25
September	35	29	20	48
October	36	30	25	35
November	38	26	22	25
December	25	27	18	10

Dramatic increase: There was a dramatic increase in people's spending in New South Wales between January and March, from 15% to 32%.

Significant difference: There was a significant difference in the money people spent on CDs in the Northern Territories between August and September, from 25 to, 48%.

Huge drop: Tasmania experienced a huge drop in spending between June and July, from 32% to a mere 18%.

Little change: There was little change in people's spending habits between August and November in New South Wales where it remained steady at around 35%.

Surprising find: A surprising find occurred in Queensland, during March to May, when people's spending increased from 27% in March to 38% in April, only to drop to 12% the following month.

Significant increase/decrease: There was a significant decrease in the amount people spent on CDs in New South Wales during the middle of the year, from 25% in June to 10% in July.

Minor fluctuation: Tasmania experienced a minor fluctuation in spending during March to June.

Steady rise/decrease: Following a slump in sales during April to June, Queensland saw a steady rise in spending between July and October.

Slight drop/increase/rise/fall/change: The Northern Territories, during the first part of the year, experienced a slight increase from 10% in January to 15% in March.

Question 2

There was a sharp increase in the USA in 1970 from 5 million to 8 million. There was a second significant increase in 1990 to 11 million, followed by a massive leap to 24 million in 2000.

Mobile phone use increased in big leaps in Japan, reaching a peak of 32 million in 1990. This was followed by a slight drop to 27 million in 2000.

Australia saw a steady increase between 1970 and 1990, after which there was a slight rise to 14 million in 2000.

Mobile phone use doubled to 2 million in 1980, followed by a sudden and massive increase to 17 million in 1990. The increase in 2000 to 24 million was less dramatic yet still very significant.

Exercise 16 Developing Your Ideas

Question 1

The number of male smokers in 1960 stood at 21%, compared to 16% of the female population.

This trend continued through 1970. However, in 1980, the number of female smokers began to increase compared to male smokers.

In 1990, the number of male smokers diminished significantly to only 13%, whilst the number of female smokers rose steadily to 22%.

The number of female smokers continued to rise, and reached 24% in 2000. However, following the sharp decline of male smokers in 1990 to 13%, the number began to rise again, and reached 17% in 2000.

Question 2

India saw a steady increase in the amount of TV being watched from 6% below the age of 15, up to 12% at the age of 30. This was followed by a significant increase to 23% after the age of 30, when it remained fairly steady.

Britain, on the other hand, saw an opposite trend—whilst it increased from 22% to 26% up to age of 21, it decreased sharply to 15% after the age of 30. And following a significant increase to 22% in the 46-55 age range, it dropped sharply to 12% thereafter.

China remained fairly steady fluctuating between 10% and 22% across all age ranges, with a slight increase to 29% after the age of 56.

Japan remained very low compared to the other countries, with a fall from 14% to 8% after the age of 21. This was followed by a further fall to 6% after 30, and a small increase to 10% after 46. After 56, however, it rose sharply to 36%, putting it second only to America, which stood at 40%.

Exercise 17: Comparing And Contrasting The Data

Question 1

Overall, there was a decline in male smokers.

At the same time, number of female smokers increased.

In 1980, male smokers dropped sharply to 13%:

Female smokers increased to 22%.

After 1990, the number of male smokers began to rise.

The number of female smokers continued on an upward trend.

Question 2

India saw a steady increase in TV watched up to age 30, followed by a significant increase.

Britain was the opposite. There was a decline after 30.

China fluctuated sharply to the age of 45 after which there was a significant increase. Apart from a decline in the 31 to 45 age group, overall, America saw a steady climb after about 21, from 18% to 40%.

Japan remained much lower than other countries, fluctuating between 6% and 14% during the whole period. The exception being after about 55 years of age, when there was a sudden leap to 36%.

Unit Two Writing The Introduction And Conclusion**Exercise 18: Writing The Introduction And Conclusion****Question 1*****Introduction:***

The charts show smoking trends for men and women over a 40 year period. Therefore, we expect to find a gradual increase in the number of smokers, and that more men smoke than women. However, we find that whilst the number of male smokers decrease, the number of female smokers increased.

Conclusion:

As the report indicates, what is surprising is not the increase in female smokers compared to male smokers, but the differences in the changes over the 40 year period.

Question 2***Introduction:***

The chart shows the amount of TV watched over the period of a lifetime. Given that the middle years (20-50) are mostly occupied by work or study, we would expect to see a significant drop in the amount of TV being watched during the period. Yet this is not always found to be the case.

Conclusion:

One of the most surprising finds was the amount of TV watched by people in Japan compared with most other countries. And apart from a significant drop after the age of 56 in the UK, generally, the amount of TV people watch increases significantly after the age of 56.

Unit 3 Coherence And Cohesion In Report Writing

Exercise 19: Coherence And Cohesion In Report Writing

Question 1

There was a slight decrease in the age women in Britain got married during the war years, from 18 in 1940 to 16 in 1950. Australia, however, witnessed an opposite trend, from 17 to 20 during the same period. Both countries, however, saw a significant increase between 1950 and 1960, from 16 to 19 in Britain and from 20 to 24 in Australia.

Britain, however, continued on an upward trend between 1960 and 1980 with an average increase of three years each decade, but levelled out between 1980 and 1990. Australia, on the other hand, saw a slight increase from 24 in 1960 to 26 in 1970, after which it witnessed a sudden decline to 22 in 1980. A trend that continued until 1990 when the average age fell dramatically to 18.

The greatest difference, however, occurred between 1990 and 2000, when Australia saw a sudden increase from 25 to 33, closely followed by Britain which saw an increase from 25 in 1990 to 33 in the year 2000.

Question 2

Brazil, during the period January to June, saw a slow, but steady increase in the number of reported road accidents, from 144 in the first two months, to 147 during March to April and 149 during May to June. This, however, is in contrast to Cuba who witnessed a slow, but steady decline, from 169 in January and February, to 166 in the following two months and again to 164 in May to June.

Mexico, on the other hand, witnessed a slight decline from 147 in January to February to 142 in March and April when it remained stable for the following two months. The biggest changes, however, occurred in Canada and France, who both saw the number of road accidents fall. In France, the decline was fairly steady from 172 at the beginning of the year, to 153 in March and April and again to 154 in May and June. Whereas France saw a massive decline from 172 in January and February, to 153 in March and April, down to as low as 65 in May and June.

Unit 5 Practice Tests

Practice Test One

It would be reasonable to expect to see a large growth in population in all 4 continents during the year 1500 to 1900. However, with the exception of North America, this turned out to be smaller than expected.

All 4 continents saw a general population growth, which in Africa was very slow up until 1800, with only a 1% or 2% growth each year. In 1900, however, the population rose sharply by more than 12%.

A similar trend was seen in Asia. There was 3% growth between 1500 and 1700, followed by 10% in 1800 and 9% in 1900.

North America, on the other hand, saw a steady but small growth of about 1 or 2% between 1500 and 1700. Yet in 1800 it experienced a population explosion, with a rapid growth of around 70%, followed by a similar decline to about 10% over the next 100 years. And Europe followed a similar, yet less dramatic change. Here the population growth increased by about every 100 years, up with 1800, followed by 3% decrease in 1900.

Whilst the trend follows a line to be expected, the sudden rise and fall in population growth in North America during the 1800s stands out as being very significant.

Practice Test Two

The charts indicate the amount of coffee consumed in China and the USA in modern times. We would expect to see that coffee drinkers in America far outweigh those in China, which, in fact is the case. Yet what is surprising is that China appears to be catching up with America.

In 1990, there were 1,062 m cups of coffee drunk in America, compared to a mere 256 m in China. However, this number began to rise after 1990. Indeed, by 1993, a mere three years later, coffee consumption in China rose to 256 m cups per year. An increase of 32 m cups.

Three years later, in 1996, both countries saw a marked increase. In America, the figures stood at 2,030 m cups per year, an increase of 936 m cups. However, in China, coffee consumption almost doubled 634 m cups.

By 1999, coffee consumption in China stood at 992 m cups, almost equal that of America, which stood at 1,090 m cups per year.

Overall, the charts indicate a massive growth in the popularity of coffee in China compared to America between 1990 and 1999.

Practice Test Three

The chart indicates the subjects studied by university students in Australia during the latter half of last century. We would expect to see a drop in the number of students studying science and maths, but what is most surprising is the amount of change.

During the years 1950-59, there were an incredible 45% of students studying science, yet by the next decade this number had reduced dramatically to 30%. This decline slowed down to 25% in 1970-79, but dropped off sharply during the next ten years to 15%, and finally 4% by 1990-99.

In contrast, almost the opposite occurred with business. Beginning at 10% in 1950-59, it had doubled to 20% ten years later. By 1980-89, the figures stood at 32%, and reached 45% by the end of the century. A trend virtually mirrored by study of the arts, which increased significantly from 20% in 1950-59, through 25% ten years later, finally reaching 38% by 1990-99.

Study of social sciences, on the other hand, saw little change during the same period. Increasing from 10 to 13% between 1950 and 1969, it remained stable for a decade before increasing to 20% in 1980-89, and finally dropping to 11% during the final decade. Maths, on the other hand, saw a steady decline from 15% in 1950-59, through 8% in 1970-79, and finally falling to a surprising 2% by the end of the century.

Clearly, therefore, it is the change in subjects chosen by students that takes the reader by surprise.

Practice Test Four

The chart shows the number of road accidents in Britain over a period of six years. It would be expected that the number of accidents rose during the final quarter of the year which is indeed the case. However, there are a few anomalies.

During the first period of each year, the figures average out to around 300 to 350 accidents. However, the second quarter of each year, from 1995 to 1998 actually saw a slight increase in the number of accidents, with the exception of the year 2000. In fact, 1997 saw a huge increase from 329 accidents in the first quarter to a massive 764 accidents during the second quarter. This was quickly followed by a decrease to 565 the following quarter, with a rise again to 929 in the final quarter of the year.

The third quarter of 1995, however, saw a significant increase from 325 to 629, and to 864 in the final quarter, whilst the same period during the year 2000 saw an increase from 387 in the second quarter to 625 in the third, and finally 755 in the forth quarter.

What's surprising to find, however, is that in 1998, following an increase from 429 in the first quarter to 444 in the second, there was actually a significant drop to 394 in third quarter of the year before rising again to 657 by the end of the year.

Whilst the overall trend in the number of accidents follows an expected course, the two anomalies, that is to say during the second quarter of 1997, and the third quarter of 1998, stand out as being significant when compared to the overall findings.

Chapter Four General & Academic Test Task Two: Essay Writing**Exercise 20: Analysing The Question****Question 1**

Visas should be banned so that people could work in the country of their choice.

Question 2

Money should be invested in health, housing, education, not space technology.

Question 3

Less money should be spent on defence, and more should be spent on computer technology.

Question 4

Young people should spend 2 years in the army learning traditional values before going to university.

Exercise 21: Finding The Issues**Question 1**

Issue 1: economic; Issue 2: social; Issue 3: security

Question 2

Issue 1: economic; Issue 2: social

Question 3

Issue 1: economic; Issue 2: defence

Question 4

Issue 1: social; Issue 2: economic

Unit 2 Writing General Training Essays**Exercise 28: Writing A Full Essay****Question 1**

Any modern economy needs well educated and trained people to operate efficiently. Therefore, I fully agree with the view that education should be free for everyone.

In order for people to obtain a well paid job, and to embark upon, and enhance their career, a university education is essential. However, the very fact that people need a good education to succeed in a modern economy is the reason it should be free. Indeed, companies are the backbone of any modern society because it is companies that produce the wealth that makes the nation economically strong.

In a modern company, that has to operate in a globally competitive market, workers are required to have a wide range of skills; technical skills, such as computer literacy, communication skills, such as effective writing skills and team working skills. Skills that have to be developed in an educational setting. Therefore, whilst people with a single skills base, welding, for instance, may still be needed in certain areas of work, people who still work in traditional manufacturing industries are more likely to operate computerised machines, and get involved in the decision making process which is the function of a small team. Therefore, if companies need well educated people to be profitable, then education should be provided free of charge.

The problem, however, is one of money. Indeed, school, college and university buildings have to be built. Teachers and administrative staff have to be paid, and textbooks and other equipment have to be bought. The money, however, could be raised through taxes levied on companies.

Therefore, given how essential education is, everyone, regardless of social status or wealth, should be given an equal opportunity of obtaining one.

Question 2

I fully agree with the idea of protecting areas of natural beauty in light of the ever growing cities. However, protecting the environment is, in itself, a major problem.

With cities growing at an alarming rate, the destruction of the environment is evident. Indeed, not only are areas of natural beauty destroyed to make way for buildings, roads factories and so on, but the pollution created by cities is also a major problem. This begs the question of what should be done about pollution.

Pollution, although serious, is not unavoidable. Take, for example, the pollution produced by cars and buses that contribute greatly to the demise in air quality. If more money was allocated to the research and development of a cleaner fuel that didn't pollute the environment, then this would be a major step in the right direction of protecting the environment. And the same goes for the pollution that is produced by factories that not only dispense pollutant gases in the atmosphere, but also pollute waterways. Once again, developing ways of treating pollutants would bring about major benefits.

Nevertheless, the increasing size of cities is also a major factor in environmental damage. Indeed, as more and more land is given over to development, less and less land is available for wildlife. And because animals, plants, insects and so forth are an essential factor in maintaining the food chain, the consequences of such environmental damage can be devastating in the long term. Therefore, it is essential that areas of natural beauty are protected solely for the purpose of maintaining a balance in wildlife, regardless of the perceived consequences to economic growth. After all, if the food chain is destroyed, or diminished to the point of not being able to sustain human life, then economic prosperity is of no value what so ever.

Therefore, given the important role that the environment plays in people's lives, saving the environment from further damage is absolutely crucial.

Unit 3 Writing Academic Essays

Exercise 29: Writing A Full Essay

Question 1

In modern societies, more often than not, people's social status depends on the amount of monetary wealth they own. Yet the creation of that wealth depends on a network of people whose job is to design, manufacture and maintain the goods that are the source of wealth. Status, therefore, should be based on an individual's contribution to society, and not on the size of their bank balance.

It is undeniable that money is important, and the creation of monetary wealth, from which everyone in society benefits, comes from trade, both domestic and international. Therefore, there is clearly an argument for social status to be awarded on the basis of wealth that the person has managed to create. Nevertheless, the success of an industry doesn't solely rely upon the person, or persons who control the company. Instead, it relies upon the skills and experience of the people who are responsible for the production of the goods. Indeed, it is a widely accepted concept that the job of a manager is to bring together, and exploit, the skills and expertise of others to achieve the goals of the company.

A problem arises when too much emphasis is placed on the money individuals, or their families have amassed. Indeed, a child born into a wealthy family often has an opportunity to gain a good education, where they are given an opportunity to realise their talents. And a good education is often synonymous with the ability to pay. Yet wealthy people make up a small percentage of all societies. Therefore, people who are not afforded a good education because of the inability to pay are left behind, and often subjected to menial or low status jobs. This means, of course, that their talents are not realised, resulting in a valuable pool of talent that society fails to benefit from.

Given this argument, it is reasonable to assume that if every member of society was given an opportunity to realise their talents from an early age, by a society that valued talents over money, the benefits to any economy could be enormous. Whereas when money that is valued, skills and talents are stifled, and the growth and development of economies are, therefore, stunted.

Question 2

If globalisation is to be taken to mean international trade, and a greater cooperation between countries in developing trading partnerships, then, undoubtedly, modern technology has gone a long way to contributing to this process.

International trade has been conducted for as long as man has walked the earth. Indeed, there is an abundance of evidence to suggest trading links between nations that existed tens of thousands of years ago. However, it is difficult to consider trade between different nations as what we term globalisation, which, given the definition above, goes beyond simple trading deals.

For international trade to be truly effective there has to be free-flowing communication between people, regardless of where in the world they may live. And this is where modern technology plays a major role. Indeed, before modern forms of communication were available to us, communication between countries took weeks, or even months. A far cry from the instant messaging that exists in modern times.

Nevertheless, international communication between people of different countries existed long before even the written word was invented. But even so, this communication would not have been possible with technological innovation: namely, the humble dug out canoe. Thus, it can be argued that a form of globalisation has indeed existed for many thousands of years. But then again, if we consider a basic hand-made boat to have laid the seeds of international communication, then advances in technology have surely speeded up the process by removing geographical barriers, leading to organisations such as OPEC, APEC and, of course, the WTO.

It therefore remains that modern technology, which has revolutionised international communication, has made possible international trade on a massive scale, reshaping economies and reforming people's lives.

Unit 5 Practice Tests

General Training Test

Practice Test One

I disagree that an age limit should be put on the use of computers because the skills children learn are essential in a modern economy.

In some cases, children may spend too much time in front of a computer. However, this does not mean that they don't participate in sports. Indeed, one only needs to walk through any university campus, or to talk to young people themselves, to discover how popular sport is as a pastime. Therefore, instead of restricting the use of computers, if health is a concern of many people, then more sports facilities should be built to enable children to gain the necessary exercise.

Moreover, computers teach children skills that are essential if they are to find a good job later in life. Indeed, computer literacy has become as important as the ability to read and write. And no one has ever argued that children spend too much time reading! In fact, computers can be very educational if used properly.

One danger of computers is the availability of undesirable information that is openly available on the internet. Therefore, rather than restricting the use of computers, the type of information available to children should be restricted instead. And the responsibility for restricting potentially harmful information should lie with parents, schools and manufacturers of computers who are at least partially responsible for the availability of sexually explicit or violently graphic information.

Computers are an essential part of modern life, and it is important that children grow up being fully familiar with their application. Therefore, it is not the use of computers that should be restricted but the type of information that is available to young people under the age of eighteen.

Practice Test Two

I agree with the point of view that entertainers, such as movie stars and sports personalities are overpaid because what they contribute to society is no more than what ordinary people do.

Of course, singers, sports stars etc. bring a lot of pleasantness into people's lives because the type of entertainment they provide enables people to relax after a stressful day at work, which is an important way of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. However, this doesn't justify the over inflated salaries they are paid.

Many ordinary people who work in healthcare similarly do much to ensure the health of people, whilst teachers are largely responsible for ensuring that people are adequately prepared for their future life. Yet they don't receive the same recognition as top sports players, film stars or singers. At the same time, many more people are responsible for the growth and maintenance of a healthy economy.

Obviously, the entertainment industry is important to many economies, but then again so is manufacturing, education and the tourist industry, to name but a few. And whilst entertainment relies on the skills and talents of people for its success so do all other sectors of society. Indeed, many highly skilled and talented people who work in many areas of industry and commerce play a crucial role in the development and maintenance of a country's economy, yet are paid very little compared to the earning often commanded by people who work in the film, music, or sports industry.

Whilst entertainers in the film, sports and music industry bring much pleasure into people's lives, it is wrong to say that they contribute more to society than ordinary people. Therefore, their salaries should be no more than that of others.

Academic Test

Practice Test One

Advance in science has led to great leaps in genetic research that could potentially bring many advantages to mankind, but only if this knowledge is used to benefit society as a whole, and not for the pursuit of profit for a few.

The advantages of genetic research are difficult to deny. Indeed, the curing of previously incurable diseases, and the cloning of human organs for transplant, could improve the quality of people's lives beyond comparison. However, at the same time, the technology could be used for the pursuit of greater profits for the people who control such technology.

Already there is a debate raging that the mapping of the human gene sequence can be used by insurance companies to determine the future health of their clients. For example, if someone's genes indicate they are likely to get cancer, then this knowledge could be used by the company to increase the cost of insurance, or even refuse insurance. This, then, begs the question of how ethical and moralistic the pursuit of profit is.

Of course, it can be argued that such information would come under the control of governments. Yet how much control would governments ultimately be able to exercise over financially powerful companies who are responsible for the acquisition of that knowledge to begin with? This leads one to wonder whether the cloning of people could result in the manufacture of individuals who are void of normal human characteristics such as intelligence, and needs such as love and social recognition, who could be exploited by companies to undertake low paid, menial work for the benefit of the owners. And this, potentially, is only one step further on from the cloning of animals.

There are, of course, many advantages to genetic research. Yet at the same time the dangers are not to be ignored. And certainly, the control of such knowledge should not be left in the hands of a few.

Practice Test Two

With the breakup of traditional communities, people in modern times are forced to take more responsibility for their own well-being. However, this does not mean that companies should be responsible for people in their old age.

Traditional communities tended to be centered around one industry, steel production or ship building, for example. Yet as industry modernised, and companies relocated to city outskirts, people found they had to travel further to work. However, when people do choose to leave their hometown in order to seek work, they often do so out of choice, not because they have to.

Although it can be argued that people are forced to leave their hometowns to seek work, when people do choose to move to another town or city, or, indeed, to the city from a rural area, it is in pursuit of wealth. Therefore, people themselves should take responsibility for their own families. Indeed, if people are in a position to earn much higher salaries than they were previously able to do then it is no great matter to provide for their aging parents financially. Besides, modern transport, which, in relative terms, is at least affordable for most people, makes regular visits to one's family a real choice, allowing a degree of pastoral care as well.

A problem that arises, should companies be made to shoulder the responsibility, is one of salaries. Any care provided for people in their own age is likely to be considered part of a person's earning, thereby lowering salaries. However, if people make provisions for themselves – private pension schemes, for example – they will retain more control over their own lives. This would also have the added benefit of boosting the economy.

In order to maintain a healthy economy, it is important that companies operate profitably. However, if extra financial burden is placed upon companies by forcing them to care for the elderly, then ultimately, the economy may suffer, and along with it the people of the country.

Chapter Five Communicative Quality

Exercise 30: Introducing Contrasting Information

City transport is cheap, clean and efficient, **although** it's often very crowded. **Nevertheless**, without public transport, such as subways and buses, a city would not be able to function. **However**, something really should be done to improve it. **But** at least it's better than none at all.

Exercise 31: Emphasising Important Information

Question 2

In any modern city traffic congestion is a major concern. **In fact**, the amount of traffic in many cities is increasing rapidly. This leads to many problems, such as pollution, danger to the young and elderly as well as health problems. **Indeed**, respiratory illness, such as asthma, is as serious as heart disease in some countries. **However**, given the efforts of scientists, as well as many large companies, traffic pollution is slowly decreasing.

With increased wealth, more and more people around the world own a car, **but** **although** scientists can produce clean fuel, the problem of road safety does not go away.

Exercise 32: Introducing A Possible Result Or Conclusion

Cars, however, are too expensive for many people to afford. **Therefore** public transport is a popular means of getting around. **As a result**, buses are often very crowded, especially in the rush hour. Modern subway systems go part way to solving this problem. Not only are they very cheap and convenient, they are also often quicker than travelling by car. **Because of this**, many people now prefer to travel by subway, which are becoming busier and busier.

Exercise 33: Writing A List: The Rule Of Three

Living in a foreign country is very exciting because you get to learn many new things. **For example**, you learn how to adapt to a new culture, different food and even a new language.

Living in a big city is very stressful at times because you have to cope with many problems **such as** overcrowding, constant noise and heavy traffic.

Having only one child has many advantages. **For instance**, you can give your child a better education, a nicer living environment and more of your attention.

Keeping pets creates many problems **including** thinking about your neighbours, going away on holiday and being out at work all day and night.

Exercise 34: Adding Information To A Sentence

Global warming is being taken seriously by many people around the world. **Indeed**, many people now make an effort to recycle plastics, metals **and** paper. **In addition**, many cities are getting greener with the planting of more trees. **However**, more could be done.

Better public transport would mean fewer people would use cars. **Moreover**, traditional forms of transport, **including** cars and buses could be replaced with electric powered vehicles. **Also/Furthermore**, roads could be made safer for bicycles **as well as** pedestrians.

Exercise 35: Expressing A Time

Around the time of my 16th birthday I decided that I should try to write a book. But **during** that year I was too busy with my studies to begin writing it. The **following** year, however, I started writing the first chapter. That was just after my 17th birthday, in fact.

I completed the first chapter in six months. But it wasn't until the **following** spring that I started on chapter two. **When** I did start to write it, however, I found that I couldn't think of any good ideas, so I took a holiday instead.

It was **whilst** I was on holiday that my ideas came back to me. So **after** I arrived back home I had no difficulty in completing the second chapter. Indeed, **between** then and my 18th birthday, I worked on the book whenever I had time **until** it was completed.

Writing Skills For The IELTS Test

Mark Morgan

"My English is very good, but I don't know how to do well in the IELTS exam."

"My English is poor. I'm wondering whether it is possible for me to pass the IELTS exam."

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本书的作者是英国人Mark Morgan，一直担任雅思考官和教师。作为考官，他对雅思考试了解透彻全面；作为雅思培训的教师，他清楚中国学生的弱点和优势。他对如何指导学生复习迎考有自己独到的见解。本书精要、实用，有了它，雅思不再那么陌生、可怕。

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